

Sports News Roundup Dec. 24



Pinar del Rio Qualifies to Second Phase of Cuban Baseball Series

Current champion Pinar del Rio beat Las Tunas 7-1 on Tuesday to qualify for the second round of the 54th Cuban Baseball Series.

With solid pitching by right hander Yosvani Torres, Pinar del Rio now comes sixth in the standings with 23 wins and 20 defeats to qualify for the next stage with 42 new matches to play before the playoffs.

Yosvani Torres pitched 8 innings and 2 thirds, allowed a single run, with four strikeouts and one walk, in his 2nd consecutive victory in the tournament.

In Tuesday's game, Pinar del Rio's offensive was combined to produce 14 hits, led by the best hitters in the lineup -- Donal Duarte, Randy Arozarena, Lazaro Emilio Blanco and Lorenzo Quintana.

On December 10, Torres allowed 7 hits and 2 runs in a game in which Pinar del Rio ended losing the game by forfeit, after no decision was made on the game over an argument with Industriales' team at Latinoamericano Stadium here in Havana. Everyone thought Pinar del Rio was giving up to retain its crown this season. An umpire's decision led to Pinar del Rio's team frustration and its members decided to abandon the unfinished game. This action forced top national baseball authorities to take disciplinary measures on the team's coach and commissioner.

Although, Alfonso Urquiola had been banned from coaching Pinar del Rio for the rest of the first qualifying round over the incident in that game with Industriales, he will be leading his team again on the second phase.

Pinar del Rio will play two games against Granma on Wednesday. Pinar del Rio, placed sixth in the qualifying board, has no chance to improve on the standings if they win over Granma. If Pinar del Rio wins both games, the team would end tied with Industriales but Los Vueltabajeros were beaten by Los Azules in their particular sub-series.

The final standings of the first qualifying round comes as follow: Matanzas, Granma, Isla de la Juventud, Artemisa, Industriales, Pinar del Río, Ciego de Ávila and Holguín.

National television will broadcast on Thursday the selection of players who did not qualify for the next round and now have the chance to be chosen to join other teams in the second round as reinforcements.

And Cuban baseball authorities will announce the players who will participate in the Cuban All-Star Game on December 28th at Bayamo's Mártires de Barbados stadium in Granma.

Cuban Bruzon Wins Chess Tournament in Mexico

This is the third time Cuban chess GM Lazaro Bruzon wins in the main group of Carlos Torre Memorial Chess tournament in Merida, Mexico. He previously won in 2005 and 2013.

Bruzón earned a total of 7.5 points out of nine by drawing in his last match playing Cuban Juan Carlos Obregon and finished unbeaten with six wins and three draws, ahead of the also Cuban Isam Ortiz.

Ortiz gained seven units and had a better tie break than U.S. Alejandro Ramírez, third with seven points in the standings as Cuban Roberto García came fourth with seven points as well.

The website of the organizing committee showed that Bruzon's balance was valid for a ranking performance of 2 757 Elo units and the sum of 11.2 units will be added in January.

The event brought the participation of 110 contenders. The next chess event, the Latin Cup, is scheduled for December 26 to 31 in Guayaquil. Bruzón, Ortiz and many of those who gathered in Merida will also be present.



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