

Sports News Roundup December *23*



Best Cuban Athletes of 2015: Awards Ceremony

The best Cuban athletes and sports in 2015 were awarded during a ceremony on Wednesday at Havana's Convention Center. The event honors the outstanding results of athletes this past year.

Pole-vaulter Yarisley Silva, gymnast Manrique Larduet and boxer Julio Cesar La Cruz are recognized as the best athletes of individual sports. Baseball player Alfredo Despaigne and basketball player Clenia Noblet are distinguished as best athletes of team sports disciplines.

During 2015, the Cuban sports movement achieved 18 medals in world Olympic sports events, including seven gold medals and 36 crowns in the Pan American Games, although Cuba could not finish in second place at the continental event.

Baseball and boxing are presented as the sports of greater prominence in the season and boxer Johany Argilagos as best rookie of the year.

Baseball

Current champion Ciego de Ávila's Tigres will try to remain at the top of the standings when the team takes on Matanzas's Cocodrilos on Friday in an attractive sub-series of the 55th Cuban Baseball Series.

The Tigres are leading the tournament so far with 34 wins and 16 defeats, but they lost twice to last season's runner up champion Isla de la Juventud's Piratas who have 27 wins and 24 defeats. The Cocodrilos come fifth after winning only a game playing Las Tunas' Leñadores.

The Piratas, last in the standings, will challenge the energy of Granma's Alazanes who beat twice Industriales' Leones recently to tie with them in the second place of the standings with 32 wins and 19 defeats.

Industriales will rival Holguín's Cachorros, who won by slide over Pinar del Río's Vegueros in their latest subseries.

The Vegueros, with only a win in the second round of the tournament, receives Las Tunas at Capitán San Luis stadium. Las Tunas comes fourth in the standings and have won five out of six games played so far in this round of the series.

Tennis: ITF World Champions of 2015

Serbian Novak Djokovic and U.S. Serena Williams have been named on Tuesday best players and International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Champions of 2015 in a ceremony at the Champions Dinner at Wimbledon, after both players won three Grand Slam titles this year.

Djokovic won the Australian Open, Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, amassing a career-best total of 11 titles in 2015 and an 82-6 record.

Djokovic, who now has won the ITF World Champion title five times, said "my season was the best of my career."

Williams took the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon, holding all four Grand Slam titles before losing in the U.S. Open semifinals. She ended the year with a 53-3 record.

Williams won the ITF title for the sixth time and said "it has been an amazing year."

The Swiss Martina Hingis and the Indian Sania Mirza became Women's Doubles World Champions, while Jean-Julien Rojer of Netherlands and Romania's Horia Tecau are Men's Doubles World Champions.

Dalma Galfi of Hungary and USA's Taylor Fritz are named ITF Junior World Champions, while the ITF Wheelchair World Champions are Jiske Griffioen of Netherlands and Japan's Shingo Kunieda, who became men's champion for the seventh time.

The ITF World Champions will receive their awards at the 2016 ITF World Champions Dinner on May 31st in Paris, during Roland Garros.

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