

Sport News Roundup May 20



Baseball

The slugger Alfredo Despaigne said in Havana that he has no responsibility at all in the allegation he was charged for allegedly using a false passport in the *Mexican Baseball League*, which he is part of *Los Piratas de Campeche*.

The *Mexican League* put aside the Cuban baseball player from its staff for an indefinite time to clarify the case that links the Cuban athlete using a fake Dominican passport for his official registration within the Mexican Leagues.

"I'm back in Cuba and I will be here for a time sharing at home with my family, waiting for the clarification from the *Mexican League* on what happened with my passport," Despaigne told Radio Havana Cuba at the José Martí airport.

"Neither the Cuban Federation nor I have anything to do with the alleged use of forged documents," said the outstanding sportsman upon his arrival, who was received by the president of the *Cuban Baseball Federation*, Higinio Vélez and Pedro Cabrera, head of the International Relations of the Sports Institute (INDER).

Despaigne, who had an excellent performance at the time of the unfortunate fact said that the problem "is being solved by the Mexican League" and he expects "to receive a rapid response to be back there soon. They know that none of us is guilty of anything, but they are looking for the real culprits. I am not worried

about feeling my image damaged because I have nothing to do with it," he said, adding that "I have received the full support of the Cuban Federation, which has properly acted, observing a constant communication and I hope everything is resolved," said the athlete.

The star of the Cuban baseball was accused by some international media to be enrolled in the Mexican League using a fake Dominican passport, a fact which led to his temporary suspension and an investigation, and the Cuban Baseball Federation strongly denied last Thursday having any regard to the case, while the *Granma* daily said this case showed the extraterritorial reach of the U.S. blockade on Cuba, which prevents Cuban players living on the island to play in the major leagues of other countries. It is a measure rejected by everyone because of its extraterritorial, legislative and outdated standards but it really responds to the economic and commercial blockade that the United States has imposed on Cuba for over 50 years.

Fencing

251 fencers have been so far registered for the *Women's Epee Grand Prix* and *Villa de La Habana Foil World Cup*, which will start on Thursday with the presence of several Olympic and world champions powers like Italy, France and Russia.

Mercedes del Risco, methodologist of the *Cuban Federation of Fencing*, said the female lid will cover 118 athletes from 30 countries, while the *Villa Havana World Cup* will be animated by 133 contestants from 24 countries.

Among the confirmed last year world champions appear Romanian Ana Branza, Olympic silver and world ranking number one, and American Race Imboden, 2nd in the ranks of the world, foil fencers Andrea Cassara and Andrea Baldini, monarchs Olympic Team in London-2012 and owners of several world titles, as well as the Hungarian Emese Szasz, world and Olympic medalist. Cuba will present 20 fencers, looking at *Veracruz-2014*.

Athletics

Cuba's champs Yaniel Carrero (100 m) and Yoandys Lescay (400) top the Cuban athletics for the new *World Championship of Relay* quartets, scheduled for May 24th and 25th in Nassau, Bahamas.

Carrero leads the 4x100 meters relay, also formed by Roberto Skyers, Reynier Mena and Yadiel Luis, while Lescay leads the 4x400 relay together with William Collazo, Raidel Acea and Adrián Chacón.

The latest international presentation of Cubans in relay events happened in the world of *Moscow-2013*, where the long relay squad finished 6th in their qualifying heat (3:04.26 minutes), with a different team to the one now announced.

The first 8 in Nassau would be directly classified for *Beijing World-2015*, something very difficult for Cuban quartets.

Around 800 athletes from nearly 50 nations will compete at the world event, including stars such as 400 m world champion, British Christina Ohuruogu.

The U.S. team will come to the Caribbean Island with 55 athletes, including its world champion LaShawn Merritt.



Radio Habana Cuba