

Sport News Roundup May 31



Skating

The experienced skater Tony Garcia, double bronze medalist in Cartagena de Indias-06, leads the Cuban skaters participating in the Pan American Sports Festival scheduled for July in Veracruz, Mexico.

David Mesa, head of the Cuban Federation, said that the specialty of racing is represented by Guillermo Muñoz, who ended 4th in Guadalajara 2011, Fanny Laura Pedroso and 15 years old Hayla Brunet, all under the guidance of coach Yuri Rodriguez.

Meanwhile, Leyda Diaz and Omar Huerbo will represent the island in artistic skating, under the guidance of Maria Clotilde Alonso.

Baseball

Cuban defector Raciél Iglesias had a workout for major league scouts in Haiti on Friday, and the Cincinnati Reds were one of the teams watching with interest, reports the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Despite being listed at only 5-11, 165 pounds, Iglesias sports a 92-95 MPH fastball. He also throws what Ben Badler describes as a sweeping breaking pitch.

Badler says that scouts believe Iglesias might be able to push his fastball into the high-90s once he puts on a little weight and gets stronger. At 165, he is even more slight than Pedro Martinez.

Iglesias played for the Cuban national team in the 2013 World Baseball Classic and the 2013 World Port Tournament. His first attempt to defect ended when he was discovered hiding in the mountains and was briefly detained.

Teams like the Reds, who are having all sorts of pitching problems right now, see Iglesias as a guy who could come in late in the season, after a little minor league seasoning, and give them some help as a fireballing relief pitcher. Whether he can be another Aroldis Chapman...well, that remains to be seen.

Boxing

Cuba has arguably the most extensive amateur boxing infrastructure in the world and the country has claimed 67 medals at the Olympic Games, trailing only the United States in the overall table.

There are estimated to be nearly 19,000 boxers and 500 coaches in Cuba today, the best fighters that bring glory to their country.

Cuban boxer Rolando Castellano Rodriquez, went to Cambodia to work as the boxing coach for the Cambodian national team.

Rodriquez works every afternoon with the Cambodian national boxing team in a brand new gym which has been built next to the old Olympic Stadium. He was initially sent to Phnom Penh by the Cuban government but decided to extend his stay.

He said that now in Cambodia sport is as popular as it is in Cuba, where any child who shows potential will get fast tracked onto a government sponsored coaching program, however Rodriquez believes that one day Cambodia will produce a boxing champion.

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