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Havana, March 12 (RHC)-- Reigning champions Matanzas and Las Tunas face each other again on Friday in the important fifth game of the semifinal playoff between them in the 60th National Baseball Series, with the series tied at 2 wins apiece.

In a hard-fought game, the Cocodrilos of Matanzas defeated the Leñadores from Las Tunas by a score of 12 to 7 on Thursday and managed to level the duel, which will determine the opponent of the Alazanes de Granma for the Cuban baseball title.

After having a seven-run lead in the third inning, the pitching of the Cocodrilos hit rock bottom and the Leñadores were reborn like a Phoenix bird to dream of being just one step away from the discussion of the crown.

The Tunera troop of mentor Pablo Civil never gave up and discounted until the tie was achieved, while manager Armando Ferrer had to request the help of right-hander Yoel Suarez, who became his star reliever, to put out the fire at the Jose Antonio Huelga Stadium, home of the 'bubble' of the province of Sancti Spiritus.

From the seventh inning onwards, the pitching staff faltered and the epilogue of the game took place in the eleventh inning, when the Matanzas stepped on home plate five times.

With no public in the stands and under strict sanitary protocols to stop COVID-19, the 60th National Baseball Series began on September 12th with the competition of 16 teams and only eight advanced to the direct elimination playoffs, after a qualifying phase of 75 games.

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