

Sports News Roundup July 4



VERACRUZ 2014

Veracruz-2014

The President of the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation of Cuba (INDER), Cristian Jiménez, expressed today his conviction that his country will win the *22nd Central American and Caribbean Games Veracruz-2014*.

Rather than a competitive purpose, this is a commitment of the Cuban sports movement, on behalf of our people and our family, to the country's leadership because of the support they have given to sports since the triumph of the Revolution in January, 1959.

In remarks to *Prensa Latina* news agency after speaking in the Health and Sports Committee of the National Assembly of the People's Power, Jimenez said the government's backing of sports has been unwavering despite financial and material difficulties.

"Our conviction about the triumph is the sports movement's answer to efforts being made in the country so that we continue existing in a globalized world, in a world

governed by money, in a world where the buying and selling of athletes becomes normal, in a world where doping, fraud and crooked referees are a reality," he said.

Since the Central American Games of Panama in 1970, Cuba has always ranked first in these regional events, but in El Salvador (2002) and in Puerto Rico (2010), where the team was absent because those venues lacked the minimal safety conditions for the Cuban delegation.

Jimenez said Cuba's triumph in the Veracruz games is also a pledge to the international campaign for The Cuban Five: Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labanino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando Gonzalez and Rene Gonzalez, who were arrested in 1998 and given harsh prison sentences in the United States for monitoring Miami-based terrorist groups operating against Cuba.

Fernando and Rene are already in Cuba after fully serving their unfair prison sentences.

Baseball

Cuban and Canadian baseball teams, U-18 category, begin playing today in the city of Matanzas, a cap preparation with a doubleheader agreed to 7 innings every game in the morning and evening hours, said Cuban coach, Juan Suarez, to *Prensa Latina* news agency, whose training bases are held at the *Palmar de Junco Stadium*, 100 km. east of Havana, a historic sport facility in which took place the 1st official baseball challenge in Cuba on December 27th, 1874.

"The group is in a very good shape, disciplined and eager to play," said the coach, who noted that many of its staff contributed to occupy the 3rd place at the 2013 World Cup in China Taipei, as well as other figures who played in the last national championship of the discipline.

The local selection is formed by 3 catchers, 15 pitchers, 7 infielders and 8 outfielders, and directs the experienced Luis Cuba, who led the national team to the bronze medal gotten in the Asian nation last year.

FIFA Brazil-2014

FIFA's Secretary General, Jerome Valcke, said today that the *FIFA World Cup Brazil-2014* is turning out to be the best ever.

No doubt it is the best World Cup in terms of soccer. It is a fantastic Cup, Valcke told the Brazilian channel *SporTV*.

Valcke, one of those who had been most critical with the organizers of the Cup for its construction delays and logistical issues, has finally yielded to the evident popular support for the games, both in Brazil and in the rest of the planet. "What we are seeing on the streets, in the cities where matches are taking place, is what everyone expected from Brazil; it is time to enjoy the best of soccer and see which teams will reach the semifinals," he said, backing the President Dilma Rousseff's predictions whenever the organizing committee was criticized: Brazil will be the Cup of all Cups.

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