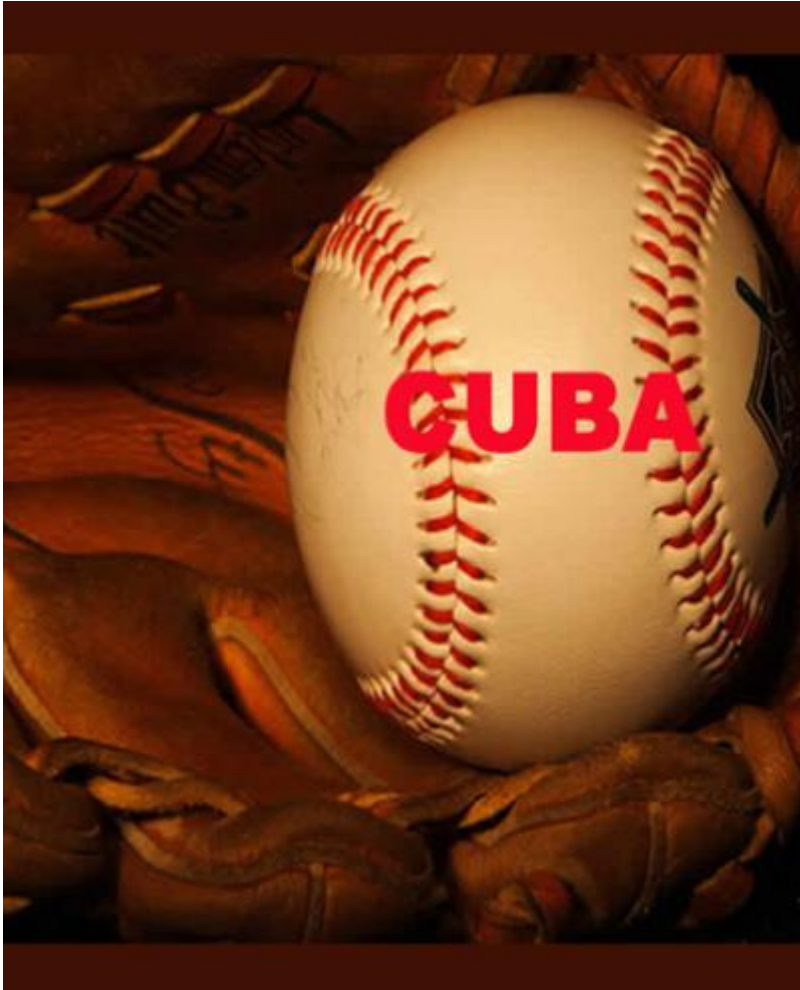


Playoffs: Crunch time in Cuban baseball



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Havana, May 25 (PL) - The adrenaline of the postseason will reach its peak this Wednesday in Cuban baseball, when the Sancti Spíritus-Pinar del Río and Las Tunas-Matanzas duels get underway.

These four teams have completed the 75-game regular phase and are now facing a best-of-seven quarterfinal stage in order to qualify for the semifinals.

At the José Antonio Huelga stadium, the Gallos espirituanos will try to maintain the good sensations and show the power that put them at the top of the standings, with 45 wins and 30 losses, although they cannot be confident against one of the "historical teams" on the island, Pinar.

The other "dual meet" presents a different scenario, as the Leñadores de Las Tunas (43-32, runner-up) and the Cocodrilos de Matanzas (40-35, seventh) will clash for the third consecutive year in the postseason, this time at the Julio Antonio Mella stadium.

Led by mentor Pablo Civil, champion in 2019, the Tuneros will receive the current runners-up at home with the goal of reversing the unfavorable balance against them (3-7) in direct elimination rounds.

These four teams will have their second games on Thursday, when they will play Granma (43-32)-Industriales (41-34) and Mayabeque (42-33)-Ciego de Avila (41-34) at the Mártires de Barbados and Nelson Fernández stadiums, in that order.

With the competition of 16 teams and Granma as the monarch exponent, the 61st National Baseball Series had its opening day last January, under a round-robin format and eight places in contention for the playoffs.

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