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Havana, August 19 (RHC)-- Cuban right-hander Yanet Cruz, who has worked in four of the five games played by Cuba, will be the starter today against Venezuela in the semifinal phase of the pre-World Cup of the Americas tournament to be held at the Jorge Luis García Carneiro stadium in La Guaira, Venezuela.

Cruz was the pitcher who threw the most inning among all the participants, with 15.2 in which she gave 13 tickets, so she must improve her control this Friday to aspire to win against the locals who will surely fill the stands.

The Cuban was co-leader in games won (2), tied with the Puerto Rican star Jianily Rivero.

For Venezuela today, right-hander Mary Rodriguez, who already defeated Cuba in the qualifying phase by 8-3, will take the mound, based on slow pitches off the plate and a good changeup curve against which the pupils of Camagüey manager Jorge Luis Pimienta were very mismatched.

In the last game that gave Cuba qualification for the 2023 World Cup if it defeated Mexico, Pimienta made substantial changes in the lineup. And since he made the most of the 7-2 win, he assured the Cuban News Agency that there would be no changes today, apparently in keeping with the old baseball adage that winning lineups are not moved.

Cuba finished fourth collectively in batting (248, 30-121), with an infield home run by designated hitter Roxana Cuello, was second in pitching (3.50, shared with Venezuela), while it finished fourth in defense (943), by displaying nine errors in 96 pitches.

The Cubans and Venezuelans will take the field at 6:00 pm. At 10:00, the fifth place match between Nicaragua and Dominican Republic will be played at 10:00, while Mexico-Puerto Rico will settle the other semifinal.

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