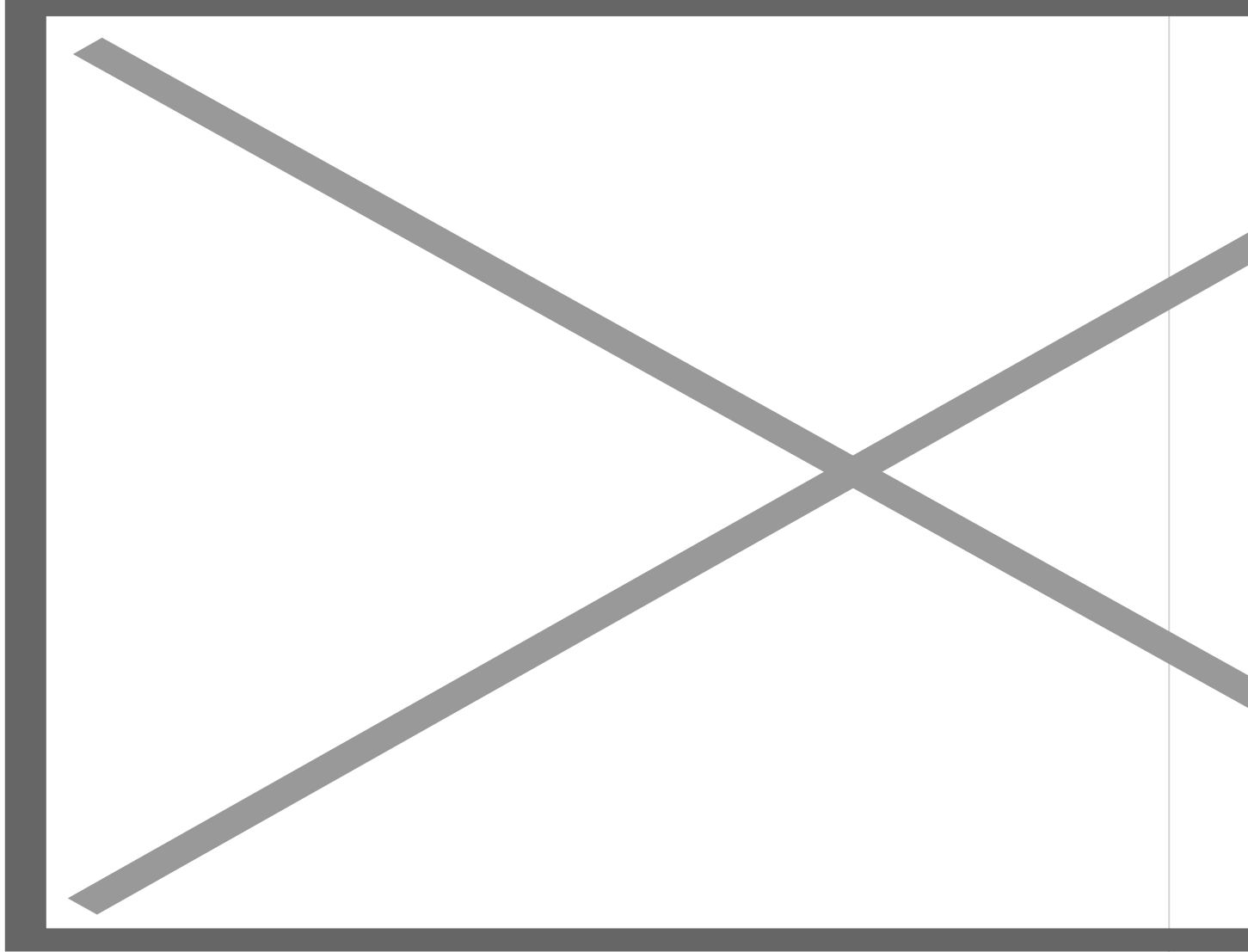


Matanzas and Artemisa head for sixth game in Cuban baseball finals

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Matanzas, January 22 (PL) - With the duel on matte point, the teams of Artemisa and Matanzas will train today focused on the sixth game of the playoff for the title of the Cuban winter baseball league.

The so-called Cocodrilos will take the field tomorrow at the Victoria de Girón stadium in Matanzas in search of the fourth success in the match to win the tournament crown.

The mentor Armando Ferrer announced for the opening game the right-hander Renner Rivero, who is looking for his first victory in the championship, after recovering from an injury during the preliminary phase.

In the entire league he has three appearances, two as a starter and one as a reliever, in which he worked 11.1 innings.

Rivero's opponent will be Raymond Figueredo, Industriales pitcher who reinforces the staff of the Cazadores de Artemisa, a team forced to win to force the seventh and last duel.

Figueredo also suffered an injury in the qualifying round, but in the post-season he signed a pair of five-inning stints, each one with dominance on the mound.

In total he worked for 31.1 innings with a pair of successful decisions, one in the opening round and the other last Wednesday against Matanzas to tie the series momentarily.

The Crocodiles took yesterday a 3-2 lead in the match by winning with a score of 6-1 which had as protagonists the winner Yoannis Yera (7.0 IP, 1CL, 4H, 2BB) and the center fielder Eduardo Blanco, promoted to the sixth inning in the game, from where he batted 5-2, including a homer, and pushed three runs.

In Sunday's game, Ariel Sánchez became the 27th player to join the 2,000-hit club in baseball championships on the island, a list that also includes his uncles Fernando and Wilfredo. "I had been trying to reach the mark for days, that had me a little tense, but in the end I made it and now I will continue to focus on helping the team to be crowned in the league, which is the fundamental purpose of us," said Sanchez.

The changes in the lineup of the Crocodiles paid off, producing 12 hits, nine of them from the third to the sixth at bat. For the next game, mentor Yulieski Gonzalez also hinted at changes in the lineup of Artemisa, which signed only six hits yesterday, among them, the 360th home run in his career by Frederich Cepeda, who is playing with a sprain. "We are going to sit down this Monday to assess how to take on the sixth game,"

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