

# *Sports News Roundup Dec. 1*

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**VERACRUZ 2014**

## **Cuban Wins Central American and Caribbean Games Veracruz 2014**

Cuban Richer Perez won the Central American and Caribbean Games' Marathon competition in men's category on Sunday, while Mexican Margarita Hernandez won women's category.

Perez, 28, and winner of *2014 Havana's Half Marathon*, won the race in 2 hours, 19 min. and 13 sec. followed by Guatemalan José García (2:19:45), champion in *2010 Mayaguez Central American and Caribbean Games*, and Mexican Daniel de Jesus Vargas (2:20:27), respectively.

On the other hand, Mexican Hernandez arrived 1st in women's category with a time of 2:41:16, followed by Cuban Dailin Belmonte (2:42:01), and Venezuelan Zuleima Amaya (2:42:27).

With this result and others, the Cuban athletes and sports confirmed again their quality and regional domain by returning to these games after 8 years of absence.

Despite of stiff opposition from the host,

Mexico, and the quality of the other participating nations, the notes of the Cuban National Anthem were heard 123 times; thus, the Cuban sports movement kept its commitment to return to the country in the highest sports seat of our area and it was achieved with a young delegation, whose 85% membership attended such a prestigious regional multi-sport event for the first time.

## **Ecuador Prepares Activities for 5th ALBA Sports Games**

Representatives from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Bolivia recently met with authorities from Ecuador, to prepare all the activities for the *5th ALBA Sports Games*, an event in which the attendance of almost 2,000 athletes from 10 countries is expected.

The sports event will be in Ecuador in April 2015, and all involved visiting delegates had the first technical dialogue with officials of the Ecuadorian Sports Ministry in Guayaquil, for the preparations for the event belonging to the *Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)*.

The delegates talked and analyzed, together with the Ecuadorian authorities, the sports in competition, the inscriptions for the athletes, as well as proper doping prevention and control and regulations.

They also visited the *Training Center in Guayaquil* and watched an audiovisual brief about the installations in different Ecuador's provinces. On this topic, the *High Performance Sport Training Centers* in the Ecuadorian provinces of Azuay, Imbabura, Salinas, Guayas and Chimborazo, will receive the competitions, with the participation of all athletes from the ALBA member countries, i.e., Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and Ecuador, while Brazil and Mexico will attend as guests.

## **World's Top 12 Nations Revealed for First-ever 'Premier 12' World Baseball Championship**

The *World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC)* unveiled the line-up of the world's best-ranked nations that have qualified for the first-ever "*Premier 12*" -- the new flagship pro baseball world championship that will feature the *National Teams* from baseball's 12 highest-ranked nations and become baseball's highest-ranked international competition, awarding US\$ multi-millions in prize money, it was officially released in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The Top 12 nations that have secured a place in the inaugural *Premier 12* in 2015 is headlined by No. 1 Japan, No. 2 USA, No. 3 Cuba, No. 4 Chinese Taipei, No. 5 Netherlands, No. 6 Dominican Republic, No. 7 Canada, No. 8 South Korea, No. 9 Puerto Rico, No. 10 Venezuela, No. 11 Italy and No. 12. Mexico.

WBSC President Riccardo Fraccari celebrated baseball's first-ever collection of *Premier 12* nations saying that "WBSC congratulates the 2015 Class of Premier 12 nations whose nations represent baseball's best that will unite and deliver an exciting and unmatched competitive parity at the inaugural *Premier 12*. Any one of these elite nations can come out victorious in 2015 and leave *The Premier 12* as the reigning World Champions," Mr. Fraccari said.

The unveiling of baseball's most powerful bloc of nations follows the end-of-the-year calculation of the *Official 2014 WBSC World Baseball Rankings*, as the final standings of the rankings in the year preceding *The Premier 12* serve as the exclusive qualifying method into the international baseball showcase.

On the topic, the release of the *2014 WBSC World Baseball Rankings* also marks the historic rise of the Japanese National Baseball Team, Samurai Japan, which for the first time ever is the world No. 1, surpassing 2013 leader, the USA.

The inaugural *Premier 12* participants will represent a global spread that includes the entire western hemisphere --North-, Central-and South America, and the Caribbean -- Asia, and Northern and Southern Europe.

Oceania's No. 14 Australia, which had been ranked as high as No. 10 in 2012, was just 8.96 rankings points behind No. 12 Mexico.

All WBSC's world championship platforms --from the U-12, U-15, U-18 and U-21 *Baseball World Cups* to the *2013 World Baseball Classic* and sanctioned/recognized international competitions, have been properly shaped the rankings and qualification into the *2015 Premier 12*.

The *Premier 12* logo and 2015 tournament dates are expected to be unveiled at an upcoming press conference; following the *2015 Premier 12*, the world championship platform that unites the world's 12 best nations will be rolled out every 4 years.

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