

# *Sports News Roundup July 09*

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## **Marabana-2015**

A total of 431 runners from the United States are registered to compete in the next edition of *Marabana*, which is a record figure, announced Carlos Gattorno, general director of the famous Cuban marathon project.

This unprecedented participation highlights among the new characteristics of the 1st edition of a *Marabana* after the re-establishment of relations between Havana and Washington, originally set on December 17th, 2014.

Although the figure could rise, 431 U.S. athletes and 16 Puerto Rican already formalized their on-line registration by paying the appropriate fee, said Gattorno.

In addition to the current political situation, the U.S. presence is authorized by 1 of the 12 licenses provided by Washington for its nationals to travel to Cuba.

*Marabana-2015* is scheduled for the 3rd Sunday of November and for the 1st time this year requires participants' qualification.

According to Gattorno, the 2,300 runners who completed the race last year are automatically qualified, and the rest will do so in individual races on July 18th and August 13th.

This marathon celebrates the anniversary of the founding of Havana and the *Day of Physical Culture and Sports in Cuba*, and has replicas across the country by *Maracuba* project.

The competition-divided in marathon, half marathon and 10 km.-calls from runners and conventional walkers to elite athletes, veterans and physically unable people.

### **Cuban School Games Organization Highlighted**

Karina Guevara, representative of the Venezuelan Sports Ministry, highlighted the quality and organization of the *Cuban School Sports Games*, the base of the high performance sports competition events in Cuba.

Guevara is at the head of a delegation with 12 athletes, competing in a diving tournament at the *Luis Augusto Turcios Lima Sports School (EIDE)* pool in Matanzas province, 62 miles away from Havana.

"We received the invitation to take part in this tournament, and we considered that it would be very fruitful and beneficial," Guevara said.

This competition covers categories 10-11 years, 12-13, 14-15 and 16-18, in both sexes, and includes athletes from Venezuela, Mexico and Colombia.

The member of the national diving commission and director of the competition, Raul Hernandez, said that the pool will host the Pan-American modality at ages 12-13, 14-15 and 16-18, expected in coming September.

In addition, Matanzas welcomes the competitions for the nautical base, and from July 15th the synchronized swimming school tournament.

### **Cuba To Celebrate Mandela Day With Race For a Better World**

The race organized by Cuba to celebrate *Mandela Day* transcends the charitable and seeks commitment for a better world, the organizers said today.

Napthal Manana, Ambassador of South Africa in Cuba, told local Prensa Latina news agency that this event promotes the sport values defended by 'Madiba', such as teamwork and physical and mental strength.

The heat, which qualifies for the *Marathon Marabana-2015*, will cover a 10 km circuit through the streets of Havana on July 18th, anniversary of the South African leader's birthday.

On the topic, Carlos Gattorno, general director of the race, pointed out that the first 600 runners who cross the finishing line will receive a Commemorative Medal to honor Mandela Foundation's philosophy: *All Can Be Winners*.

Starting and finishing again at the Havana's Capitol, this trace will be opened to runners of different categories, including master and differently disabled, who may register from July 13th-17th.

### **Santiago 500: Chess House: Emblematic Site**

The *Jose Raul Capablanca Chess House*, located in the centric Cespedes Park in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba, is one of the most visited installations by chess lovers and is highlighted by its colonial façade dating back to the end of the 18th century, where the genius Capablanca once asked to local participants to play against 30 simultaneous tables in 1938.

Antonio Gonzalez Trujillo, recognized as one of the fathers of chess in Santiago, recalls that game. That day the young Carlos Santos excited for playing against Capablanca responded: No maestro, let's give that game more time because the privilege of your presence deserves it.

Currently this is one of the institutions that maintains the tradition of chess alive in this city, known as the *Heroic City*, and named as the Chess House that carries the name of the major exponent of the science sport in Cuba.

The house, located in the colonial sector of the city, which is about to celebrate its 500th anniversary, has not always been home to the provincial academy but before the triumph of the Revolution it was the site of the *Society of the Centro Gallego*, commented Gonzalez Trujillo who was its director and professor for many years.

The site holds testimonies of figures like Enrique Figuerola, first Olympic medalist of the province and other greats like Alberto Juantorena, Norge Luis Vera, Mercedes Calderon, Yunidis Castillo, Sergio Arturo, and others.

The installation is the best site to honor the 6 greatest chess Maestros of Santiago de Cuba like Maritza Arriba Tobaina, Zirka Frometa Castillo, Eldis Cobo Artiaga, Carlos Larduet Despaigne, Oleini Linares Napoles and Lelys Martienz Duany.

With the objective of showing off the splendor of Santiago de Cuba in commemoration of its 500th anniversary, the institution is under refurbishing for current and future generation, said its director, Jose Reyes.

The breeze of a renovated city and the hospitable environment involved in a chess game are found in the surrounding areas of Cespedes Park for those that want to try out their luck in a game of chess.

## **Athletics**

The 40th edition of Lausanne's famous *Athletissima* meeting, the 9th event in this season's *IAAF Diamond League*, offers a welter of events featuring that priceless commodity within any sport — true competition.

A total of 10 reigning Olympic champions, 7 world champions and 9 European champions will converge on the *Stade De La Pontaise* on Thursday night. Among the most eagerly awaited confrontations will be the re-match between the two triple jumpers who reached historic heights —or rather, lengths— in the opening *IAAF Diamond League* of the season in Doha, Cuba's Pedro Pablo Pichardo and Olympic champion Christian Taylor.

No other triple jump competition had previously involved more than one man surpassing 18 meters, but the pair became only the 4th and 5th men in history to better that mark as Pichardo eventually triumphed with an *IAAF Diamond League* record of 18.06m, with his US rival just 2 centimeters behind.

Thus, competition will be just as tight in some of the marquee events on the track and field as Britain's Mo Farah faces a strong Ethiopian trio in the 5000m comprising Hagos Gebrhiwet, Imane Merga, and the prodigious 17-year-old who won in Rome in a world-leading time of 12:58.39, Yomif Kejelcha.

## **Paris Presents Candidacy for 2024 Olympic Games**

The mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, officially announced the candidacy of the French capital for the *Summer Olympics 2024*.

Hidalgo expressed in a letter his hope that if Paris wins the nomination and organizes the summer event of the year, the swimming career test for triathlon will be held at the legendary river Seine, which crosses the French capital.

Our city is already working for it. Parisians will be able to swim in the Seine after 2024, thanks to the Games, he said.

The mayor added that "a new era will open for Parisians and the possibility for each one to take a bath in the Seine will be part of the "precious heritage" Olympic Games should leave, he said.

Today, bathing in the emblematic river is prohibited in its passage through Paris, mainly because of water contamination.

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