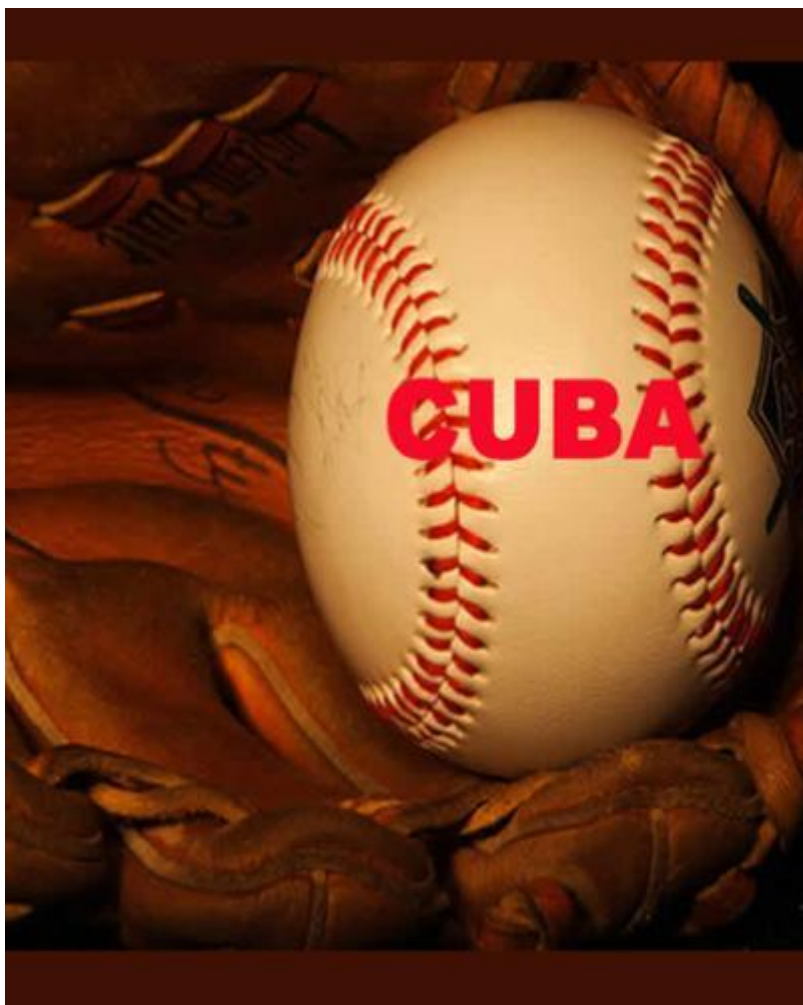


Round up of Sport news.

Thursday, January 9th, 2014



Baseball

The president of the *Cuban Baseball Federation*, Higinio Velez, said the *Villa Clara* team will have an outstanding performance in the upcoming *Caribbean Series* to be held in Margarita Island, Venezuela.

In an appearance on the *La Mesa Redonda* – the Round Table – radio and television program last night, the manager confirmed that Cuba will attend the next edition of the traditional event as a *guest* and not as a *full member* of the Caribbean Confederation of the discipline.

Vélez pointed out that the line-up of Villa Clara team that won the title in the *52nd National Baseball Series*, including reinforcements requested by its mentor Ramón Moré last season, and veteran catcher Ariel Pestano, who currently plays in Mexico, will be respected.

However, the president of the Cuban Baseball Federation did not rule out the inclusion of other athletes, always with the consent of the director of the team, to

create a more competitive cast to face a demanding game.

Cycling

The Cuban cycling sextet to represent the Island in the 49th edition of the *The Táchira Cycling Tour*, left this Wednesday while event organizers predict a good turnout.

The contest runs until January 19th covering roads and avenues of federal entities of Portuguesa, Barinas, Mérida and Táchira itself.

The Cuban cast consists of Yasmani Balmaseda, Onel Santa Clara, Eduardo Acosta, Jesus Barragaño, Yariel Leon, Victor Horta, Agustín Martínez and José Mujica, all led by Henry Rodriguez, head coach route.

Other male athletes will intervene also in January in the *8th Tour of San Luis*, while four girls leave tomorrow for Argentina.

Soccer

Portuguese star soccer Cristiano Ronaldo is leading today Internet users' preference in the *Prensa Latina's* survey to pocket the *FIFA Ballon d'Or 2013*.

Ronaldo, from the *Spanish Real Madrid* club and winner of the prize in 2008, has 2,146 votes, or 46.6% of the total 4,606 votes cast so far.

Ronaldo, also known as CR7, leads Argentinian Lionel Messi (2,016 votes), the forward of the FC Barcelona and winner of the Ballon d'Or four times from 2009-2012, and also French Franck Ribery, from the Bayern Munich, who only accumulates 444 votes.

Ronaldo's performance in 2013 was excellent, with 69 goals scored, breaking his own personal record (he scored 63 goals last year), and he showed that he's got even more potential.

The winner of the FIFA Ballon d'Or 2013 will be made public on January 13th in the Kongresshaus of Zurich, Switzerland.

And speaking of football stars, the Argentinean Lionel Messi played his 1st game after nearly 2 months of inactivity due to a muscle injury in his left leg, and celebrated it by scoring 2 goals in the 4-0 thrashing *Barcelona* gave to *Getafe* on Wednesday in the first round of the knockout stages of the Copa del Rey's quarterfinals.

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