

Guillermo Garcia's hot blood and strength dazzled Chunichi Dragons

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Guillermo Garcia

By Boris Luis Cabrera and Raúl Rodríguez

Havana, November 13 (RHC)-- Two of Cuba's top baseball prospects, Guillermo Garcia and Frank Abel Alvarez, made their contracts official on Friday in Havana to play for the first time as professionals.

Both the super sonic pitcher from Pinar del Río, Frank Abel Alvarez, and the slugger from Granma, Guillermo Garcia, will be part, starting next season, of the Chunichi Dragons organization, in the Japan Professional League (NPB).

"For all athletes to sign a professional contract is a very important achievement, it is something that gives great satisfaction. Personally, I am very happy with everything that is happening with my sports career because it is a challenge and a goal that I have to fulfill," said the strong slugger when he was interviewed by Cubadebate and Radio Habana Cuba, minutes after the contract protocol, held in the Adolfo Luque hall of the Latin American Stadium.

At just 19 years of age, this young man from Bayamo was already in the sights of the technicians of the backyard when he was released by the Cuban Federation of this sport to integrate a list of 34 athletes that was delivered to Major League Baseball (MLB) for a possible contract, until the agreement was frozen by the administration of the then U.S. President Donald Trump.

Two years later, when he was chosen as the Most Valuable Player of the playoffs of the last National Series where his team Granma was proclaimed champion, he demonstrated his talent and caught the attention of Asian scouts, who did not delay in requesting his services.

"They noticed me in the playoffs because of the strength and magnitude of my at-bats, and above all because of the moment in which they occurred. The playoff is something that is a lot of pressure and tension, they realized that I have hot blood, strength, and intelligence to face the challenges," he says. I never thought of being the MVP of those playoffs, I only had in mind to help the Alazanes to be champions, but when I heard the news I was very happy as well as my family who has always supported me throughout my career," he adds.

On that occasion, this right-hander, who stands in the left-handed batter's box, shocked everyone by compiling 39-19 (487 Ave) in the 11 semifinal and final challenges, including three RBIs and four home runs, with 17 runs batted in, in addition to deciding the championship in his last at-bat.

These days, the also called 3G by the initials of his first and last names, has been communicating with Alfredo Despaigne, another slugger contracted by those distant lands.

"I have talked a lot with Despaigne, he is like another trainer for me and I feel tremendous satisfaction that this is so. When he was here he helped me a lot in training and when he found out about my contract he called me and told me to go for it, that baseball is strong because of the rigor of the training, the discipline and its different culture," he says.

Before leaving for the land of the Rising Sun next January to fulfill his one-year contract, where he will have the possibility of joining the 70-player roster at any time, this native of Bayamon will serve as the starting first baseman for the Cuba U-23 team that will participate in the First Pan American Junior Games in Colombia, and is immersed in training for that event.

The sad part of the story is that for the moment we will not be able to enjoy his connections in our domestic championship, which will be a hard blow to the aspirations of his Granma team to revalidate the national title. At the end of our meeting, he did not want to say goodbye without dedicating a few words to the fans of his homeland.

"I want to thank the fans of Granma for all the support they have given me during my time with the team and I want to tell them that I will always be an alazán. Any time I get there, if I have to play ball with the team I will do it. From a distance, of course, I will always be supporting them in everything they need".

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