

Yesander led win over Philippines at Softball World Cup

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Yesander Rodriguez

Auckland, November 28 (RR) - Yesander Rodriguez had a perfect day against the Philippines and was key in Cuba's second victory in the World Cup of Softball, held in New Zealand.

Rodriguez hit three hits in as many at-bats, including a home run and a pair of RBIs.

The Filipinos showed that there is no lesser rival in this tournament and as it happened against the United States, where they lost 1-0, they offered resistance to the Cuban squad, especially thanks to the work done by their main pitching figure, left-hander Leo Barredo, who pitched all 7 innings, scored 3 clean ones and struck out 10 times.

Cuba scored its first two runs in the top of the third, thanks to a home run by captain Yesander, with a teammate in circulation, the third for Leonardo Cardenas' team in as many games. The third came in the top of the 6th, as a result of Héctor Castillo's single to center field with Yesander in the field. The Asian team's only score, the first in the entire World Cup, came in the bottom of the 5th, due to a deflected pitch by Alain Román with a runner in the anteroom.

At the end of the challenge, Santiago's Yesander acknowledged the excellent game given to them by the number 21 in the world ranking. "We took a good game, I had the chance to give that home run, to put my team ahead. I went out for a pitch in zone and look for a good contact".

For our team, Alain Román returned to the pitching circle and got his second hit of the tournament. The main figure of men's softball in Cuba, threw 5 chapters, with 11 opponents retired on strikes, did not give away bases on balls, allowed only one hit and a run that was dirty. Left-hander Gusbel Plutín closed again at a high level with two innings of work, with only one hit and a couple of strikeouts.

"We are focused on going inning by inning, game by game and we are getting the result. I worked with fast pitches, I feel good and I will try to continue helping the team".

Coming from the bench, Héctor Castillo hit an important hit in the 6th to give the Cubans the run of tranquility. "I was all the time watching the pitcher, the pitches he was using. I knew that at any moment I was going to have a turn at bat and I took advantage of it."

Yasmani Alvarez was eager to get a chance and debuted with a double in a World Cup. "I wanted to go out to bat, since I wasn't with the team in the first two games. I always have a positive mind and I'm ready to go out when the team needs me.

After this victory, the Cubans have a positive balance of 2-1 and will face the difficult United States (2-1) on the fourth day. The challenge that could qualify our team to the super round will be this Monday at 6:00 PM local time.

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