

Sports News Roundup September 08



Baseball

The current champion Ciego de Avila dawned today on top of the *55th Cuban Baseball Championship* with its victory on Monday over Guantanamo and the defeat of the then leader Las Tunas while facing Granma.

Ciego de Avila's *Los Tigres* produced a decisive cluster of 2 runs in the 8th to overcome by a 4-3 closed margin to Guantanamo's *Los Indios* with success for reliever Yadir Rabbi and 3rd Yunier Cano's rescue, while Luis Castillo took the loss.

The catcher Osvaldo Vasquez hit his 3rd homer and lead this department while veteran 1st baseman, Yorelvis Charles, drove in 2, as the most outstanding in winning offensive.

Ciego de Avila now has 6 wins and 2 losses, a half-game ahead of Granma, which succumbed 5-3 against Las Tunas despite homers by Adrián Moreno, Guillermo Avilés and Lázaro Cedeño.

For Las Tunas' *Los Leñadores*, outfielder Jorge Johnson, hit double and triple with 2 RBIs, while rookie Diego Granado took the win supported by Yadier Hechavarría's rescue.

Pinar del Rio also placed a half-game of the tip to have 8-2 over Villa Clara, thanks to artillery attack of 14 hits, including outfielder Reinier León's homer, who hit 4-3 with 3 trailers.

In other matches on Monday, Mayabeque surpassed 9-8 to Sancti Spiritus, Cienfuegos 3-2 to Santiago de Cuba and Holguin 2-0 to Camagüey.

And another from baseball says that the father of baseball in Russia, Mikhail Kornev, reiterated today his interest in the presence of Cuban players in Russian clubs, after a friendly match between his team *The North Stars* and the team of the Cuban diplomatic mission in Moscow, which was backed by a broad representation of their families, in a cap held at the *Olympic Center* of Planernaya region.

We want to have the most talented Cubans, and even students who come to Russia may be joined to the participants teams in our local series, which extends from May to August, said the former famous player and director of the national team of Russia, because the Cuban presence will turn into the quality of Russian baseball.

Control of the Ball

The Cuban Erick Hernandez set here today another world record for ball control from a sitting position with his feet alone, in more than 3 hours and 16 minutes and 31 sec., in the lobby of the Copacabana hotel in the Cuban capital, breaking the previous record held by his compatriot Luis Carlos Garcia (3:15.01) since December 13th last year.

Hernandez already has 2 Guinness records -- by touching the ball 319 times for 1 min. with the head, and hitting the ball with his thighs for 1 hour and 28 min., plus more time with hitting the ball with all over the body in 19:10 hours.

FIVB Volleyball Women's World Cup

China's Zhu Ting was named *Most Valuable Player* at the FIVB Volleyball Women's World Cup won by her team on Sunday with a victory over Japan.

Four players from NORCECA Confederation, including 2 Dominicans, were selected as members of the *All-Star squad* awarded during the closing ceremony.

Dominican Republic's Niverka Marte was named the best setter and Brenda Castillo as the best libero, while Cuba's Daymara Lescay and American Tetori Dixon were the best and 2nd best middle blockers.

Russia's Nataliya Obmochaeva received the award as best opposite and her teammate Tatiana Kosheleva as the 2nd best outside spiker, while Serbia's Brankica Mihajlovic was the best outside spiker.

The United States finished in 3rd place with a 9-2 win-loss record, the Dominican Republic concluded at 5-6 in 7th place and Cuba in 9th with a 4-7 mark.

China and Serbia, both with 10-1 record, earned tickets to the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games as the top 2 finalists.

And another news from volley says the *International Volleyball Federation (FIVB)* finally echoed the claims of Cuba to disable for 4 years those players who drop out or request their discharge, hurting the performance and prospects of development of the sport on the island.

The announcement was made by the president of the Cuban Federation, Ariel Sainz, in a meeting with the local press, in which also participated Javier Jimenez and Rolando Cepeda, 2 of the 5 Cuban players who have been hired for the 2015-2016 Season by foreign leagues.

To try to stem the exodus sports, the Cuban Federation has made changes to its statutes and since last year has implemented a new policy for Cubans that allow them to be recruited by foreign leagues, and perceive 90% of the contract amount directly while the 10% goes to the Cuban Federation to buy sport materials.

On this regard, 5 Cuban volleyball players will depart next October to play abroad as part of an initiative to better up the quality of the sport in the island, and to continue broadening the experience of allowing national athletes to participate in foreign leagues, so far limited to baseball.

Javier Jimenez, of good results with Greek PAOK, repeats the enterprise along teammate-to-be Rolando Cepeda, while Osmany Uriarte will move to Turkey.

For the female team, Sulian Matienzo and Melissa Vargas will go to the Czech Republic, and will have the chance to play in some European tourneys.

And to close with this sport, Cuba will face Russia on Friday during the 1st day of the *World Women's U-20 Volleyball Championship* to be held until February 20th in several Puerto Rican cities, with the participation of 16 teams.

Wrestling

The Cuban Greco-Roman gladiator Mijail Lopez will seek today his 6th world title at the *World Wrestling Championship* which opened yesterday in Las Vegas, the United States.

Lopez, 130 kg division, just starts a duel against Russian Bilyal Makhov, former head of the tournament in freestyle, who by quirk of the draw, will face in their 1st match.

For their part, Cuban Greco-Roman gladiators Miguel Martinez and Yasmany Lugo left without medals today at the opening of the event.

Softball

The teams of *Ciego de Avila* and *National Media Journalism* concluded undefeated with 3 wins each in the 1st day of the *Softball Tournament Press in Cuba Jorge Luis Valdes Rionda in Memoriam*, based in the city of Ciego de Avila.



Radio Habana Cuba