

Lionard Kindelan: Like Father...Like Son

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Lionard Kindelan is a slugger by blood, genes. He is aware he has many skills to improve and does not like being compared with his father Orestes.

He has steady walking, similar to his father Orestes Kindelan when he walked to the plate. It is almost impossible to compare both. Lionard Kindelan, son of the “Greatest Drum” —HR record holder in Cuba (487) — wants to pave his own way. He was born in August 21, 1996 and balls, strikes, home runs became his comfort zone as well as the wonderful and noisy ballpark Guillermon Moncada.

He also plays the first base. He was part of his team Santiago de Cuba when players recently visited the Victoria de Giron Stadium in Matanzas. By the way, both teams —Santiago de Cuba (16-15) and Matanzas (20-13) — are trying hard to qualify to the second stage.

Lionard has already 4 HR —Granma native Lazaro Cedeno is the leader with 9 HR— and he has raw power. In fact, he was the HR leader in the U-23 tournament with 11, record for the competition.

His offensive numbers are not as good as expected right now (228/392/392) in 79 AB.

He offered his views exclusively to CubaSi:

Father's Heritage

The power, the tactical and technical elements as well as the will to play good baseball...

What are the elements you are focusing your training on? Is it an advantage to train with your father?

I started hitting to the right side of the field in the batting practice, so I could have more patience at home plate. The first thing is pitching selection and that is my main handicap. I am taking lots of strikeouts. Most of them have been with bad pitches partnering with my anxiety at home plate.

I am working hard to correct these flaws as patience is one of the best attribute a hitter may have. It is called plate discipline and helps to hit the ball harder.

Training with a hitter like my father is a privilege. I owe many things to him and other trainers who influenced greatly in my growth.

It is important to highlight that Orestes Kindelan was not only a power hitter, but also stood out in the contact department as he hit 313 BA in 21 seasons facing pitchers with far superior quality back then.

What are the pitches with which you feel more comfortable with?

I feel better with fastballs, so far. But I am getting used to hit breaking balls step by step. Curveballs are dangerous even for drivers...

Any difference between the National Series and the U23 tournament?

The main difference is the pitchers' wisdom. Pitchers do not analyze the situation the same way here in the National Series and the U23 tournament. Hurlers in the U23 throw more fastballs oscillating in the 86-90 mph range. Here is different. Most pitchers here barely reach the 88 mph and depend on their breaking balls, which are essential in their repertoire. They are always looking for the weakest points of every hitter.

Who has been the toughest pitcher you have faced so far?

I can't tell you just one name. Most have vast experience in National Series like Ciego de Avila's Vladimir Garcia. He pitched me very well. He changed the timing, focused on locations. I could not hit the ball in 2 AB. Matanzas' Yoanni Yera and Jonder Martinez were also tough.

Do you swing the ball for HR?

Many great power hitters have said you do not look for homeruns and it is true. There

certain moments you go for it and you send the ball beyond the fences, but there are other times where it happens effortlessly. You just need to execute well the technique. Technique and raw power, these are the keys.

Santiago in the second round?

The team is playing very good. Most of us are young players and our mood is up. We know we are young but we have quality and we are encouraged to qualify. We want to give a great show for the fans.

Many fans hope Santiago de Cuba can get back to the place it deserves as one of the top 4 Cuban baseball teams of all times. Are you ready for the challenge?

Yes, we have realized it. Most of the provinces we have played in, the vast majority of fans support our team Santiago de Cuba. And they demand us to play 100% hard. And we do it exactly that way so Santiago can return to stellar performances of past times.

Lionard Kindelan has his own dreams as every young player. He dreams of playing in a high-quality baseball: NPBL or MLB. And he also wants to win a title with his team Santiago de Cuba.

Being the son of Orestes Kindelan is not easy and such pressure rests on his shoulders every day like a building. His immediate goal is to help his team advance to the second round and being in the top 4 of the National Series of Baseball in Cuba.

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