
Ciego de Avila Wins Cuba Baseball Title

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Yander Guevara made for deciding games and an offensive that took off from the very first episode, left no doubt about the intentions of the Ciego de Avila Tigers to win the Cuban baseball league championship. The Tigers won their second title in five years with a 7-2 victory in game seven over the hard fighting Isla de la Juventud Pirates, in their first ever championship series.

The Tigers are the new kings of the jungle, and as the Cuban league champions for 2014-2015 will represent the island at the 2016 Caribbean Series, tasked to defend the title won by Pinar del Rio earlier this year.

Ciego de Avila manager Roger Machado managed to get the best for last from his squad, playing the tie breaker at home.

Ciego got on the scoreboard off Isla starter Yoelkis Cruz in the opening inning on a bases loaded single by Yoelvis Fiss and a sacrifice fly by Yeniet Perez, scoring Jose Adolis and Andy Zamora who had both singled.

Cruz would recover, but in the third inning the Tigers scored their third, and what proved to be decisive run on a sacrifice fly by Raul Gonzalez, scoring Ariel Borrero.

Meanwhile Yander Guevara would remain almost unhittable until the sixth when the Pirates came alive and dangerously close to the Tigers. Hits by Michel Enriquez and Luis F. Rivera, a sacrifice bunt and a two run single by Jorge L. Barcelan put Isla back in the game, down 3-2.

But the Tigers responded very quickly.

In the bottom of the sixth an error by shortstop Alfredo Rodríguez allowed Raul González to get on base. Yorbis Borroto moved the runner to second, and then Adolis García singled him home with his second hit of the afternoon to put the score at 4-2.

Losing pitcher Yoelkis Cruz, got the hook after completing 5.1 innings allowing five runs – three earned – on nine hits, two walks and a strikeout.

In his relief would come righthander Luis M. Suárez, who quickly gave a single to Andy Zamora, walked Humberto Morales and saw Ariel Borrero drive in the fifth Tiger's run with a sacrifice fly to center.

Meanwhile Yander Guevara retired 10 batters in order to the end of the top of the 7th, his last inning. The winning pitcher did not walk a batter, had three strikeouts, and allowed two earned runs on eight hits.

Guevara, who was also the final game winning pitcher when the Tigers won the 2011-2012 title, was voted the series MVP.

Much recognition to Isla de la Juventud manager Jorge Luis Rodríguez who in his first year at the helm took his team to the finals in what proved a seesaw hard fought series.
