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## US Blockade Stops Cuba's Sport Development

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The US economic, commercial and financial blockade against the island of Cuba for more than 50 years, limits the Cuban sports development , beside causing deep affectations to the Cuban economy and society.

Despite the measures adopted by the government of US President Barack Obama, which modify some aspects of the blockade's implementation, the damages are still big, harms by his policy remain burdensome for the Cuban people and the state, which allocates annually amounts of financial and human resources to ensure the right of its citizens to practice and compete in sports.

Among the effects that the disastrous effects of the US policy on the Caribbean island, there are that the National Institute of Sports and Physical Education (INDER) is not available to purchase sports items in the United States, implements coming from the brands Louisville, Wilson, Rawlings, Atec, Xbat and 3N2, brands for baseball and softball.

Neither of the brands Easton and W & W for the discipline of archery, while these items are mandatory according to the official rules of the international federations.

For this reason, Inder has to import these sports equipment from a third country, which results in an increase between 20 and 30 percent of its actual price.

Recently, Cuba made procedures through a Spanish company, to buy a boat of the brand Hobie Cat 16 that, if it were acquired, its price would be a 30 percent greater.

The efforts made have not been completed to materialize and consequently affected the preparation of the athletes of that discipline because of the lack of professional equipment.

A Cuban anti-doping laboratory reported that in June 2016, the North American Office of Asset Control (OFAC)

retained the shipment to Havana from biological samples of a group of athletes of Peru, in transit through the United States.

Samples were sent for analysis in the laboratory of Cuban, using the German company DHL by the Peruvian Institute of Sport.

Because of the implementation of the policy of blockade, the centre of reference in Latin America in the fight against doping could not collect the economic benefits of the research of Peruvian samples.

In the opening of the Cuban National Gymnastics School in 2000, a famous Dutch company supplied all the equipment, at a cost of 30,000 dollars. This year, to maintain the good shape of the Cuban gymnasts, 72,000 euros had to be paid, just for the carpet to train and compete.

In the case of baseball, Cuba purchases thousands of Japanese balls of the brand MIZUNO, at 9.50 dollars each ball.

The cost of equipment and specialized clothes, the distance from the country where the items are finally achieved, and constant technological changes make the purchase more expensive, and in addition, some international sports federations demand to participate in their events with certain brands of equipment.

In general, the economic damage caused to the Cuban people by the United States blockade, whereas the depreciation of the dollar against the value of gold in the international market, amounts to 125,87 billion dollars at current prices.

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