



Cuban sports authorities, including Raúl Fornés Valenciano, first vice president of Inder, and Juan Reinaldo Pérez Pardo, president of the Cuban Baseball Federation and national commissioner, were present this Thursday at the Round Table program to report details on the First Elite League and the next international commitments of this sport.

Fornés Valenciano commented on the implementation of the comprehensive strategy for the development of baseball, a process that began before the arrival of the pandemic with the criteria provided by the population.

The attention to the sports reserve, the selection of talents, the implementation of this sport as a subject in the educational system, the expansion of the competitive system with women's tournaments and Baseball 5, and the incorporation of softball to a differentiated attention, were points that exemplify the effort that the governing entities have made to achieve this progress.

"If we don't pay attention to the base, we won't be able to develop baseball," said the manager, who said ways of entering are also being

studied, which is not only in the hiring of athletes.

The improvement of the quality of the stadiums, the search for new sources of financing, the attention to the sporting glories with new parameters to catalog them as such, more work in the base academies, and the inclusion of science in sport with the training of the sabermetricians, are other steps that have been carried out, he said.

Fornés spoke about a proposal that is being analyzed for new income from players with a differentiation depending on their quality and volume of games played, which will be effective this year or next, and about the plans for the insertion of several coaches in professional leagues to acquire experiences and be on par with international baseball.

"There has been progress and it only remains to implement what has been proposed. We are anticipating in the 2024-2028 cycle that the results will begin to emerge in the international arenas. We have no doubt that we are going to achieve it," he declared.

Pérez Pardo, for his part, began his speech by talking about what he intends to be the most important baseball tournament in the country, scheduled to begin on October 8 in Bayamo with the meeting between Agricultores and Tabacaleras.

"All insurance for the competition is guaranteed and is in Cuba," he said.

As previously announced, he officially said that the game schedule will consist of 50 games per team, where each one will play 10 as home-club, and assured that he has seen a significant advance in the quality of most of the main stadiums during his national tour.

Regarding the effects on the Pinar del Rio and Artemisa stadiums due to the passage of Hurricane Ian, he said that the clubhouse has been relocated. In the case of the Tobacco growers, they will be in Cienfuegos to do their training concentrate, and depending on the progress in repairing their Capitan San Luis stadium, they could be home-club in another province when the tournament begins, such as the Island. of the Youth.

Regarding the additions and deletions in the payroll that were announced, the director said that on October 5 they will be made official and that day, if the teams have any justified leave, they will be able to upload players who were in the initial pool proposed by the National Commission even from other teams.

It was also announced that on October 3 and 4, a preparatory seminar will be held with the assistance of the main directors of the competing teams, where significant issues for the development of the series will be discussed.

One day before the start of the league (October 7), in Bayamese, the Series 61 Gala will be held to reward the most outstanding players.

The director pointed out that the proposal was taken to the provinces to start the 62 National Series in March and hold the under 23 championship in parallel (from March to June). In this way, he explained, there could be ups and downs between the provincial teams of both tournaments, and the Elite League would remain fixed in the last quarter of the year.

"Each squad of young baseball players will be an extension of the main one, with the same clothing and denomination," he said.

In this project, which has been accepted by the majority of fans, the under 23 campaign would be played only on weekends (double game on Saturdays and single on Sunday), from Tuesday to Thursday the athletes would continue training in the academies provinces and would travel Monday and Friday.

With this new structure, the commissioner declared that the national champion will represent Cuba in the new tournament that the WBSC will organize called the Champions League, scheduled for November, and whoever is crowned in the Elite League will do so in the Caribbean Series. .

Pérez Pardo assured that the World Classic will be attended with a team as competitive as possible where, in addition to the athletes from the patio, others without ties to the federation and who have not played in the national series or the next selective tournament will be called. This, he stressed, would be done taking into account the athletes who defend the most needed positions, and who are willing to defend the colors of the country.

Finally, Luis Daniel del Risco, Treasurer of the Cuban Baseball Federation declared that there are now 27 athletes and a coach hired in different leagues, and with their contribution some resources have been acquired and an assessment is made of where this budget is going.

He said that 20 pitching machines have been purchased for each province and some academies, 8 batting kits for the first placed in the last national campaign, 16 batting cages, and implements

such as spikes, bats, and balls, and that the commitment is reach the 547 sports teams in the country.

Del Risco recalled that the contracted athletes receive the full amount agreed in their contract and that the clubs pay the federation for training rights between 10 and 20% of that amount.

"We have reached the academies and the EIDE, everything does not stay in the national series," he said.

Before concluding, he also recalled that to guarantee a ball game it is necessary to move a significant number of people (hotels, transportation, radio and television, etc.) and a great effort is made in the country to ensure the material things that guarantee the spectacle. that the people need.

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