

Ulfrido García: Endless Spark on the Box

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Ulfrido García Andújar is undoubtedly a pitching example of Santiago de Octubre. Left-handed, born on January 1st, 1995, 1.88 height and 73-74 kg of weight, his arm lean and young.

Yet the gods of baseball luck don't fully accompany the boy wearing number 85 on his back when he pitches. He holds a life record of 25 wins and 36 losses in National Series, with an ERA of 4.45 every nine innings, 222 strikeouts, 180 ball bases and a non flattering Whip of 1.53.

In fact, this season despite being the iron man of Santiago de Cuba team, he shows an almost balanced average of wins-lost (7-4). Of course he has opened several games and has only finished five complete and 77.1 innings performance, leading the pitchers of our baseball season when writing these lines.

His figures were backed-up with offensive of 272, ranking third among pitchers with more strikeouts (53) only surpassed by the also left-handed Yoanni Yera (81), ERA 3.84, Whip 1.37 and 26 bases.

In times when Cuban baseball left-handed pitchers are really rare, and keeping in mind what great gurus of baseball say regarding that 75% of victory rests on good pitching. We took advantage of the visit of Santiago de Cuba team at Victoria de Girón and with my colleague Giusetta León as partner we threw a repertoire of questions by Cubasí:

What are your main weapons as a left-handed pitcher?

The main weapon I have is control. Previously it was not that good and I have improved over time and won some experience in the national series. At present I consider it fundamental for my pitching and to keep domain on the strike zone when I try to put my pitches there.

Who is the most difficult batsman you have faced?

All batsmen are complicated, I don't underestimate any. You have to take them out when they come to the home plate and now I couldn't tell you who is the most difficult. Of course, there are always some who are better at batting, but I cannot tell you a name.

As a team I believe Pinar del Rio is the more complex team I have faced. I walked the distance against them until we won 3-2. Despite the victory and just allow 5 hits, it has been the most difficult game for me this Season.

Importance you give to the legs and the wind-up.

The wind up is essential for a pitcher, because from it comes the coordination and movement to carry out a good technique, not to wear away the arm and achieve a harmonic movement of all body parts involved. Legs are fundamental, because they transfer strength when pitching. Therefore running is a wonderful exercise for pitchers...

Dominant pitch

The most dominant for me is the hard ball, which is near the 90 mph and it's the one I trust most because I mastered it. Of course if you abuse of it batters get used to seeing it and many take out their arms and that accelerates the swing. In fact, in Canada I received many hits because of the hard ball.

Elements you should work on in the future

I must keep improving control and the repertoire. The latter I have perfected it enough, but I need to try to put my pitchings in the zone where they will be more effective.

Opener or relief pitcher?

I feel more comfortable as opener since I start the ball game and I can walk more in the game, to help to my team and the results have demonstrated I do better. I start even or I take a small lead if the team delivers, and I don't have to come in on a tough spot with the game complicated or behind on the score.

Always pitcher?

Always, since my early years in the sports school and even when I began in the National Series with 18 years.

You have had a large slump in the last four subseries to the point you are out of play-off positions. How do you see Santiago?

This is a young team, but with spirit we always come out to win, we try to win one game at a time and it's working. We will keep struggling, the first half of the season is not over yet and I believe we can on the second half and as everybody knows Santiago team is really hard to beat on Play-Offs, because although we are the team we used to be, we are still Santiago the other teams look at us with respect.

Paradigms, idols from the mound

I don't have just one, I have two or three, the right-handed pitcher Norge Luis Vera, Ormari Romero, from f Santiago, but I liked the pitching style of the left-handed from Cienfuegos Adiel Palma and I always follow him, I had the chance to work with him in the trainings to join the Can-Am League and he helped me to improve my technique. He helped me a lot and I do appreciate all the pieces of advice he gave me.

What of your partners who are still active?

I like the pitching style of Freddy Asiel and Yosvany Torres. They are combative, experienced pitchers, smart... they are always willing to pitch and they are always there when needed to help as much as they can.

What cannot be missing in a pitcher?

The main thing is control, there are pitchers who don't have that speed, but with a good control, putting the ball

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where hurts the most to rival batsmen they reach good results, because they are pitchers who think, they are aware they don't have great speed, but they dominate the area, and prove how important is control.

Pending subject that of control for most of the pitchers playing the national season number 57th. The balance of strikeouts-bases on ball was fixed at the time of this interview in 2684-2414. We leave the rest to you.
