

Cuban, Dominican players present in Japanese baseball league final

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Players from Cuba and the Dominican Republic are heading the list of Latin American baseball players set to play in the final rounds of Japan's Pacific and Central Baseball Leagues.

Cuban players Alfredo Despaigne, Yurisbel Gracial and Livan Moinelo qualified for the finals of the Pacific League, after the victory of the SoftBank Hawks over the Rakuten Eagles with a score of 2-1 in the final playoff game (a match of three games).

In the game held in this city, Despaigne made a hit in two official chances at bat, received a base and scored a homerun to finish the series with a batting average of .500, a home run and three teammates brought to the home plate (runs batted in).

Gracial closed the game with 1 hit and 2 strikeouts, for an average of .300, while relief pitcher Moinelo pitched one single inning, did not allow any hitter to bat and left his earned run average effectiveness at 0.00 and four strikeouts in the three games.

The SoftBank Hawks, reigning champions of the competition, will face the Seibu Lions in the final stage of the Pacific League, which will determine the representative of that circuit in the Japanese final series.

In the Central League, the Hanshin Tigers defeated the Dena Stars 2-1, at the Yokohama Stadium, to win the series and formalize a game against the Yomiuri Giants.

Dominican Rafael Dolis scored his second victory of the series, after not allowing hits and striking out a pair of opponents in two thirds of relief, while his co-national and teammate Jefry Marte finishing 5-1 and with a total average of .250.

The Central League also includes Cubans Onelki Garcia (pitcher of the Hanshin Tigers) and Alexander Guerrero (Yomiuri), both with outstanding performances in the current season.

The final games will begin next Wednesday in the Tokyo Dome (Central League) and the MetLife Dome of Tokorozawa (Pacific League).