

This time, the seventh heaven turned blue

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When Santiago de Cuba won easily the sixth game of the post-season semifinal against Industriales, I thought that the ghosts of 1999 season finals would come up, when they won the throne of the Cuban baseball the very next day.

That season in 1999 was witnessed firsthand by the current manager of the Havana's team, Guillermo Carmona, and had yet another precedent: the 1992 finals in the *Serie Selectiva*, when *Serranos* beat *Habana* in seven games.

Game 6 witnessed again how players from Santiago de Cuba hit in very clutch spots, mostly with two outs, in a first inning that was horrible for Industriales.

Once again, patience of Santiago's hitters at home was key, together with the players' accurate running skills around the bases.

However, in game 7, Santiago's miscues popped up again and their

hope to reach the 62 National Baseball Series' finals vanished.

The players were nervous as they were less experience than their rivals. But this post-season showed they have the talent and the determination to succeed.

For game 7, both teams depended on their aces and it turned out to be an excellent baseball game.

Industriales' hitters started the game aggressively and the first run came after a walk to Oscar Valdés with the bases loaded. Until then, RHP Alberto Bisset had just averaged 10 pitches per inning and was in line to pitch a complete game.

His opponent, RHP Raymond Figueredo, had a great start going six innings, despite some walks that got him into trouble, he got the right outs when needed.

This performance, by the only effective starter for the Blues, allowed the coaching staff to stick to the game plan as they brought their settler and closer, as done in modern baseball.

Industriales got the ticket to the finals but both deserve our congratulations for the passion showed and for having taken fans to the stadiums again, not to mention to high number of tele viewers and radio listeners around the world.

The feat by the players from Havana, whose have needed seven games to advance in each of their first two post-seasons series, will meet a new chapter when they face Las Tunas Lumberjacks, but that is another story.

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