
Baseball Canada announces roster for Cuba Summer Series

25/06/2014



Baseball Canada announced today the names of 24 players that will travel to Cuba for a nine-game exhibition series against the Cuban 18U National Team from July 4th to 10th.

All nine games will take place at Victoria de Girón Stadium in Matanzas.

The Cuba Summer Series is an important step for the Junior National Team as they prepare for the COPABE 18U World Cup Qualifier scheduled for September 5th to 14th in Los Cabos/La Paz, Mexico. The top four countries in Mexico will qualify for the 2015 IBAF 18U World Cup in Koshien, Japan.

“In Cuba, our players will be challenged by playing in a foreign environment against one of the premiere baseball nations in the world,” said Greg Hamilton, Head Coach and Director of National Teams for Baseball Canada. “The Cuban (18U) National Team will provide a world-class opponent for our club and give us a preview of what type of competition we will face in Mexico.”

Prior to Cuba, the team will assemble in Toronto for an exhibition game at Connorvale Park in Etobicoke on June 30th before holding workouts at Rogers Centre on July 1st and 2nd.

On Canada Day, the Junior National Team will be a guest of the Toronto Blue Jays taking part in on-field pregame festivities before watching the Jays take-on the Milwaukee Brewers.

Players, coaches and staff will travel to Varadero, Cuba on July 3rd.

Roster highlights:

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Published on Cuba Si (<http://cubasi.cu>)

-Twenty-three (23) players named to the roster have previous experience with the Junior National Team program

-RHP RJ Freure (Burlington, ON) will be participating with the Junior National Team program for the first time

-Four players (Mitchell Bigras, Josh Naylor, Demi Orimoloye and JP Stevenson) named to the roster took part in the 2013 IBAF 18U World Cup in Taichung, Taiwan where Canada finished in seventh place

-Five players (Robert Byckowski, Ben Onyshko, Louis-Philippe Pelletier, Zach Pop and Mitch Robinson) named to the roster were selected earlier this month in the MLB First-Year Player Draft

The coaching staff will be led by Head Coach Greg Hamilton (Ottawa, ON), while coaches Shawn Bowman (Port Moody, BC) and Mike Johnson (Sherwood Park, AB) return to the staff. Former big leaguer and Olympian Jason Dickson (Fredericton, NB) will join the coaching staff as a guest coach.

Live game tweets from Cuba will be available via Baseball Canada's Twitter account, [@baseballcanada](https://twitter.com/baseballcanada). Daily game stories will be posted after each game on Baseball Canada's official website, baseball.ca.
