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18Aug91 CUBA: CUBA TROUNCES PUERTO RICO - WINS BASEBALL GOLD MEDAL

By Lionel Martin

HAVANA, Aug 18, Reuter - Cuba's mighty baseball team trounced Puerto Rico 18-3 to clinch its sixth straight Pan American gold medal since 1971 in the event.

The Cubans collected 23 hits and hit six homers during the lopsided game for the championship on Saturday night.

When the game ended the elated team jogged around the playing field with one player carrying the Cuban flag while the theme song from Chariots of Fire blasted through the loudspeakers.

The sixty thousand Cuban fans who attended the game went wild with joy.

Cuban president Fidel Castro, who witnessed the ballgame, hung medals around the necks of all the players and coaches of the United States team which won the bronze, the Puerto Ricans who won the silver and the victorious Cubans.

Cuba, Puerto Rico, United States and Dominican Republic all qualify for the baseball competition of the 1992 Olympic games in Barcelona.

In the finals, Emidelio Urrutia tied a Pan American games record by collecting 6 hits in six at bats and hitting three homers with seven runs batted in. Oreste Kindelan, German Mesa, and Omar Linares hit the other Cuban home runs.

The Cubans confirmed their superiority by scoring six runs in the ninth inning. A two-bagger by Orestes Kindelan sent in two of the runs. Romeo Martinez hit a single and Jose Delgado followed suit sending in Kindelan. With two on base, Urrutia unloaded his third homerun of the game.

The two Cuban pitchers, Jose Luis Valdez and Omar Linares gave up only two runs on five hits. Valdez, who allowed both of the Puerto Rican runs in the sixth inning, took credit for the victory. Puerto Rico used three pitchers. The loser was Jesus Feliciano.

Cuba ended the Pan American games with ten wins and no losses. In total it scored 145 runs and hit 37 homers. Only 27 runs were scored against the champions during the ten games.

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