



# La Prensa del Béisbol Latino

A publication of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) Latin American committee

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## Celebrate Latino 2005 Accomplishments

by Anthony Salazar

Latinos in baseball fared very well this season. We have MVPs, Gold Glovers, Silver Sluggers Slugging Leaders, Runs and Stolen Base Leaders, and much more.

For the first time, a Latino manager piloted his team to a World Series sweep. Chicago White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen shared his victory with the people of his native Venezuela, where he has taken the trophy to show to the people that made him what he is today, a winner.

MLB and Chevy teamed up this season to present the Latino Legends Award, honoring baseball's greatest Latino players. Fans were able to select from a list of Latino players, recent and historic. The idea was to pay homage to the legacy and the place Latinos hold in baseball's history.

The Hall of Fame has recently revealed the names of candidates for the special election pertaining to Negro Leaguers. Of the dozens of names, Latinos include: Orestes "Minnie" Miñoso; Alejandro "El Caballero" Oms; Alejandro "Alex" Pompez; and Cristobal Torriente. José Mendez is listed as a Pre-Negro Leaguer candidate. Look for those results soon.

The current 'Baseball as America' is currently in Oakland, CA where the city's museum held "Latinos in Baseball Night," honoring the contributions of Latinos to the game. The night was filled with celebrities, stories, and memories of days gone by.

In looking at all that has been accomplished this year, it seems as though we have experienced a sort of renaissance that has brought to light Latino contributions, and a greater awareness of how we fit in. We have to keep building on this, generating more awareness and more opportunities in all levels of baseball. Our voice needs to become louder and stronger. We can do it!

## Remembering Severo Nieto

by Jay Berman

Severo Nieto, an author and journalist in Cuba for more than six decades, has died at the age of 82.

Nieto became ill in July and was diagnosed with cancer in September. He died Oct. 11 in Havana. His death was reported by media throughout the country. The Internet edition of the newspaper *Juventud Rebelde* called him "one of the most prestigious sports journalists" in the nation.

Sportswriter Fausto Triana, a colleague of Nieto in the press association *Prensa Latina*, wrote: "The death of Severo Nieto -- our dear Severo -- is a lamentable fact that reminds us of the inevitable course of life."

Triana said Nieto "was in every sense an example of a true teacher of journalists."

See *Nieto*, page 4

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## CUBA GANA OTRA VEZ! LOS CUBANOS DOMINAN LOS MUNDIALES EN HOLANDA

By Peter Bjarkman

(Rotterdam, Holland) - While six division champions and two wild card teams prepared to square off in a major league post-season to determine entrants in the 101<sup>st</sup> edition of what big league professional baseball has so long mis-named as the "World Series," the sport's true "world" championship was already being contested in northern Europe. The third-sixth tournament of the baseball World Cup was staged during early September in five cities across The Netherlands and the result was a glorious three weeks of international baseball clashes that went almost entirely unnoticed by provincial North American fans.

The outcome of the latest World Cup—which was known as the Amateur World Series until 1986—provided little in the way of surprises as the invincible Cubans again cruised to a world title while the always under-prepared USA and Japan teams once more fell flat on the international stage. It was Cuba's ninth straight World Cup victory in a remarkable string of championships dating back to the 1940s. Featuring its strongest national team in more than a decade, Cuba (11-0) breezed unchallenged through the 18-country field to its twenty-fifth title in twenty-eight attempts. The juggernaut islanders have not finished out of the victory circle in international baseball's top event since 1982, a year in which they boycotted the Korea-based games. During this stretch of nine uninterrupted titles the scourge of international baseball has won 93 of 97 individual games, certainly the most remarkable winning skein found anywhere in baseball history, at any imaginable level of competition.

Critics of international baseball often claim that the Cubans repeatedly win because they play only inferior competition. But such a claim is clearly a distortion. This year's USA entry sported a collection of top AAA prospects including Mets top pitching prospect Brian

Bannister, Devil Rays infielder Josh Phelps, and Diamondbacks southpaw Chris Michalak, among others. But the American squad under manager Davey Johnson under-performed from the opening bell. Team USA was crushed 11-3 by the heavy-hitting Cubans in the quarterfinals and limped home a disappointing seventh.

Cuba, behind young mound sensation Dany

Betancourt, edged South Korea 3-0 in the gold medal contest at Rotterdam's Neptunus Stadium to cap their unbeaten run. Panama, featuring ex-big-leaguer Rafael Medina and minor leaguers Freddy Herrera, Earl Agnoly and Jonathan Vega, edged a Netherlands team of Dutch Antillean stars 7-6 in the bronze medal game staged in Haarlem. The outstanding individual performer of World Cup 36 was veteran Cuban shortstop Eduardo Paret, who batted .632 before falling to injury late in the pool-play opening round.

Despite losing team-captain Paret for the playoff round, the Cubans emerged victorious this time around with one of their strongest national teams ever. A new generation of stars has emerged despite all the attention given in the North American press to a handful of defections by veterans like José Contreras and Kendry Morales. New Cuban headliners boasting unquestioned major league abilities are third baseman Yulieski Gourriel, who slugged a leading eight homers, and DH/infielder Michael Enriquez, the tournament's top hitter and RBI producer.



See *Cuban*, page 9

## BÉISBOL TRIVIA CHALLENGE

1. How many Latinos were selected on this year's All-Star Game?

- a. 12                      c. 23  
b. 10                      d. 15

2. New York Yankees outfielder Bernie Williams is from what country?

- a. Panama                c. United States  
b. Puerto Rico        d. Dominican Republic

3. What Spanish-language broadcaster was the first to be elected to the Hall of Fame?

- a. Buck Canel        c. Felo Ramirez  
b. Jaime Jarrin      d. Rene Cardenas

4. When the Dodgers put Roberto Clemente on waivers, the Pirates picked him up for...

- a. \$500                    c. \$5,000  
b. \$2,500                d. \$4,000

5. By his own estimate, how many Latinos did 'Papa' Joe Cambria sign?

- a. 400                    c. 500  
b. 250                    d. 325

Trivia answers: 1) c; 2) b; 3) c; 4) a; 5) a

## Member Spotlight: Kit Krieger

by Anthony Salazar

NAME: Kit Krieger

SABR CHAPTER: Northwest

AREAS OF EXPERTISE: various and modest

**FAVORITE BASEBALL MOMENT:** My three innings pitched with the Vancouver Mounties of the Pacific Coast League on September 8, 1968 and striking out Gail Hopkins to end the 3rd inning.

**FAVORITE LATINO PLAYERS:** Juan Marichal, Conrado Marrero, Martin Dihigo

**LATINO BASEBALL EXPERIENCE:** I have attended games in nine different stadiums in Cuba. Cuban baseball is a parallel baseball universe and a "must see" for baseball fans.



## Taking a trip with Cubaball Tours

Cubaball Tours was established in 2000 to give baseball aficionados a unique baseball experience. Tours are led by Kit Krieger, a member of the Society of American Baseball Research and former pitcher in the Pacific Coast League.

Cubaball offers a close-up view of Cuban baseball past and present. The eight-day tour features taking in Cuban National Series games. The tour may include games at Havana's Estadio Latinoamericano, Havana Province, Matanzas, Pinar del Rio, Cienfeugos, Sancti Spiritus, and Santa Clara. There are opportunities to meet with officials from the Cuban League and those involved in the development of Cuba's rich baseball talent.

A highlight of each tour is a session with Conrado Marrero, the last major leaguer living in Cuba and legendary figure in Cuba baseball. Marrero, a great storyteller, regales tour members with memories of the Mexican League, Connie Mack, Ted Williams and Cristobal Torriente and Satchel Paige. Participants visit the

famed La Tropical, where Negro League stars such as Josh Gibson and Ray Dandridge played in the 30's and 40's, and pay homage to Cuban baseball heroes at the monuments located in Havana's Christopher Columbus Cemetery. If the schedule permits, Cubaball visits the gravesite of Martin Dihigo in the town of Cruces, views an exhibit dedicated to Dihigo in the local museum, and meets with the Hall of Famer's son, Martin Jr., a one-time farmhand in the Reds chain.

The tour is conducted in cooperation with MOVPAZ, the Cuban Peace Movement, and gives participants an opportunity to gain understanding about Cuban culture, economics, politics and society. A walking tour of historic old Havana, an UNESCO world heritage site, is a tour highlight.

The 2006 tour is scheduled for early March with departures from Vancouver and Toronto. Visit the Cubaball website ([www.cubaballtours.com](http://www.cubaballtours.com)) for prices and photos of past tours.

— Kit Krieger

*NIETO, from page 1*

Nieto was born March 19, 1923, in Pinar del Rio. He began as a correspondent for *Heraldo Pinare* in Pinar del Rio at 15. He later was a sports editor for a radio station, then worked for the newspapers *El Crisol*, *Prensa Libre*, *Cuba Deportiva*, *America Deportiva*, *Sabado Deportivo*, *Ahora*, *Adelante* and *Revolucion*.

He wrote several books, including *Beisbol Cubano: Record y Estadisticas* (1955), *Atletismo: Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos 1951-1991*, (1995), *Conrado Marrero, El Premier* (2001) and *Jose Mendez, El Diamante Negro*, (2004).

Titles awaiting publication include *Adolfo Luque, El Havana Perfecto*; *Cristobal Torriente, El Bambino Cubano*; and *Martin Dihigo, El Maestro*.

Nieto joined *Prensa Latina* in 1959 and covered sports events in Cuba and else where, including the Panamerican Games, Olympic Games and championships in baseball, boxing, volleyball and cycling.

He is survived by his wife, Rosa Marina Misas Perez; sons Eduardo Severo, Nieto and Severo Fidel Nieto; daughter Ana Mari Nieto; and five grandchildren.

Nieto was vice president of the National Commission of Sports Historians of Cuba, and he

had received numerous awards for his writing. He was a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America. More recently, he was a member of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR).

It was my privilege to have met Severo Nieto in 1991 in the *Prensa Latina* offices in Havana when my wife and I were there to observe Cuban baseball. On subsequent visits, we met Rosa, Ana Mari and two of his granddaughters and were guests of the family's hospitality. I attempted to help him distribute his books in the United States, bringing some on disks to the United States and giving them to a publisher. I also brought him current copies of *Who's Who in Baseball* and other baseball publications, unavailable in Cuba for more than four decades because of the U.S. blockade of that nation.

Severo Nieto was a warm, friendly man of great distinction who contributed greatly to the understanding of Cuban sports history throughout the world. Through several books yet to be published, I hope he will be able to continue to do so for many years.

Our conversations were interesting in that he spoke no English, I speak poor Spanish, and we were both hard of hearing. But I always looked forward to seeing him, and I will miss those conversations.

## RESEARCH REQUESTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bill McNeil, author of about a dozen baseball books including "Baseball's Other All-Stars" that discussed the great players outside organized baseball, in countries like Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Mexico, Panama, and Nicaragua.

McNeil is writing another baseball book entitled, "Negro Leaguers in the Winter Leagues," and is in need of box scores of important games that were played in all the above named countries, between 1900 and 1950. He also needs game descriptions, if available, a brief history of baseball during that time period, such as organized leagues and famous players. McNeil would like

some games that were played during the winter months and that had at least one Negro league player in the lineup.

Most importantly, he would appreciate receiving the box scores of important games played anytime during the year. In the DR for instance, McNeil would like to obtain one box score from the famous 1937 league that included Trujillo's team, Los Dragones.

Any assistance members can offer will be greatly appreciated. You can email Bill McNeil at: [wmcneil68@hotmail.com](mailto:wmcneil68@hotmail.com).

## Review: What a Great Year for Latinos in 2005

By Tony Menendez

### LATINO LEADERS

#### AMERICAN LEAGUE

*Runs:* Alex Rodríguez, New York Yankees (124)

*RBI:* David Ortiz, Boston (148)

*Doubles:* Miguel Tejada, Baltimore (50)

*Home Runs:* Alex Rodriguez, New York Yankees (48)

*Wins:* Bartolo Colon, Los Angeles Angels (21)

*Strikeouts:* Johan Santana (238)

*Saves:* Francisco Rodriguez (45)

*Slugging:* Alex Rodriguez (.610)

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

*Runs:* Albert Pujols, St. Louis (129)

*RBI:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta (128)

*Triples:* Jose Reyes, New York Mets (17)

*Home Runs:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta (51)

*Stolen Bases:* Jose Reyes, New York Mets (60)

*Innings Pitched:* Livan Hernandez, Washington (246.1)

### AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

(as of 11/16/2005)

#### MVP

*American League:* Alex Rodriguez, New York Yankees

*National League:* Albert Pujols, St. Louis

#### Hank Aaron Award

*American League:* David Ortiz, Boston

*National League:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta

#### Edgar Martínez Award (Best DH)

David Ortiz, Boston

#### DHL Delivery Man of the Year (Best reliever)

Mariano Rivera, New York Yankees

#### Rolaids Reliever of the Year

*American League:* Mariano Rivera, New York Yankees

#### MLB Players Choice Awards

*Player of the Year:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta

*National League Outstanding Player:*

Andruw Jones, Atlanta

*American League Outstanding Player:*

David Ortiz, Boston

*American League Outstanding Pitcher:*

Bartolo Colon, Los Angeles Angels

*National League Outstanding Rookie:*

Willy Taveras, Houston



### Silver Slugger Awards

#### AMERICAN LEAGUE

2B Alfonso Soriano, Texas

3B Alex Rodriguez, New York Yankees

SS Miguel Tejada, Baltimore

OF Vladimir Guerrero, Los Angeles Angels

OF Manny Ramirez, Boston

DH David Ortiz, Boston

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

SS Felipe Lopez, Cincinnati

OF Miguel Cabrera, Florida

OF Andruw Jones, Atlanta

OF Carlos Lee, Milwaukee

### Gold Glove Awards

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

2B Luis Castillo, Florida



SS Omar Vizquel, San Francisco

OF Bobby Abreu, Philadelphia

OF Andruw Jones, Atlanta

#### MLB Players Choice Awards

*Player of the Year:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta

*National League Outstanding Player:* Andruw Jones, Atlanta

*American League Outstanding Player:* David Ortiz, Boston

*American League Outstanding Pitcher:* Bartolo Colon, Los Angeles Angels

*National League Outstanding Rookie:* Willy Taveras, Houston



## Pedrin Zorrilla: Mr. Baseball (1905-1981)

by Edwin Fernández

On the week of November 9<sup>th</sup>, in Puerto Rico, we celebrated Pedrin Zorrilla's 100th. birthday. Pedrin, best known in his native Puerto Rico and in the organized baseball, as "Mr. Baseball" and "El Cangrejo Mayor," has become a national icon, not only for his baseball greatness, but for his continuous efforts to help the less-fortunate fellow citizens.

There are many major endeavors that Pedrin can take credit for, but we will concentrate on the ones related to his real passion: baseball. Besides being a great family man, he was, among other things, a good baseball player, a professional baseball manager and team owner, a major league scout, owner of a horse racing stud, member of the legislature in Puerto Rico and a businessman. He was born in Manati on November 9, 1905.

Due to his passion for baseball, Pedrin Zorrilla, together with five friends, made possible that in 1939 the Semiprofessional Baseball League of Puerto Rico, extended a new franchise to Santurce (an important sector of San Juan, capital of Puerto Rico, located near the northeast coast of the Island). That franchise was named Santurce Cangrejeros (Crabbers).

This was the beginning of one of the most romantic baseball era in the Caribbean. His natural skills to deal with people, especially with baseball players, together with his leadership, baseball savvy and his desire to help others, made of Pedrin a unique personality in baseball.

He built the most successful baseball franchise in Puerto Rico. After the end of World War II, Pedrin signed for his Crabbers many of the best players from the Negro Leagues. Players such as Billy Bird, Willard Brown, Bob Thurman, Roy Campanella, Raymond Brown and Josh Gibson, who manages Santurce in its first season, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity given by Zorrilla to Gibson.

In the 1950 decade Pedrin had the best team in the Island, winning four Championships and three Caribbean Series: 1951, 1953 and 1955. The latter is considered the best team ever in Puerto Rico. For instance, they won the 1955 Caribbean Series without adding a player from the other teams, as it was the custom. That team was composed of stars like Willie Mays, Roberto Clemente, Bob Thurman, George Crowe, Buster Clarkson, Valmy Thomas, Ruben Gomez, Luis Rodriguez Olmo, Bill Greason, Don Zimmer, Harry Chiti, Ronnie Samford and Sam Jones. Pedrin brought Willie Mays to Puerto Rico in 1954. He convinced the Giants owner to let him play. ¡Wow!

For his players, he was a friend, a personal advisor, a buddy. He identified himself with the black players during their difficult times in baseball. This was very significant for the continuous presence of those players, year after year, in our baseball.

As a Major League scout, he had the necessary abilities and the baseball eye to recognize talented players. While working for the New York/San Francisco Giants and the Chicago Cubs, he signed Ruben Gomez, Orlando Cepeda, Jose Pagan, Juan Pizarro, Julio Navarro, Jose Laboy, Jose Morales, Carmelo Martinez, Luis Cabrera and Henry Cotto.

As part of the Centenary activities for the week, the Zorrilla Family and the Sportscaster Association of PR, on November 9, held a discussion panel session on his life. The Panel was formed by eleven personalities that were either knowledgeable on his accomplishments or protagonists themselves, in different aspects of his life and baseball career.

The first panelist, Jorge Colón Delgado, sports historian and SABR member, made an impeccable review of the first years of his life.

**ZORRILA**, from page 6

Jorge has been commissioned by the Zorrilla family to write a book on Pedrin's life. Then Tom Van Hyning, also a SABR member and author of the books, "The Santurce Crabbers" and "The Puerto Rico Winter League: A Major League Launching Pad," talked about the kind of players signed by Pedrin in the 50's. Tom lived in Puerto Rico for over ten years and became a great fan of the Crabbers and Pedrin.

Eduardo Valero, chairman of SABR's Latin American committee, was also very articulate while referring to Pedrin's human traits. Orlando Cepeda, in his discussion said that "Pedrin was like my father... he saved my career." Eduardo Figueroa, the first pitcher born in PR to win 20 games in the Majors, said "he brought me back to baseball; without him I never would have won 20 games."



**Zorrilla with Ruben Gomez  
and Willie Mays**  
*Courtesy of the author*

Esteban Rodriguez and Victor Colon, two of his fellows when he was on the politics arena, gave testimony that Pedrin worked hard for everyone, mostly for the poor sectors, without considering their political beliefs. Ramiro Martínez, a long-time sportscaster, gave credit to Pedrin for bringing the first Major League exhibition games to Puerto Rico.

Reinaldo Paniagua, one of the most recent owners of the Santurce Crabbers, said he experienced how the world of baseball, including in the Major Leagues, loved and respected him, when they went around the ballparks to recruit talent.

In 1981, Harry Rexach created the Pedrin Zorrilla Award, which is given annually to a successful baseball personality. He emphasized the award's importance and encouraged the Zorrilla family and the Sportscasters Association to continue with this effort.

Finally, Valmy Thomas, a former catcher for the New York Giants and Crabbers, with tearfully described how good Pedrin was to his players, that in difficult times they used to play as hard even if there was no money, saying that "he was not only one man, he was two."

### **Important announcement made by Orlando Cepeda**

In a press conference held on November 8, Orlando Cepeda announced he has formed a Committee to propose Pedrin Zorrilla to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame as an Executive. The Committee includes very influential personalities in baseball and other Hall of Famers such as Sandy Koufax and Tany Perez.

Enrique, his son, Mrs. Diana, his widow, Diana Margarita and Isabel Cristina, his two daughters, they felt very moved and confessed, that not until now, when they received so much affection and love for Pedrin, realized the feelings of so many people and what Pedrin represent for Puerto Rico.

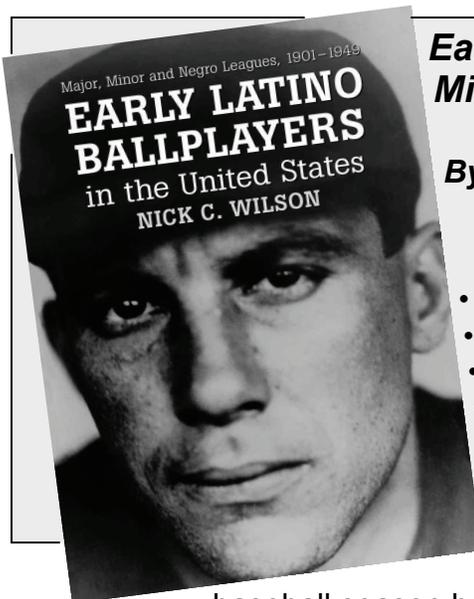
For them, and for all of us, it was kind of a heads-up. We need many Pedrins in our baseball and in our society. It is important to note that besides the book on Pedrin, there is movie on his life in the works.

The winner of the Pedrin Zorrilla Award 2005 was Emilio (Millito) Navarro, a centenary himself, celebrating number 100 this past September 26<sup>th</sup>. Millito is still alive and in good health and went to receive his award.

"This is the greatest prize I have received in my life, Pedrin was a man the players loved, this is a great honor," he said.

## A LITERARY REVIEW & INTERVIEW

By Anthony Salazar



### **Early Latino Ballplayers in the United States: Major, Minor and Negro Leagues: 1901-1949**

By Nick C. Wilson

- 208 pages, \$35 hardcover (7x10)
- Photographs, appendices, notes bibliography and index
- McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers
- Published 2005
- ISBN 0-7864-2012-X

Cover photo: Rafael Almeida

With the 2005 baseball season having drawn to an end, it is only fitting that we reflect on baseball's leaders, where we find that Latino players have taken a lion's share of awards for their prowess on the field. This season Latinos constituted roughly a third of Major League Baseball rosters. That was always not the case, however.

In his current release, *Early Latino Ballplayers in the United States: Major, Minor and Negro Leagues, 1901-1949*, author Nick Wilson points out that baseball's numbers were lacking of Latinos in the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During the first half of the last century, Latino players were subjected to racial discrimination and abuse. Light-skinned players found some fame in the Majors, while darker-skinned Latinos toiled away in the Negro Leagues in relative obscurity.

Wilson provides an insightful resource on these Latino players, most of whom have never shined in baseball's limelight. He draws heavily on dozens of personal interviews he has conducted over the past few years, and works well with his secondary sources.

The photographs, a number of which are from the author's personal collection, beautifully illustrate the strength and character of his subjects.

Chapters are devoted to the specific decades, though better known Latinos, Armando Marans and Rafael Almeida share a chapter, while Adolfo Luque, the Pride of Havana, enjoys a chapter to himself.

Readers will like the profiles of the lesser known players such as: Julián Castillo, Jacinto Calvo, Angel Aragón, Mero Urena, Roberto Ortiz and Salvador Hernández.

Wilson's work adds a great deal to the historiography of the Latino baseball story. While we bask in the glow of the hundreds of Latino players in today's game, it is important to know whose shoulders they stand on.

This is Wilson's second book. His first work, *Pastime: Oral Histories of Surviving Major Leaguers, Negro Leaguers, Cuban Leaguers and Writers, 1920-1934*, was published in 2000 also by McFarland.

Order information can be found at McFarland's: [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com) or by calling directly at 800-253-2187

## Q&A with Nick Wilson, author, "Early Latino Ballplayers in the United States"

by Anthony Salazar

### I was impressed with your list of personal interviews. What personality had the biggest impact on you, and why?

The most impressive personality that I profiled in the book was probably Martin Dihigo. Practically every former ballplayer I interviewed who was over the age of 50 said that Dihigo was the greatest athlete they had ever seen. The most impressive person I had interviewed for the book had to be Felo Ramirez - even more than Cepeda or Miñoso or Felipe Alou or Tony Perez. Ramirez, who is now in the broadcasters' wing of the Hall of Fame, was an encyclopedia of knowledge about every Latino ballplayer of note since the turn of the last century.

### In your research, what did you learn that surprised you the most?

I was surprised by the *degree* of fear that major league owners had regarding the hiring of Latino ballplayers. From 1900 through 1947 they were *obsessed* with proving the familial lineage of each player. They lived in fear of being discovered with a player who may have had a black ancestor. In the Rafael Almeida and Armando Marsans situation, the Reds concocted wild stories and fed them to the press. They presented both boys as not only being of white Spanish heritage, but also descendents of Spanish royalty. Of course, much of it was false.

### Your book stops at 1949. Why? What was significant there?

I stopped at 1949 because 1950 represented a new chapter in baseball. It was a turning point regarding the acceptance of Latino ballplayers as more than just good defensemen. The Latin Revolution began in 1950 with the powerful offense of Miñoso and Bobby Avila. Then came Vic Power, Roberto Clemente, Cepeda, and others. It was remarkable that the whole thing turned around at the beginning of a new decade.

### To what extent did World War II influence the Latin migration to the United States?

The major leagues and Negro Leagues needed Latino ballplayers during WWII because their ranks were stripped by the draft. WWII had only a temporary effect on the migration of ballplayers. The biggest impact on Latino ballplayers in the major leagues came about because of Jackie Robinson in 1947.

### How well did Latino players fare in the Negro Leagues?

It appears, through testimony and incomplete records, that the Latino players were major contributors to the high level of play in the Negro leagues (1920 - 1949) and Black barnstorming teams (1900 - 1919). Again, historians believe that men like Dihigo, Jose Mendez and Cristobal Torriente were as good as any of the stars of the major leagues and Negro Leagues. Unfortunately, many of their accomplishments were never recorded.

### *CUBAN*, from page 2

The USA and Japanese (fifth place) teams again proved major disappointments. The reason is not lack of talent but rather lack of focus.



The Americans throw their teams together at the last minute. And there is little interest back home to motivate the top American pro prospects to

perform seriously on the World Cup stage. The same seems true with the Japanese, who sent a pro league all-star team to the Athens Olympics but this time entered a solid but overmatched club of industrial league all-stars. But for the Cubans these Olympic-style tournaments mean everything. And once again Cuban fans and

sports officials have much to crow about after another surprisingly easy victory in a showcase event of international baseball that the red-clad islanders have thoroughly dominated since their earliest entries way back on the eve of World War II.

*Note: Readers wishing to learn more about World Cup 36 can access reports Bjarkman filed for the English-language website of Prensa Latina's international news service. Bjarkman's in-depth stories are found under "Sports" at [www.plenglish.com](http://www.plenglish.com).*

**Peter C. Bjarkman provided the photos, and is the author of "Diamonds Around the Globe: The Encyclopedia of International Baseball," and has traveled the Cuban baseball scene extensively for the past decade.**

## A note from the Editor

by Anthony Salazar

First, I would like to thank all the contributors, Edwin Fernandez, Jay Berman, Tony Menendez, Peter Bjarkman, Kit Krieger and Nick Wilson. This is by far, the biggest issue of *La Prensa del Béisbol Latino* we've had yet. Thank you all for making this possible.

This issue seems to reflect our greater interest in history and legacy of Latino baseball. I know there is a great deal I learned with this installment. Much like history on any flavor, there is much more to learn and understand. Those nuggets of knowledge provide the much-needed awareness we can embrace today.

I invite you to submit a story for the next issue and share your passion in Latino baseball history.

Better yet, if you have a lot of research and you're looking for a place to present it, the SABR national convention is one of the best

venues. SABR36 will be in Seattle, and research abstracts are now being accepted. Log onto NWSABR's URL: <http://nwsabr.sabr.org/convention.htm> for more details.

Thanks again for taking part in our committee.



### Latin American Baseball Committee

Eduardo Valero	Chair
Edwin Fernandez	Co-Vice Chair
Anthony Salazar	Co-Vice Chair, Editor

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### In This Issue

*Paying homage to Severo Nieto, Pedrin Zorrilla and the Cuban World Cup winners & more!*