LATIN AMERICA COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

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EDUARDO VALERO CHAIRMAN

Buenos Dias Good news for SABR members. One of our committee's main goals is near its completion, to provide historical data and stats of the Latin America leagues in which over 2,000 mayor and minor league players have participated. These data should be an excellent compliment to several SABR committees.

Please be advised that a Venezuela Baseball League Register has been published. There is a great possibility that at SABR 27, copies will be available as well and how to order it. Covers all the players that have participated on the league since 194&when it was organized.

A Caribbean Series Guide which includes stats is also available upon request. It covers from 1949 to 1960 (1st stage) and from 1970 to 1996. Those interested kindly contact me. A Latin America Committee member, Jorge Figueredo is working toward the publication of the Cuban Professional League history and stats (1868-1960). Alfonso Araujo, Mexican historian, writer and statistician from is also doing likewise with the Mexican Pacific Coast League (1945 to the present) The Latin America Committee is compiling data and stats of the Dominican Republic League (1945 to the present).

"Beisbol Profesional de Puerto Rico a history of the Puerto Rican Leaguue" will be available by next September. It includes data as well as statistics of the 59 seasons of this Caribbean circuit gathered by LA Committee members Jose A, Crescioni and Eduardo Valero.

All these books will enable SABR members get inside these circuits and obtain valuable data of many Hall of Famers who did play in those leagues to compliment their records, among other information for their respective areas of research.

Of the Hall of Fame inductees next August, please be advised that except Nelly Fox the other three, Tom La Sorda, Phil Niektro and Willie Wells participated in Latin America. La Sorda played in Puerto Rico and in Cuba and managed in the Dominican Republic. Phil pitched in Puerto Rico, while Willie Wells played in Mexico, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Including La Sorda, Niektro and Wells there are 27 Hall of Famers who have participated in Puerto Rico: Roy Campanella, Joshua Gibson, Johnny Bench, Roger Hornsby, Buck Leonard, Leon Day, Ray Dandridge, Mike Schmidt, Hank Aaron, Reggie Jackson, Monte Irvin, Roberto Clemente,

Frank Robinson, Willie Mays, Jim Palmer, Sandy Koufax, Ferguson Jenkins, Satchell Paige, Martin Dihigo, Jim Bunning, Earl Weaver, Johnny Mize, Steve Carlton and Bob Gibson. Of those, played in Cuba: Dandridge, Leonard, Dihigo, Campanella, Irvin, Paige and Day, besides Brooks Robinson, Oscar Charleston, James “Cool Papa" Bell, Judy Johnson, John Henry Lloyd and Early Wynn, sixteen in total.

The amount of Latin Americans from Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico and Venezuela participants in organized baseball continues to increase. As of last May, 1922 players were under contract in major and minor leagues. Dominicans are the leaders with 1,217.

Venezuela follows with 429, Puerto Rico 160, Mexico. 117; Panama, 56; Colombia, 19; Cuba. 15 and Nicaragua 9.The International Baseball Association recently approved the participation of professional players in the Olympics as well as in the Pan American, European Asian games and the World Championships. Definitively this step will have an impact in the conversion of amateurs to the pro ranks.

On the other hand, for the first time the Nicaragua First Division League admitted professional as well as foreign player in their tournament which finished last April. The foreign players were from Cuba, Panama Mexico, Dominican Republic, Colombia and USA. Nicaragua has applied for admission in the Caribbean Baseball Confederation which includes, the Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Mexican Pacific Coast Winter Leagues. Its champion teams meet in the Caribbean Series played yearly in early February

On our next LAC newsletter it will include a complete list of all Latin American and Caribbean players who have participated in the Mayor Leagues along with the years they came to the Big Leagues.

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