

## Pedro Luis Lazo Iglesias

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Name: Pedro Luis Lazo Iglesias.

Nickname: El Rascacielos Pinareño or Jíbaro.

Date of birth: 15 May 1973.

Place of birth: Río Feo, Pinar del Río, Cuba.

Nationality: Cuban.

Place of birth: Río Feo, Pinar del Río, Cuba: Pitcher.

League: National Baseball Series.

League: Mexican Baseball League.

Trajectory: Pinar del Río (Baseball Team), Cuba, Pirates of Campeche.

Pedro Luis Lazo Iglesias. Outstanding Cuban baseball player. He is considered one of the best Cuban pitchers of all time. Maximum winner of the National Series of baseball of Cuba and second in punches propinados. In 2010 he retired from active sports in Cuba. The people of Pinar del Río paid him a great tribute at the Capitan San Luis Stadium. He marched as a coach to the Mexican League, but the great way in which he was seen in training determined that he was hired as a pitcher by the Pirates of Campeche.



Biographical Synthesis

As a young Pedro Luis Lazo worked as a peasant helping his father to

plant rice in his hometown. He was expelled from the EIDE for low yield, along with him, the future receiver of Pinar del Río Yosvany Madera and the future second base of Pinar del Río and the Cuba Yobal Dueñas team.

Cuban Baseball

It debuted with the Forestales set (second team of its province) in the series of 1990-1991. At the end of that series he was called to the youth team Cuba, and since 1995 he was part of the selection of the island's elders.

He is the only baseball player in the world with four Olympic finals (2 gold medals and two runners-up), this strong man, 1.92 meters tall and weighing 236 pounds, is considered by many as one of the five best pitchers in Cuban baseball after the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution. Known as El rascacielos pinareño or Jíbaro, as he prefers to be called, he currently holds the record for most victories in the Cuban championships (257). In spite of this, he has expressed modestly: "The best pitcher is not the one who wins the most, just as the best batter is not the one who hits the most. Many may disagree with me, but how many would win more if they had better teams behind them.

His long career has been full of successes both domestically and internationally. Although he became famous within the Cuban fans playing with the number 99, before he had done it in the Cuba team with the 33 and 17, but when arriving at the national team Gabriel Pierre and Javier Mendez asked him to give them both numbers almost in succession, then Lazo began to play with the 99, a number that nobody was going to ask because nobody played with him.

He was part of the exceptional body of monticulistas that led Pinar del Río to obtain two consecutive national crowns in 1997 and 1998. He integrated the Cuban squad to the I World Baseball Classic 2006, the strongest tournament in the history of this sport, on that occasion his impeccable performance on the mound allowed Cuba to reach the final.

Possessing a very strong arm, during his extensive sports career Lazo accumulated an impressive record for a pitcher. He obtained more than 200 victories, gave more than 2000 punches, more than 600 of average effectiveness as a pitcher and less than 3.50 clean runs per game. Only two other Cuban pitchers, Rogelio García and Braudilio Vinent, are close to his personal record.

But Luis Lazo also established himself in the play-offs of the Cuban ball, where pressure increases and it is not easy to dominate rivals. He launched 72 games in the postseason (he started 48), completed 26, won 29 (second behind Vera), saved seven (Yolexis Ulacia has ten), provided six grouts and struck out 311 batters.

Lazo threw all of Cuba's big teams in play off. He widely dominated Industriales, as the Cuban capital's blue team won 15 games and lost six. On the other hand, it had an even balance with Villa Clara (2-2) and was below against Santiago de Cuba (2-4).

Against the other rivals he saw in play off, Lazo had contrasting results: he dominated Sancti Spíritus (4-2), drew with La Isla (2-2), and fell to Havana (4-5) and Cienfuegos (0-2).

His relationships with the national baseball leadership in Cuba were always good, although he felt resentful when he was excluded from the team that participated in the 2003 Pan American Games in the Dominican Republic: "I never understood and I'm still sorry. I was in full sporting form. The arguments they gave me didn't convince me.

Lazo was also besieged many times by major league talent scouts, but he constantly rejected offers to move to the sport rented within the United States.

Internationally he was a very successful pitcher: he won 22 games, lost only 2 and saved 31. Lazo won two memorable games: against the Baltimore Orioles in the Latin American and in the Sydney 2000 Olympic final against the United States.

#### Official Retreat

After several seasons in which he had declared his intention to retire from active sport, finally on Sunday, December 26, 2010 his official retirement took place in the Capitan San Luis Stadium in the city of Pinar del Rio.

Accompanied by his teammate in the Pinar del Rio team, Donald Duarte and his former national team team mate and personal friend Osmany Urrutia, Lazo was applauded by more than 15,000 fans who came together to pay tribute to who for 20 years was an idol of the Pinar del Rio fans.

Lazo, who possesses a great human sensibility, had become the godfather of the Casa de Niños sin Amparo Filial, those who were present at the retreat ceremony. After the farewell, the athlete expressed his desire to work with children after his retreat.

In August 2011, Cuban director Emilio Caro premiered El Rascacielos de Cuba, a documentary based on the life of Pedro Luis.

#### Mexican Baseball

In 2011 he arrives in Mexico as a youth pitching coach of the Piratas de Campeche team, which belongs to the Mexican Baseball League. In the preseason, he also participated and helped prepare the national team for the 2012 campaign.

During the Northern League he participated in several games, winning 4

games without any defeat, in addition to hitting 56 batters in 41 pitching innings. Faced with this situation, she was told about the option of being part of the Pirates in the 2012 campaign, making her official inclusion in the team in May 2012.

During a press conference by Eng. Gabriel Escalante Castillo, president of the Board of Directors of the Pirates, was presented to the media as a member of the team. At that time Escalante Castillo commented: "It's a historic day for baseball campechano and it can also be said that for Latin American baseball. Lazo has an enormous record of triumphs in his career.

#### International Events

- World Youth Championship 1991
- Pan American Games in Mar del Plata, (1995)
- Fukuoka World University Games (1995)
- Intercontinental Cup of Havana (1995)
- Atlanta Olympic Games (1996)
- Intercontinental Cup of Barcelona, (1997)
- World Championship of Italy, (1998)
- Maracaibo Central American and Caribbean Games (1998)
- Winnipeg Pan American Games (1999)
- Cuban Bilateral Stop with Baltimore Major League Orioles team, 1999
- Sydney Olympic Games (2000)
- Chinese Taipei World Championship (2001)
- Canada Challenge Tournament in (2002)
- Intercontinental Cup of Cuba, (2002)
- World Championship in Cuba, (2003)
- Panama Pre-Olympic Tournament (2003)
- Athens Olympic Games (2004)
- Premundial de Colombia, (2004)
- World Championship of Holland, (2005).
- First World Baseball Classic, (2006)

#### Acknowledgements

- Selected by the people among the 100 best Cuban athletes of the 20th century.
- September 28th Distinction, granted by the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, on that date in 2014, in a ceremony celebrated in Pinar del Río for the 54th Anniversary of the foundation of that organization.