

World Judo Open Championship: Idalys returns forged in bronze

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After more than a year absent from tatamis, Cuban Idalys Ortiz returned to her old ways at the recently held World Judo Open Championship in Marrakech, Morocco, by winning the bronze medal among 18 competitors.

In my opinion, Idalys Ortiz is a judo crack. The outstanding super heavyweight from Artemisa ratified her class and after more than a year absent from tatamis returned to her old ways at the World Judo Open Championship in Marrakech, Morocco, by picking bronze among 18 judokas.

That was not the only joy for Cuba, because with four athletes among representatives from 28 nations, Alex García, of Matanzas, emulated Idalys among the men, after beating his teammate Andy Granda in the bronze medal match.

Nearly 7270 kilometers (4525 miles) separate Marrakech from Havana, but a large number of Cubans were aware of the performance of our main ace on the tatamis.

I mean that Idalys has had an enviable service record since she joined the world elite in the 2007 season, by winning the crown just on January 1st at the World

Judo Open Championship in Qingdao, China.

Since then, the exceptional athlete, who says she bases her matches on tactics, with strength, speed and explosiveness little common for her division as added values, has increased her technical repertoire over the years, as well as her showcases.

She has climbed 80 awarding podiums in more than 90 competitions, with 11 Olympic victories and only 2 defeats. She's worthy of respect and if this weren't enough, she owns a favorable 73.1 percentage in tournaments officially registered on the specialized website www.judoinside.com derived from 179 wins and 66 losses.

On Moroccan lands, she headed her division with 2 wins. In semifinals, she lost to Japanese Sarah Asahina, (both show a bilateral 1-1 win/loss balance), and then she redeemed herself vs. French Romane Dicko in the bronze medal match.

It's worth saying that Asahina (4050 points) and Bosnian Larisa Ceric (3284), gold and silver medalists, respectively, are solidly placed on top positions of the world ranking of the +78kg division, scenario in which Idalys, despite her impasse of more than a year, ranks 21st with 1300 points, hence, none of her elite opponents has afforded to forget her.

After being 28 years old last September 27, Idalys retakes her route, carrying the winning star on her shoulders and with her grabbings set from the distance on Tokyo 2020, where she might add another medal to her medal harvest from that 2008 Beijing Games bronze.

As regards their state of mind and amidst a renewal process of our female team, the presence of Idalys, along with the possible comebacks of Dayaris Mestre, Maricet Espinosa and Yanet Bermoy in the future, as well as the inclusion of Kaliema Antomarchi in the 78kg division elite, is substantially important and encouraging.

Almost nobody remembers Alex from the 2010 International Judoguis Golden Championship, when he escorted Oreidis Despaigne in the 100kg division, or his participation in the Youth Olympic Games that same year in Singapore, event where he stayed at the medal threshold with a fifth place.

Today, García (1856 points) ranks 14th in the world ranking of the +100kg division and is one of the main trump cards of our men's team. He had a stony performance in Marrakech, because after surrendering vs. Japanese Kokoro Kageura (1200 points / #24) in the leadership match of the group, he had beat both Russian Alexander Mikhaylin and his teammate Andy Granda in repechage.

Speed is one of the major resources of Alex García. Maturity in the study of his rivals and security in his actions also complement his explosiveness. He does speed trials on the track (30-40 meters) with Prof. José Ibáñez to increase this last component, which he combines with jumps in circles on one foot. They are very positive for *oguchi-ari* and contribute to keep both balance in the equilibrium axis and correct combat positions.

He always dedicates time to acrobatics at the end of his training sessions.

By the way, from 2009 to the present day, Alex, fifth on Brazilian soil, exhibits a positive balance of 47 wins and 40 losses at top level competitions.

That's the reality of our judo super heavyweights. Idalys, who seems she has not been absent over a year and returns to her old ways; and Alex, who is still grabbing a place in the elite. Let's wait to see what the rest of the Olympic cycle holds in store for them.

Translated by Jorge Mesa Benjamin / Cubasi Translation Staff
