Andy Cruz: Fists Swinging again at the Glory in 2018

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He carries on his fists the challenge of keeping the undefeated condition he achieved last year in this 2018. That condition that won him the distinction of best rookie of the year in Cuban sports (he made his debut as first boxer in the 64 kg), after winning undefeated the championship of Hamburg, the same happened in the World Championship… finishing a whole year with 18 international matches impeccably.

He also won the domestic championship Playa Giron and with the detail of winning all the rounds in all his fights. This yield on the boxing pit won him the lead in his division at the world ranking sponsored by AIBA, with 1 700 points way ahead of the Uzbeks Ikboljon Kholdarov and Fazliddin Gaibnazarov (both with 1 300), and the German Artem Harutyunyan (1 200), following in that order.

Born on August 12th, 1995 in Alacranes town, of Union de Reyes municipality in Matanzas, 1.68 meters height Andy is considered today one of the best pugilists pound by pound of amateur boxing worldwide. From my point of view, our island's best, after inheriting with fame, the position in the team left by Yasnier Toledo.

Champion of the Pan-American Games of Toronto 2015 in 56 kg, many will remember his very skinny build back then, one of the main boxers of Los Domadores of Cuba and pupil of Emiliano Chirino, he agreed to talk with Cubasí:

What left year 2017 in the personal field for you?

"The results are the best reflection of a very good year. I had to work a lot because as everyone knows I shifted divisions and that implied adaptation in the first place to the weight. Redirecting my efforts toward growing strong, especially the punching.

Luckily everything went better than I had planned. It was very important to become World Champion, to gain experiences and fighting high-rank boxers. Boxing is a sport of constant learning, with each match, each rival."

Domain of distances, speed, precise punching, dodging, and good displacements… Where do you believe your virtues come together?

"I mainly bet for the mid and outside distance. My extremities and being a bit taller than the remaining elite men in my division, allow me so. I am not afraid of any distance and always try to take the fights in relationship with the demands of the opponent. The jab is one of my main resources, although I usually combine it with uppers and swings searching for effective combinations".

What exercises do you prioritize during training sessions and the best sparring in La Finca?

"Running and the jumping rope are among my favorite exercises. In these moments I concentrate on elevating the strength, mainly in punching, because there is a huge difference regarding the 56 kg division. In the 64 kg division the punches land harder. I always think the sparring with Julio Cesar La Cruz, Lázaro Álvarez and Roniel Iglesias are quite profitable for me. Each one has its peculiar fighting style, I take advantage of that and they make me a more complete boxer.

Many people think that I have style similar to that of Julio and somehow it's true: I like dodging and not getting punched when I enter to punch. I partly do it for my mother who is my number one fan and sometimes she doesn't watch my fights because she doesn't like that I get punched, and the stress that causes her".

What elements would you like to improve for future matches and looking at the distant Olympic Games of Tokyo 2020?

"There are always things to improve. Quality in the punching, I study opponents… talent without prior preparation is not good at all. That's why I thank my coaches for being pending of every detail. My results are those of the Cuban school of boxing, their prestige. I never underestimate any opponent. Every single one of them comes into the ring to win and a single blow can sometimes decide a tournament, or even your career. That's why I follow to the letter the most minimum hint. As for taking on any competition I never slack in the trainings."

Always a boxer?

"When I was very little I began practicing karate, since I was 10 years old I began in boxing. I was a brawler and trainer (Gustavo Delgado) opened a path for me in boxing trying to scratch that itch a bit".

Quite promissory future and without severe lesions so far. Any keys?

"Give everything in the training, the work-rest relationship, mainly for us who can have up to four daily sessions sometimes. I take good care of my body, for that reason I haven't had any severe lesion so far. That's a way to be ready for any event."

In fact, Andy Cruz shows in world competitions a perfect sheet 11-0, if you are reading this he has probable made his debut against the Heroic of Colombia, as part of the C-1 pool that began the eighth season at the Sports City Coliseum.

Besides he will have his eyes on the Central American and the Caribbean Games of Barranquilla, because certainly, his golden career will grow from now on, after his winning in Toronto.

Let's just witness on the ring what he gives to his mother Vivian Gómez, his father Ramón Cruz, and to the entire Cuban people. I personally join those who think: he is the best Cuban boxer pound by pound at present. If anyone is in doubt, go ask the Uzbek Kholdarov, his victim in the final match of Hamburg, and also in the World Championship of Boxing (2017).

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