

Mijain Lopez and his scope targeting Barranquilla

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In snipers' terminology, it could be said that Cuban Greco-Roman wrestler Mijain Lopez has only one target in his scope: the Central American and the Caribbean Games to be held July 19-August 3 in Barranquilla.

Believe it or not, Mijain has just won one gold medal in this sort of games and it occurred in Veracruz 2014.

It is certainly surprising that such a high-ranked wrestler (three Olympic gold medals, five gold medals in World Championships) has only grabbed one title in Central American Games.

He participated in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in 2016, but the small number of five wrestlers deprived him of winning the title. Cuba did not participate in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, in 2010 due to safety issues with the delegation.

### **How is everything going so far?**

I am focused on my training. Everything is all right and I am injury-free this time.

Thus, I can look for the result everyone wants. And this is no other than the first place in my category 130 kg.

I will not face tough opponents in Barranquilla. But I always respect the opponents and I never underestimate them. However, I tell my people I will go out there looking for the gold medal.

### **How do you feel physically?**

I am ready to go. I feel full of energy and vigor. As I have said before, my sole rival is my weight and the rule changes of my sports.

### **Was it profitable the rest you took last year?**

It was great after so many years of sport career. I rejuvenated myself. I feel awesome right now.

### **After the Central American Games, are you planning to go to the World Championship to be held in Hungary in October?**

The technical staff and I decided that it is better that Oscar Pino has another chance. He did pretty well last year by winning a bronze medal in the World Championship held in Paris, France.

Besides, the trainers are doing an excellent job with me. They are focusing on my physical shape for Tokyo 2020 without serious injuries or fatigue.

### **Last March, in the tournament to get the tickets for Barranquilla, you were involved with your partners giving them advises...Would you like to train in the future?**

Yes, I do like it. It would be very special to convey my experiences to younger athletes. I try to teach them everything I have learned as wrestler.

### **How do you see the wrestling team of Cuba?**

The boys are all right. They are enthusiastic and want to win. I am pretty sure we can win the six gold medals in Barranquilla. This goal is perfectly feasible.

**You can achieve the feat of winning four gold medals in the Olympic Games of Tokyo 2020. What is your comment on this?**

I would like to go step by step. But I can say one piece of advice. It is better my opponents train hard as I will go all in to win my gold medal. It will be the perfect closure for my career.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Diaz//CubaSi Translation Staff**

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