
Cuba at the Paralympic Games: High efficiency

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As usual, the Cuban delegation to the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games was characterized by its high efficiency, winning 10 medals with only 21 athletes.

Of course, the greatest praise for legend Omara Durand, who won three gold medals in the 100, 200 and 400 meter flat races, to reach 11 titles in summer events and thus put an end to her glorious sports career in the best possible way.

These 11 gold medals are not outstanding at a world level because there are athletes with 30 or more titles, mainly in swimming, but it is a milestone for our sport, and an example of total dedication from the Santiago de Cuba native and her guide, Yuniol Kindelán.

Her legs can still run a lot more and hence continue giving joy to the largest of the Antilles, but she has done her best and has earned the opportunity to enjoy the well-deserved rest and family warmth, which is missed when you have been involved in high performance sport for

over a decade.

The other flag-bearer of our delegation, Robiel Yankiel Sol, fulfilled his leadership in the long jump competition despite yearning a better mark. Records do not always fall in major competitions and this was the case, but his crown was never in jeopardy.

The other two gold medals, somewhat surprising, from javelin thrower Guillermo Varona and table tennis player Yunier Fernández were very pleasant.

Varona debuted in this type of competition with a fourth place in Tokyo, but he managed to reverse previous results and achieved his best performance.

Yunier's path was way more difficult, with his paddle and on his wheelchair, he finally managed to reach the top after having a dream competition.

I believe it is important to also highlight the silver medal won by judoka Sheyla Hernández, always against rivals of much greater body weight, which in some way is worth double, since she had to stand up for her husband, who could not compete due to lack of eligibility based on his visual disability.

Ulises Aguilera's bronze medal after several injuries, Yamel Vives' silver medal and Pablo Ramírez's, the latter the first for a Cuban in weightlifting, also shine brightly.

In short, Cuba earned six gold medals, three silver medals and one bronze medal, which placed it 24th in the final standings and so Cuba outperformed the previous summer event held in Tokyo, when our delegation ended in the 35th spot.

I cannot close this article without mentioning Lorenzo Pérez, another legend of our sport for the disabled. He was unable to emulate what he had done in previous events in the pools, but he already promises to return to his former glory in the throwing disciplines, which were what caught his attention when he began his sport career.

With the dedication and pride that characterize him, he will surely

continue to shine in these new disciplines.

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