

Two Cuban triumphs in boxing at Tokyo 2020



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Tokyo, July 27 (RHC)-- Cuban boxers Roniel Iglesias and Julio Cesar La Cruz stamped today the word triumph in the opening chapter of the stories they intend to write in the Olympic Games organized in the Japanese capital. The welterweight Iglesias, winner in London 2012 and bronze medalist in Beijing 2008, was able to recover from an uncertain start to win a 3-2 verdict over the host Quincy Mensah Okazawa, who raised the hopes of his team in the opening round.

It was the debut of the roster under Rolando Acebal, marked by undue grips and twists of the local, which at times seemed to take the West Indian out of step on the ring of the Kokugikan Arena. So much so that the latter was penalized with a point for hitting the back of the neck in the intermediate segment, when he rediscovered his punching and the sense of distance, while the Japanese was giving in physically.

In the final round, he increased his offensive effectiveness, provoking a protection count, and sealed a work enough for the officials to tilt the scales in his favor, although without a performance at the height of his distinguished record.

"The way he throws his punches was the most complicated thing, but I am sure of the preparation done and I know that the next presentation will be better," said the also 2009 Milan world champion.

"There was no pressure at all for being the first of the team to fight, and the purpose of achieving my third Olympic medal is confirmed," he sentenced.

His next outing will be on Friday, to face the American Delante Johnson, defeated by him in the semifinal of the Pan American Games of Lima 2019 and today 4-1 at the expense of Kazakhstan's Ablaihan Zhussupov.

For the cruiser La Cruz it was easy the mission to pass over the Kenyan Elly Ochola. Without being fully employed he signed 5-0 vote, in tune with what was predicted by the wide quality gap separating him from the African: 30-26, 30-24, 30-24, 30-24, 30-24, 30-23.

"It was a good debut at 91 kilos in top-level international events," he commented in the area set up for reporters. "I fulfilled what was indicated by the coaches to cover the three rounds in search of rhythm, without rushing," he added.

"The work we did allows us to face the competition convinced that we can do what is expected from the flagship of our sport, to dedicate it to those who fight in Cuba against covid-19," he pointed out.

The upcoming fight will be more demanding, against Cuban-born Spaniard Emmanuel Reyes, who knocked out Kazakh laureate Vasili Levit in the second round, but the captain insists that the goal is to win fight by fight, no matter who tries to avoid it.

Tomorrow the Island will depend on featherweight Lazaro Alvarez and semi-featherweight Arlen Lopez, favorites to eliminate Iranian Daniyal Shahbakhsh and Algerian Mohammed Houmri, respectively.

The former disposed of Morocco's Mohamed Hamout and Houmri won a 3-2 decision over Venezuela's Nalek Korbaj.

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