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Havana, October 25 (RHC/JIT)-- Cuban taekwondoka Dario Navarro Riquelme came within thousandths of being included among the top eight competitors in the Online World Taekwondo Poomsae Open Challenge III.

The top eight are strong contenders to get direct quotas in the modality for the XXV World Taekwondo Championship to be held in Wuxi, China, next year.

Navarro Riquelme, leader on the Island in the specialty of imaginary combat, fought for almost a month in the virtual Challenge III, won by Korean D. Kim, with 7,560 points.

"Dario did an excellent competition, with scores (7,290) never obtained before and debuting in this difficult category of under 30 years old. That's why I consider that ninth place in the world to be very good," Enrique, his father and coach, told JIT. The Antillean was bronze in that event in 2020, but in the junior category.

"You have to take into account that he was a thousandth of a second behind the Asian C. Lui (HKG-7 310), leaving behind great competitors from Canada, Brazil, Singapore and others," he highlighted.

"For the Americas, the top eight included R. Real, from the United States (7 470), and B. Dzibe, from Mexico. Dzibe, who placed third and fourth. The rest are from Iran, Taipei, China, Thailand and the Philippines," said Dario, the only Cuban contestant in the competition.

The young man thanked the support of Inder in Cienfuegos, as well as the directors of the Jorge Agostini School of Sports Initiation, where he records the videos he sends to the competitions. Also to his coach in the national team Carlos Regalado and Rolando Ignacio, one of his first trainers.

"We are satisfied and unhappy at the same time, because we thought we could be among the top eight. Now we focus on the next online event Atu President's Cup from November 8. It will be of G-2 category with options to earn points for the Olympic ranking," he said from his beloved Cienfuegos.

The poomsae was called together with Kyorugui (sparring) for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

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