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Havana, November 12 (JIT)-- A total of 214 athletes in 26 sports will represent Cuba at the First Pan American Junior Games of Cali 2021, scheduled to take place from November 25 to December 5.

This was revealed on the radio and TV program Mesa Redonda (Round Table) on Thursday, which was attended by top executives of the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (Inder).

José Antonio Miranda, general director of high performance, gave a broad description of the continental event, emphasizing the impulse it offers to athletes between 14 and 23 years old, and the opportunity it will give to most of its champions to qualify for the Pan American Games in Santiago de Chile 2023.

He also praised the conception of the competition program, since it is harmoniously related to the Olympic and Pan American calendars; it offers qualification to world competitions such as handball for under 23-year-olds; and it regulates to two the number of sports that the hosts can add.

Miranda described the qualification process for the event as complex, due to the impacts of the covid-19 pandemic and the fact that it coincided with the preparation stage of the national delegation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

He mentioned that volleyball (indoor), tennis, softball and 3x3 basketball were among the sports that could not obtain their places. However, he stressed that Cuba will be one of the largest delegations.

In terms of statistics, the director explained that 169 classified athletes (78%) come from the national high performance schools and 45 from the Eide and academies of the country. A total of 61 athletes are 18 years old or younger, and two will compete with 14 "abrilés".

Miranda confirmed that canoeist Yarisleydi Cirilo, world runner-up and Olympic finalist, will not be able to participate in Cali 2021 due to an injury that requires treatment and recovery that cannot be postponed, as she is an important prospect for Paris 2024.

As has been usual in recent multisport events, the calendar will reserve the most options for Cuba in its second half, with a total of 16 sports, among which athletics, boxing and wrestling stand out.

As for the strategic purposes of the delegation, the executive reiterated the evaluation of the sports reserve for the Olympic cycles of Los Angeles 2028 and Brisbane 2032, as well as for the participation of several figures in the Paris 2024 event. There is also an interesting opportunity to evaluate the area's rivals.

Finally, Miranda highlighted the high level of motivation prevailing in the teams preparing for the competition on Colombian soil, which have been asked to enjoy the competition, give their best and perform with commitment and dignity.

He praised the continuity that the competition brings to the development of young players, and commented on the idea of establishing the Central Caribbean Youth Games.

In the same television program, the director of the methodological technical department, Oscar Nuevo Reyes, spoke about the design of the preparation in the midst of the pandemic and in view of the coincidence with the closing of the preparation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

In this regard, he pointed out that a high percentage of what was planned has been fulfilled, which although it is not optimal, it will allow to assume the event in positive conditions from the physical and technical point of view.

Yoselín Ramiro, director of education and training of the sports organization, referred to the assurance of the teaching activities of the members of the delegation, as well as the ideological and cultural preparation carried out.

She confirmed that the flag ceremony will take place on Saturday, November 13 at the Havana Capitol, seat of the National Assembly of People's Power.



Radio Habana Cuba