

# *Cuba's best athletes in 2021 receive well-deserved tribute*

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**Gala Athletes of the Year Mijain López. Photo: Calixto N. Llanes**

Havana, December 24 (RHC)-- The best exponents of Cuban sports in the year 2021 were honored on Thursday afternoon at the capital's Martí Theater, as part of the usual gala that every year honors the

most outstanding athletes in Cuban sports.

The ceremony was presided over by Jorge Luis Broche Lorenzo, member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Party, and Jorge Luis Perdomo Di-Lella, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic.

The gala was dedicated to the glories of national sports, to the work of Cuban scientists, to the 63rd Anniversary of the Triumph of the Revolution and to its eternal leader, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz.

During the tribute, awards were given to the best athletes of the year, both conventional and handicapped, as well as to the best teams and coaches.

In addition, awards were given to the ten most outstanding athletes, youth athletes, the best athlete hired abroad by the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER), those distinguished with mentions and the participants in the First Pan American Junior Games Cali-Valle 2021.

Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba, Los Clásicos, Dúo Iris y Rapzodia, and Arnaldo y su Talismán, among others, entertained the audience. A special moment was experienced when our scientists were awarded with a recognition carried by the main Cuban sportsmen. All together on the stage left a beautiful image for history, a sign of unity as a nation, this time in two sectors that have given so much glory to Cuba: health and sports.

The highest awards of the afternoon went to Mijaín López (Greco-Roman wrestling), best individual male athlete, who also won the event of the year for his fourth gold medal in summer events; and Idalis Ortiz (judo), among women.

Robiel Yankel Sol (para-athletics) and the stellar Omara Duran (para-athletics) deserved the same distinction among the para-athletes.

Omara and Mijaín dedicated a few words to those attending the ceremony and to the Cuban people in general.

Omara Durand spoke on behalf of all Paralympic athletes, thanked INDER and all those who made the gala possible and gave her the opportunity to go out on all competitive stages. Speaking of her successes, the champion said "thank once again my coach Miriam, Juniol Kindelán, my guide, my husband and my little girl who are there in the audience, and many, many thanks to the people of Cuba for the support received".

For his part, the extraclassman Mijaín López began his speech by thanking all the people of Cuba and the educators for celebrating his day on December 22, showing his pride for all those who trained him. Then, he expressed his joy for the homage received: "I am happy today to be here with the medical personnel who were recognized together with us. I believe that unity is what makes us feel stronger, prouder of being Cubans (...)".

Thus, the Cuban sports movement puts an end to a year full of successes. In this period of time, its exponents gave the people one of the best Olympic performances of the last decades, overcoming the difficulties generated by the pandemic, a common factor for all sportsmen and women in the world since the beginning of the disease. In the case of the Cubans, this situation is compounded by the burden represented by the criminal blockade imposed by the United States more than 60 years ago, and inhumanely intensified in times of pandemic.

To our champions, all the glory, the eternal recognition of our people and the sincere wish for new successes in 2022.

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