

# *Cuban badminton with five stars at the Santo Domingo Open*

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Havana, June 8 (JIT).- Cuba will be present with five figures in the XII Santo Domingo Badminton Open, from this Wednesday until Sunday.

It represents the beginning of the qualification to the Central American and Caribbean Games in San Salvador, and the Pan American Games in Santiago de Chile, both to be held in 2023, after almost three years without competing for the covid-19.

Leading the team is Havana's Osleni Guerrero, the most experienced player in the country, along with Santiago's Leodannis Martinez, who has not been in the sport for a few years. Both have the best results at this level.

The trio is completed by Yeily Ortiz from Cienfuegos, Thalia Mengana from Santiago de Cuba and Marianne Gonzalez from Havana, all of them with international experience.

The tournament starts this Wednesday with the qualifying tournament for the main draw, while from 9 to 12 all the modalities will be played: singles, men's and women's doubles, and doubles.

"All of them have been with the team for some time, the three men with more experience, the girls with less, but at least they have participated in international tournaments at some level," recalled Alexis Ramirez, president of the Cuban Badminton Federation.

Yeily and Thalia attended the Central American and Caribbean Games in Barranquilla 2018 and the Junior Pan American Games in Cali 2021; Marianne to the Pan American team championship in February 2019 in Peru and Yeily herself to the multi-sport event in Lima 2019.

"The event inserts us in the world calendar, as we have been absent for almost three years due to covid-19, it will also allow us to see the environment, the rivals, how the countries are, who are more advanced and in which modalities we can have more possibilities," Ramirez told JIT.

"Of course the fundamental thing is to gain points for the world ranking because the qualification for the multiple games in San Salvador is already underway and should begin in the second semester for those in Santiago de Chile," he added.

Ramirez explained that the computation to grant the places to those events in the continent is made after verifying the points that the players add up to the closing of each fixed date, in the case of the JCC will be in December of this year and for the JP must be in June of 2023.

"As the ranking counts the last 52 weeks these events refer to that list, especially for the Central American classification," said the federation.

Meanwhile, Humberto Daudinot, coach who will be accompanied to Santo Domingo by psychologist Rodney Ayala, expressed the joy of all after the long drought of tournaments due to the pandemic.

"There is a high motivation in everyone, we are training well, the last stage of preparation was quite fruitful, since the Faculty of Medical Sciences, our home in Cienfuegos, supported us by giving us the small board full time in the morning, a schedule that we shared with the Physical Education teachers," he said.

Daudinot commented that Osleni, in spite of the years in the sport, still has the same desires, now with more willingness to return to the competition, leaving behind the anxiety to be in that world of testing strength, reflexes and skills.

He knows that the tournament is going to have quite a high level with the presence of Israelis, Italians, Indians and Japanese, among others, and he is confident that his boys will advance in the organization chart, as well as the doubles in both sexes, especially the girls.

"The girls are in very good shape, we are hopeful that they will make an outstanding performance, it is a good doubles. Our expectation is to "sneak" in medals, mainly in doubles", expressed Daudinot, who already has in his record to lead the group that participated in the Junior Pan American Games of Cali 2021.

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