

Andy Granda knocks down several giants and is crowned World Judo Champion

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Cuban Andy Granda is crowned world champion

Havana, October 12 (RHC)-- Cuba's Andy Granda was crowned this Wednesday in the +100 kg division at the World Judo Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, by defeating in the final the new Japanese talent Tatsuro Saito.

The gold medal of the 30-year-old judoka from Matanzas province - in western Cuba, is the first by a male athlete from the island in 2022, and the only individual medal of the Cuban team in Tashkent.

In a final that was extended to Golden Rule, the Cuban judoka beat Saito by ippon - three shido penalties - after 6.24 minutes of combat.

Saito, 20, was the favorite for the title because of his most recent results and the lineage of Japanese judo. He is the reigning champion of his country and has won several top-level tournaments, including the Baku Grand Slam.

To reach the final, the Lima-2019 Pan American champion and continental multi-medalist, won four bouts, defeated several "heavyweights" in his division, including by wazari in the quarterfinals against Georgian laureate Guran Tushisvili, 2018 world champion, Tokyo-2020 Olympic runner-up, winner of four Grand Slam tournaments and second in the world ranking.

Another of the matancero's victims was Roy Meyer of the Netherlands, bronze medalist at the 2019 and 2021 World Championships.

Meanwhile, the stellar Idalys Ortiz (+78 kg) could not reach the medals, winning 2 fights and losing two others to finish in seventh place.

The multi-Olympic and world medalist won twice, but then lost to the well-known Brazilian Beatriz Souza, eventual silver medalist, and in the repechage she lost to Raz Herko, from Israel.

The other Cuban who competed on Wednesday, Omar Cruz (+100) lost in his first fight.

With Granda's title, Cuba said goodbye to the individual competition with a gold medal, a fifth place by Ivan Silva (90 kg) and a seventh place by Idalys Ortiz (+78).

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