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Havana, October 24 (JIT)-- Two-time world champion and Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medalist Rafael Alba (+80 kg) was injured in his opening bout against Croatia's Pasko Bozic at the Manchester 2022 Taekwondo Grand Prix.

"He was winning the first bout when he got injured," Ivan Fernandez, president of the Cuban Taekwondo Federation, told JIT.

Giant of 2.02 meters and 29 years old, the Santiago native arrived at the English event with a small advantage over his first opponent, king of Europe whom he had defeated in the grand prix in Paris this year, where Alba climbed to the top of the podium.

This time the Croatian claimed victory by RSC, as the judge stopped the fight at the Manchester Arena before the regulation rounds were over.

The final day of competition at the Grand Prix saw new faces join the taekwondo elite.

On the closing day, the home crowd roared in support of their idol Caden Cunningham, who reached the final with a hard-fought victory over 2016 Olympic champion Cheick Sallah Cisse of Ivory Coast.

However, after beating Brazil's Maicon Siqueira in the first round for the title and falling in the second, the Carioca connected with a kick to the body to win him the gold.

On the way to the podium, Siqueira had beaten Emre Kutalmis Atesl, from Turkey, king of the Rome Grand Prix this 2022.

The competition, which was attended by 256 athletes from 61 countries, plus a refugee team, was a showcase for what lies ahead at the Guadalajara 2022 World Taekwondo Championships, in Mexico, from November 13 to 20.

The final of the grand prix circuit will take place in Saudi Arabia.

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