

Doubles gold medals in Caribbean table tennis tournament



Photo: ULTM

Havana, March 22 (JIT) - The Cubans won a pair of gold medals in the doubles competition of the Caribbean Table Tennis Championship in Georgetown 2023, Guyana.

Daniela Fonseca and Idalis Lovet proved indecipherable for Puerto Ricans Melanie Díaz and Dianely Ríos, whom they defeated 3-1 sets in the final, a performance praised by the president of the Cuban Table Tennis Federation, Bárbaro Oliva.

"This is Puerto Rico's top pairing. Although Adriana Diaz is their best player, she never plays in the doubles, so it could be a preview of what we will face in the next Central American and Caribbean

Games," the federation president said from the headquarters.

The Antilleans had advanced with a 3-1 set win over the Dominicans Eva Brito-Esmerleyn Castro, and then swept the Puerto Ricans Kristal Melendez-Brianna Burgos.

Andy Pereira and Jorge Moises Campos put on a thrilling show for five sets and subdued Puerto Ricans Angel Naranjo and Oscar Birriel, young stars who have shown growth in every international event.

"It was a tremendous match, those guys also play in European leagues and have climbed positions in the rankings," Oliva added before acknowledging that the Cubans had to appeal to their mastery and greater experience to secure the victory in the defining set.

"Also very important was the victory in the semifinals over the top pairing from Puerto Rico. That tells us it was a good day," confessed the also national commissioner of this sport in allusion to the match in which they defeated Brian Afanador and Daniel Gonzalez 3-1.

Cuba depended on another duo in each gender. Liván Martínez and Adrián Pérez lost in the semifinals to Naranjo and Birriel and won the bronze medal.

Lizdainet Rodriguez and Estela Crespo could not advance to the decisive instances, losing in their first match to Melanie and Dianely.

What happened on Tuesday night at the Georgetown National Gymnasium had the flavor of a rematch, because in the morning there was a medal dispute in the mixed doubles and the combination of Daniela-Moisés was not effective against Melanie-Daniel.

They lost the match for the gold by 0-3 sets, without showing their best game and insecure in the key moments of the match, according to the appreciation of the Antillean federation.

During the day, the assembly of the Caribbean Table Tennis Confederation was also held, which included in the agenda the election process. The delegates ratified Teddy Matwus, from St. Lucia, for a last term as president and appointed Oliva as first vice-president.

The single-elimination single-sex event is scheduled for Wednesday. One day later, the team competitions that will define the region's quotas for the Santiago 2023 Pan American Games will begin.

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