

Cubans warm up muscles close to the World Athletics Championships



Budapest, August 17 (Jit) - Throwing, jumping and running sections marked the first contact of the Cubans with the training and competition facilities that from next Saturday will host in this city the XIX World Championships in Athletics 2023.

Hammer thrower Ronald Mencía and discus throwers Mario Díaz and Silinda Morales dedicated the afternoon to technical executions, while in the jumping area Lázaro Martínez, Cristian Nápoles and Liadagmis Povea adjusted details for their initial presentations.

"I am discovering something new, impressed to be here next to figures that I only knew by their names and results," commented to JIT Mencía, a debutant in these matters and with the responsibility of opening the way for Cuba in the stadium of the National Athletics Center of Hungary.

"I have assimilated that I must show myself more active in the competition, try to do it as if I were in our stadium," added the Spiritua native, barely 20 years old and fourth place in the recent XXIV Central

American and Caribbean Games of San Salvador 2023.

In the men's hammer throw, 37 contestants from 22 countries were registered, including one of the legends of this specialty, Poland's Pawel Fajdek, winner of the four previous editions. Now he does not appear as the leader of the ranking.

That privilege is enjoyed by his compatriot and Olympic champion in Tokyo 2020, Nowicki Wojciech, thanks to a record of 81.92 meters. Four other hammers are placed between him and Pawel, who this year has a top mark of 78.10 meters. Mencia, with 76.66 meters in his record, would have to approach that mark on the opening date to advance to the final.

For Mario and Silinda, trained by Hilda Elisa Ramos, finishing in the top 12 is also a huge challenge. In the men's competition, scheduled for Saturday evening, Mario will have the urgency to surpass his personal best of 65.21 meters to reserve a place among the finalists.

Silinda's turn will come a day later. She will take on her second foray into these events in a different way, with more maturity and expectations. "I have worked on technical details during the last few weeks and I believe that reaching the final is possible," she assured.

Lázaro and Cristian are also counting down the hours for their debuts, so they are accelerating their conditioning in order to arrive in the best possible shape for a long-awaited moment, scheduled shortly after the opening ceremony.

Both have reached world finals. Lázaro won last year's universal indoor competition and Cristian was one spot away from the podium in the outdoor edition of London 2017.

The rest of the Cuban armada also "warmed up" this day and will return on Thursday to the training scenarios arranged for the more than 2 thousand athletes who must attend the event.

Budapest is already hosting a party animated by the best in athletics on the planet, a prelude to what we will be able to enjoy at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

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