

Cuba's Alejandro Parada shows his talent and advances to the long jump final

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Havana, August 23 (RHC) - Young Alejandro Parada qualified this Wednesday for the long jump final at the World Athletics Championships Budapest 2023 with a jump of 8.13m (+2.5), fifth among all the contestants.

19 years old and native of Palma Soriano in the province of Santiago de Cuba, the recent champion of the Centrocariibes of San Salvador was only surpassed by four other jumpers with much more experience.

With a great jump of 8.54m, the best mark of the season, Jamaican Pinnock led the qualifying round, in which 38 jumpers were divided into two groups.

He was followed by China's Jianan Wahg (8.34), Olympic and world champion Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece (8.25) and Jamaica's McLeod (8.19).

For the talented Cuban jumper it was his debut in adult world championships, after winning silver in last year's U-20 in Cali, Colombia.

"I already overachieved. The first goal was to get to the final and there we are. I had no pressure at all. Now that we are there, we have to set another goal," Parada told the Cuban press envoy to the World Cup, Eyleen Ríos.

He added that in the final he will give "his best" although he made it clear that he already feels he has achieved an "excellent performance".

"I feel good and I would like to leave here with a personal best - his record is 8.15 -", added the student of Iván Izaguirre and guided in Budapest by Yoelbis Quesada.

Asked about his feelings on seeing himself among the best in the world, he responded with humility and firmness.

"Inside I was saying to myself: you are number one, the marks don't matter. You are here to surpass yourself and you don't have to think about what others have. That mentality has helped me a lot," he remarked," said Parada, noting that he competed without any pressure.

For his coach, Parada shows a "good technical development" for his young age and stands out for his "level of concentration and commitment".

Izaguirre considers him one of the talents of Cuban athletics, he considered and highlighted that in the flight phase he performs a difficult technique of two and a half (steps)", the same used by the phenomenal Pedroso and other Cuban jumpers such as Juan Miguel, Maykel Massó and Ibrahim Camejo, all Olympic medalists.

The long jump is one of the most awarded specialties of Cuban athletics in outdoor world championships with seven medals and the one that has won the most gold medals (4), all of them by Iván Pedroso.

Parada's classification is, so far, the best for Cuba on Wednesday, in the absence of the evening program, in which Leyanis Perez and Liadagmis Povea will be in the triple jump classification.

In the morning, neither Rose Almanza (sixth in her 800m heat), nor Yunisleidy García (sixth in her 200m heat), nor Eduardo Nápoles Bandera (5.35m in pole vault) were able to advance in their respective events.

Cuba's jumping area has been shining so far in the world championship. To the medals of Lázaro Martínez Santrayll and Cristian Nápoles must be added the meritorious fourth place of Luis Zayas in high jump, with his lifetime best (2.33), and now the qualification of Parada to the long jump final.

On Tuesday, the high jump event was won by the Italian Olympic champion Gianmarco Tamberi, who finished with 2.36, tied with the American JuVaughn Harrison, although the Italian was favored because he had fewer faults.

Tuesday's surprise was given by 25-year-old American Laulauga Tausaga, who arrived in Budapest eighth in the international ranking, and took the gold medal in discus, snatching from her throne the previous champion, China's Bin Feng, and the other contender as favorite to win, her compatriot Valarie Allman.

Tausaga surprised in the fifth throw with 69.49 meters, her personal best, improving significantly her previous best (65.46).

Among Wednesday's finals is the 400m, in which the Dominican Marileidy Paulino will go in search of her first gold medal, after the silver in Eugene 2022, where she also took gold with the mixed 4x400 relay.

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