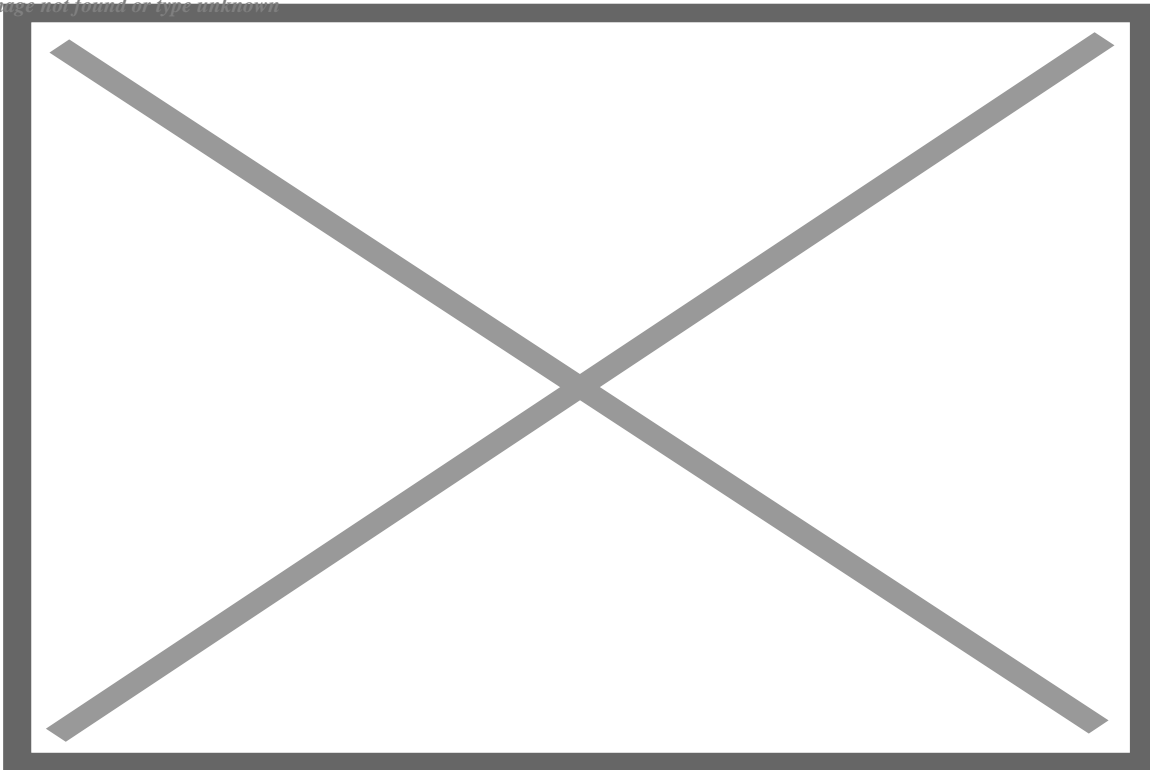


Onel Hernandez is not at 100 and will miss games against Honduras

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Havana, October 7 (JIT)-- Onel Hernandez will not be with the Cuban national team in the 2023-2024 CONCACAF Nations League matches against Honduras, in which the team led by Yunielys Castillo will play for its future in the A level.

The last-minute decision does not respond to a refusal of the player to represent his country, but to totally circumstantial issues as he clarified.

"I am not at 100%, I have felt again the hand injury in training and that is why I am not playing regularly at the club. I'm not ready to contribute to the national team," he explained.

In view of his absence to the last calls of the national team, the player also discarded that it is about his refusal to represent Cuba, "whoever says that does not know me, I am Cuban and I want to play with my national team".

The Norwich City striker clarifies that he has had an unfortunate season and has been haunted by injuries, which prevented him from playing with the national team.

However, he expresses his desire to play for the senior team.... "I have talked to Yunielys and told her that I want to play with the national team, that I am motivated to be there by her project and her philosophy of soccer, but I don't think I can help at this time."

"I want to be there and I will return to the national team, but I want to do it when I am fit and able to contribute," said the player.

In any case, his absence is an important loss considering the planning for these crucial matches against an opponent qualitatively superior to those faced previously in this competition.

"Onel is a very important player, on this and previous occasions we did everything possible so that he could be with us and it could not happen," said AFC general secretary Miguel Angel Diaz.

"This time we thought that he would finally return with the team and until the last minute we were confident of his presence, but the player explained to us that he is not 100% and that he prefers not to participate on this occasion, a decision that we respect," said the also head coach of the National Football Committee.

The repercussion of his inclusion is positive for the Cuban team, hence the idea of bringing him to play in less important roles...

"We tried to negotiate his presence, even if it was to play 20 or 25 minutes as a revulsive, but he prefers to return in full form and we respect his decision," added the manager.

"There has been no friction with him, neither in the Nations League nor in the Gold Cup. There doesn't have to be now. He has expressed his desire to represent the country and we believe he has a lot to contribute to our team. When he is ready, the doors of the national team will be open to him," Diaz concluded.

The Cuban eleven will have to focus on the tough match against the Hondurans on October 12 and 15. Their permanence at the highest level of the competition of nations at the area level will depend on the results they can obtain.

In previous matches, the national team has shown order and defensive solidity. With more minutes played, they should be more organized in their back lines.

On the attacking front, Yasnier Matos, William Pozo, scorer of the goal that gave Cuba the victory against Suriname, and captain Luis Javier Paradela will have to play a leading role.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/deportes/336037-onel-hernandez-is-not-at-100-and-will-miss-games-against-honduras>



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