Yunisleidy Garcia puts Cuba back on the sprint throne 32 years on

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Santiago de Chile, November 1 (RHC) - Cuba's Yunisleidy Garcia put Cuba back on the throne of the hectometer in the Pan American Games, after a long wait of more than three decades.

23 years old and involved in her best season, Yunisleidy became the second Cuban woman to dominate the 100m in Pan American Games (11.36 sec), after Liliana Allen reigned in Havana 91.

In Tuesday's final she clearly surpassed Jasmine Abrams of Guyana (11.52) and Trinidadian Olympic and world finalist Michelle Lee Ahye (11.53).

"I was focused like never before, because I knew I could reach the gold medal. I went out fast with the shot, which is the worst thing I have, but I have been improving, and everything went well," Garcia told reporters in the mixed zone of the Julio Martinez Stadium in the Chilean capital.

Yunisleidys stressed that with the conditions seen in the semifinal (11.53), she always knew she could reach a medal. "I have trained a lot for this great result," said the sprinter native of Remedios, in Villa Clara.
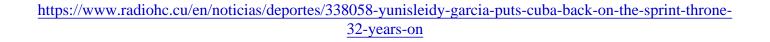
"I don't like to underestimate my rivals, but I always thought I could be champion. When I stood at the start I said to myself, I'm here, now I'm going to give it my all", added the athlete, whose great dream is to be an Olympic finalist in the 100m.

Her coach, José Feliciano Biliers, praised his student's work in the final. "I saw her very well, combative and technical," he said.

"We had planned a bronze, but in the morning when we saw that the American was not there we said, let's go for the gold."

"Very soon she will go under 11 seconds. Improving a little bit some muscular planes and the technical level I think she is in conditions to run 10.90 or 10.88 soon and with that to be included in an Olympic final," he said.

Yunisleidy García's title was the first for Cuban athletics in Santiago 2023 and the 14th gold medal for the island's delegation, which is now in sixth place by nations.

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