

# *Cuba sweeps France in boxing duel*

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Havana, April 6 (JIT)-- Cuba found a perfect response from established and up-and-coming youngsters to beat France on Friday in the eight bouts disputed by its male boxing squads in a billboard organized in the famous Varadero beach resort.

In a bout witnessed by the president of Inder, Osvaldo Vento Montiller, and the French ambassador to the island, Laurent Burin Des Roziers, the two-time Olympic champions Julio Cesar La Cruz (92 kg) and Arlen Lopez (80 kg) led a team that signed all the successes by 5-0.

Julio repeated his dominance over Soheb Bouafia, his victim in a similar event held last year, when the now visitor acted as host in the city of Tremblay, and Arlen overcame the European champion in the U-22 category, Cesar Yorelin.

The evening, hosted by the Brisas del Caribe hotel, had an exciting start contributed by the world third Alejandro Claro (51 kg), who did not believe in the greater record of a Billal Bennama owner of three medals at that level (one silver and two bronze).

"I dedicated the first round to study him, because we had never faced each other, and in the following rounds I decided to go all out, because I have worked very well in my preparation", explained the local, who was accurate in all three distances and scored more and better.

Then, the universal runner-up Saidel Horta (57 kg) "walked" the number two of the old continent Samuel Kistohurry and Rolando Martinez (57 kg) added another interesting outcome as a sign of progression by disposing of the number three of the orb Samuel Kistohurry.

"I went up with the confidence that comes from training well, which allowed me to fulfill the plan against a man with more competitive experience," said Martinez after a work that projected him solid in the transition from medium to long distance and in his straight punching.

Jorge Cuellar (71 kg) won without problems at the expense of Makan Traoré, bronze medalist at the European Games, and then came the joy of Arlen and Julio, as a reward for performances that left very little margin to their opponents.

The former, with attacks marked by clear punches, "to make the difference from the beginning, although we still lack in the preparation to get to Paris", and his partner faithful to mobility in terms of defense and an offense that grew with the clash.

"It was a fight with good tactics on the part of both, because their coach is a Cuban who knows my style, and the important thing was to prove that we are moving towards the main objective, which is the third Olympic gold," said the captain of the Antillean squad.

In one of the most awaited moments of the night, the runner-up Fernando Arzola (+92 kg) took revenge for what happened in Tremblay by defeating Djamil Aboudou with a protection count in the second round.

And to top it all off, another world silver medalist Erislandy Alvarez (63.5 kg) showed his strength against Robert Grau, a last-minute substitute for triple champion and Olympic runner-up Sofiane Oumiha, who was suffering from muscle discomfort.

The day put an end to a lively camp with competitors from seven countries, as part of the preparation for the Olympic Games under the five rings.

## RESULTS

51 kg: Alejandro Claro (CUB) 5-0 to Billal Bennama (FRA)

57 kg: Saidel Horta (CUB) 5-0 to Lounes Hanraqui (FRA)

57 kg: Rolando Martinez (CUB) 5-0 to Samuel Kistohurry (FRA)

71 kg: Jorge Cuellar (CUB) 5-0 Makan Traoré (FRA)

80 kg: Arlen Lopez (CUB) 5-0 Cesar Yorelin (FRA)

92 kg: Julio Cesar La Cruz (CUB) 5-0 Soheb Bouafia (FRA)

+92 kg: Fernando Arzola (CUB) 5-0 Djamil Aboudou (FRA)

63,5 kg: Erislandy Alvarez (CUB) 5-0 to Hugo Robert Grau (FRA).



**Radio Habana Cuba**