

Swimmers Becali and Falcón Jr. to compete in Paris 2024

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Andrea Becali
Photo: JIT

Havana, Jul 3 (JIT) - Swimmers Andrea Becali and Rodolfo Falcón Junior will compete in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games thanks to the World Aquatics universal invitation, bringing Cuba's total number of athletes to 53.

Both deserved the places for their records in 200 meters freestyle (02:00.70) and 1 500 (15:49.72), respectively, which validated 817 and 771 points for the time table in relation to the world record of the event in question.

To achieve such designations, according to World Aquatics regulations, they must not exceed 30 years of age or have previously participated in two Olympic Games without making the A mark required by that federation.

"The news is wonderful, I think that both athletes in their trajectory have deserved it, in our case there were no miracles, they were the ones who participated in the World Junior Championship in 2019 and were preparing together with Luis Vega and Elisbet Gámez for the Tokyo 2020 Games," their coach Luisa María Mojarrieta expressed to JIT.

"I feel happy for them, both have sacrificed for years for swimming and have given us with effort and dedication the intention to achieve a purpose of greater value. Their physical effort and sacrifice has never been little, and that one is hard because it is mental," she acknowledged.

The experienced technician expressed her gratitude to World Aquatics, the Cuban Olympic Committee and the federation of this sport for trusting Andrea and Rodolfo all the time.

"In turn, I thank them both for giving me the opportunity to live another Olympic experience, now with them. For me the most important thing is that they will be part of these Games and that they will live those beautiful moments. I am sure that they will participate with the pride of doing their best", she said.

Lulu, as she is affectionately known, will be present at her fifth Summer Olympic Games. In Beijing 2008, she accompanied athletes Heisy Villarreal and Pedro Medel; in London 2012, Hanser García and Pedro Medel; and in Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020, Elisbet Games and Luis Vega.

For her part, Andrea Becali expressed that "dreams do come true, I feel many mixed emotions, proud of the athlete I have become and of achieving every goal proposed since I was promoted to the national team at 13 years of age".

"It has not been an easy road, but it has been worth the daily effort, the passion, the dedication, the discipline, every tear, every trial, every obstacle I overcame has shaped me to take steps and learn from them," she emphasized.

"I want to thank my mother for teaching me to be strong and brave, even when all seemed lost, she is the engine of my life. To my father for his teachings and advice, and being my example of perseverance and overcoming, as well as to my two sisters, who have meant a lot to me," she stressed.

Andrea especially acknowledged the support of her coach Lulu, for fighting and believing in her in a path that has not been easy, as well as the psychologist, friends, teammates and all those who in one way or another have had to do with her preparation over the years.

"This is a great start to continue fighting to achieve greater performances," she said.

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