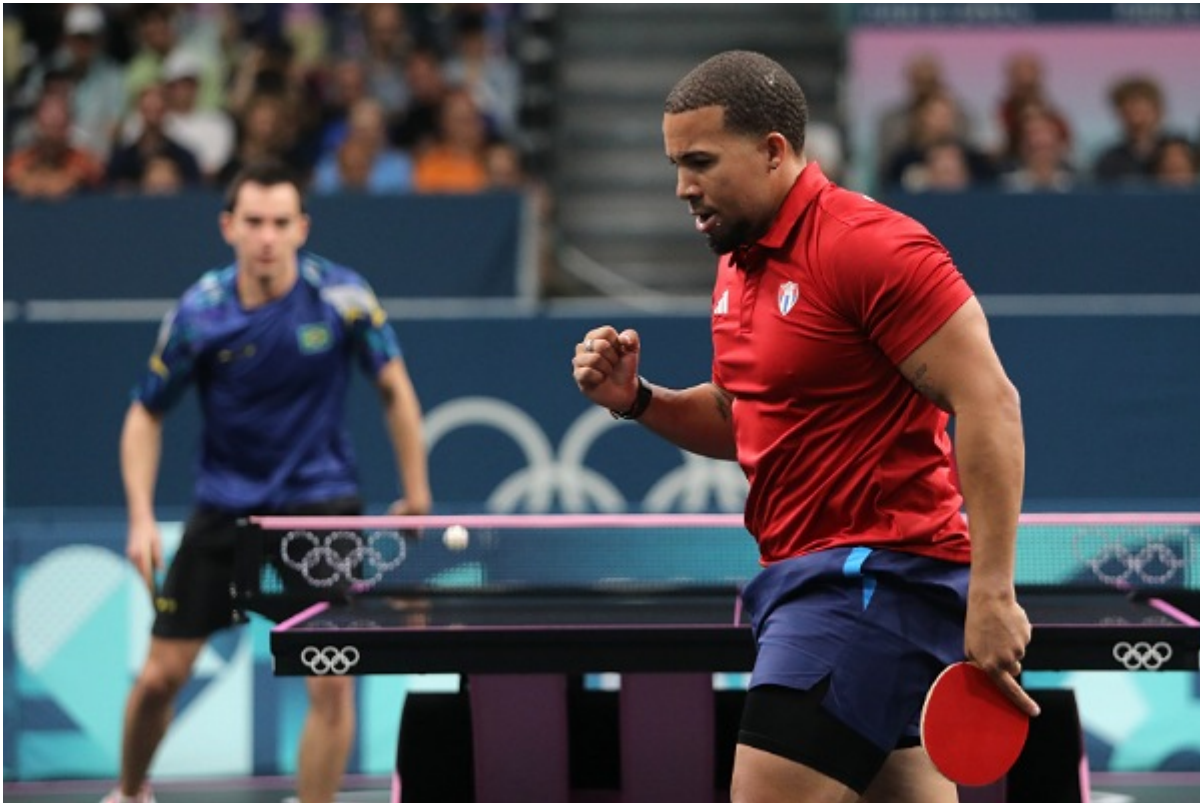


Tennis player Andy Pereira enjoyed his third Olympic foray



Andy Pereira

Paris, Jul 29 (JIT) - Every defeat is different and the one suffered on Sunday by Cuban Andy Pereira may be the least painful of his career. The considered as the best Cuban tennis player of all time said goodbye in this city to his third Olympic experience, reason enough to return home with his head held high.

The person responsible for his farewell at the Paris Arena Sud was none other than the Brazilian Hugo Calderano, like the Havana native, the greatest, but in America. The fact that he could not win a set (0-4) does not take away the shine of Andy's performance, who, as in the final of the Pan American Games of Santiago 2023, turned to his best arsenal and at times gave the feeling that he could sustain the challenge.

"I tried and I think it was a better match than Chile. I went out from the beginning to look for him, I didn't think about which opponent he was... but it's not for nothing that he's number six in the world," Andy assured, after seeing his options diluted with scores of 8-11, 7-11, 9-11, 9-11, 4-11.

"He is a player who constantly changes his tactics. Just when I thought I was adapting, he came up with something new, surprised me and managed to take control of the match", said the reigning continental runner-up, who beyond what happened on the Parisian night, has reason to say goodbye to his cycle with the best of smiles.

Individual champion in the Central American and Caribbean Games of San Salvador 2023, winner in doubles along with Jorge Moises Campos in the Pan American multi-sport event... titles that are an important part of his most recent achievements.

"These last two years have been the best of my career. All this has come when I had thought about retiring. I even stayed away from the tables for a while... I came back and life rewarded me with this great result," he confesses, now that perhaps the idea of putting the racquet away for good is once again on his mind.

"I would say it was a reward for my perseverance. I also managed to be among the top 60 in the world, something I also didn't achieve before," he acknowledges, while thanking the many who supported him throughout the journey, which previously went through the Olympic editions of London 2012 and Rio de Janeiro 2016.

"This time the draw did not favor me. But I'm happy for my performance, for the support I've had from Inder, from the Cuban federation, for all the people who follow my career."

"Thanks to them I got the strength to rethink my retirement and this year 2024 is dedicated to all of them, to those who gave me the strength and told me "come on, you can do it"... and they were right," he adds.

Andy lost this Sunday in Paris... he did it against one of the best in the world, leaving flashes of enormous mastery in each of the sets, only within reach of the greatest in the sport. He gave the best of his talent in each set, giving battle... enjoying.

"If tomorrow I decide to retire, the truth is that I will leave happy... if tomorrow I do, it will always be with more than what I dreamed of one day. So I will always leave happy", he emphasizes without stopping smiling, as if to leave no doubt about what he feels at this moment.

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