

Boxing 4-4 and marks Cuba's Olympic passage to Tokyo-2020

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Tokyo, July 28 (RHC)-- Boxing continued to report chapters of happiness for Cuba in Tokyo 2020, as the island's two fighters who took to the ring, Arlen Lopez and Lazaro Alvarez, won on Wednesday, bringing the flagship of Cuban sport to four victories.

Of the five Cubans who competed in three disciplines on the day, the only ones who came out on top were the boxers, as neither judo nor beach volleyball were able to win.

Double Olympic bronze medalist Lazaro Alvarez (57 kg) defeated Daniyal Shahbakhs of Iran by RSC in the second round to move to within one win of securing a medal and continue on his way to Olympic gold.

Dubbed "The Prince of Boxing," the Doha-2015 world champion also landed the best punches from the beginning of the fight against a fighter who showed speed and good moves, but was stopped due to a facial injury.

Another success was achieved by the Rio-2016 Olympic champion and world champion, Arlen Lopez, in his new division (81 kg), when he categorically defeated the Algerian Mohammed Houmri 5-0.

In his world premiere at 81 kg, Arlen looked strong, with good physical condition and good mobility in the ring.

Judo is still not finding the winning path and on Wednesday, world runner-up Ivan Silva (90 kg) fell in his first bout in Golden Rule against Turkish Mihael Zgank, who projected him with a sacrifice technique.

Meanwhile, the Cuban beach volleyball duo of Leila Martinez and Lidiannis Echevarria found no answer to the high blocking of the Russian pair of Makroguzova and Kholomina and fell in straight sets (21-16 and 21-11).

To advance to the second round, the Cubans will have to overcome the Italians Menegati and Orzi, who were also beaten by the Australian duo of Artacho and Clancy.

Now Australia and the Russian duo, competing on behalf of the Russian Olympic Committee, are 2-0 and lead Group E, followed by Cuba and Italy, both with 0-2.

To advance to the second round, the Cubans only need to win as comfortably as possible against the Bambinas and hope to place among one of the best third places.

Tomorrow, Thursday, Cuba's main attraction will be in judo, with the presentation of Kaliema Antomarchi (78 kg).

Special thanks to Radio Havana Cuba's Raúl Rodríguez -- reporting from Tokyo, Japan -- for his news story in Spanish. ¡Gracias Raulito!

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