

Elisbet came close to national record in World Swimming Championship

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Lisbeth Gamez Photo: Roberto Morejón (taken from JIT)

Havana, December 19 (RHC)-- With another remarkable performance Elisbet Gamez closed Cuba's presentation at the XV Short Course Swimming World Championship by being only 22 tenths of a second off the national record in the 400 m freestyle on Sunday in Ilid which takes place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, until next Tuesday.

She stopped the clocks in 4:09.08 minutes, very close to erasing the best of that event on the island, which belongs to the Baracoense herself since 2018 and which is 4:08.86. She finished in 18th place.

In her debut she was sixteenth in 200 free with new domestic primacy by performing 1:57.26 and surpassing the previous one (1:58.02), equal in her possession for two years.

"I wanted to lower the 400 as well, it didn't come out what we set out to do, that's why I'm not happy," she told JIT.

Beyond the satisfaction for new marks, the most prominent of her performance was that she swam in both for an excellent amount of points, which by the FINA thousand table - close to the world record -, her times deserved 835 units (200 m) and 828 (400). The most distinguished of the Antillean quartet.

In this regard her coach Luisa María Mojarrieta pointed out that, of course she longed to break her record, but it should be noted that she does not swim that event since the 2018 world circuit when she precisely made that time.

"For me it is an exceptional performance, she has shown to be in full strength and that for the sport is a great encouragement. She is our most important athlete for the 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games," she said.

"I am very happy because despite all the problems we have been going through in addition to the covid-19 pandemic, such as the water temperature in the pools since the end of 2018, they, who are the main protagonists of this story, have proven their worth as athletes," she asserted.

Lulu, as she is affectionately called, referred to the performance on this occasion of the girls superior to that of the boys, which reinforces them with greater possibility as a team for the multisport event in El Salvador.

"Although we have Luis Vega, who was not quite good here, but his technical mark in 200 butterfly (774 points) is better than Andrea's (719 and 731). Adrián Navarro had the most discreet result, but it was good for him. He achieved 706 units in the 400 freestyle," he commented.

The 20-year-old only had international experience in the recent Junior Pan American Games in Cali, and the teacher recognizes that even though his times were discreet "I can't say he did badly".

For his part, Nelson Fernandez, national commissioner, praised the performance of Gámez today. "We knew it was difficult because the existing quota is of her own and of very good quality".

He added that "she is an athlete with a sporting shame and a huge commitment, one of those that really comes, she is sad because her goal was to improve it and to stay so close is not easy to assimilate".

"In general, I think we have had a good performance and we are showing that swimming is something to be reckoned with, that there are swimmers to look for a result in the Central American and Caribbean Games."

He declared that "we are happy with these results. We hope that our people feel the same way because despite all the difficulties we keep trying to improve and develop this sport".

"With a little more conditions to train we can achieve many things, we have talented athletes, an experienced coach and a commitment to our sport," he said.

Andrea Becali returns from this World Championship with two national firsts in her second foray in this type of event. She swam the 100 meters in 1:01.25 and the 200 meters in 2:12.01 to annul from the books among the oldest existing ones, which were 1:02.17 and 2:13.84, respectively, both imposed by Ana Maria Gonzalez in Hong Kong in April 1999.

Meanwhile, Vega stopped the clocks in 1:57.89 in 200 butterfly, very close to her own domestic record of 1:57.45 minutes. In the 100m he clocked 54.46 seconds to place 61st out of 88 contestants.

The other male representative, the 20-year-old Navarro took the 400m freestyle in 3:58.31 minutes and the 200m in 1:53.99.

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