

Cuba in three semifinals of the Giraldilla Badminton Tournament

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Yeily advanced in singles. Photo: Calixto N. Llanes (JIT)

Havana March 18 (RHC)-- Cuba assured this Friday its presence in three semifinals of the XXI International Badminton Tournament Giraldilla de La Habana 2023, which is being held at the Coliseum of the Ciudad Deportiva.

In singles, Yeily Ortiz will face Bulgaria's Hristomira Popovska after her categorical 21-14 and 21-15 victory over Guatemala's Alejandra Paiz.

After being bye at the beginning, on Thursday she defeated Canada's Aarushi in the second round by 21-4 and 21-12.

The 21-year-old Cienfuegos native has already secured one of the bronze medals, something unprecedented in her career in the individual modality of this traditional competition.

"Very important for me because I try to get as many points for the world ranking and also to fight for our badminton to return to have results in the area as years ago," she said.

Yeily herself joined racquets with Taymara Oropesa from Holguin to dominate compatriots Marislenis Montero and Nayibis Reyes (21-6 and 21-2) and advance to the semifinals.

The most experienced players of the national team will compete against the Peruvian sisters Fernanda and Rafaela Munar Solimano, who in the quarterfinals overcame Cuban newcomers Nathaly Alvarez and Charite Pazos by 21-3 and 21-6.

The other bronze medal for Cuba was secured by the mixed doubles team of Diosbel Tamayo and Nayibis Reyes, who defeated their teammates Reidan Cervantes and Charite Pazos in sets of 17-21, 21-14, 21-17.

This Saturday they will have a difficult duel in the semifinals against Guatemalans Christopher Martinez and Mariana Paiz.

The other match in this round will be between Samuel O'Brien and Tahila Richardson (Jamaica) and Iliyan Stoyanov and Popovska (Bulgaria).

These duos defeated the hosts, Juan Carlos Bencomo and Taymara Oropesa, and Roberto Carlos Herrera and Yeily Ortiz, respectively.

Bencomo and Taymara, in their first competition together, showed grit and harmony. After losing 19-21, they came very close to tying the challenge by imposing frank resistance until the greater experience of their opponents sealed the partial by 21-23.

"We could have won, but we lacked preparation. Anyway, Bencomo has good potential for the mixed, especially because of his size," commented to the JIT publication the medalist in the Central American and Caribbean Games of Veracruz 2014 and Barranquilla 2018, and who does not stop dreaming of new triumphs.

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