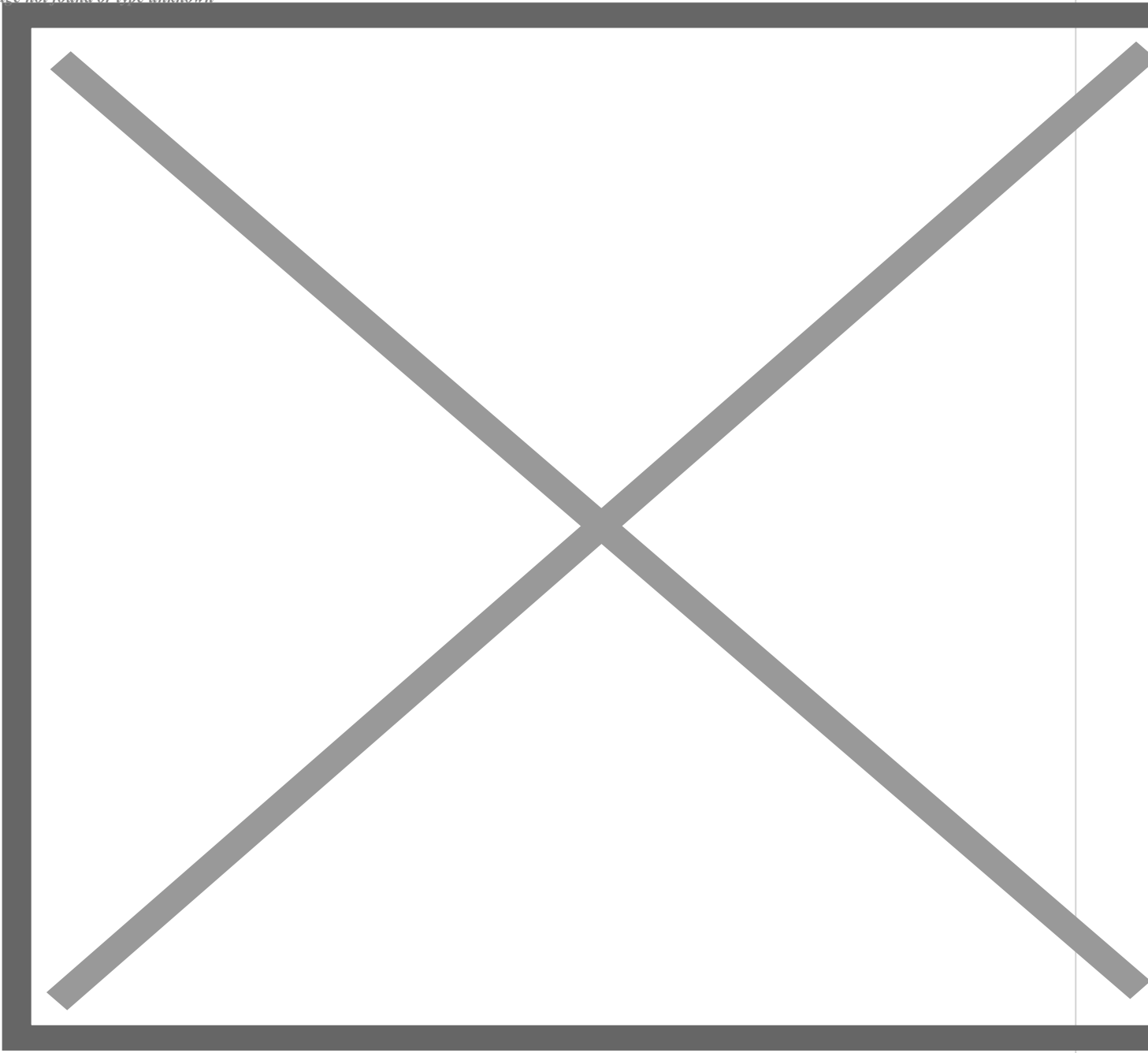


Cuban fighter aims for Gold at Paris Olympic Games

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Havana, Jun 22 (PL) Cuban 80-kilogram boxer Arlen Lopez ratified today in Paris that his goal in the Olympic Games is the gold medal, a deed that would make him a three-time champion under the five rings.

"Julio Cesar La Cruz (92) and I have that goal, for which we have prepared well," commented to Prensa Latina the 31-year-old boxer, originally from the eastern province of Guantanamo, who was crowned in the summer events of Rio de Janeiro-2016 and Tokyo-2020.

In the 120-year history of Olympic boxing, which debuted in the program in St. Louis-1904, only three fighters have climbed to the top of the podium three times, the Cubans Teófilo Stevenson and Félix Savón and the Hungarian Lazlo Papp.

According to Lopez, the preparation has been good and will have its final part on French soil, in the commune of Tremblay-en-France, as part of a project of the association Cuba Coopération France (CubaCoop) to accompany Cuban athletes qualified for the games.

All that remains to be done is to fine-tune the last details for a difficult tournament, because all athletes dream of competing in Paris-2024 and train hard for it, he said.

In this regard, he affirmed that there will be no small rival and insisted on the importance of taking each fight as a challenge and foreseeing different scenarios.

The Cuban team of five boxers that will fight in the great celebration of the sport arrived in France on Thursday and will debut in the competition on July 27, one day after the inauguration of the games that the City of Light will host for the third time in history, after the editions of 1900 and 1924.

Lopez celebrated the quality and desire for victory of the other three members of the island's squad, the young Saidel Horta (57), Erislandy Alvarez (63.5 kg) and Alejandro Claro (51), athletes averaging 22 years of age, all medalists of the last world championship, Tashkent-2023.

"They also come for the gold, to leave their name early in the Olympic Games to cheer Cuba; the ring will say the last word, but the five of us will go into it with everything," he said.

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