

Omara Durand's first gold medal at Xalapa Grand Prix

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Havana, April 28 (JIT) - Cuban Omara Durand achieved her best time of the season in the 200 meters during the Xalapa 2023 Parathletics Grand Prix, on Mexican soil.

The multi Paralympic champion in the T12 category (profoundly visually impaired) covered the distance in 23.90 seconds on Thursday to give those present at the Heriberto Jara Corona stadium her first time under 24 seconds so far this year.

Accompanied by her guide Yuniol Kindelán, the Santiago native had run the preliminary segment in 24.31 seconds, as a preview that she was in conditions to look for a good time in her next presentation. She was followed on the podium by Dominican Darlenys De la Cruz (25.03) and Manuela Jacinto (27.51), in that order.

Her coach, the experienced Miriam Ferrer, commented to JIT from the headquarters that everything went as planned because her disciple complied with the designed strategy and improved time -after the performances in Dubai (24.96) and Marrakech (24.17)- corroborate a successful return to the tracks.

Omara took the year 2022 to recharge her batteries and enjoy a little more time with her family. She then began to prepare the road to the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, announced as her last competitive foray.

Cuba was also represented in the field on Thursday by throwers Yorisan Monterrey (discus-F43) and Gerdan Fonseca (javelin-F57).

A silver medal rewarded Yorisan after scoring 39.40 meters, only surpassed by the 48.39 of Colombia's Nelson Blandon. Host Jose Luis Estrada scored 38.66 meters to take the bronze medal.

Gerdan sent the javelin to 39.70 meters from his first attempt and that assured him a place on the podium, behind the champion Edgar Barajas (42.35) and his escort Luis Alberto Gomeztagle (41.87), both of them homegrown exponents.

Felipa Hechavarría climbed to third place on the podium in the long jump, category T46, with a record of 5.23 meters. The gold medal went to Ecuador's Kiara Rodriguez (5.88 meters) and the silver medal to the United States' Taleah Williams (5.43 meters).

This Friday, the focus will return to Omara, who will be in the 400m preliminaries shortly after noon. In the evening, she will compete in the 100m direct final.

That will be her debut in the hectometer during the current campaign and will serve to clear the path towards new reigns at the Paris 2023 World Para Athletics Championships, set for next July, and at the Santiago 2023 Parapan American Games in November.

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