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Havana, March 1 (RHC) - World volleyball mourns the death of Alexis Batte, a star for almost a decade in Italy and a member of the Cuban national team in the 1990s, who passed away on Sunday on the island victim of a painful illness.

Batte, who would have turned 52 on July 28, had recently returned from Italy to Cuba, where he was born in Villa Clara, in the central region of the island.

With the Cuban national team he won a World Cup and a World League, while since 1998 he played in Italy, where he stayed for almost a decade and played for important Serie A1 clubs such as Padua, Trentino and Piacenza.

His teammates of some years ago in the Cuban national team showed their sorrow on social networks for the untimely death of Batte, a left-footed attacker of great power.

"Brother you left us without saying goodbye. What pain the news of your departure gives me. I will always remember you with that smile, joy and respect with which I always knew you. You were an important part of my life and that of many Cuban volleyball players. We will always remember you Alexis Batte," wrote on Facebook Ihosvany Hernandez, one of his teammates and at the time one of the best central defenders in the world.

"Terrible news. All of us who knew you know the kind of person you were," wrote Osvaldo Hernandez on the specialized portal Los Leones del Voleibol Cubano, while the former DT of the national team Orlando Samuels was surprised to express "dear friend what sad news, I do not know how it happened, because we met a short time ago".

Spaniard Kike de la Fuente remembered him as "a great partner, while beach volleyball coach Leonides Regueiferos expressed "man and friend of all of us, may God rest his soul".

Likewise, the Italian Volleyball Federation, in the voice of its president, Giuseppe Manfredi, conveyed condolences for Batte's untimely death to his daughter Ilaria Batte, a member of Italy's U-21 national team.

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