
Marlies Mejías: To Olympus you get from Cuba and Through Power Shimano

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At present it can be affirmed for sure that Marlies is the most complete cyclist of our national team. To his personal record and sixth Olympic position in Omnium, must be added the crown of in the second edition of Titan Tropic of Mountain Bike, besides showing strength in route races.

She has no limits. She fights every race as her last. Her physical appearance is far from that of a cyclist shifting from route events and track events, among them Omnium, considered the strongest and her top event.

We are speaking of Marlies Mejías García, (Santiago de Cuba, December 29, 1992), but since she was little and riding a bicycle in Güira de Melena.

Her intensity put her in the crosshair of several professional clubs, until Weber Shimano Ladies Power from Argentina, with athletes from different countries of the continent, signed her in late 2016.

I keep a unique professional relationship with Marlies. I admire her perseverance and courage, I have been with her in moments of sport and psychological slump... she always agrees to speak openly. Therefore she accepted a sprint of questions and answers with Cubasí:

After almost a year of contract with Weber Shimano, how have you adapted to the group dynamics?

It was really not difficult to blend in the group's dynamics. On my arrival the board of the club told me that one of the objectives was that I would be taking the role as a leader. And fulfilling that role I had to adapt quicker.

Noticeable differences regarding the training systems you had in Cuba?

There are not many. My individual plan stayed the same, because Leonel still coordinates my system training. Of course, we have a rigorous competitive calendar planned by the Club and that system of competitions works as the

most thorough of trainings.

Successful experience in the United States. How do you assess it?

Winning in the United States, compete a notch higher, to prove myself was a great experience. Before I considered many of these route athletes outstanding, almost unreachable. Now I can say we are at the same level, especially for well-trained I arrived. The results show **Becoming the most successful cyclist in Weber Shimano bring additional pressure?**

Indeed. It's suffocating because being the team leader is great responsibility. We are talking of setting the example in the competitive ground, the image, the daily routines... for young girls as well as more experience athletes. It's easy to say, but having everyone looking up to you on your performances in a totally professional context is not easy.

Which has been the most difficult race so far?

All races are a bit difficult, but in the U.S. a very strong route was Winston Salem.

What's your opinion on Arlenis Sierra and her results with the European Astaná?

I've got that question a lot lately. Arlenis Sierra deserves all the admiration on my behalf. Her uprising has been spectacular; I think she is a great athlete and excellent route cyclist.

What are your expectations regarding your possible participation in the Titan Desert?

I'd very much like to participate in the Titan Desert because it would be a good start-off for next season. Besides giving a try against several of the best runners in Mountain Bike and cyclo-cross bikes would be also a unique opportunity.

On this regard Verónica Martínez, sport directress for Ladies Power, assured that if the Titan Desert doesn't overlap any competition of the club, there would be no problem for Marlies to run. "There are great champions who do route, MTB, cyclo-cross", said the colleague Aliet Arzola.

Do you plan to keep doing route in main events and multiple games of the present Olympic cycle?

Yes I plan to continue in both competitions, I would never discard the tracks, although after Rio de Janeiro the Omnium has removed. Now I will put more attention to the route and the Mountain Bike, but I cannot stay away from the tracks. In fact, the Central American and the Caribbean Games of Barranquilla are my next objective.

How is life and communication with the rest of the girls and the directive of the Club?

I think the communication is everything in a team. Luckily in my case and I believe that is the sensation in the general sense of all athletes of the club, that aspect is well among us and with the Club directives.

Do you feel nostalgias for mom, sister and niece?

I miss my family each passing second. The games and mischief of my niece, the energy and willpower my sister sends to me, riding next to her at times, mommy's cooking, her advice, voice and even the scolding. It's very hard to spend so much time away from them.

Ambition in this new stage of your sport career

To keep growing as a cyclist. To participate in great races and reach the next Olympic Games in full shape, the best ranking possible.

Do you feel that the politics of sportsmen's recruiting opened a path to new horizons?

It's difficult; to actually sign a contract carries along complex questions that range from reaching an agreement between **Inder**, our federation and the Club interested to many other tiny details. In any way I am grateful for the

opportunity. I think it not only opened new paths to me but to the entire sport of cycling. It's the chance to show ourselves. Arlenis and I, in Cuba there are other girls who are very good. It would be fine if they experienced the concept of professionalism in its entire dimension, to improve and realize how crucial is the team work in the route, the strategies, and escapes, to put your strength in function of another athlete, everything...

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