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Rolando Acebal: Cuban boxing and its nautical chart in 2018

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Guantanamo's Rolando Acebal is a coach who knows where to direct the objectives of the Cuban boxing squad.

He talks about baseball and feels it like all Cubans passionate about sports. He keeps his deeply-rooted local accent and asserts that one of the keys for success of our boxing school lies in coordination, that grace or kind of dance that is in our genes and the way in which our boxers translate it into the ring.

He heads our squad since 2010, talks slowly, as if thoroughly thinking about every word and agreed to dialogue with CubaSi before the second match of the Cuba Domadores vs. the Uzbek Tigers, belonging to the C2 of the 8th World Series Boxing:

**Do you intend to keep the first figures throughout the regular stage of the 8th Series? It's something that has been questioned before...**

"In these first matches we will present the winners of the last Playa Giron Tournament, except the +91 kg division, where Jose Angel Larduet returns, because Erislandy Savon returned to 91 kg. Then, on the road, we will go handling changes, in tune with the potentialities that we have in each category.

The intention is to attend well prepared to win back the Series title.

“In the case of the Uzbeks, it is good to have them in the group. Their status as Rio de Janeiro Olympic champs, in addition to the fact that this country is one of the main powers in world boxing at present, contributes us rivalry and an important meter, even when they did not present in this first match their first men, except super heavyweight Jalalov.

“It is a team of remarkable quality and being at home always gave us the idea to go out to sweep, because despite starting the Series our boys are well prepared, resulting from a high-level Giron, especially in the semifinal and final bouts”.

### **The strategy with Julio Cesar la Cruz thinking of Barranquilla too?**

“We must take into account several factors with Julio: the main thing is his health, we cannot take him to all competitions. We are talking about 12 years fighting in 81 kg, he has already reached his top performance, sports mastery and we cannot exhaust him. With that development controlling his weight too often becomes biologically complicated. That’s why; he fought in 91 kg at the Giron.

“In the important events he will fight in 81, with a strict planning, working time. In the decisive matches of the World Series he will fight in the same division, as well as in Barranquilla.

“That will be an event in which we will have to fight very accurately. Despite being Central American and Caribbean Games we cannot afford a margin of error. We will go out in pursuit of a great performance. There are countries with world-category individualities in the area. Julio Cesar himself lost once to Venezuelan Albert Ramirez. We always have a high commitment and are a regional benchmark in that competition”.

### **Are the +91 kg still the least solid division in our squad?**

“At world-elite level, yes. We dominate in the area, but when we exchange fists with the best cards from Europe we have difficulties. We are working based on the strengthening of this division. It goes through attracting athletes from cadet categories with a physical somatotype close to the ideal thing in height-weight, in order to direct the efforts towards their technical development later. For example, now at the recently finished tournament in India, Yoandy Toirac lost in semis vs. Jalalov, issue that influenced Larduet’s designation.

“That is a substantial element. Our super heavyweights have many disadvantages in that extend with the best in the planet. And a Roberto Balado seldom comes out”.

### **Ahead of the following stage and for the sake of winning the title back, how**

## **do you see your pupils?**

“We are more strengthened than in the previous season. Robeisy’s entry into the team again will surely contribute to put the seal. It’s no secret that in some divisions we need to stabilize performances. The more experienced athletes now”.

“We have hardly undergone changes in the team membership and motivations and willingness of both the technical staff and the boxers are very high. We do not sleep and are always waiting for any detail that undermines the integrity of the sportsman and affects the potentiality of the team”.

“We are always monitoring that continuity of the athlete’s life”.

## **It’s still soon, but what would be your forecast ahead of Barranquilla?**

“Objectively, we have hardnoses of the stature of Colombian Yubergen Martinez (49 kg), Olympic runner-up, who has beaten our first figure Jhoannys Argilagos twice. Venezuela has Finol (52), bronze medallist in Rio de Janeiro 2016. Also included is Dominican Dos Santos, a 56 kg-boxer with many resources. In spite of that, we have planned to pick up no less than 8 golds”.

Always with the bar very high. A lightning fist exchange in which tied: Acebal with his calmness, while I was moving fast and striking him with jabs of questions. The verdict: an unquestionable draw and search for constant success for our flagship.

**Translated by Jorge Mesa Benjamin / Cubasi Translation Staff**

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