

Name: Juan Carlos Lemus García.

Date of Birth: February 6, 1965.

Birth Place: Pinar del Río, Cuba.

Nationality: Cuban

Occupation: Boxer

Titles: National, Central American, Pan American, World and Olympic Champion.

Juan Carlos Lemus García. Former Cuban boxer, Olympic champion in Barcelona (1992), world monarch in Sydney (1991) and in multiple tournaments organized by the International Amateur Boxing Federation (AIBA).

First Steps in Boxing

He was born on February 6, 1965 in the province of Pinar del Río.

Early boxing enthusiast, he stood out in the National School Games and in several youth tournaments, in which he showed his skills.

In 1985 he debuted in the Girón Beach Tournament in Nueva Gerona, where he lost in the semifinals, in the 67 kilogram division, against the experienced Candelario Duvergel, Pan American starting line-up in Caracas (1983). Months later, in the final round of the Giraldo Córdova Cardín International Boxing Tournament, in Ciego de Ávila, he gave up again by unanimous decision of the judges (0-5) against Duvergel, to finish with a silver medal.

Entry in the national preselection

In the same year he represented his country at the World Youth Championship in Bucharest, where he showed the power of his punch with both hands. His first opponent, Finnish Jukka Rouvinen, was given RSC (Referee Suspende Combate) in the opening round. Then, the Polish Mariusz Kujawa received from Lemus a fulminant knockout a few minutes after the start of the lawsuit.

To the Canadian Gabriel Downey, the referee stopped the fight also in the first round. In the semifinals, Lemus knocked down the German federal Hans Mieling, who was decreed the KO within minutes of the start of the lawsuit. This amazing work of the young Cuban fighter was reflected by the Romanian press with great headlines. For the gold medal, Lemus and Bulgarian Angel Stoianov engaged in a violent battle of constant exchange. The European stoically endured all three rounds

and won the 3-2 verdict. However, this was an important result in the young Pinar del Río's incipient sporting career.

He took part in the 1986 Girón Beach Tournament in Havana, in which he lost by points again in the fight for the title against Candelario Duvergel, who months later would win the silver medal at the World Championship in Reno, United States, losing 2-3 to the American Kenneth Gould. However, Lemus was the representative of his division in the two Cuba-United States tops that took place at the end of that year. In the first, in the city of Lake Charles, he imposed his boxing precisely against Kenneth Gould, and in the second, in the city of Sacramento, he provided a spectacular KO to Frank Liles in the initial assault.

Consecration as a great champion

However, the gold medal in the national tournaments Playa Girón was evaded by Juan Carlos Lemus as long as his rival was the consecrated Candelario Duvergel - his main opponent in Cuba in the 67-kilogram division - who defeated him again in 1987, by points, in the final round of the Holguín edition. In the Giraldo Córdova Cardín tournament of the same year, in Santa Clara, Duvergel fought in the 63.5 kilogram division by decision of the national boxing commission, clearing the way for Lemus, who won the gold medal by defeating Alfredo Duvergel Adams, 5-0. With that result he won the right to attend the Pan American Games in Indianapolis in the welter, because his eternal rival would do it in the immediate lower division.

Indianapolis Pan American Games in 1987

In Indianapolis he knocked out Patrick Rose (Jamaica) in the second round; then he surpassed RSCH (Referee Suspende Combate por golpe a la cabeza), in the second, Wayne Richards, from Islas Virgenes, and for the pass to the final, he made Pedro Frías leave for an injury, in the final round. Once again he had to fight in the final fight with the American Kenneth Gould, whom he defeated 4-1, to become Pan American champion.

Results in National, International, Girón Beach and Central American Tournaments

In 1988 he won the Girón Beach Tournament, held that year in Sancti Spíritus. In the decisive fight he defeated Alfredo Duvergel, by decision of the judges. However, in the tournament Giraldo Córdova Cardín de Las Tunas was defeated once again, 0-5, by Candelario Duvergel, promoted to the 67 kilogram division, who was selected to represent Cuba in the Central American Championship of the discipline, in Guatemala, where he finished in first place in the welter division.

In early 1989, Lemus lost the national championship in Guantánamo to Duvergel, 1-4, in the 67-kilogram division, but in the Giraldo Córdova Cardín in Pinar del Río he defeated Juan Hernández Sierra, 5-0, as his fiercest opponent had dropped to light welter weights (63.5

kilograms). Mas Hernández Sierra was selected to represent his country at the Central American and Caribbean Games in the Dominican Republic, where he won the gold medal in combat against Julio César Green (Dominican Republic), by unanimous decision of the judges.

In 1990, Juan Carlos Lemus left the welter division and moved on to the 71-kilogram division. Despite having triumphed over Pedro Duarte in the 1990 Girón Beach Tournament in Cienfuegos, he was not selected for the Central American and Caribbean Games in Mexico City. Alfredo Duvergel was in charge of representing Cuba at that regional event, where he won the gold medal. However, in November of the same year, Lemus appeared in one of the phases of the Boxing World Cup in the Indian city of Bombay. In the 71-kilogram division, he defeated Robin Reid (Great Britain) by points and Mukund Killekar (India) by RSC-4. In the semifinals, he made Ole Klemetsen (Norway) leave in the fifth round, and for the gold medal he had Raymond Downey (Canada), 21-6.

#### Pan American Games in Havana in 1991

He was crowned at the 1991 Pan American Games in Havana, when he defeated Puerto Rican Miguel Jiménez in the final bout, for being blunt out of bout. The technical commission selected him for the World Cup in Sydney, Australia, despite having lost in the Girón Beach Tournament, against Alfredo Duvergel, and in the Giraldo Córdova Cardín, against Eduardo Correa.

In the World Championship he gave RSC-3, in his first fight, to the democratic Korean Ki Soo Choi; later he defeated, 19-8, the New Zealander Sililo Figota, and for the pass to medals he defeated the Nigerian David Defiagbon, 23-13. In the semifinals he gave RSC-2 to the German Torsten Schmitz, and in the final fight he defeated one of the best fighters in the world in his division, the Soviet Israel Akopkokhyan, 26-11.

#### Entering Olympic Glory

Two consecutive defeats to Alfredo Duvergel in 1992 cast doubt on his participation in the XXV Olympic Games in Barcelona, but the technical committee finally selected him. In the division of 71 kilograms he had an unfavourable draw at the top of the organisation chart, but he was not discouraged. First they convincingly beat Arkadi Topoev of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS, which brought together the fighters from the former Soviet republics) 11-0. The German Marcus Beber did not finish a single round before him, and lost by RSCH. The Latvian Igors Saplavskis could only score two effective blows, while the Cuban gave him twelve, to obtain the verdict in his favor. With that performance he was sure of the bronze medal. In the semifinals he defeated the Hungarian Gyorgy Mizsei, 10-2, and in the final he won with a 6-1 victory over the Dutch Orhan Delibas. In his five fights,

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all against European fighters, he only allowed five effective blows, according to the judges; a real feat.

Latest results as a great boxer

He still lacked the title in Central American and Caribbean Games, in search of which was presented in the appointment of Ponce, Puerto Rico (1993), where RSCH won his three fights against Luis Bastardo (Venezuela), Jose Luis Quiñones (Puerto Rico) and Alberto Zorrilla (Dominican Republic), demonstrating once again the power of his punch with both hands. But that would be his last victory in the ring, because months later, in the Girón Beach Tournament in Matanzas, he received a knockout from his main rival, Alfredo Duvergel, which marked his definitive retirement from the sport.

Juan Carlos Lemus was an elegant and technical boxing fighter, with the complementary advantage of a powerful hit with both hands. He went on to win all the titles conferred by the International Amateur Boxing Federation (AIBA), and was chosen as one of Cuba's 100 best athletes in the last century.