



## Polytechnic pride present at the

### Paris 2024 Olympic Games

**Araceli Ornelas Caballero, a graduate of CECyT 13 "Ricardo Flores Magón", will participate as a judge in the taekwondo discipline**

ENRIQUE SOTO

**A**t the Paris 2024 Olympics, which will bring together the best athletes from around the world, taekwondo athlete and a distinguished graduate of the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN), Araceli Ornelas Caballero, will proudly wave the flags of Mexico and IPN by participating as a judge in this discipline. This event will be etched in the history of sports for this institution and our country, as she is one of the few Mexican women to have achieved such a feat.

Politécnico and taekwondo intersected in Araceli Ornelas' life at the age of 15, when she entered the Centro de Estudios Científicos y Tecnológicos (CECyT) 13 "Ricardo Flores Magón," where she learned what it means to be a dedicated Politécnica and had her first encounter with this Korean martial art.

#### **IPN and taekwondo in Her Veins**

"The Poli," as Araceli affectionately calls it, represents prestige, education, and high academic standards, but above all, "has been my family. Here, I found my best friends and this martial art that became a part of my life. Many people said that taekwondo was a hobby, but once it gets into your veins, it never leaves; just like Politécnico, once you enter, you never stop representing it."





The athlete, originally from Mexico City, appreciates that IPN offers comprehensive education, allowing many young people like her to find their destiny in both their athletic and professional development. For Araceli, taekwondo professor José Luis Onofre, who led the national team and coordinated this discipline at IPN, was her inspiration to become a referee.

She recalled that when Professor Onofre led the national team, many Olympic medals were achieved. "I was part of that process; I started when the professor was forming the pool of Olympic athletes. Seeing

the medals coming to Mexico made me feel super fortunate because he gave us close access to those results," she emphasized.

She acknowledged that the taekwondo path, although challenging, has its rewards: "Many times, you have to be up very early, leave very late; spend many hours at the same event as a competitor and even more as a referee."



She paused and, with a big smile, confessed that her family has been motivating support throughout her sports career: "My mom and my older brother are also IPN graduates; they affectionately call me 'ratona.' My dad and my son are the ones who have supported me on this journey. They have always believed in my passion."

Another important figure for her is Professor Rosa María Adam Tovar from Nuevo León, who was the first Mexican referee to participate in the Olympic Games. She also shared her admiration for taekwondo athlete María del Rosario Espinoza, who has won three medals in three editions of the Olympics.

In 2004, Araceli Ornelas achieved her first certification as an official taekwondo referee. She mentioned that to become a referee, she had to undergo extensive preparation, which included theoretical knowledge of the rules and practical application in the combat area.

#### Technology and Taekwondo

La The taekwondo athlete, who holds a Third Dan black belt and completed a degree in International Business at the Escuela Superior de Comercio y Administración (ESCA), Santo Tomás Unit, stated that incorporating technology has been crucial in the evolution of this martial art to offer a more accurate assessment of what happens in the combat area. She added that the World Taekwondo Federation decided to apply technology to eliminate the subjectivity and bias with which each referee used to score.

To young people about to join Politécnico and those who want to practice a sport, Araceli Ornelas left this message: "See taekwondo as a way to advance in life. In referee preparation, my colleagues have also become my family. Many people from IPN, various entities in the country, and even from other nations share the same passion for refereeing and this combat sport."

