

### Cuba to play Costa Rica in Quarterfinals

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Cuba defeated Puerto Rico 3-1 (25-20, 26-24, 20-25, 25-12) to finish second in pool A and will face Costa Rica in the NORCECA U20 Women's Championship quarterfinals on Thursday.

Cuba is set to face Costa Rica and Puerto Rico waits for the loser between Mexico and Dominican Republic to complete the quarterfinal round.

There was a rain delay in the first set, with Cuba recovering from a 13-16 deficit blocking Puerto Rico's spikers. Cuba controlled set two on serves for a huge 12-6 advantage but Puerto Rico was inspired and extended the set to a thriller Cuban win. Puerto Rico rallied past Cuba 14-9 winning set three 25-20. Finally Cuba decided to grab full control finishing in four. Cuba's and Puerto Rico's performance had many ups and downs.

Cuba dominated Puerto Rico with 47-27 huge advantage in kills and 13-9 margin in blocks. Puerto Rico owned the serves with 10-4 advantage. Cuba committed 35 unforced errors and Puerto Rico finished with 32.

Ailama Cese once again had a spectacular performance scoring 19 points on 16 kills and 3 blocks, to lead Cuba. Yamisleydis Viltres followed with 15 points on 8

kills, 4 blocks and 3 aces. Ariana Pagan was Puerto Rico's leading scorer with 10 points.

Ailama Cese top scorer of Cuba: "It was important to win because our opponent in quarterfinals will be much easier to face. We are mentally and physically tired because of yesterday's match against United States. We want to win every much from here on because our goal is to qualify to worlds. We were much more focused in set four because we didn't want to wear out for our next performance by playing a fifth set".

Regla Torres head coach of Cuba: "It was a bad performance, we came out short, we were over confident. I thing they thought – United States is tougher so if we faced them head to head, this would be a walk in the park- they are wrong, there is no small opponent. They need to learn that we have the obligation to face everyone with the same game level. We will continue playing the same; we need to change in form, in character, in attitude, in motivation. They must be motivated to perform".

Paulina Pérez captain of Puerto Rico: "We had an excellent energy and attitude, we played well against Cuba, and we worked hard to win that third set. My team was confident, our serves were effective and we always scored when our passing was on the spot. I am very satisfied, despite the variations in our line-up".

Rafael Olazagasti head coach of Puerto Rico: "I believe we could have won set two also, but that's that. It's not the same finish second than third in our pool because the crossover match will be tougher. Our lack of international experience is obvious; we aren't able to win sets and that's possible only when you play more. There is a great difference in our performance today compared to that against United States; playing every day improves our performance".

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