

Cuba defeats Argentina in dramatic five-sets

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17/06/2019



Cuba defeated Argentina in dramatic five-sets 3-2 (32-30, 25-20, 22-25, 17-25, 15-13) in their opening match at the fourteenth Men's Pan American Cup in the Multifunctional Auditorium of Colima, Mexico.

Argentina led the entire first set only to lose three set points (24-21) and reaching a dramatic 32-30 in Cuba's favor. Still the South American squad extended the actions bouncing back from 0-2 set-deficit. It was a match full of emotions, intensity and powerful spikes as well as blocks.

Cuba led in blocks with huge 13-5 margin, while Argentina led in attacks 62-59. Both teams scored on 5 aces; in addition, Cuba committed more errors (41-34).

Cubans used a balanced scoring attack with wing spikers Marlon Yang and Miguel Angel López on 16 points apiece; wing spiker Osniel Mergarejo registered 12 points, while middle blockers Roamy Alonso and Javier Concepción tallied 11 points apiece. Argentinean Nicolas Bruno led all scorers with 23 points on 22 kills and one ace; opposite German Johansen joined in with 14 points and wing spiker Nicolás Lazo added 10 points.

On Monday, Cuba (1-0) meets with Canada (1-0) and Argentina (0-1) faces Suriname (0-1).

**MEN'S PAN AMERICAN CUP**

Comments:

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Published on Cuba Si (<http://cubasi.cu>)

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Miguel Angel López, top scorer Cuba: "We were aware it was going to be a tough match, Argentina always presents teams technically and tactically well prepared. We also have lots of potential and we were confident in our performance. I believe we were better in blocking and attacks".

Nicolás Bruno, captain Argentina: "We are both aggressive teams, both of us want the Cup and both sides committed errors, a bit more on our side, mostly in the first set. It was a nice game and it's a shame we lost".

Nicolás Vives, coach Cuba: "We made some changes that gave result, we are preparing for the Pan American Games. In the fifth set we adjusted to come out on top. Argentina is a team high quality team that dominated the match on many occasions. We must work on concentrating better because they are young, with an average of 21 years old".

Fabián Maruco, coach Argentina: "It's really difficult to summarize such a hard match because both teams performed really well on occasions. It was very emotional, but also technical and tactical from both sides, it seemed more a chess match than a volleyball one. The first set was in our hands, luckily my team kept on playing, which is difficult to recover from".

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