
Cuba is golden at the Men's NORCECA Championship

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Cuba won the gold-medal match 3-1 (25-18, 21-25, 25-20, 25-20) at the 2019 Men's NORCECA Continental Championship at the University of Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada.

Cuba led in attack points (46-34), and dominated from the service line (10-5), but the U.S. held its own in blocking with 11 points compared with Cuba's seven.

Cuba's was a team effort with Osniel Mergarejo and Miguel Angel Lopez leading scoring with 15 each, followed by Robertlandy Simon (including four aces) with 14 and Marlon Yant with 12.

TJ Defalco and Kyle Ensing had 12 points apiece for the United States.

Cuba had already locked up a spot in the NORCECA Olympic Qualifier next January as the winner of the recent Champions Cup, held in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The U.S. is already qualified for the 2020 Olympics as winner of its pool in the FIVB Qualification Tournament last month.

Cuba, head coach, Yosvany Muñoz Perez: "I'm very happy. We came here to fight for first place, and that happened. We had very strong serves, the reception was very, very good and our attacking was a good performance.

Our players now will play professionally all over the world and we'll get back together in December to prepare for the Olympic Qualification tournament. "

USA, head coach, John Hawks: "They served really well, as we expected, and I think offensively they were just a little sharper than they were the other night (when USA won in the pool match). We didn't pass as well as we did, we lost the serve/pass game.... Our guys are trying to prove ourselves to our senior teams, to be on the roster...."

Leaving here with the silver medal is great, but we want gold. We're proud of the effort, but in the end we just weren't sharp enough, so credit to Cuba, they played great."
