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Cuba finishes pool-round defeating Costa Rica

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Cuba defeated Costa Rica 3-0 (25-17, 25-15, 25-16) to finish pool A in third place and moving into quarterfinals at the NORCECA Women's Continental Championship in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Cuba with 1-2 record moved into quarterfinals to face the loser between United States and Dominican Republic; Costa Rica (0-3) will play position matches.

The top three ranked will play the NORCECA final four Olympic qualifier to be held in January; except USA that has a ticket to Tokyo 2020, Dominican Republic already qualified to the final four and Cuba who isn't taking part of the Olympic cycle.

Cuba overpowered Costa Rica 40-27 in kills; they also dominated 10-3 in blocks and 9-4 in aces. Cuba allowed 14 points on errors against 16.

Cuba's outside hitter Claudia Tarin scored a match-high of 13 points on 11 kills, one block and one ace, accompanied by middle blocker Melanies Arcia who topped with 4 blocks of her 11 points. Outside hitters Tamara Espinoza and Maria Sofia Arroyo led Costa Rica with 10 and 9 points all on kills.

Claudia Tarin, top scorer of Cuba: "The team executed well, because of our two losses we needed to win this one to advance to quarterfinals. Today we were more motivated and we stabilized our serves which we had difficulties in our previous matches. We will give our best for

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what's left of the tournament".

Tamara Espinoza, top scorer of Costa Rica: "Today we didn't fail that much in serves, but we had difficulties scoring; our defense could have been better. Obviously we need to improve and learn because this isn't our category. This is an excellent opportunity to learn; it motivates us to be more dominant in Central America if we learn to control all the elements of the game".

Tomás Fernández Arteaga, Head Coach of Cuba: "We got the win, but we still can't read the blocking, our defense is not well positioned because the block can't execute. It's hard for us to get back the ball, everything the opponent throws in the back row falls. Today our U20 team finished the match, everyone had a chance to play and tomorrow I will do the same regardless who we face; we have to prepare for the final crossover that might be against Mexico".

José Miguel Briceño, Head Coach of Costa Rica: "My players are looser, you can see their improvement from the first match to this one, they are more comfortable and you can see a group. Cuba dominated us with serves in the second set, we weren't able to solve despite our reception was perfect on occasions, we couldn't respond to Cuba's tall blocks".

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