

OPINION: Santiago 2023, the Disaster of Team Sports

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Although we haven't had great results in most team sports for years (without representation in the Olympic Games, to give the best example), in regional events we did achieve titles and good performances in general, but in the Pan American Games of Santiago de Chile 2023, what happened in this type of disciplines was truly terrible.



We've already dedicated a space to baseball at the time, so now we will go to others, also with tradition and results in our geographical area.

The one that follows our national hobby with great feats in both sexes is volleyball, which in recent years has experienced a lethargy in the women's sector, but presents very good teams in the men's sector.



The girls were more or less at their level, because teams like the Dominican Republic or Brazil were far above

them, and others like Colombia and Puerto Rico also have a more promising present.



This was not the case for the men, who were among the favorites to compete for the gold medal and were unable to reach the finale.

The first problem was the formation of the line-up, because several of our main figures were not authorized to participate in Santiago, especially those playing in Europe. However, putting together a squad in which there's no replacement for the center-backs, for example, is reckless, not to mention outrageous.

Was it really better to fill in with four quarterbacks who were not going to see action before giving the opportunity to a young talent who needs training in that position, or in that of attacking receiver, which was also lame? I think a good opportunity was lost to strengthen other players, and give rest to the starters, who practically did not sit down throughout the tournament.



It's true that we had setbacks, but so did other teams. With what we had, I think we could have beaten Argentina and Brazil (we lost in five sets), but we continue to suffer with the lack of concentration in crucial moments, and as champions of the first set we are not going anywhere, we have to keep our performance throughout the entire match.

We leave volleyball, which we have also approached quite a bit, and turn to see handball, which left me dissatisfied in both branches. The girls were not up for gold, but they should have had a better performance, and men, with brilliant players in European Leagues, were up for much more. I don't think the rivals who defeated us are superior, so something went wrong tactically.



Basketball did not have high expectations, because we must remember that neither team qualified for Santiago, and the girls went due to the absence of the United States. In any case, they played a worthy role, perhaps the only one that can be classified as such among all team sports, where they left the door open to field hockey, because although the desertions came after the competition was over, mentally that affected the players who did not perform at their best.



This last aspect greatly complicates the work in team sports, because when team work begins to show up, if one or several pieces are missing, almost everything collapses, but it cannot be the justification; we have to work much better on aspects such as concentration, dedication, and technical-tactical thinking, to once again celebrate big time in this type of disciplines that are among the most popular.
