
Dominican Republic and Cuba to FIVB World Cup

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Cuba defeated Dominican Republic 3-1 (22-25, 25-18, 25-13, 25-23) on the final day of the NORCECA Women's Final Four Cup as both teams secured the available berths for the World Cup in Japan, the first Olympic qualifying event.

With two triumphs in the tournament and a total 10 points, the Dominicans qualified for the event in Japan after winning the first set.

From then on, the Cubans increased their attacks aware of only winning the three following sets they could clinch the remaining ticket for a better point-ratio quotient than Puerto Rico, 3-0 winners of the first match over Canada.

Melissa Vargas was the top-scorer (20), followed by Alena Rojas and Sulian Matienzo, 13 apiece. For the visiting team, Marianne Fersola was the only one with a double-digit tally (10).

An excited Roberto García, local coach, expressed that "today we only expected to win. My

girls needed it, I think. They respect the Dominicans for their results, but they battled for the success and their qualification to the World Cup.”

Cuban captain, Sulian Matienzo, said: “We all knew our performance was decisive and much more as the Puerto Ricans also had hopes alive just depending on what we could do. So it was only in our hands on the court and not anyone else’s. That’s why we are extremely happy.”

Brasilian, Marcos Kwiek, Dominicans’ coach, admitted that “Cuba played a good game. We came to qualify for Japan and we got it despite having many injured players who had been complaining since the first day and I could not take any risk with them. After this berth, we have several commitments this year in a very long season. Anyway it was a hard-fought match, except in the third set where we had many problems.”

Dominican, Prisila Rivera, said: “Cuba offered unexpected resistance. Obviously we were already qualified and we played more relaxed. Nevertheless, the local team performed an awesome game. They came from behind in a very short time. If they continue playing together, it will be a difficult team not only for us but also for any squad worldwide.”
