GROUP 3 GOLD FOR CUBA, CHINA TAKE BRONZE

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There was gold for Cuba in Group 3 as they won a gruelling five-setter (26-24, 19-25, 25-20, 21-25, 16-14) against hosts Turkey to edge the final match in Bursa.

The Turks had been the only team to beat Cuba in this year's World League, in the Intercontinental Round, but despite their best efforts were unable to repeat that success on Sunday in front of a spirited home crowd.

Captain Rolando Cepeda led the way for Cuba with 28 points, ably supported by Santiago Uriarte (22), while Turkey top scorer was Toy Metin (17).

The bronze medal in Group 3 went to China, who had lost narrowly to Cuba in Saturday's semifinal.

The Chinese, who had lost 3-0 to their Slovakian opponents 15 days earlier, dropped the first set but fought back to win 3-1 (21-25, 39-37, 25-23, 25-19), with victory in the second set – the longest in the competition so far – giving them a huge boost.

There was joy too for Japan. In their final FIVB Volleyball World League match of the season, Masashi Nambu's side recovered from throwing away a two set advantage to record their first win, beating Germany 3-2 (25-22, 25-22, 14-25, 23-25, 17-15).

"Since this team started out a year-and-a-half ago we have suffered so much," said Japan captain Yu Koshikawa, who scored 22 points for his side. "Now we have finally won, and we

can see what winning feels like. I think it will accelerate our growth as a team.”