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Havana, September 16 (RHC/JIT)-- Cuba was close to its first win when Mexico needed five sets to win in the third match of the penultimate day of the preliminary round of the Women's Pan American Volleyball Cup in Santo Domingo.

Joel Olazabal's students looked much better against a rival team made up of a mix of experienced players and players under 23 years of age, who won 3-2 (22-25, 26-24, 17-25, 25-16, 15-10).

The young coach told the site of the event that "now we have three days of competition in addition to the five days of training in Cuba to achieve more stability and better coordination between the passers and attackers".

"The Mexican team made many mistakes that gave us a break and the possibility to win two sets," he added.

Mexico -now with a record of one win and two losses- scored more points in attack (61-47) and in service, although with less advantage (10-8), and committed 32 own faults to 25 for the Cubans, who were superior in blocking (13-9).

Corner player Claudia Tarin with 18 points was the most productive for the Antilleans (0-3), followed by middle blocker Yensy Kindelan (12) and setter Thalia Moreno (11). Blocker Amelia Morozo and outside hitter Ivi May Vila added seven apiece.

For the opponents, Samantha Bricio was the top scorer of the match with 25, including five aces, while Maria Rodriguez (16), Grecia Castro (15) and Karina Flores (14) contributed to the success.

In the other matches, the United States and Dominican Republic maintained their unbeaten streak by sweeping Canada and Puerto Rico, respectively.

This Thursday will be the fourth day of the preliminary round in the round-robin system with the duels between Mexico-Puerto Rico, United States-Cuba and Dominican Republic-Canada.

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