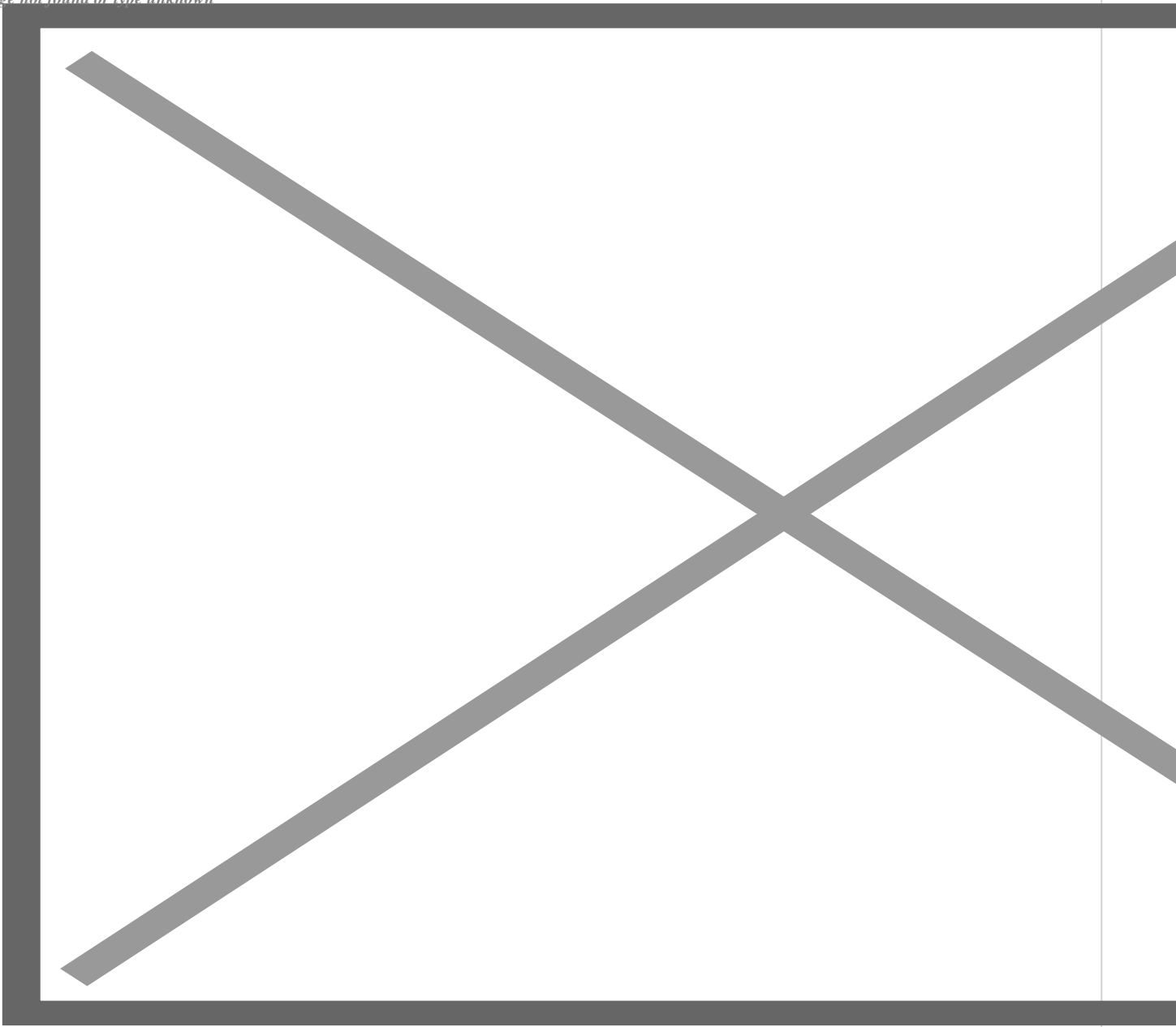


Cuba challenges Mexico in World Basketball Qualifiers (m)

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Cuba's national team will host Mexico today in the first of two home games, as part of the FIBA Americas qualifiers for the 2023 Basketball World Cup.

Havana, February 24 (RHC/Prensa Latina)-- Cuba's national team will host Mexico today in the first of two home games in Havana, as part of the FIBA Americas qualifiers for the 2023 Basketball World Cup.

The Caribbean island team arrives at the second World Cup window in the region with the best possible roster, which includes eight players in professional leagues in Europe and South America, many of them repeaters of the previous call-up at the end of 2021.

The squad under the command of coach Eduardo Moya, which next Sunday will play against Puerto Rico at the same venue of the Coliseum of the Sports City, has as its main figure the power forward Jasiel Rivero, who plays for Valencia Basket in the demanding Endesa League of Spain. The 28-year-old Havana native is joined by shooting guards Yormán Polás (MHP Riesen Ludwigsburg), Karel Guzmán (Ubanca Transsilvania Cluj-Napoca) and Yoanki Mencía (Gimnasia y Esgrima) as the other renowned players of the Antillean squad.

Also returning to the national team are young talents Pedro Bombino (La Unión) and Neysser Coutin (Jáchal), both of whom have played basketball in Argentina, while the names of Sifredo Cacero (CB Morón) and Raúl de la Cruz (Basket Casapulla), who have played independently in Spain and Italy, are also returning.

The Cuban team is in last place in qualifying group B after losing to the United States (90-95) and Puerto Rico (60-69) in the first window in the Mexican city of Chihuahua.

In order to aspire to finish among the first three places that will continue on the road to the World Cup qualification, the team must seek victory at all costs against a surprising Mexican team that leads the key with two successes without setbacks.

Coach Omar Quintero's Central American squad will be made up mostly of the same players who in their first matches defeated the Puerto Ricans and the United States in consecutive games, teams that will meet this Thursday in Washington, in the other match of the section.

The qualifying tournament in the Americas kicked off last November with the first of six windows, scheduled to last 15 months until February 2023.

The World Cup will take place in the cities of Manila, Okinawa and Jakarta during 17 days of competition between August 25 and September 10, 2023.

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