

Cuba faces Mexico today in third qualifying basketball window



Cuba vs Mexico

Havana, July 1 (ACN)-- The Cuban men's basketball team faces its Mexican counterpart this Friday in the third qualifying window for the 2023 World Cup, in the shared venues of Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan.

The Cuban team, winless in four games, no longer has options to advance to the next round, although it must complete the group stage in duels against Mexico, in the Aztec nation, and against the United States here in Havana, on July 1 and 4, respectively.

This Friday's match will take place at the University Auditorium Gymnasium in the city of Chihuahua, starting at 8:10 p.m. local time, which would be 10:10 p.m. here on the island.

For that game, Eduardo Moya, technical director of the national team, called up 12 players led by Jasiel Rivero, from Valencia Basket of the Spanish League, along with Karel Guzman, from U-BT Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Yoanki Mensía, player of Gimnasia y Esgrima de Comodoro Rivadavia, in Argentina, Yoel Cubilla, Sergio Machado, Marion Díaz, Yorman Polas, Marvin Cairo, Neisser Coutin, Raúl Abreu, Pedro Roque and Sigfredo Casero Jr. also make up the roster.

On February 25, in the second window of this qualifying process, the Caribbean nation's team lost 72-82 to Mexico at the Ciudad Deportiva Coliseum in the capital.

In that game, the Mexicans were a "whip" for the rival defense with their shots from long distance, making 10 three-pointers in 27 attempts, several of them in a third quarter that they dominated 28-17, which was decisive to achieve the victory.

The first half of the game was quite even with a 39-37 scoreboard in favor of the winners, and although the Cubans won 18-15 in the fourth period, it was not enough to take the victory.

For the Aztec team, three players stood out on offense, led by Gabriel Giron, who scored 23 points, in addition to Orlando Mendez (19) and Daniel Amigo (15), the latter also with 11 rebounds.

On the other side, without being in the best of his performances, Rivero finished with 13 points and nine rebounds, to stand out in both departments.

Also scoring double digits were Mensía (11), along with Marcos Chacón, Pedro Bombino and Casero, all three with 10 points.

In Group D, Cuba is in the cellar with a 0-4 record, in a group led by the United States and Mexico, both with 3-1; while Puerto Rico (2-2) is in third place.

According to the qualification system, after completing the six matches, the top three of the preliminary stage in each group will be able to continue in the competition in search of guaranteeing one of the seven tickets from the American continent to the 2023 World Cup.

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