

# *Cuba vs. Guatemala in Pan American Volleyball Cup*

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**Cuba U-21 volleyball team**

Havana, June 5 (JIT) - The Cuban team debuts this Monday against Guatemala at 4:00 p.m. in the Norceca 2023 U21 Men's Pan American Cup, which will last until June 10 at the Coliseum of the Ciudad Deportiva in Havana.

Also competing on the first day are the Dominican Republic and Haiti, Canada-Puerto Rico, corresponding to group B, and the defending champions of the United States and Nicaragua, the other challenge of the A key.

Last year, on this same stage of Via Blanca and Boyeros, the Americans defeated the Mexican team, absent this time, for the gold medal, and Canada beat the locals for the bronze medal.

The Cuban team is made up of opposite Alejandro Miguel González and corner players Bryan Camino, José Ramón Gómez, Félix Ernesto Rodríguez and Ronald Limonta.

The team is completed by center backs Yakdiel Contreras, Yusniel Gonzalez, Alexis Wilson and Jose Angel Morejon, passers Yonni Iglesias and Ronaldo Flaquet, and libero Alvaro Ricardo.

Jesús Cruz, coach of the hosts, told JIT that "this team is the base of the previous event, but now we are including four U-19 players so that they can get their experience in competitions of this category. Next year we have to compete in the qualifier for the world championship so that we will be familiar with this level.

He added that the competition is also an opportunity to evaluate the athletes in their development from last year to this date. "We know that the United States and Canada are the main rivals, they always participate with quality teams because that is the characteristic of this sport in their countries, but we will always fight for the podium and thus remove the thorn of the fourth place in 2022," he said.

Andy Read, veteran coach who led the champion United States the previous time, was cheerful on his return to the Cuban capital. "We are coming to defend the crown we won last year and for that we have brought a very strong team with players who block very well and have a good serve," he announced as in 2022, when his disciples did not make him look bad by winning the competition undefeated.

German Arnd Ludwing, Canada's technical director, also said that one of his objectives is to improve on the third place achieved in the previous version.

"This tournament will also serve as preparation for the U21 world championship in Bahrain next July. Two weeks ago, we held a training camp with 16 players, and now these 12 have remained. The competition will help them unite the team even more," he said.

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