

Cuba vs Iran in search of its third victory in the Volleyball Nations League

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Havana, May 25 (RHC)-- Cuba will clash this Saturday against Iran in search of its third victory in the first week of the Volleyball Nations League (VNL), after adding two wins and a loss in its first outings and

sneaking into Olympic qualification zone.

Jesús Cruz's students have won the tournament against Brazil and Germany, in both cases 3-1, and lost against Japan 2-3.

The Cubans experienced another dramatic battle on the court on Friday, but this time they could not overcome the resistance of the Japanese and fell in the tie break.

The match was a real swing, with both teams giving their all and providing luxurious displays at times.

Cuba had match-point several times in the fifth and final set, but the Japanese, led by the star left-hander Nishida, always found the formula to equalize the actions and then decide.

The Cubans were much superior in attack and blocking, but they made too many mistakes against one of the best teams in the world.

On an individual level, Miguel Ángel López (25 points) and Marlon Yant (17) stood out.

Meanwhile, Japan showed a field and reception defense that bordered on excellence, guided by a passer with a vision of the game and impressive hands.

Those from Japan, already qualified for Paris 2024, played almost all the time with the bench and only appealed to Nishida in crucial moments.

Given Japan's position as third in the world ranking, Cuba barely lost 0.08 points with the setback and continues to fight hard for a ticket to Paris 2024 in the qualification zone.

The Cubans maintain ninth place in the ranking, the last one that will qualify for Paris-2024, with 256.77 points, while Serbia, tenth on the list, fell to Brazil in four sets and lost just over three points, now totaling 249.43.

In other results on Friday, world champion Italy beat Iran 3-0, Poland beat the Netherlands by the same score, Olympic champion France also beat the United States 3-0, and Canada beat Bulgaria 3-0.

This Saturday the Cubans compete against Iran, at 8:00 p.m. Cuba time.

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