

Cuban Lopez the most valuable player in Club Volleyball World Cup

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Miguel Angel Lopez

Havana, December 13 (RHC)-- Cuban Miguel Angel Lopez was the Most Valuable Player of the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship, which concluded with a 3-0 victory of his team Sada Cruzeiro, from Brazil, over defending champion Lube Civitanova from Italy.

In front of almost five thousand fans in their hometown of Betim, the champions of the 2013, 2015 and 2016 editions won their fourth title with a 25-17, 25-22 and 25-23 sweep to avenge the defeat suffered for

the gold medal in the competition two years ago.

With this fourth medal, Sada is only surpassed by another Italian club, Trentino Itas, which has climbed to the top of the podium five times (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2018) and on this occasion had to settle for the bronze after dominating the Brazilian team Funvic in three identical 25-18 scores.

In the Sada-Lube clash, Cienfuegos-born Lopez Castro -also one of the outside hitters of the Ideal Team- was once again the inspiring spark plug of his team in the fight for the gold by scoring 12 points, several from backhands and two aces.

The 24-year-old player told the FIVB website that "I have no words to describe our performance tonight, it is a very important day in the history of our club. We were strong from the first to the last point of the tournament and I am very proud of each one of us."

"When I first came here, I said I wanted to win as many titles as possible here and this victory is a big part of that," said the Cuban national team Olympian.

"For me, our whole team is the Most Valuable Player. Everyone did their job very well and I am proud of my team. My serve didn't work well in the opening match and my teammates gave me all the confidence I needed to keep going," he said.

Small in stature, but with exceptional leaping power, Lopez Castro told a local television station that "Sada Cruzeiro showed firmness, unity and strength. That was the reason for the victory, which personally means a big step forward in my aspirations".

The Antillean was the only one to reach double digits, but he had the support of Olympic medalist and three-time club champion with Sada, opposite Wallace de Souza, who contributed nine goals, while corner attacker Rodrigo Leao added 8 and centers Henrique Rodrigues and Isac Santos 6 each.

For the Lube Civitanova, Cuba's 20-year-old attacker Marlont Yant accumulated 11 units, all in spikes, as did the Puerto Rican opposite thanks to 9 spikes and 2 aces. Another Cuban, the giant Robertlandy Simon added 7 in a challenge in which they were superior in attack (36-32) and service (6-3), however Sada Cruzeiro dominated in blocking (6-1) and committed less own faults (19-34).

Ideal Team:

Most Valuable Player: Miguel Angel Lopez (Sada Cruzeiro)

Best Passer: Fernando 'Cachopa' Kreling (Sada Cruzeiro)

Best Opposite: Wallace de Souza (Sada Cruzeiro)

Best Outside Attackers: Miguel Angel Lopez (Sada Cruzeiro) and Alessandro Michieletto (Trentino Itas)

Best Middle Blockers: Otavio Pinto (Sada Cruzeiro) and Robertlandy Simon (Cucine Lube Civitanova)

Best Libero: Fabio Balaso (Cucine Lube Civitanova)

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