

Cuba vs. Puerto Rico for bronze in Volleyball Final Six

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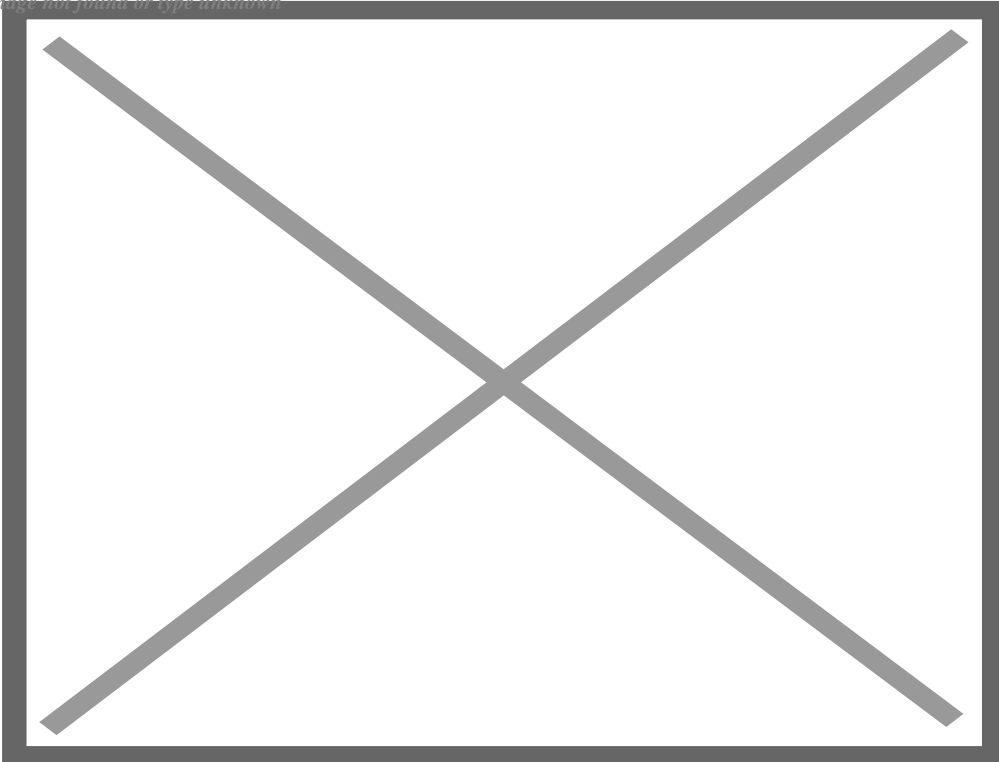


Photo: Ernesto Beltré (Norceca)

Havana, September 10 (RHC)-- Cuba and Puerto Rico will face off this Saturday for the bronze medal at the II Norceca Final Six Pan American Cup in Santo Domingo 2022, which is being held at the Ricardo Gioriver Aria Volleyball Palace.

The team from the Greater Antilles dominated the Puerto Ricans in the preliminary round, last Friday, in a close and emotional match that ended 25-23, 25-27, 25-22, 22-25 and 15-13.

In the semifinals, the Dominican Republic overcame the Cubans in straight sets of 25-20, 25-13 and 25-16, and the United States defeated the Puerto Ricans 30-28, 26-28, 25-22 and 26-24, so the winners will fight for the place of honor.

The Quakers, who have six wins without losing a set, showed their experience and quality to obtain advantages in attacking (36-33), blocking (7-4) and service points (14-0), while committing fewer unforced

errors (12-18).

Three of the hosts were the only ones to reach double digits in the match: opposite Gaila Gonzalez (17) and corner players Yonkaira Pena (13) and Brayelin Martinez (11).

For the Cubans the top contributor was middle blocker Laura Suarez (9), followed by opposite Greisy Finé (7) and corners Sulian Matienzo (6) and Ailama Cesé (4). The starting setter Gretell Moreño was unable to line up due to a hand injury suffered in the match against the Puerto Ricans.

The best moment for the Cubans occurred in the first set, when they tied at 11 and went ahead 14-13. However, the locals adjusted the "machinery" that they are preparing for the upcoming world championship and did not lose their dominance with effective actions at the net and from the service line, which destabilized the Cuban team in front of an enthusiastic crowd that filled the hall.

In the other semifinal match, the best offensive players for the northern team were Danielle Drews and Stephanie Samedy with 21 points each. For their opponents, veteran Karina Ocasio was the top scorer of the game with 23 points, followed by Brittany Abercrombie with 21.

The other two participating teams disputed the fifth place with Canada defeating Mexico with scores of 23-25, 25-23, 25-19, 15-25 and 16-14.

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