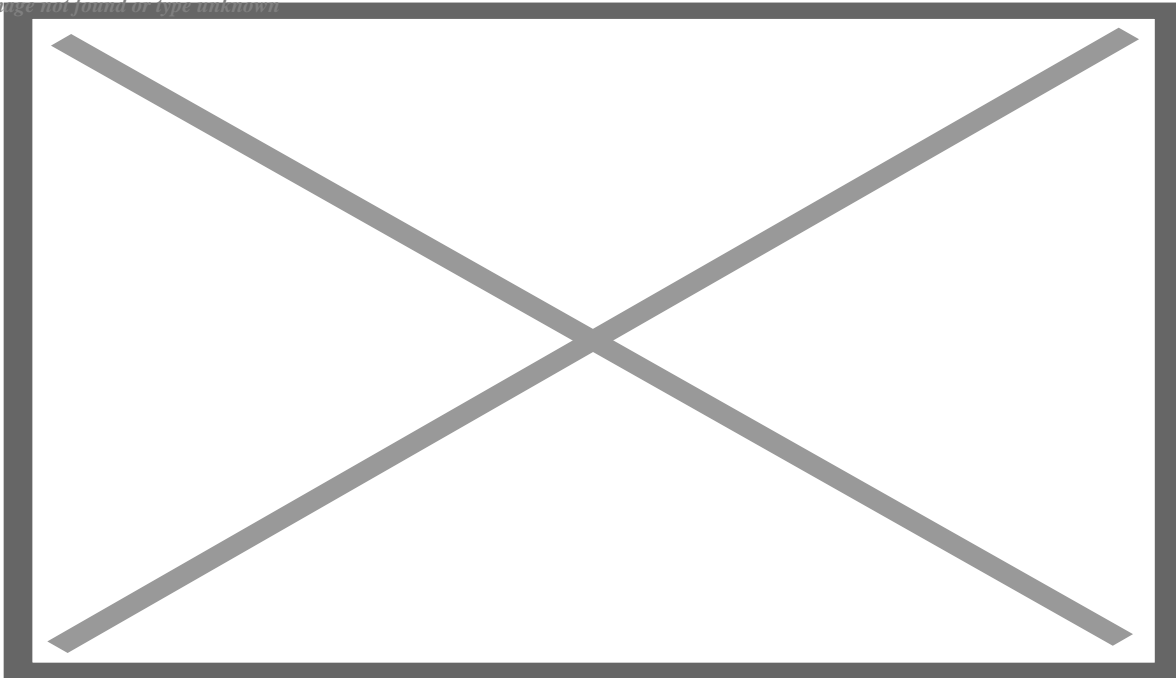


Silver for Cuba in Norceca Beach Volleyball Circuit

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Noslen Diaz and Jorge Luis Alayo // Photo> Getty Images

Havana, December 12 (JIT) - Cubans Noslen Diaz and Jorge Luis Alayo won the silver medal in the final phase of the Norceca Beach Volleyball Circuit 2022, which took place in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

Diaz and Alayo engaged in a close battle against Canadians Samuel Schachter and Daniel Dearing in the first set of the final match, in which they led by a score of 21-16.

However, in the next segment the northerners adjusted their game with a more confident blocking and took an early 9-4 lead. In addition, they did not make the same mistakes as when they lost to the Cubans in the group round.

The Caribbeans cut the deficit, but could never catch up (21-19). The same thing happened in the third set, and the northerners won the match (15-12) to complete almost an hour of relentless action.

Referring to their opponents from the Greater Antilles, Samuel told Norceca's website that the duel "was very difficult and exciting, Cuba is an extremely talented team".

Norlen and Jorge Luis close the year with four medals in the same number of participations in the Circuit, as they previously won gold, silver and bronze.

To dispute the crown, Francisco Alvarez Cutiño's students defeated in the semifinals the experienced Mexican duo of Juan Virgen and Miguel Sarabia, in three sets (18-21, 21-17 and 16-15) and 55 minutes of action.

Schachter and Dearing had a quicker victory (39 minutes) in that phase: 21-19 and 21-17 against the Americans Chaim Schalk and Theodore Brunner. The latter won the bronze by beating Virgen and Sarabia by 21-15 and 21-18.

Cuba's Nahomí Charlot and Dayani Zerquera secured the fifth place in the women's competition by beating hosts Bethania Almanzar and Crismil Paniagua, who won the disputed first set 22-20, but lost the following sets 13-21 and 7-15.

To reach this challenge, Nahomi and Dayani defeated Costa Rica's Angel Williams and Kianny Quesada (21-19, 21-13); and Almanzar and Paniagua defeated Amber Bennett and Taylor Buchner of the U.S. Virgin Islands, 27-25 and 21-18.

The winners of this eighth and last stop were the leaders of the ranking of the competition, Betsi Flint and Julia Scoles (United States), after beating the Puerto Ricans Allanis Navas and Maria Gonzalez by 21-16 and 21-19.

The bronze medal went to Canada's Amanda Harnett and Marie-Alex Bélanger -their third of that color in 2022- after defeating Mexico's Atenas Gutiérrez and Abril Flores in three sets (18-21, 21-10, 17-15).

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