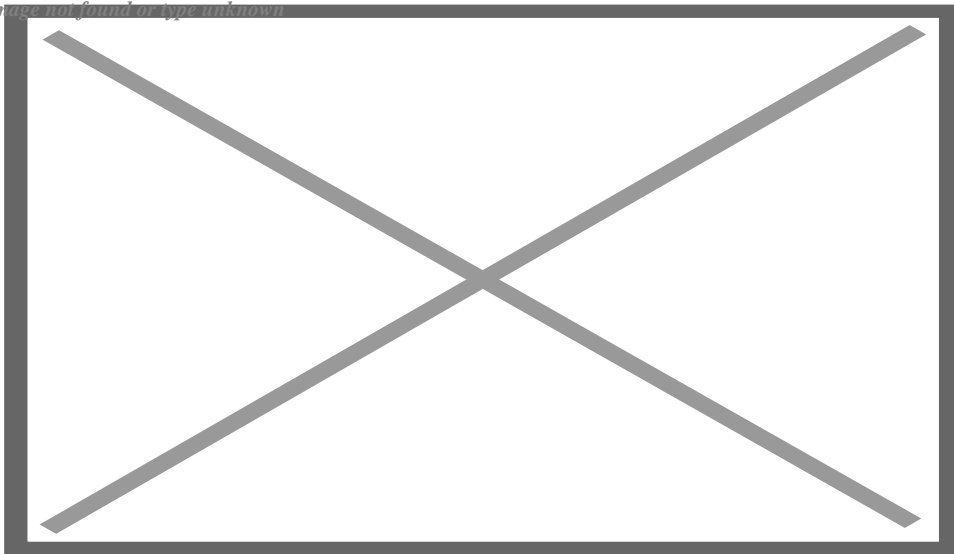


Three Cubans to reach the semis of the best volleyball league in the world

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Osniel Mergarejo

Havana, March 28 (RHC).- Three Cubans, Jesus Herrera, Osniel Mergarejo and Wilfredo Leon, will be in the semifinals of the Italian Volleyball Super League, after the eliminations of Piacenza and Lube Civitanova in the quarterfinal playoffs.

Although they have not had much play in recent matches, Herrera and Polish nationalized Cuban Leon are two of the stars of Perugia, which swept Verona in three games.

In the semifinals, Perugia will face Mergarejo's Milan, who surprised by leaving the Piacenza trio of Robertlandy Simon, Roamy Alonso and Brazilian nationalized Yoandy Leal on the road to the title in five hard-fought matches (3-2).

The last quarterfinal series - both extended to five games - concluded on Wednesday, with surprising wins for Milan against Piacenza and Monza against the Lube.

Cuban Marlon Yant had another double-digit match on Wednesday, but it was not enough to guide the multi-champion Lube Civitanova to victory, falling in 4 sets to Monza (23-25, 23-25, 25-20, 22-25).

Yant scored 18 points, 13 of them in attack and 3 in blocking, but had an irregular match, without the consistency and effectiveness of previous days.

In attack he hit 13 of 27, for a 48 percent efficiency, and in reception he committed two errors with an efficiency of 44.

Young Bulgarian Alexandar Nikolov led the Lube offense with 19 points.

For the winner Monza, Canadian Maar Stephen had a great day and deserved the distinction of Most Valuable Player (MVP), scoring 22 points, 6 in blocking, with a remarkable 58 percent efficiency in the attack. He was complemented by Japan's Ran Takahashi with 19 points and great success in defense and reception.

Osniel Mergarejo's Milan was superior in the fifth and decisive game to the favorite Piacenza of Cuban players Simon, Alonso and Leal.

With Japan's Yuki Ishikawa and young Belgian Ferre Reggers as mainstays, the northern Italian team won with scores of 25-21, 25-21 and 25-22.

Mergarejo came on as a substitute in all three sets and left with two points and a good performance in reception.

For Piacenza, Simon scored 6 points, 2 with the service, but did not manage any unit in his specialty, blocking, while Leal added 9, and Roamy did not see action.

World champion Daniele Lavia (Trentino) was selected the MVP of the quarterfinals.

The semifinals of the Italian Super League, the best in the world, will start on Sunday with the Peguria-Milan and Trentino-Monza duels, in five-game series to win 3.

La Lube and Piacenza will fight for the fifth place.

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