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## USA and Cuba move to the semi final round

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, July 15, 2007.- USA and Cuba secured spots in the semi final round of the women's volleyball tournament by improving to 2-0 records in Pool B of the Pan American Games.

USA had two big reactions to beat Puerto Rico 3-1 (21-25, 25-18, 25-16 y 25-22) and Cuba defeated Costa Rica 25-17, 25-12 y 27-25. Both teams now will meet to decide the top position.

The Puerto Ricans had a very consistent first set, but in the second and third the Americans imposed their blocking and potent kills. Puerto Rico was ahead 16-13 in the fourth set, but the Americans rallied 12-6 to take the match.

"We played more stable and placed well our attacks," said Susan Woodstra, the American coach. "Puerto Rico started

very well but could not keep the consistency."

The best scorers for USA were Tayyiba Haneef with 18 points, Danielle Scott-Arruda 15, Foluke Akinradewo 14 and Cynthia Barboza 12. The Puerto Ricans had Karina Ocasio with 16 points, Aury Cruz 13, and Sarai Alvarez 12.

Antonio Perdomo, the Cuban coach, did not use stellar player Yumilka Ruiz and also benched Zoila Barros midway of the second set.

"I knew we could win without them so I rested them saving both for the tough upcoming matches," said Perdomo.

The Costa Ricans enjoyed the third set and presented a tough battle to a Cuban side playing mostly with its bench.

Nancy Carrillo was the top Cuban with 14 points, Yanelis Santos scored 10 and Rosir Calderon added 9. The best Costa Rican was their captain Verana Willis with 15 points, followed by Karen Cope with 9.