



USA and Cuba won the first day in Pool B

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, July 14, 2007.- USA and Cuba got victories in the first day of action in Pool B of the Women's Volleyball Tournament of the Pan American Games.

While the Americans got an easy 3-0 (25-9, 25-19 y 25-12) over Costa Rica, Cuba had to battle against Puerto Rico before prevailing 25-18, 25-17, 24-26 y 25-23.

The Americans relied on its powerful game at the net and displayed an explosive attack with great defense that tied-up their rivals' game.

"We are going to try to advance in the preliminary round and then go after a medal," commented Captain Danielle Scott. "But the most important thing for our

team is the experience to get by our younger players in such strong competition."

The pair of middle blocker Tayyiba Haneef-Park and Scott took advantage of their size and scored 14 and 13 points respectively. Foluke Akinradewo and Cynthia Barboza each added 10 points.

Karen Cope led Costa Rica with 11 points and was followed by Captain Verania Willis with 10.

"Our rivals made too many errors at the beginning and we took advantage of that," said Yumilka Ruiz, the Cuban captain. "When they reacted it was a little bit too late."

"We knew it was going to be a tough match, but we did not have good concentration at the start," said Aury Cruz, the Puerto Rican captain.

Cuba had five players with double figures in scoring, led by Ruiz who had 18 points, Yanelys Santos contributed 15, Nancy Carrillo, 14 and Daimi Ramirez and Zoila Barrios had 11 apiece. Sarai Alvarez was the best Puerto Rican with 14 tallies and Karina Ocasio added 13.

