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Newsletter

Cuba and Dominican Republic to decisive match

TIJUANA, Mexico, May 5, 2012 – Pre-tournament favorites Cuba and Dominican Republic are now set to clash for the only ticket available to the 2012 London Games in NORCECA Women's Continental Olympic Qualification Tournament at Tijuana, Mexico.

The three-time Olympic champions Cuba, currently ranked No. 10 in the world, advanced to the title-match after overcoming a resilient Puerto Rico (No. 19) in four sets (23-25, 25-17, 25-19, 25-22) on Friday at Tijuana Multi-Sports Gymnasium.

On the other hand, the No. 9 Dominican Republic trounced Canada (No. 22) in straight sets (25-15, 25-18, 25-15) to reach the decisive match of the week-long event.

Cuba v Puerto Rico

Three-time Olympic champions Cuba overcame Puerto Rico to advance to the title-match. Veteran Yanelis Santos and young Yoana Palacios led five Cuban players with double digits in the score charts with 16 and 15 points respectively. Rosanna Giel added 14 including five blocks while Wilma Salas and Leanny Castañeda had 11 and 10. Cuba led 11-7 the blocks category and also had the edge in serving aces 5-4. The winners gave away 23 points with their errors and benefited from 27 made by the losers.

Dominican Republic v Canada

The world-ranked No. 9 Dominican Republic advanced to the final-match following an easy victory over No. 22 Canada on Friday. The Dominicans dominated the whole match and topped the taller Canadians in blocks 8-1 and had the slight edge in serves 3-2. The winners made 15 errors to 18 by the defeated team. Bethania De La Cruz led four Dominican players who finished the match in double digits in the score sheets with 14 points, all via attacks. Veteran Annerys Vargas and the young Lisvel Eve, the team's middle blockers, each finished with 12 points and 5 and 3 blocks respectively. Gina Mambru tallied 11 points including the last point to seal the victory. Canada's Sarah Pavan recorded 12 points.

Costa Rica v Honduras

Costa Rica advanced to a match for the fifth position by dispatching Honduras in straight sets (25-11, 25-9, 25-11) in just 55 minutes. Catalina Fernandez and Verania Willis topped Costa Rica's scoring stats with 9 and 8 points respectively while Karen Cope, Angela Willis and Paola Ramirez each contributed 7 points to the victory. Honduras' Catarine Leiva finished with five tallies. Verania Willis

recorded five aces leading Costa Rica to a 13-1 advantage in serving aces and the winners also outblocked the defeated side 7-2.

Mexico v Trinidad and Tobago

Mexico saw off Trinidad and Tobago in straight sets (25-13, 25-16, 26-24) and now will play Costa Rica for the fifth place. Alejandra Isiordia was the best scorer of Mexico with 19 points, including four service winners and one block, while teammate Olivia Meza added 8 points. Kystle Esdelle led Trinidad and Tobago with 18 points and Abigail Gloud followed with eight. Mexico edged Trinidad and Tobago in blocks 7-6 despite their disadvantage in height but clearly established the difference in the serves category with 10 aces against only two.

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