



CHAMPIONNAT CONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

JULY 5-10 JUILLET GATINEAU CANADA



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Newsletter

Canada overcomes inexperience in opening win at U21 men's championship

GATINEAU, Canada, July 5, 2016 – Canada's youngest players contributed to their encouraging 3-0 (25-12, 25-18, 25-15) win against Guatemala that wrapped the first day of the U21 NORCECA Men's Continental Championship.



Eric Loeppky, one of the Canada's three 17-year-olds, had a game-high 12 points (seven kills on 11 attacks, four aces and one block). Seventeen-year-old Sharone Vernon-Evans added 10 (seven kills on 10 attacks). Erik Diaz Flores led Guatemala with eight points (all on kills, from 15 attacks).

"We just wanted to play Canada volleyball," said Canada captain Matthew Mawdsley, a six-foot-11 middle blocker who scored eight points. "They could be the best team in the world; they could be the worst team, but we just want to do what we can. We're happy with how we did.

"Now that we are used to the environment and used to this stage, every aspect should go up for us," Mawdsley added. "Our passing, everything. We are looking forward to it." Canada, with an average height of 195 cm, is the tournament's second-tallest team while Guatemala (181 cm) is tied for the shortest. That disparity made for some unique challenges at the net.

Cuba beats spirited Trinidad & Tobago 3-0 in men's U21 Group B opener

GATINEAU, Canada, July 5, 2016 – A composed Cuba posted a straight-sets 3-0 (25-15, 25-6, 25-16) victory against Trinidad and Tobago in the opening Group B match of the U21 NORCECA Men's Continental Championship.



Miguel Lopez Castro led Cuba with 17 points (including 12 kills on 16 attacks, one block and four aces) and Miguel Gutierrez Suarez added 14 (eight kills, four aces, two blocks) at Centre Sportif de Gatineau. Marlon Phillip topped Trinidad and Tobago, which is the youngest team in the event, with 13 points (including 12 kills on 34 attacks).

"Since minute number one, we were all trying to do everything correct," Cuba captain Rey Issac Flores said. "If anything went wrong, we corrected it quickly. We had a lot of trust in ourselves and the big thing is we were always pushing forward."

Cuba, with significantly more size and experience than Trinidad and Tobago, succeeded on 37-of-52 attacks to their opponents 19-of-64. The disparity in strength and size led to a 9-2 Cuban edge in aces.

"We have to play our game," Cuba coach Jesus Angel Cruz said. "The service was slow today. It will improve."

Trinidad and Tobago is not only the youngest team with an average age of 17.1, but has an average height of 181 cm to Cuba's 194. The developing squad stayed level to 10-10 in the third set. Cuba corrected with a kill and a block from Roamy Alonso and ran off 10 of the next 13 points.



USA beats Barbados 3-0 in men's U21 Group A opener

GATINEAU, Canada, July 5, 2016 – Utilizing their entire roster, the United States posted a straight-sets 3-0 (25-15, 25-15, 25-16) victory against Barbados in the opening Group A match of the U21 NORCECA Men's Continental Championship.

The USA received eight points apiece from outside hitters Reese Devilbiss (seven kills plus the match's only ace) and Austin Matautia (seven kills, one block). Michael Wexter also had five. The victors also had an 8-4 edge in blocks.

Carlos Cyrus led Barbados with nine points (seven kills, two blocks). Andriy Stapleton scored six, all through kills.

"That is a better Barbados team than we have seen, so hats off to them," USA coach Jay Hosack said. "We felt fairly confident coming in and it was just a matter of cleaning stuff up on our side."

"Compared to some recent years when I have been involved [with the American team], we are a little bit bigger and a little bit cleaner. But Canada and Cuba [who are each in Group B] are really good teams and we have to fight hard to get through this thing."