



2003 Norceca Women Continental Championship

Cuba and Canada move to the semifinals

Cuba and Canada advanced to the semifinals of the Norceca Women's Championship scoring easy victories in the quarterfinals of this qualifier event for the World Cup.

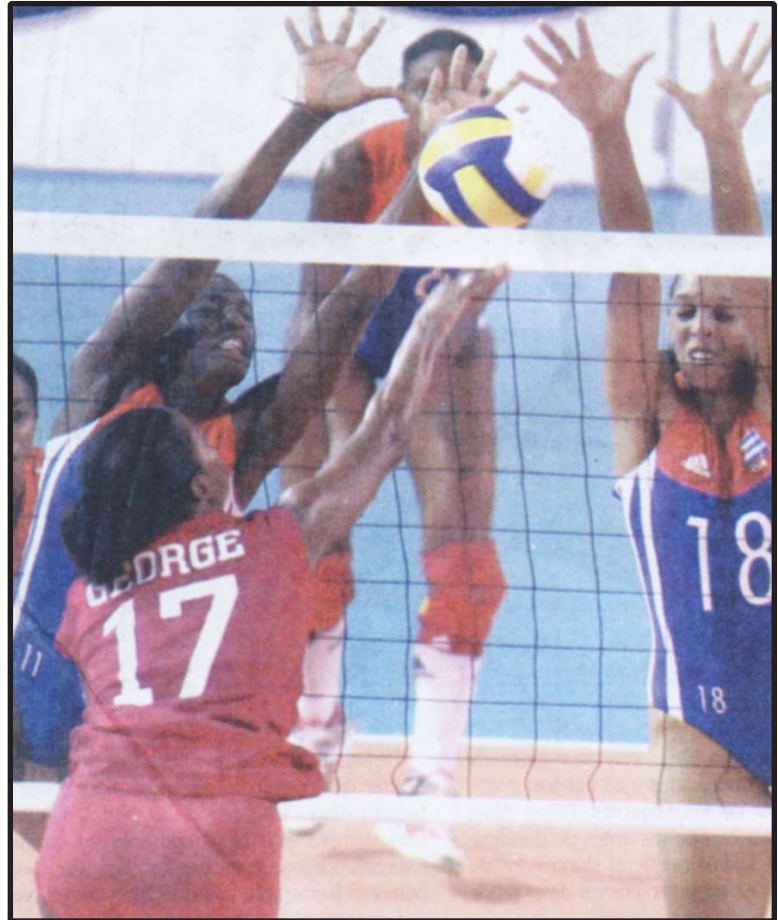
Cuba defeated Puerto Rico (25-6, 25-15, 25-14) and will meet the Dominican Republic in a rematch of last month encounter during the Pan American Games won by the Dominicans. Canada beat Costa Rica (25-18, 25-8, 25-15) and will face United States.

"It is a match with a lot of things," said Luis Felipe Calderon, the Cuban coach. "The Dominicans have been playing very well against us lately. It is going to be necessary to keep the concentration all the way in order to defeat the Dominicans, an inspired team playing at home."

Yumilka Ruiz, the Cuban captain, said: "The Dominican Republic team is a growing team, but we will have to go out to play for one of the two places in next World Cup, and that is our goal." Yaima Ortiz led Cuba with 12 points and Dulce Tellez added 10.

Canada will have a very tough match against USA, the favorite to win the gold medal in this tournament. "We are going against USA, a very talented team, but anyway we are going to give our best," said Lorne Sawula, the Canadian coach. "Being in the final four fulfill our goal. Now we want a medal."

Sarah Pavan led the Canadians with 14 points, scoring 8 of 12 spikes attempts, and Amy Tutt and Barb



Bellinin had 13 and 12 points respectively. Verania and Angela Willis scored 9 and 8 for Costa Rica. Shawula praised the talent of Pavan, a tall young lefty that have been the sensation of the tournament.

"She is going to be an unique player," said Shawula. "The girl is only 17 years old, but in a couple of years she is going to be something special. She belongs to an exceptional breed."

Today, Puerto Rico will play Costa Rica for the fifth place. At 6:00 USA meet Canada and the Cuban Dominican Republic match close the day.