



NORCECA WOMEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT

Cuba takes the first step to Athens and Dominican Republic dominates Mexico



With a 3-1 victory over Canada in the opening match of the NORCECA's Women Olympic Qualifier in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Yumilka Ruiz, Zoila Barros, Nancy Carrillo and Yaima Ortiz all scored in double figures as the three-time Olympic Champions defeated the Canadians by score of 25-18, 25-14, 24-26, 25-19.

Ruiz had 16 points, and Carrillo and Barros scored 15 apiece while Ortiz contributed with 10. "I am satisfied with the victory," said Luis Felipe Calderon, the Cuban coach. "Even in the third set that we lost I liked the way the team reacted to tie it before falling out to a young Canadian team who always was battling.

"The Canadians had their best scorer in Bard Bellini who had 18 points to lead all the players. Sarah Pavan scored 10. "My team did what they could against a team like Cuba," said Lorne Sawula, the Canadian coach. "We have seven players in my team that never had played against the Cubans.

Some times you can frustrate Cuba like we did it in the third set, but you have to keep doing and doing that with consistency to beat them."

The Dominican Republic crushed Mexico 3-0 in the nightcap of the opening day schedule of the NORCECA's Women Olympic Qualifier. It was a powerful show from the

host team considered the toughest rival for the favorite Cubans. The score was 25-17, 25-16, 25-8 and the match lasted only 58 minutes.

"Our team has been training very well and has improved a lot in the tactic and defensive game and we hope to keep improving," said Jorge Garbey, the Dominican coach.

"I am especially satisfied with the performance of Kenia Moreta, who is in the starting squad for the first time and did a good job tonight." "Since the end of the World Cup in Japan we have been preparing Moreta as an outside attacker and she is making a good transition," he added. "It is our first match and it is good to start winning."

"The girls were very nervous and never found the rhythm, we had a lot of problems with the reception and allowed too many direct points," said Jorge Azair, the Mexican coach. Milagros Cabral led the Dominicans with 13 points, Moreta had 11 and Cosiris Rodriguez and Annerys Vargas had 10 apiece.

