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Dominicans win their fifth Pan Am Gold and Niverka Marte selected MVP

HERMOSILLO, Mexico, August 28, 2022.- Dominican Republic won their fifth Women's Pan American gold medal defeating Colombia 3-1 (21-25, 25-13, 25-21, 25-16) and team captain Niverka Marte selected MVP on Sunday at the Sonora Arena in Hermosillo.

The Dominican Republic also won the Women's Pan American Cup title, in 2008, 2010, 2014 and 2016. For Colombia, this is their first silver medal and second medal in the history of the event, having won the bronze medal in the past edition in 2019.

The United States won the bronze medal over host Mexico 3-1 (25-19, 24-26, 25-16, 25-11). This is the United States fourth bronze medal in the history of the Pan American Cup, and they earned their qualification to the 2023 Pan American Games finishing as the top ranked NORCECA team not previously qualified, Dominican Republic and Mexico earned their tickets last year.

During the closing ceremony Niverka Marte was selected MVP along with the following awards: 1st Best Spiker/Server Bethania De La Cruz (DOM) 2nd Best Spiker/Scorer Avery Skinner (USA) 1st Best Blocker Geraldine Gonzalez (DOM) 2nd Best Blocker Darlevis Mosquera (COL) Best Setter Maria Alejandra Marin (COL) Best Opposite Gaila Gonzalez (DOM) Best Libero/Receiver/Digger Brenda Castillo (DOM)

Dominican Republic, 3, Colombia 1 Gold Medal

Dominican Republic won their fifth Women's Pan American gold medal defeating Colombia 3-1 (21-25, 25-13, 25-21, 25-16). Dominicans blocking and service points seized Colombia by comfortable 14-9 and 4-0 margins respectively. The Caribbeans also led by a close 56-51 attacking advantage and scoring on 22 South American errors against 19. Outside hitter Bethania De La Cruz scored a match-high of 23 points on 21 kills and two points from blocks in Dominican Republic's gold medal victory.

Opposite Gaila Gonzalez also contributed to the winning effort with 15 points from 11 kills, one block and three aces, joined by outside hitter Yonkaira Peña collecting 14 points from 12 kills and two blocks. Three players also led Colombia's attackers, outside hitter Ana Karina Olaya with 17 points on 16 kills and one block, outside hitter Amanda Coneo with 13 points on 10 kills and three blocks, and middle blocker Yeisy Soto tallied 10 points.

United States 3, Mexico 1 Bronze Medal

The United States won the bronze medal over host Mexico 3-1 (25-19, 24-26, 25-16, 25-11).

The U.S. fought four-set points (20-24) in the second set, but Mexico extended to overtime forcing the Americans to celebrate their victory in four sets. United States topped every skill of the game, with 52-32 attacking margin, 11-8 in blocking points and 10-7 aces. The U.S. committed one less error than Mexico (25-26).

Outside hitters Veronica Jones-Perry of the United States led all scorers with 24 points from 20 kills and a match-high of four aces. Opposite Stephanie Samedy scored 15 points on 11 kills, three blocks and one ace, followed by outside hitter Avery Skinner with 13 points on 8 kills, a match-high of four blocks and one ace.

Outside hitter Samantha Bricio and Grecia Castro led Mexico producing 10 points each.

Cuba 3, Puerto Rico 1

Cuba beat Puerto Rico 3-1 (14-25, 25-22, 25-23, 25-21) for the fifth place. Cuba concluded the event with a 3-3 win-loss record and Puerto Rico 2-4. Both teams earned their qualification to the 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games among the top three teams not qualified to the event; Dominican Republic and Mexico won their ticket last year.

Cuba held a close advantage in attacks (53-51) and in blocks (10-7), while Puerto Rico controlled serving points (6-2) and committed fewer unforced errors (24-27). Opposite Dezirett Madan of Cuba scored a match-high of 23 points. Middle blockers Laura Suarez and Dayana Martinez chipped in with 11 points each. Outside hitter and team captain Pilar Victoria topped Puerto Rico with 20 points and opposite Genesis Collazo contributed with 19 points.