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Cuba claims last ticket to U18 World Championship



HAVANA, Cuba, March 19, 2015 – Cuba claimed the last ticket to the FIVB Girls' U18 World Championship in Peru next August by crushing Costa Rica in straight sets (25-2, 25-6, 25-11) in Day Three of the age-group Pan American Cup in Havana on Thursday.

As winners of Pool B, Cuba advanced directly to the semifinals of the event to take place next Saturday at the coliseum of Ciudad Deportiva.

Diaris Perez (15) and Allama Cese (10) were Cuba's best scorers of the 53-minute match. Allison Font finished with 8 for Costa Rica.

The last day of the preliminary phase saw three matches extended to the five-set limit, including the 3-2 (21-25, 25-23, 23-25, 25-19, 15-5) victory of the Dominican Republic over Argentina to claim the top place in Pool A and the other direct ticket to the semifinals.

Natalia Martinez scored a tournament-high 25 points, including

seven aces, to lead the Dominicans, followed by Massiel Matos with 20. Lisbeth Rosario contributed five blocks among her 14 points while Vielka Peralta added 13 in the victory. Argentina's Anahi Tosi and María Corbalán had 21 and 20, respectively, in the loss.

In the other match of Pool B, Puerto Rico edged Chile 3-2 (25-21, 29-31, 25-19, 22-25, 15-13) to open Thursday's actions.

Puerto Rico's Ivania Ortiz and Paola Salas each tallied 19 points in the winning effort while Dariana Hollingsworth and Joscelyn Coronel added 13 and 11 points, respectively. Josefa Marti had 17 points for Chile and Amalia Carvajal added 12.

In Pool A, Mexico outdueled Peru 3-2 (25-21, 25-21, 23-25, 20-25, 15-13) for their first victory of the preliminary phase.

Karla Mireles topped Mexico with 15 points, followed by Karina Flores and Kathya Garcia with 11 points apiece and Alondra Amaro with 10. Peru's Katherine Regalado had a match-high 20 points. Diana De la Peña and Nicole Abreu finished with 15 apiece while Maricarmen Guerrero had 14 points in the losing cause.

Preliminary phase final positions:

Pool A:
Dominican Republic 3-0, 13 points
Argentina 1-2, 7 points
Peru 1-2, 7 points
México 1-2, 3 points

Pool B:
Cuba 3-0, 14 points
Puerto Rico 2-1, 9 points
Chile 1-2, 7 points
Costa Rica 0-3, 0 points

Friday's Quarterfinals
14:30 Puerto Rico v Peru
16:30 Argentina v Chile