



**U18 Women's  
Pan American Cup**  
La Habana, Cuba, 15-23 March, 2015

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# Newsletter

## Teams with different goals set to battle at U18 Pan Am Cup

HAVANA, Cuba, March 16, 2015 – The coaches of the teams participating in the III U18 Girls' Pan American Cup from March 17 to 22 at Ciudad Deportiva commented about their expectations and possibilities before the start of the competition that offers the last ticket available for NORCECA and South America to the World Championship in Lima, Peru next August. The teams grouped in Pool B – Puerto Rico, Chile, Costa Rica and hosts Cuba will battle for the ticket while the four teams in Pool A will use the tournament as a warm-up in preparation for the big FIVB event.

Luis Aponte, coach of Puerto Rico, said some of his players are suffering some physical ailments they are able to handle since are not so painful. "They were playing with their clubs and we have been working for one month and a half. It will be a tough competition and without disrespecting anybody, Cuba will be our biggest rival, precisely in our opening match, one of the toughest contests. Nevertheless we work as a team and all the players must contribute their part."

Hugo Jauregui, coach of Chile, seemed well confident about their chances. "We have prepared to try to get the berth at the World Championship. We know that there are some very good teams with the hosts Cuba the team to beat. Anyway, I think we can reach the last match of the zone and achieve our goal. We have worked all the summer and before coming here we shared training with Peru, played some matches, and we are ready for the battle."

Tomás Fernández, coach of Cuba said "this team was the last project of our beloved professor Eugenio George. He created the training patterns so we have a double commitment, to pay tribute to him and to battle for the pass even though we respect all the opponents. We have trained hard for 15 months, my girls don't have the competitive experience and their strength is to play as a unit."

Former player Andres Lopez of Costa Rica, the youngest coach in the competition, admitted his team doesn't have the capacity to play for the spot in the world championship "but we come here to prepare our team for some other events like the U18 Central American next August and the U20 in December. We have maybe the youngest team in the cup and we understand we are not contenders, but there are challenges within the group about improving and learning from the lot of girls in the other teams with great conditions who are able to play well at this age."

Brazilian Alexandre Ceccato, coach of Dominican Republic, said "we are after some objectives even though we are already qualified like knowing the team of Argentina, play against Peru again, a team we know well since we play them last May, and also Mexico. This is an important tournament as we continue our preparation and in order to be familiar with some potential opponents during the world championship."



Mauro Silvestre, the coach of Argentina, qualified to the world event considered "the Cup presents one of the better options for preparation, and maybe the only one for several reasons. We give the competition the importance it deserves and we have the time of calm to think about the development of the players. We are currently in the finals of the National League and some of our regulars, including the middle blockers, had to stay back. But we'll try the complete group takes part in the U20 Cup in Santo Domingo, also before the world championship."

Edwin Jimenez, Peru's assistant coach of Spaniard Juan Diego Garcia who was on his way to Cuba commented "this is a preparation tournament and the main goal of our young team, is to show dedication, defense and good combination of attack and blocking, putting together the work done in practice in order to reach the world championship in Lima with the ideal conditions. This will be a good thermometer to check the work and give the team the international rhythm and to be at our peak for the big challenge in our home soil."

Cuban Ricardo Naranjo, coach of Mexico, said the event is very important for his teams and its goals. "Our target is to develop the young players who are attending their first international competition. We have a lot of expectations but the playing level in the area is high. We are qualified but there are players who need to be developed, and that's the focus in this tournament. We are coming here to win and they want to be competitive and it helps to play in a group where the other three are qualified. To play against Peru and Argentina is a big experience for my players who I consider have good service, offensive abilities and middle blockers with considerable height. I think we can do a good job even though there is a lot of work ahead to be done since they come from different states and are preparing also for the National Olympiad. But we are ready for the battle."