

Eight NORCECA teams begin quest for two tickets to U19 WCH



HAVANA, Cuba, June 23, 2016 – The coaches of the eight teams taking part in the NORCECA U19 Boys Championship were enthusiastic about the intentions of good performances by their sides, especially when only two tickets are available to the 2017 world championship instead of three as it was in 2014.

The world championship will feature 16 teams instead of 20 when NORCECA had four representatives. Now, besides the two teams that qualify in Cuba, a third one will be granted to the winner of the Pan American Cup scheduled in 2017.

Samuel Shweisky, coach of defending champions United States: "I ask the boys to play with confidence but without arrogance. There are some of them with good jumping skills and good bodies but still are so green. I think Cuba is strong. We trained for a week and I had to select 12 of 24 from several high schools of the nation. They still in the process of know each other, and I don't know how they will react under pressure."

Gabri Alarcon, coach of Mexico: "We have had a short time to prepare but they are the best of the country. Each one of them train in their state of origin for the big event in Mexico which is the Junior Olympiad so they are in good shape and rhythm. Our goal is to win one of the two tickets to the world championship."

Osma Hernandez, coach of Nicaragua: "We are bringing kids who are in their first cycle in this division and are pretty well motivated. To be here is like a dream and I hope they react and

do a good job. Our pool is a strong one but I am confident of the enthusiasm of my boys who qualified as Central American champions, ahead of Guatemala and Costa Rica."

Arturo Solano, coach of Costa Rica: "This is an event to acquire more international experience. They are very young and to get that is very important because it is difficult to obtain it within our country. Nevertheless, the team has been together for two years and qualified in third place at the Central American tournament in 2015."

Vicente Paniagua, coach of Dominican Republic: "We have rookies who never have been out of the country. They are debuting internationally and will get nervous. This is the first time they play together because they come from different towns of the island. My expectation is to battle against Costa Rica and Nicaragua and to win would be a success because after watching USA training I know we don't have many chances against them."

Steve Davis, coach of Jamaica: "I have been with the team for eight months but only could prepare them for 10 days before this tournament. They train together once a week because they come from different schools and zones of the country, but they have courage and aggressiveness and will do whatever to obtain a good result."

Olsen Josep, coach of Antigua and Barbuda: "Our team doesn't have the experience. We only have the victory achieved one month ago in Antigua to qualify to this NORCECA. Our purpose is that they can learn a lot from the opponents and to enjoy the competition."

Nicolas Vives, coach of Cuba: "We have trained with the desire and objective of winning but our main purpose is to qualify to the world championship. If after that we have the option of winning the gold, much better. I am confident in our services, the blocking and the traditional attack of our players."