



## Coaches opinan acerca de sus equipos en Copa Pan Am



SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic, July 7, 2018 – The coaches of the teams participating in the XVII Women’s Pan American Cup commented about the possibility of their sides on the eve of the start of the competition.

With five tickets available to next year’s Pan American Games the competition promises to be a tough one.

Some of the teams are also using the tournament as a preparation for the FIVB World Championship to be played in Japan.

The United States are the defending champions and Coach Jonathan Newman-Gonchar hopes to continue on the same path.

“We are excited to be here to defend what USA teams have done before at this tournament,” Newman-Gonchar said.

Here follows the excerpts of their statements:

**Guillermo Orduna, Argentina:** We just finished playing in the FIVB League of Nations which was a good experience beyond the results. Our game grew up. We have a blend of experienced players with some young ones who are coming from the lower divisions. Our goal is to qualify to the Pan American Games. At the VNL we won a match against Korea but also played matches of close score against Russia, Netherlands and Dominican Republic.

**Wagner Fernandes, Brazil:** We have been training just for four weeks with no matches of preparation which represents one first difficult. Other difficult is that our pool is very strong with teams of Argentina, Colombia and Mexico who have trained and played since April. Our team is a mix of veterans like Dani and Thaisa Menezes with some adult but young players. We have not played the Pan Am Cup regularly

but this time is a qualifier to the Pan American Games. We are happy to play and to be here because the cup is a strong an important tournament.

**Marcello Abbondanza, Canada:** We are really interested in this tournament because we have many new young players. We worked hard for one month and a half but we didn’t have friendly matches. This a testing event to see what we can do at the world championship. Our focus is on trying to do our best and reaching the semifinals would be a great achievement.

**Antonio Rizola, Colombia:** The team is coming from a big evolution program. President (Carlos Alberto) Grisales is supporting all the initiatives. Right now an under-age South American Tournament is going on in Colombia. We just played a great Challenger Cup in Lima. This Pan Am Cup is going to be a tough one with very high technical level. Our pool is very difficult with Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. We are going to give our best.

**Andrés López, Costa Rica:** The team is practically a new one with only two players remaining from the teams that participated twice in the world championships. The important thing is to return to the Pan Am Cup as Central American champions which is our merit. This is a class A or triple A competition to give the girls a view of the reality and an



idea of where we want to be participating.

**Wilfredo Robinson, Cuba:** This is a team of two generations and we are working on the adjustments based on the projections and the level of those players. Our goal is how to qualify among the top five teams going next year to the Pan American Games in Lima. We know the level of the other teams but that is the goal of Cuba at this moment.

**Marcos Kwiek, Dominican Republic:** Now that the Pan American Cup is a qualifier to the Pan American Games with five positions available, the event is bigger in quality with many teams after those spots. We have the extra pressure of playing at home with the fans considering the cup as the most important event. Our goal is at least to win a medal. The team is well balanced after the participation in the League of Nations.

**Ricardo Ponce, Mexico:** Our team has been training for four weeks now at the city of Monterrey. We have assembled a team with good balance between players with a long resume and other who are coming from the U-20 division. From the physical and technical point of view this a good balanced team and with good perspective for this type of competition.

**Carlos Aparicio, Peru:** This is a new team with many players who are for the first time with the national team. We are in a rebuilding process and I have been with the team only since May 2. Our main purpose is to prepare this team for the Pan American Games in Peru next year. Here we have the girls who gladly accepted the invitation and with them we are working. Half of the team is under 23 years-old and for the U23 Pan American Cup in Cañete next August I plan to add players from the junior teams.

**Javier Gaspar, Puerto Rico:** Our team is a mix of young and veteran players and our goal here is to qualify to Peru 2019. Participating in the NORCECA Challenger in Canada was a good experience winning our three matches. Then in Peru we faced stronger teams like Bulgaria and Colombia. We had the chance to evaluate some of our players. Another goal this summer is to win a medal at the Central American and Caribbean Games in Barranquilla.

**Francisco Cruz, Trinidad & Tobago:** We are fresh from winning the CAZOVA tournament for the seventh consecutive time but since February we have not had

the opportunity to train on a regular basis. The fact that compensates these difficulties is that we have five athletes playing in foreign leagues, but also they don't have the same level. We are qualified to the world championship which requires total support from the authorities.

**Jonathan Newman-Gonchar, United States:** We are excited to be here to defend what USA teams have done before at this tournament. The girls are hungry to compete after six weeks of hard training and play only against teammates. There is a lot of anticipation for this event and our team is ready to compete.

