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# Newsletter

## Puerto Rico wins gold in five-set showdown at the Challenger Cup



EDMONTON, Canada, May 20, 2018 - Puerto Rico ended Canada's hopes for a gold at home today at the Women's Challenge Cup at the Edmonton Expo Centre.

It was a thrilling five setter with the scores of 22-25, 25-17, 25-19, 25-27, 15-8.

Canada came out fighting to win the first set, but then Puerto Rico looked more organized in the next two. Pushed by the fans, Canada won the fourth in exciting fashion to force a fifth set only to fall short.

Dominating for Puerto Rico was Daly Santana with a whopping 30 points for her side.

Alexa Gray contributed 18 points to Canada's effort, while Autumn Bailey and Alicia Ogoms had 10 apiece.

Cuba won the bronze medal match earlier, in a 3-0 match over Trinidad. Nicaragua finished in fifth place.

**Javier Gaspar, Head Coach of Puerto Rico:** "We knew it was going to be very tough. Canada is a good and an extremely well-coached team, and I knew they would have a plan to try and stop our offense. In the first game we made 12 errors, we missed too many serves and they kept us off balance a little bit with the things that they were doing. Then the next couple set we found our rhythm. I think Daly (Santana) was huge for us. The fourth game we had them where we wanted them, but we had chances and we didn't execute. Hats off to them because they did an excellent job in key situations.

**Daly Santana, Captain of Puerto Rico:** "We had a little bit of struggle with the first set, but we were able to clean it up and focus on the things we needed to do individually so we could help the collective. It was a very tough match, very physical and long rallies every play. It was just about coming out with a good attitude and playing good volleyball."

**Marcello Abbondanza, Head Coach of Team Canada:** "We wanted to win. I think we can improve on many things, but when we are only together for a short time it is very difficult."

**Kyla Richey, Captain of Team Canada:** "This was definitely not what we wanted - it is good that we fought back and pushed them to a fifth set, but then on the other hand we needed to start off better than we did. Puerto Rico plays a really solid blocking defense and we couldn't execute our game plan at the beginning and got a bit scrambled and they were able to get momentum that way. We have really good skill sets, but we need to read situations better. We can execute good things in practice, but we need to translate that into a game if we want to have success."