



USA and Dominican Republic to battle for the gold



SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic, July 13, 2018 - The United States earned the right to defend their title as champions of the Women's Volleyball Pan American Cup after subduing a tenacious Canada 3-1 (25-18, 23-25, 25-23, 25-19) in the first semifinal contest on Friday at Ricardo Arias Pavilion in Santo Domingo.

The United States recorded 21 blocks, led by seven from Chiaka Ogbogu, against 9 by the Canadian side.

Sarah Wilhite, Adora Anae and Haleigh Washington each registered 13 points for the USA squad while Aiyana Abukusomo-Whitney and Ogbogu contributed 10 and 9, respectively.

Kiera Van Ryk and Alexa Gray topped Canada's scoring with 18 and 16 points while Autumn Bailey added 10.

Meanwhile, host Dominican Republic, supported by a noisy partisan crowd, overpowered Brazil in straight sets 3-0 (25-16, 25-14, 25-23) to move into the final contest against defending champions United States.

Brayelin Martinez landed 23 points as the main offensive player for the home side followed by Yonkaira Peña and Annerys Vargas with 12 and 10, respectively.

Bruna Honorio Marques with 10 points stood out for Brazil and Thaisa de Menezes added 7 in the losing effort.

Argentina 3, Mexico 1

Argentina defeated Mexico 3-1 (23-25, 25-22, 25-22, 25-19) in the match for the 9-10 positions. Paula Nizetich and Elina Rodríguez each scored 18 points in the victory while Lucia Fresco and Julieta Lazcano added 12 and 11, respectively.

Andrea Rangel and Samantha Bricio finished with 14 and 10 points, respectively, for Mexico. Mexico won the battle at the net with 12 blocks against 5 by the winners who had 65 attacks to 41 by the defeated side.

Trinidad & Tobago 3, Costa Rica 0

Krystle Esdelle registered a tournament-high 25 points as Trinidad & Tobago swept Costa Rica 3-0 (26-24, 25-18, 25-16) in a match for the 11th-12th positions. Besides Esdelle, Channon Thompson reached double figures for the winning side with 12 points, including four aces. Renelle Forde and Jalicja Ross chipped in with 7 and 6, respectively. Tannia Carazo had 9 points for Costa Rica and Yuliana González added 7 in the losing cause.