



Cuba wins thrilling five-setter against Brazil



TORONTO, Canada, July 19, 2015 - Cuba edged Brazil in five sets (25-20, 18-25, 25-23, 22-25, 15-11) to claim a thrilling victory in a Pool B match at the men's volleyball tournament of the Pan American Games at Exhibition Center of Toronto on Sunday.

The Cubans, who had lost to Argentina in day one, played with a lot of energy with a strong defense at the net handing Brazil their first loss.

Argentina in Pool A and Canada in Pool B won for second time in as many days at the men's competition.

Argentina did a quick work against Colombia in three sets despite using mostly second string players as starters, while hosts Canada battled hard before emerging winners against Puerto Rico in four sets.

In Sunday's nightcap, United States came back to defeat a resilient Mexico in four sets to even their record at 1-1 in Pool B. Mexico sits at 0-2.

Cuba 3, Brazil 2

Javier Jimenez and Rolando Cepeda scored 26 and 21 points, respectively, to send Cuba to a thrilling five-set 3-2 (25-20, 18-25, 25-23, 22-25, 15-11) victory over Brazil in Pool A. The full house at Exhibition Center, on the edge of their seats for most of the match, watched Cuba scoring a tournament-high 17 blocks against the taller Brazilians with Cepeda and Livan Osoria leading the way with four blocks apiece. Douglas Souza finished with 23 points for Brazil, followed by Renan Buiatti and Mauricio Silva with 18 and 16 points, respectively. Brazil gave away 35 points with their errors, two more than Cuba while the winners held a 17-6 margin in the blocking category.

Canada 3, Puerto Rico 1

Hosts Canada defeated Puerto Rico 3-1 (25-23, 25-23, 21-25, 25-20). It was the second victory in as many matches for the home side in Pool B of the competition after downing Mexico in day one. Puerto Rico evened their win-loss mark at 1-1. Gavin Schmitt's 24 points, including three aces, topped the scoring of Canada, while John Gordon Perrin contributed 15 points. Rudy Verhoeff, Nicholas Hoag and Graham Vigrass chipped in with 9, 8 and 7 points, respectively. Steven Morales finished with 20 points as the best Puerto Rican offensive player, followed by Mannix Roman with 11 tallies, Hector Soto added 9 points while Jackson Rivera and Enrique Escalante concluded with 8 apiece.

Argentina 3, Colombia 0

Argentina relied mostly on bench players to beat Colombia in straight-sets 3-0

(25-14, 25-16, 25-21). It was the second victory for the South American team coached by Julio Velasco and the second defeat for the Colombian side coached by Cuban Eliseo Ramos. Argentina dominated the one-sided contest with advantages in blocks (9-1), aces (6-2) and attacks (41-30). Martin Ramos led the Argentinean attack with 17 points, including two blocks and one ace, while Ezequiel Palacios and Maximiliano Gauna contributed 12 and 10 points, respectively, in the victory. Andres Piza was the only Colombian with double figures in the scoring with 12 points. Carlos Alomia finished with eight.

United States 3, Mexico 1

United States recovered from losing the first set and a serious threat in the second and went on to defeat Mexico 3-1 (20-25, 27-25, 25-16, 25-17) in the last match of day two. It was the first victory for the USA team that lost to Puerto Rico in the opening day. Mexico is winless in two outings. The Americans won the match despite committing 40 unforced errors to 27 by the Mexicans. They, however, dominated in blocks (11-2), service winners (9-3) and attacks (50-38). Zachary La Cavera and Taylor Averill had 17 and 16 points, respectively, as the best scorers for USA. Brian Cook was next with 14 while Torey DeFalco added 11, including three aces and two blocks. Daniel Vargas and Jorge Barajas stood out among Mexican players with 14 and 13 points in the losing effort.

