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## Cuba tops the preliminary round undefeated

TEPIC, Nayarit, Mexico, July 15, 2022.- Cuba topped the preliminary round undefeated winning their last match to Mexico 3-0 (25-20, 25-18, 25-22) at the Men's Pan American Cup NORCECA Final Six on Friday night at the Amando Nervo Auditorium in Tepic, Nayarit.

Cuba finished first place with 5-0 record and 22 points, they will face Puerto Rico in semifinals who finished fourth. The other semifinal is a North American battle between Canada and the United States, second and third placed respectively.

Mexico with 1-4 record will play Dominican Republic for fifth place.

### Canada 3, Puerto Rico 0

Canada moved into the semifinals after defeating Puerto Rico in straight sets 3-0 (25-18, 25-22, 25-23). Canada ends the preliminary round with a 4-1 record and 19 points finishing among the top four in the event. Puerto Rico with 2-3 record and 7 points waits for the days' results to confirm their semifinal spot. Puerto Rico's effort in leading the third set up to point 14 wasn't enough to stop Canada's offense who finished with a huge 41-27 advantage in attacks. They also were more effective in blocks by a comfortable 9-4 margin and a 4-0 lead in serves. From Canada's side, opposite hitter Jordan Canham led all scorers with 15 points, followed by outside hitter Logan House with 11 points and middle blocker Xander Ketrzynski with 10 points who led in blocks with 4 points. Outside hitters Klistan Lawrence and Pedro Molina led Puerto Rico with 9 and 8 points respectively.

### United States 3, Dominican Republic 0

United States locked their semifinal spot beating Dominican Republic 3-0 (25-13, 25-16, 25-20). The U.S. concluded the preliminary round with a 3-2 record and 17 points, finishing in third place making their way in the semifinal round where they'll face Canada who ended in second place. Canada beat the United States in straight sets in their first match of the event. Dominican Republic ends with 0-5 record and will play for fifth position.

The United States held an overwhelming 40-25 advantage in attacks, the also led with comfortable margins in blocks (6-1) and serves (8-1). Both teams committed a similar number of errors, the U.S. with 22 and Dominican Republic with 21. Opposite hitter Francesco Sani of the United States scored a match-high of 15 points on 11 kills and 4 aces, followed by middle blocker Austin Wilmot with 10 points on 7 kills and 3 blocks. Once again Henry Tapia led Dominican Republic with 11 points all on kills.

### Cuba 3, Mexico 0

Cuba topped the preliminary round undefeated winning their last match to Mexico 3-0 (25-20, 25-18, 25-22). Cuba finished first place with 5-0 record and 22 points, they will face Puerto Rico in semifinals who finished fourth. The other semifinal is a North American battle between Canada and the United States, second and third placed respectively. Mexico with 1-4 record will play Dominican Republic for fifth place. Mexico suffered the loss of one of its key players, opposite hitter Diego Gonzalez, early in the first set, who was injured falling while defending over the net. Cuba beat

Mexico on 36-25 advantage in attacks and a 7-1 margin in aces. Mexico led 7-6 in blocks and committed one less unforced error than Cuba (26-27). Opposite hitter Jesus Herrera tallied 16 points for Cuba, on 13 kills, one block and two aces, joined by outside hitter Osniel Mergarejo with 14 points on 11 kills, one block and two aces. Mexico's top scorer was outside hitter Mauro Fuentes with 8 points all on kills.