



II Women Volleyball Pan American Cup in Saltillo, México.



New Coach Garbey at Dominican helm

Under the guidance of new head coach Cuban Jorge Garbey, the Dominican Republic Team go to Saltillo, Mexico aiming for a top-four finish in the Second Women Pan American Cup, an official event of the NORCECA Confederation starting next Monday.

Garbey, who was assistant coach of the Cuban National Team, replaces Jorge Perez Vento who was dismissed following the last World Championship in Germany after an 8 year tenure.

A loss to Puerto Rico in Germany caused the firing of Perez Vento, a former Cuban star with Dominican nationality. The Dominican Republic, currently ranked 15th in the world, later avenged that loss while defeating the Puerto Ricans in El Salvador in route to the gold medal in the Central American and Caribbean Games.

The team just came from participating in the Montreux Volleymasters where they finished 0-4 but lost one set 29-31 to the eventual champions China. They

also had successful friendly matches in Spain and Portugal.

The Dominican squad not only is looking to grab one of the top four places and a berth in the 2004 World Grand Prix, but also is preparing for the big compromise as host of the Pan American Games in Santo Domingo next August and the NORCECA Tournament in September.

Midle-blocker Nurys Arias along with outside attacker Cosiri Rodriguez, Milagros Cabral and Yudelkis Bautista lead the Dominican side. Veteran setter Francia Jackson is the team's captain and libero Evelyn Carreras repeats in the squad.

"We have a good team with a lot of potential," said Garbey before departing to Mexico. "I think that a finish in the top four is within reach and we will be gunning to that target in the Pan American Cup."

USA, Brazil, Canada and Puerto Rico will play in Pool A while Cuba, Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Mexico are the teams in Pool B. The top teams of each Pool will automatically enter the semifinal phase while the second and third finishers will play a crossed quarterfinal round. The winners in the semis will play for the gold medal and the losers will battle for the bronze.

The opening ceremony of the Pan American Cup is scheduled for June 30 at 19:45 in the Convention Center with capacity for more than 4,000 spectators. However, matches will start the same day at 14:00.

Dominican Republic squad: Anneris Valdez, Yudelkis Bautista, Evelyn Carreras, Alexandra Casó, Sofia Heredia, Nurys Arias, Milagros Cabral, Francia Jackson, Cosiris Rodriguez, Kenia Moreta, Sidarka Núñez, Juana González.