



2003 Norceca Women Continental Championship



USA is in semifinals after a thrilling victory over Cuba

USA overcame an electricity power failure during the tie-breaker and edged Cuba 3-2 behind the attack of lefty Nancy Metcalf advancing to the semifinals of the Norceca's Women Continental Championship. The score was **20-25, 25-20, 25-20, 18-25, 15-13**

The Americans finished with a 2-0 record in Pool B. Cuba will face Puerto Rico in Wednesday quarterfinals and Canada meet Costa Rica. With the score tied at 4-all the electricity failed and the action was delayed for about 20 minutes when the power was completely restored. Captain Danielle Scott let her serve in the net and Liana Mesa responded with an ace for a 6-4 lead in favor of Cuba. Then Metcalf came up with a powerful production to tie the

match a 8-all. A couple of big blocks by Scott gave USA a 10-8 lead and two spikes of Cuban Yumilka Ruiz went long and the Americans got a four point lead at 12-8. The Cubans narrowed to 12-11 with a couple of unforced errors and Metcalf produced another spike for a two point lead.

A serve by Lindsey Berg ended in the net and a potent attack by Ruiz produced another tie at 13-all. Once again USA relied on Metcalf for the spike and match-point and Logan Tom produced an ace for the victory. "It was a game of high and lows for both teams," said Toshi Yoshida, the American coach. "We brought Metcalf at the right time and she delivered some huge points. Also our blocking was a key."

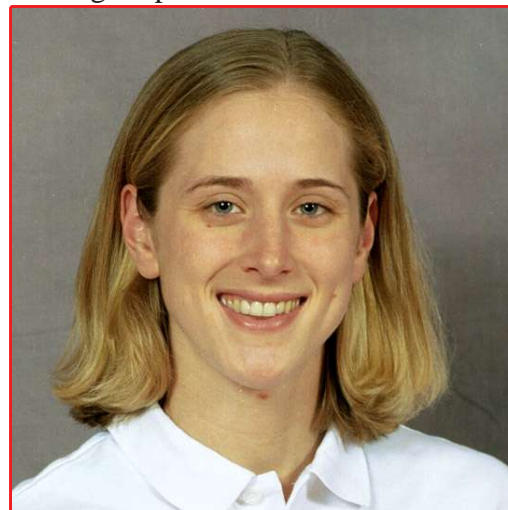
"We could have won in four sets," he added, "but the Cubans played a great set establishing a very quick pace. You have to credit them."

"We came mentally prepared to play five sets and win the match by two points and that was exactly the way it happened," said Scott, the USA captain. "As I said before we didn't expect a three set match and we don't expect it the rest of the tournament."

"USA have a great team with twelve players," said Luis Felipe Calderon, the Cuban coach. "It is a luxury that every coach would love to have. They can make substitutions without losing effectiveness. It was a great match for both teams and they won tonight." "They have very big players and their blocking was very good at the right moment and I offer my congratulations," he added.

In earlier action, the Dominican Republic qualified first in Pool A after beating Trinidad & Tobago 3-0 (**25-12, 25-8, 25-14**) using mostly bench players. Juana Saviñon and Sofia Mercedes each had 13 points.

Canada finished second in Pool A defeating Puerto Rico 3-1 (**19-25, 25-20, 25-10, 25-17**) with lefty Sarah Pavan scoring 18 points.



18-Nancy Metcalf