



North Central American and Caribbean
Confederation, NORCECA

Norceca Newsletter

January, 2004
No 52
English



NORCECA MEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT



Puerto Rican Hector Soto stops Canada

CAGUAS, Puerto Rico, 5 de enero.- Puerto Rico had four players in double digits and defeated Canada 3-1 to even up its record after two days of action in the NORCECA Men's Olympic Qualifier widening its chances of making the semifinal round.

The host Puerto Rican came from one set down to beat the Canadians in 112 minutes by score of 23-25, 25-21, 25-23, 25-21. The spectacular performance of Hector

Soto, who had 35 points one day earlier against Mexico, was the key for the victory. Soto had 28 this time and was accompanied in the attack by Ossie Antonetti (15), Victor Rivera (11) and Ariel Rodriguez (10).

Canada could not solve the offense of the host team after prevailing in the first set. After that, the Puerto Ricans imposed a consistent service creating a lot of problems for the Canadian's attack the rest of the encounter.

With the offense of middle blocker Steve Brinkman, Canada recovered in the fourth set. But after

a tie at 20, Puerto Rico opened the gap with three consecutive points courtesy of killings by Soto and Antonetti and a mistake by the North Americans. Paul Duerden with 15 points and Brinkman with 12 were the best Canadians tonight.

For Canada it was its second loss in as many outings and Puerto Rico is 1-1. Cuba had a day of rest and on Tuesday play against USA. The other match will be Canada vs. Mexico "This is a moral victory for us because we felt obliged to win this one for our fans after the loss against Mexico," said Luis Ruiz, the Puerto Rican coach. "We created problems to their offense and attacked in the corners avoiding their strong middle blockers." "Puerto Rico played a great game and once again we failed in the important moments," said Stelio DeRocco, the Canadian coach.

"We are in a must win situation now to make the next round." PUR-CAN 3-1 (23-25, 25-21, 25-23, 25-21) Total (98-90) Duration: 1:52, Audience: 1,832