



Dominican Cruz rates Italy as the team to beat in Bydgoszcz



BYDGOSZCZ, Poland, August 15, 2006.- Dominican coach Miguel Beato Cruz rated Italy as the team to beat during the Polish leg of the FIVB World Grand Prix starting tomorrow here on Thursday with the matches USA vs. Dominican Republic and Poland vs. Italy.

The other three coaches -Marco Bonitta, Lang Ping and Andrzej Niemczyk- were more cautious in their response to the question about the favorite team of the four competing in Poland.

"If we go the rankings, Italy is the top ranked team here so they deserve to be considered as the team to beat," said Cruz. "But we are all teams well ranked so I think every squad has the same goal of winning the event and has the potential to do it."

"It is hard choice," said Polish Niemczyk. "Everyone

has a chance because all the teams are very strong."

Meanwhile, USA Coach Lang Ping said all will depend of the situations. "I agree that it's very hard to say. The winner will be the team who plays the best," she said.

The Italian Bonitta said that "this is the first international competition for my team and I expect to improve day by day and be enough strong at the end of the Grand Prix because we are already qualified to the finals as the host team. At the end, the mental situation of the team will be better."

Niemczyk would like to see his team in the finals after finishing 7 and 8 in the last two editions.

"It is going to be an important competition and we will do the best we can to finish among the top five teams," he said.

The Dominican Cruz, fresh from defeating Cuba in the match for the gold medal at the Central American and Caribbean Games in Colombia, said his team is well prepared technically and physically.

"I am conscious of the caliber of the teams here, but my team is ready to battle at this high competitive level," he said.

