



Cuba to battle for 5-8 positions and USA for 9-12



NAGOYA, Japan, November 12, 2006.- Cuba completed an unbeaten second round performance with a straight sets victory over Poland (25-18, 28-26, 25-23), but defeats to Serbia and Montenegro and Italy in the first phase denied them a chance of playing for the medals at the FIVB 2006 Women's World Championship.

Cuba finished in third place in Pool E behind Italy and Serbia & Montenegro, and next will meet China, fourth in Pool F, in the competition for 5-8 positions along with The Netherlands (F-3) and Japan (E-4).

In the round for the medals, Brazil (F-1) will play Serbia & Montenegro (E-2) in semi finals and Italy (E-1) will meet Russia (F-2).

"We are very happy with our results and performances in the second round," said Felipe Calderon, the Cuban coach. "But the first phase was very tough for us. We now have to look forward and keep making progress every day."

Nancy Carrillo was the top Cuban scorer with 18 points, and Rosir Calderon added 12. Yumilka Ruiz and Yanelis Santos each had 10 points.

"It was a very good game for both teams. Poland was good, but we went for the victory right until the end. I know how important today's match was, so I am very happy," said Ruiz, the captain of Cuba.

Meanwhile, USA finished sixth in Pool F after scoring a five-set win over Germany by score of 25-27, 25-23, 19-25, 26-24, 15-11.

Tayyiba Haneef and Heather Bown each had 23 points for USA, Katherine Wilkins contributed 16 and Nancy Metcalf added 13.

"This was a very good match for both teams. For us, we were

really tired of losing. Finally we won and I'm happy that our players were able to fight back." said Lang Ping, the USA coach. USA (F-6) and Germany (F-5) now will join Chinese Taipei (E-5) and Turkey (E-6) in the round for the 9-12 positions.

Puerto Rico, the other team from NORCECA Confederation in the second round, lost to Azerbaijan in straight sets (25-21, 25-18, 25-18). Karina Ocasio was the only Puerto Rican in double figures with 10 points.

Puerto Rico (16) leaves the competition along with Azerbaijan (13), Korea (14) and Poland (15).

"This tournament has finished for us," said Juan Carlos Nunez, the Puerto Rican coach. "We couldn't do well in the second round but we have learned many lessons and would like to make use of what we learned for our future games."

In Pool E, Italy beat Japan 25-17, 28-26, 25-23 and qualified in first place of the group followed by Serbia & Montenegro, winner over Chinese Taipei in a five-setter 25-22, 24-26, 19-25, 25-15, 15-13. Korea defeated Turkey 25-14, 25-13, 25-22.

In Pool F, Brazil defeated Russia in four sets (27-29, 25-14, 27-25, 25-22) and qualified in first position ahead of the Russians. The Netherlands came from behind to beat China in five sets 21-25, 17-25, 25-23, 25-22, 15-12.

