



## USA defeated Canada in five sets, Puerto Rico lost to Germany



TOKYO, Japan, December 2, 2006. - The United States came back from 2-1 down to beat NORCECA's regional rivals Canada 3-2 in the first match of the 9-12 play-offs at the Men's Volleyball World Championship on Saturday.

World No. 5 USA held off the 12th-ranked Canadians 25-21, 24-26, 12-25, 25-21, 15-9 to move into Sunday's match for ninth place against Germany. Canada can now finish no higher than 11th.

Riley Salmon was the best American scorer with 14 points and David McKinzie and Reid Priddy added 11 and 10 respectively. Canadian Fred Winters scored 21 points, Paul Duerden and Pascal Cardinal added 17 and 16 and Murray Grapentine had 10 points.

In the second classification match for places 9-12, Germany powered past Puerto Rico 3-1. The Europeans won 25-19, 23-25, 25-19, 25-18 and will now play USA for ninth place on Sunday. Puerto Rico will meet Canada for 11th place in the 24-team tournament.

Christian Pampel led Germany with 21 points and Bjorn Andrae added 18. Puerto Rican Hector Soto had 17 points, and Victor Rivera and Jose Rivera added 12 and 10 respectively.

USA Coach Hugh McCutcheon: "There are no easy matches in the World Championships and today was a good example of that. With a tournament that goes on for 14-15 days it is important to get the right level of motivation and effort for the whole time.

Canada improved their play and our guys did not respond, and

we had a little chat after the third set and they responded well. It was about trying to find the right combinations and right level of energy on the court. The depth of teams and talent in men's volleyball is very strong and every time you step on court, regardless of the opponent, it is going to be a good match."

Canada Coach Glenn Hoag: "The match was very important to us because a top 10 finish was our main goal. In the first set, the image was exactly what we have been doing for the tournament, playing to 20 points and then giving five points away. The USA team did not play well in the third set, but they are an experienced team and I knew they would come back with more rhythm and game plan. We lost our game, and we cannot do that at this level. In the fifth set, we just lost our flow. If we play like that going into the Olympic qualification we will not be going to the Olympic Games."

Puerto Rico Coach Carlos Cardona: "We could not play well because their good serves put a lot of pressure on us, and our serves did not function well."

Meanwhile, reigning World Champions Brazil will defend their title to the very end as they face Poland in tomorrow's final of the 2006 FIVB Men's World Championship. Following a shaky start in the first semi-final, Brazil recovered and claimed their place in the final beating Serbia and Montenegro 25-19, 15-25, 25-22, 25-12. Gilberto "Giba" Godoy was the best Brazilian scorer with 19 points.

Poland emerged from a grueling semi-final encounter with Bulgaria to book their place in the World Championships final with a 25-20, 26-28, 25-23, 25-23 victory against their European rivals. Michal Winiarski led the winners with 20 points.

