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Dominican Republic and United States to play for NORCECA Gold

MORELIA, Mexico, October 1, 2015. - Dominican Republic and United States will play in the Gold Medal match of the NORCECA Women's Continental Championship on Friday at Bicentenario Auditorium of Morelia, Mexico.

United States ranked first in the world has beaten Dominican Republic ranked seventh, in the Gold Medal match of the past two editions of the NORCECA biennial event. United States has earned seven NORCECA titles while Dominican Republic has only won once.

Advancing into the final match, Dominican Republic defeated Canada 3-1 (18-25, 25-20, 25-23, 25-20) and United States downed Puerto Rico 3-0 (25-20, 25-18, 25-17) in the tournaments' semifinal matches.

Mexico 3, Costa Rica 0

Mexico defeated Costa Rica 3-0 (25-16, 25-18, 25-13) to play for fifth. Mexico held a 28-20 margin in spikes, 6-2 in blocks and 6-3 in serves. Mexico took advantage of Costa Rica's faults, scoring 35 points on their opponents' errors. Opposite Dulce Carranza led Mexico's offensive with 10 points, Outside Hitter Lizbeth Sainz contributed with 9 points and Outside Hitter Andrea Rangel chipped in with 7 points. Costa Rica's Opposite Mijal Hines led all scorers with 12 points and Outside Hitter Evelyn Sibaja scored 7 points.

Cuba 3, Trinidad and Tobago 0

Cuba dominated Trinidad and Tobago 3-0 (25-14, 25-14, 25-14) and will face Mexico in the match for fifth place. Cubans took advantage of Trinidad and Tobago's 33 errors and limited their faults to 11, they held 30-24 margin in spikes, 10-6 in blocks and 2-1 in aces. Opposite Heidy Rodriguez of Cuba topped all scorers with 14 points, 9 on kills, 4 on blocks and 1 ace. Opposite Krystle Esdelle led Trinidad and Tobago with 9 points, Middle Blocker Sinead Jack contributed with 7 points and Outside Hitter Channon Thompson registered 6 points.

Dominican Republic 3, Canada 1

Dominican Republic defeated Canada 3-1 (18-25, 25-20, 25-23, 25-20) to reach the Gold Medal match. Canada had an early 6-2 lead with good blocking and scoring on Dominican Republic errors. Dominican Republic pushed hard with serves to tie 8-8, and forcing longer rallies; Canada kept their blocking effective leading again 14-10, giving more confidence to their offense to finish 25-18. Canada took the lead 5-3 again as Dominicans engaged in consecutive errors.

As the set developed, Dominican Republic spiked hard keeping the score close 12-12; Canada reached the second technical time out up 16-14. Dominicans finally jumped to lead and closed 25-20 to tie the actions. In set three Dominicans spiked hard against Canada's blocking to score and take the lead 9-7; this went on going but Canada was patient until they tied 17-17. It took Dominican Republic two set points to seal 25-23 with a touch of the ball after a spectacular rally. The fourth set was slow, the score always close; Dominicans' blocking executed well for the lead and win 25-20. Dominicans held a huge advantage in spikes 51-35, while Canada had a 13-12 margin in blocks and 2-1 in aces. Dominicans scored on 29 errors of Canada but gave away 38 points from their errors. Outside Hitter Brayelin Martinez scored 22 points, 18 on kills and 4 on blocks to lead Dominican Republic into the final and Outside Hitter Yonkaira Peña contributed with 13 points. Canada's top scorer was Opposite Tabitha Love with 14 points, followed by Outside Hitter Dana Cranston with 11 points and Middle Blocker Rebecca Pavan with 10 points.

United States 3, Puerto Rico 0

United States beat Puerto Rico 3-0 (25-20, 25-18, 25-17) in their semifinal. Both teams had errors in blocking and serving in set one; strong kills on both

sides kept the score close and tied on several occasions, but Puerto Rico took a two point lead 12-10 that USA cut to reach the second technical time-out up 16-15. Neither one was dominant; USA won the set 25-20 with aggressive kills. USA held a huge 14-9 lead with powerful offense; the Americans' blocking also performed well keeping Puerto Rico under control for the finish 25-18. USA jumped to the lead in the third set by 11-7, not allowing Puerto Rico to perform while being aggressive in kills.

USA managed total control of the actions while finishing set three 25-17 and beating Puerto Rico. United States prevailed over Puerto Rico with 44-30 margin in spikes, a huge 10-3 advantage in blocking and 2-0 margin in serves. United States committed 22 errors and scored on 19 opponent errors. Outside Hitter Jordan Larson-Burbach led United States victory registering 13 points, followed by Middle Blocker Tetori Dixon and Opposite Nicole Fawcett with 12 and 13 points respectively. Outside Hitter Aurea Cruz topped Puerto Rico's scorers with 9 points, while Middle Blocker Alexandra Oquendo and Opposite Karina Ocasio added 6 points apiece.

