

# *Cuban Women's Basketball Players Head to Santo Domingo*

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## **SPORTS NEWS for TUESDAY, MAY 9th**

The departure of six basketball players to the Dominican Republic on Wednesday is the main novelty of the Cuban women's pre-selection, beginning preparations for the Centrobasket in Puerto Rico from June 3rd to the 9th.

The Dominican contest will be attended by Fransy Ochoa, Anisleidys Galindo, Leidys Oquendo, Yuniesky Bouly, Marlene Cepeda and Edith Thompson, who played in the Argentine super league.

According to Alberto Zabala, technical director of the national team, "This opening is effective, because it raises the level of athletes, they play more matches, they get to know different coaches and systems and that develops their technical-tactical thinking."

Speaking to RHC, the Cuban strategist acknowledged the benefits of this second Cuban participation in the beginning of the training, as the event includes a schedule close to the 20 games between May 13 and June 13.

For the captain, Anisleidys Galindo, runner-up with the club Star Berisso and member of the ideal squad

of the regular phase in the Argentine league this opportunity is very valuable for his career.

"When I arrived to Argentina it was my first time, I did not know everything, but little by little I was playing and proving what I could do. Now in the Dominican I will try to maintain the results and contribute to the victory," said the 26-year-old.

The forward, Leidys Oquendo, a member of the Talleres de Paraná team and deserving of the status of best foreign player in Argentina emphasized that no matter the level of the league, "basketball is a collective sport and requires many parties to raise the level" .

With the participation of this group of players in the Dominican Republic, plus the presence of Ineidys Casanova in Brazil and Arlenis Romero in El Salvador, Cuban basketball rises to 8 the number of females in foreign tournaments.

The Dominican Republic presented Cuban Orlando Samuels as the new technical director of his men's program and head coach of the senior volleyball team.

Samuels was introduced by Nelson Ramirez, secretary general of the national federation and director of the program for men, accompanied by Luis Mejia Oviedo, president of the Dominican Olympic Committee and representatives of the Ministry of Sports.

Samuels graduated from the Cuban Institute of Physical Education in 1987 and trained his country's men's team to a gold medal at the 1989 World Cup and silver medals at the World Championships in 1990 and 2010.

"I'm a hard worker and the guys know it and they're willing to do their part," Samuels said. "What I have seen is a group with high potential and the results must be shown if we accomplished with the projected plan."

The Dominicans are champions of the Central American and Caribbean Games after winning the gold medal in Veracruz, Mexico in 2014.

"We have the potential to go beyond the Central American Games," Samuels said. "We have to explore the Pan-American Games, the World League and the Olympic Games, but we have to do some hard work to achieve that."

Victor Gil, vice president of the Dominican Federation, gave the first words highlighting Samuels' successful career, while Tony Mesa took a turn as representative of the Sports Ministry.

The international calendar of the Dominican Men's National Team includes the Pan American Cup in Canada from July 23rd to the 31st and the NORCECA Continental Championship in Colorado, United States from September 24th to October 2nd.

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