

# *Cuba's soccer team to face Antigua and Barbuda unchanged*

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**Onel Hernández scored Cuba's goal in the 28th minute. Photo: CONCACAF**

Santiago de Cuba, June 9 (JIT) - The Cuban national soccer team arrived in Saint Kitts and Nevis with the same roster that defeated Barbados 3-0 in its second CONCACAF Nations League 2022-2023 match.

There they will face Antigua and Barbuda on neutral ground and with the chance to climb to first place in Group A at the second level of the league.

The team coached by Pablo Elier Sanchez starts as favorites despite the fact that their rivals have two wins in as many matches.

The accumulation of several matches has been beneficial for the team and this should be noticeable in the next match. That is precisely the Cuban coach's intention in keeping the team together, as he told JIT.

"We are very happy with the group. We have had an intense preparation these days and the dynamism we are looking for is already coming out. You could see in the game against Barbados that we could even score another goal," he said.

However, some were not happy with the image of the second half against Barbados, which was argued by Elier: "for us the most important thing is the victory and that's why the changes came after a 3-0 score. With that advantage we have to take advantage and give minutes to players who should be ready to take on equally important roles."

"We gave an opportunity to a talented young player like Christian Flores to make his debut in front of his home fans and we were able to observe how he fitted in with a group he doesn't know and gave details of his quality, that also allowed us to get other players into that dynamic I'm talking about because we need them all ready," he added.

Regarding the absence of changes, he insisted that the most important thing is to win and assured that the defeat against Guadalupe conditioned any rehearsal plan due to the team's need to win.

However, he did not rule out calling any other athlete in case he is needed for the next game, depending on any injury or suspension. Among those athletes, the Pinar del Río native acknowledged, there are some from the national league and others who play in foreign leagues, some of them in the middle of procedures to be able to join the senior team.

"There is a good atmosphere in the group and we are focused on winning to qualify directly to the 2023 Gold Cup," said captain Aricheell Hernandez, who believes that the goal is possible.

The two matches against Antigua in the coming days can catapult Cuba to the top of the A key and wait until March next year with the comfort of closing at home.

Probably this Thursday we will see the same starting eleven on the field in order to respond to the coach's soccer idea that solidifies with each game, hopefully also with a victory.

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