

Volleyball: Cuba defeats Iran in Pre-Olympic but did not win Olympic ticket

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Marlon Yant

Havana, October 9 (ACN)-- Cuba's men's volleyball team defeated Iran 3-2, but missed out on a direct berth at the end of Group A of the pre-Olympic tournament in Rio de Janeiro, the key that awards two of the six spots for the Paris 2024 multi-sport event.

With no chance of a place and very distant from the performance exhibited in previous days, mainly in the second and third sets, the Cubans won the first, 25-20, fell in the second and third, 23-25 and 23-25, but reacted in the fourth and fifth, 25-13 and 15-9.

The truth is that this result could have been a sweep, as the disciples of Jesus were better in all elements of the game, but gave up 29 points due to their own mistakes.

In the first round of section A on Sunday, Brazil left the largest of the Antilles with no direct ticket options, as they defeated Italy 3-2 (25-23, 23-25, 15-25, 25-17 and 15-11), a team that if Cruz's pupils had won would have maintained their aspirations, but they had to settle for adding points for the world ranking (RM).

Now the team from the largest of the Antilles will have to wait for their place in the RM after the end of the 2024 Nations League, an event that will define the five qualifiers, a number that will increase with France, due to its hosting status, and the six from the pre-Olympic, with the top two teams from groups A, B and C.

Against Iran, the collective statistics reflect better results for Cuba in attack, 59 units to 55, blocking (17-6) and service (9-3), but they gave up three more points than the Iranians (29-26).

Individually, Iran's Amin Esmaeilnezhad was the top scorer of the match with 22 points, 20 in attack, one in blocking and one in service, followed by Cubans Jesus Herrera (21/16-3-2), Marlon Yant (14/11-2-1), Miguel Angel Lopez (12/11-1-0) and Javier Concepcion (11/6-3-2).

Caribbean José Massó (10/6-4-0) and Movin Naski (10/10-0-0-0) also finished with double digits.

In key A, the direct qualifiers to Paris 2024 are undefeated Germany, with 18 points and six wins, and Brazil (15/6-1), followed closely by Cuba (14/5-2).

In B, the winners are the United States (20/7-0) and Japan (16/5-2), while in C are Poland (18/7-0) and Canada (15/5-2).

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