

2007 FIVB World Grand Prix: three pools in Japan, Russia and Hong Kong (China) to play the second le

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Â Lausanne, 8th August 2007 â€“ The second weekend of the FIVB World Grand Prix is ready to start. Three pools will play in Tokyo (Japan), Khabarovsk (Russia) and Hong Kong (China) from Friday to Sunday. After the first leg played last week in Italy, Japan and Poland, the 12 Womenâ€™s teams are back on the court, divided in three different Pools. This second weekend (10th - 12th August) is scheduled in Tokyo, Japan (Pool D: Brazil, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Netherlands), in Khabarovsk, Russia (Pool E: Cuba, Kazakhstan, Russia, U.S.A.) and in Hong Kong, China (Pool F: China, Dominican Republic, Italy, Poland).Â In Khabarovsk, some problems for the Russian team stressed by Head Coach Gianni Caprara: â€œWeâ€™re playing at home, and must strive for the maximum. But taking into consideration Sokolovaâ€™s and Merculovaâ€™s injuries, the fact that some players are young and not experienced enough, and such a high level of competition, thus our task is winning at least two matches.â€•Great expectations for the return of Japan, back in the Ariake Colosseum where almost 10,000 enthusiastic fans carried away the team through a heart-stopping tie break on Sunday. â€œAfter the first weekâ€ says Head Coach Shoichi Yanagimoto â€œthe team is becoming united. Their condition is improving and we want to play with a real focus in our game. We are really conscious of the World Cup and the Olympic Games. During the first week I think the team played much better than I had expected, and by using the same players again I want the players to have more experience and improve their skills.â€•All is ready in Hong Kong, where the organizers have set a funny game for the teamsâ€™ captains during the official press conference: they had to compose a puzzle of the event logo, running between the tables. Waiting for the big matches to come, this first game was won by the new Italian captain, the setter Eleonora Lo Bianco.The third weekend (17th - 19th August) is foreseeing in Osaka, Japan (Pool G: Japan, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia), in Taipei, Chinese Taipei (Pool H: Brazil, Chinese Taipei, Dominican Republic, Italy) and in Macau (Pool I: China, Cuba, Netherlands, U.S.A.).The Final Round will be played in Ningbo (China) from 22nd to 26th August by China (host country) and the best five ranked teams after the Preliminary Rounds.