

Wins by Dubai, Orchard Hill and Villa del Lago advance Joe Barry Memorial Cup

By Alex Webbe

Orchard Hill 11, Valiente 10

Orchard Hill (Steve Van Andel, Polito Pieres, Peke Gonzalez and Lucas Criado) opened their defense of their 2015 Joe Barry Memorial Cup title by building an 8-5 halftime lead over Valiente (Bob Jornayvaz, Roberto Zedda, Santi Torres and Santi Chavanne) before holding on to register the 11-10 win.

Santi Torres scored the first goal of the game in the opening 32 seconds of play followed by a tying goal (30-yard penalty conversion) from Polito Pieres a minute later. Santiago Chavanne gave the lead back to Valiente, 2-1, with 4:36 left in the chukker. Pieres took control of the ball at midfield in the waning seconds of the opening chukker and raced down the field to tie it at 2-2 with 11 seconds on the clock.

Torres and Peke Gonzalez exchanged goals in the opening minutes of the second period, 3-3 before the momentum shifted in Orchard Hill's favor. A pressing Orchard Hill attack resulted in a number of costly Valiente fouls that had Pieres converting three consecutive penalty shots to move ahead, 6-3.

The two teams matched one another goal for goal in the third period. Pieres and Chavanne each converted penalty shots while Roberto Zedda and Lucas Criado each scored a goal from the field. At the end of the first half Orchard Hill held on to their three goal lead, 8-5.

Criado scored on a pass from Gonzalez to open the second half with a 9-5 Orchard Hill lead. Zedda drove neck-shot 30-yards through the Orchard Hill goalposts, 9-6. Pieres scored the final goal of the period from the field and with two periods remaining in regulation play, Orchard Hill was in possession of a four goal, 10-6, lead.

Defense governed the fifth chukker with both teams having difficulty scoring. Both attacks were characterized with runs up and down the field with no positive results. Chavanne scored the only goal of the period with just 2:57 on the clock, but Orchard left the field with the lead, 10-7.

Valiente opened the final chukker with a powerful shot through the goalposts by Chavanne that brought Valiente to within two goals of the lead, 10-8. Gonzalez gave the three goal lead back to Orchard Hill on an impressive 200-yard scoring run, 11-9. Valiente continued to attack the Orchard Hill goal with Chavanne scoring his fifth goal of the game that cut the Orchard Hill lead to two goals, 11-9. Orchard Hill fought fiercely

to take the wind out of the resurging sails of the Valiente players but Valiente persevered. Chavanne scored his final goal of the game with 2:13 on the clock, and bringing Valiente to within a goal of the lead when Orchard Hill stemmed the tide. The Orchard Hill defense held for the final two minutes of the game and celebrated a narrow 11-10 win.

Pieres scored five of his game-high seven goals on penalty conversions. Criado and Gonzalez each scored twice for the win. Chavanne's six goals led the Valiente attack. Torres and Zedda scored two goals each in the loss.