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PRESS RELEASE

Canada's Binstock/Schachter captures men's gold at FIVB Parana Open



At the FIVB Parana Open all first-time podium finishers were, from left, Chile's Marco Grimalt/Esteban Grimalt (silver), Canada's Josh Binstock/Sam Schachter (gold) and Canada's Ben Saxton/Chaim Schalk savor their medal moment in Argentina.

Paraná, Argentina, November 2, 2014 – Creating some history for their country, Canada's Josh Binstock and Sam Schachter fought through the chilly, windy, sometimes drizzly Argentinean spring evening and a strong opponent to emerge as winners of the gold medal Sunday at the double-gender US\$150,000 FIVB Parana Open.

Back in Argentina for the sixth time and in Paraná for just the first time, the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Tour stop was held in Paraná in a purpose-built venue at Balneario Thompson in Paraná, located in the Entre Rios province on the eastern shore of the Paraná River.

FIVB PURSE, TOURNEY TOTALS
The FIVB Parana Open is the 312th FIVB men's tournament since its first event in 1987 and the 276th FIVB women's tournament since FIVB began women's competitions in 1992. Gold medal winning teams in each gender in FIVB Parana Open will split \$11,000, silver will receive \$8,000, bronze medalists get \$6,000 and the fourth place finishers will earn \$4,500 of the \$150,000 total purse.

GOLD MEDAL RESULTS

In a match between one team that had made it just once to a final four and the other that never been to one, Canada's second-seeded Josh Binstock/Sam Schachter swept Chile's fourth-seeded Esteban Grimalt/Marco Grimalt in straight sets, 21-14, 21-12 in 36 minutes.

BRONZE MEDAL RESULTS

With misting rain falling under darkening skies and increasing wind as night was falling on the Paraná stadium court, Canada's top-seeded Chaim Schalk/Ben Saxton bounced back from their tough semifinal loss earlier Sunday to topple Germany's fifth-seeded Thomas Kaczmarek/Sebastian Fuchs, 21-15, 21-10 in 33 minutes.

GOLD MEDAL RECAP

The victory gave Canada its second men's gold medal in the history of the FIVB World Tour, and first since July 7, 1996 when Canada's legendary won their country's first FIVB gold medal in Berlin by defeating Brazil's Para Ferreira/Guilherme Marques. Couple with the bronze medal victory, it marked the first time in the history of the FIVB World Tour that Canada earned two men's medals in the same FIVB event.

Canada's Binstock/Schachter tandem was playing in just its sixth FIVB World Tour event as a team with one fourth place finish in the FIVB Sao Paulo Grand Slam this year. They ended with a 7-0 match record on the road to winning the championship. Binstock is also a Canadian Olympian having finished in 17th place in the 2012 London Olympic Games. Schachter teamed with Garrett May to win the 2010 FIVB U-21 World Championship in Alanya, Turkey.

For Chile's Esteban Grimalt/Marco Grimalt, this was their 20th FIVB World Tour event as a team and they were playing in their first final four and their previous best finish was one fifth place. They finished 6-1 in this tournament entering their semifinal match against the Canadians. It was also the first time Chile had advanced a team to the final four and first time the South American country earned a medal in an FIVB World Tour event.

Much like the last two sets of their semifinal victory, Canada's Binstock/Schachter played with poise, enthusiasm and tenacity to overwhelm Chile's ever-improving Grimalt cousins.

The first set was tied only two times, both early and repeated blocks by Binstock and digs and kills by Schachter steadily pulled them further ahead. At 13-6, Schachter served two untouched aces as the Canadians continued to build up their lead. After a three-point run by Chile narrow the gap in 17-12, Canada scored four of the next six points to win the set.

In the second set, Canada again came out strong, scoring the first six points of the set on the strength again of near-flawless play, Binstock's blocks and Schachter's continuing digs and kills to keep a gap of five to eight points and the match score was never tied and there were no lead changes in a dominating performance by the Canadians.

With the score 19-12 in the second set, Schachter had another cross court kill and Binstock ended the set and match with another powerful block.

Canada's Binstock was overjoyed at the end, commenting, "This is amazing that we can make history here. We kept the focus throughout the match and we didn't make many mistakes. Sam played very well this entire tournament and to put together a run of seven straight match wins in a FIVB World Tour event is really like a dream come true. We are very happy. The outcome of the gold medal match was determined much more easily than we expected, because Chile's Grimalts have a great team. I don't think they played their best and we certainly played our best. We are really working hard and improving every week."

Canada's Schachter was equally as pleased, adding, "We love Parana and we will never forget what happened here this week. Getting the second gold medal in the history of Canadian men's beach volleyball history is something to really be proud about and we are. Especially when you think its been 18 years since our great Olympians Heese and Childs won our country's first gold medal."

BRONZE MEDAL REVIEW

The bronze medal win gave Canada its first men's medal on the FIVB World Tour since 2002 when Jody Holden/Conrad Leinemann earned a silver medal in Cadiz, Spain.

Playing in their 22nd FIVB World Tour event as a team, Canada's Schalk/Saxton duo was playing in their first final four with previous best finishes of two fifth places. They had a 6-1 match record in Argentina. All six wins came in two sets and the longest of those matches was only 33 minutes.

Germany's Kaczmarek/Fuchs duo was also playing in its first final four with previous best finishes of ninth place in two tournaments. They had a 5-3 record in this tournament as they won three times on Saturday to make it into the final four of the tournament, their first on the FIVB World Tour.

Canada's Schalk/Saxton did their homework against a team they hadn't played before and learned some key things from watching their countrymen Binstock/Schachter come from behind to shock the German duo. After a comfortable first set win, Canada's Schalk/Saxton took off in the second set, much like their Canadian teammates had done earlier against the German tandem. Similar to the third set of the other Canadian match against the German's Canada's Schalk/Saxton pulled out quickly ahead to leads of 5-1, 9-2, 12-14 and eventually 19-7 before ending the set and match on another hitting error by Germany's Kaczmarek/Fuchs.

Following his team's bronze medal victory, Schalk stated, "We are very happy but are still angry about that three-set defeat in the semifinals. Anyway we enjoy this because it is our first medal and we also played in our first final four on the FIVB World Tour. It is an honor to win a medal for Canada. It's kind of a way of saying thank you to our federation for all of the help they have given us to this point. We went to all 10 FIVB Grand Slam events this year as well as this Open in Argentina which has really helped us develop as a team."

Teammate Saxton gave his perspective as well, commenting, "We played very strong, everything worked and we had very few mistakes. We still hurt about the lost in the semifinals, were we were so close. I think our anger from the semi lost helped us still very focused for the bronze medal match. We are happy to come back and win the bronze medal. Parana is a nice city and we hope return next season."

SEMIFINAL RESULTS

Chile's cousins Esteban Grimalt/Marco Grimalt had to save nearly 12 match points before finally overcoming Canada's Binstock/Schalk/Saxton in three long sets, 24-26, 30-28 and 15-9 in 58 minutes to move into their first FIVB World Tour gold medal match.

The second saw a match where momentum swung back and forth before Canada's Binstock/Schachter came from behind and pulled away from Germany's Kaczmarek/Fuchs for the win. In another three-setter, Canada lost the first set 14-21, flipping the result to take the second set 21-14 before earning their first FIVB World Tour gold medal match appearance by overpowering the Germans in the tie-breaker by a 15-9 score in 51 minutes.

In the brilliantly played first semifinal match, Chile took leads of three or four points in both of the first two sets only to see Canada march back to tie and even take the lead in both of the first two sets. Chile hung tough, fighting through six match points, but Canada won the first set and Chile fought through to survive the second.

In the deciding third set, it was tied up to 5-5 before Chile went on their first run of three points to assume the lead they never relinquished at 8-5. With Canada striving to get back in the set, Chile's Marco Grimalt stepped up with three straight blocks on Canada's Schalk and Esteban Grimalt ended the set and the match with a cross court kill in one to win the match to also move to their first FIVB World Tour gold medal match.

Chile's Marco Grimalt/Esteban Grimalt tandem now has a 2-0 record against Canada's Schalk/Saxton having defeated them in July in The Hague FIVB Grand Slam in straight sets.

In the second semi, the match saw a huge swing in confidence during the first two sets as Canada's Binstock/Schachter gained more and more energy with their success. In the deciding third set, Canada's Binstock/Schachter rocketed to leads of 5-1 and 12-4 that seemed to stunned Germany's Kaczmarek/Fuchs and well they tried to rally, Binstock's blocks and Schachter's digs keep coming and the set and match ended on a kill by Schachter after a block and two kills by Binstock.

OH! CANADA

Canada had four men's teams in Argentina, two of them won their respective pools, one was second and the other third as all advanced to the elimination rounds. Combined in pool play, Schalk/Saxton, 16th-seeded Garrett May/Maverick Hatch, Binstock/Schachter and eighth-seeded Grant O'Gorman/Sam Pedlow had an impressive combined 9-3 match record in pool play. On Saturday, the Canadian tandems compiled a 5-2 record. On Sunday with two teams in the final four, the Canadians went 3-1 to give them an impressive 17-6 overall combined record in the tournament.

ARGENTINE HISTORY

Men's champion duo in Corrientes last year was Latvia's new duo of Aleksandrs Samoilovs/Janis Smedins while women's champion team was Sophie van Gestel/Madelein Meppelink of the Netherlands.

Through this year's 2014 event, Argentina has hosted a total of seven FIVB World Tour events (5 men, 2 women) with three events held in Mar del Plata, last year in Corrientes and this year in Parana. In the men's medal totals, Brazil has five medals, followed by Argentina and Canada with two each and with one men's medal each in Argentina are Australia, Chile, Italy, Switzerland and the United States.

After two FIVB World Tour women's events held in Argentina through 2014, Brazil has extended its lead in the medal parade with five total medals followed by the Netherlands with one.

NEXT UP

With the grand slam portion of 10 events on the 2014 FIVB World Tour complete, the tour continues through December with two more FIVB Open events left. Remaining on the 2014 calendar are one double-gender FIVB Open event along with one men-only FIVB Open tournament.

This week, the tour heads to Qatar for the men-only \$75,000 FIVB Doha Open, Tuesday through Saturday before concluding in South Africa with the double-gender \$150,000 FIVB Mangaung Open (Dec. 9-14).

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