

August 19, 2013

BRUJO DE OLLEROS ROLLS TO 1ST U.S. STAKES WIN IN CARL HANFORD S. 'WIZARD' FROM URUGUAY IS REVITALIZED IN COMEBACK UNDER METTEE TEAM VALOR, SANTULLI REWARDED FOR PATIENCE WITH 5-YEAR-OLD

The real Brujo de Olleros made his presence felt in the United States on August 19 when the Uruguayan champion miler rolled to a 6 1/4-length win in the Carl Hanford Memorial Stakes at Delaware Park.



Brujo de Olleros opened up in the stretch to win by more than 6 lengths in the Hanford Memorial over one mile and 70 yards, and both his jockey and exercise rider expressed confidence that he can handle a mile and an eighth. HoofprintsInc.com photo

long as a year to fully acclimate, and this horse just did not look right to me last summer, even before he ran," Irwin said. "We sent him to Bill Recio in Ocala last winter, since Bill had a lot of past success working with horses from the Southern Hemisphere. He got him going and by the time the horse was ready to join Rick Mettee at Fair Hill in early May, he finally looked like he did when we bought him."

Brujo de Olleros, named for a Brazilian trainer who was known as the "Wizard" of Olleros, impressed Recio and Mettee in his training, and he made a very promising comeback on June 23 at Parx near Philadelphia, where he just missed with a stretch rally going 7 furlongs in a \$100,000 Listed race.

Stretched out to 2 turns in the Hanford Memorial over a mile and 70 yards, Brujo de Olleros opened up as the 2 to 5 favorite and was 4 to 5 going into the gate in a

Team Valor International and Richard Santulli purchased Brujo de Olleros privately in February 2012 after he broke a 75-year track record winning a major mile race in Uruguay by 14 1/4 lengths in 1:33 1/5, but he did not acclimate well to his new surroundings at first. After two disappointing starts last August and September, Team Valor CEO Barry Irwin was convinced that the liver chestnut needed a break to fully adjust to the U.S.

"I had seen horses from the Southern Hemisphere take as

"[Brujo de Olleros] is one of the most magnificent looking horses I've seen."

*Steve Haskin
Blood-Horse*

field of 8 that included Grade 3 winner Tiger Walk and Chilean classic winner Omayad. Brujo de Olleros was eager to go—he broke through the gate but the assistant starter fortunately was able to hold on and keep him and jockey Alex Cintron from going more than a few feet. After re-loading, Brujo de Olleros broke sharply again and settled into a stalking position from 2 wide in third and fourth place. Brujo de Olleros cruised to the front coming out of the far turn and poured it on in the stretch under a hand ride.



Brujo de Olleros will point to Belmont Park's Kelso Handicap, a "Win and You're In" prep for the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile.

"When I saw where he was in the turn, I knew he would win like that," said Danielle Hodsdon, the regular exercise rider for the 5-year-old son of Wild Event. "He's deceptive to ride: he only uses that extra gear if you ask him."



Rick Mettee has 3 stakes wins from 23 starters as Team Valor's private trainer and has been a bit unlucky with 10 second-place finishes.

Cintron, Delaware's leading jockey by earnings in 2013, said Brujo de Olleros is the best horse he has ridden this year. *Blood-Horse* senior correspondent Steve Haskin referred to Brujo de Olleros on Monday as "one of the most magnificent horses I've seen," and wrote that the horse was very impressive winning the Hanford Memorial in his second start off a long layoff and in a "solid field."

Team Valor and Santulli will consider sending their "Wizard" to Belmont Park for the one-mile Grade 2 Kelso Handicap on September 28. The Kelso is a "Win and You're In" prep for the \$1-million Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile on November 2 at Santa Anita Park. Brujo de Olleros was not nominated for the Breeders' Cup program when he arrived in the U.S. but was nominated for life for \$50,000 last July.

Mettee won the Kelso in 2006 and '08 for Godolphin Racing and now has 3 stakes wins since saddling his first runner as Team Valor's private trainer in late May. His last 10 starters have compiled 2 wins, 4 seconds and 2 thirds, including the Hanford Memorial and Infinite Magic's Grade 3 win in the American Derby.