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Havana, January 29 (RHC)-- Havana native Jasiel Rivero and his club Valencia Basket defeated Gran Canaria by a score of 91 to 62 on Friday and ensured their presence in the Copa del Rey of Spanish basketball, a competition to which the top eight teams in the Endesa League qualify, after the first 17 games of the regular season have been played.

Playing as locals at the Fuente de San Luis Pavilion, Joan Peñarroya's disciples dominated the first half of the game 50x30 with partial wins of 23-17 and 27-13.

In the second half they maintained their dominance and won the final two quarters by 18-14 and 23-18 to claim their biggest win of the season.

Slovenian Klemen Prepelic, with 16 points, led the offense of the winners, seconded by American Mike Tobey, who contributed 12 points and grabbed seven rebounds, in a game in which Rivero, from the capital, had nine points, four rebounds and two assists in 21 minutes of play.

With this victory at La Fonteta, the Taronjas reached 10 wins in the local tournament and have seven in a row, three in the League and four in the Eurocup.

They have not lost in the league since December 19, when they lost to Río Breogan, while in the Eurocup they suffered their last setback on December 21 against Cedevita Ljubljana of Slovenia.

The Valencianistas, who will have to return to the court this Sunday as visitors against Lenovo Tenerife, have managed to qualify for the 23rd time to the Copa del Rey, the last 10 in a row.

The Valencian team's debut in the Copa del Rey took place in the 1998 edition of Valladolid, when they achieved the feat of winning the title after beating Joventut Badalona in the final.

Valencia Basket has disputed four more finals, in addition to that of its debut, the last one three seasons ago, in Vitoria 2017, against Real Madrid, but in none of them managed to take the victory.

For the 2022 edition, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Joventut de Badalona, Baxi Manresa, Ucam Murcia, Valencia Basket and Río Breogan have already qualified.

Only one place remains for the Cup, which will be hosted by the city of Granada from February 17 to 20, and will be played by Lenovo Tenerife and Bitci Baskonia. Everything depends on the Lenovo Tenerife-Valencia Basket, which will be played on Sunday.

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