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POLO



WINTER 2017 | THE EUROPEAN SEASON

CHAMPION STYLE:
FASHION BEYOND THE FIELD

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LANG LANG

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James Harper, MVP of the 2017 Royal Salute Coronation Cup, wearing the new England kit by Hurlingham Polo 1875; featured on pages 40-45

HURLINGHAM MAGAZINE

Publisher Roderick Vere Nicoll

Executive Editor Peter Howarth

Editor Gemma Latham

Assistant Editor Jemima Wilson

Editor-At-Large Alex Webbe

Art Director Julia Allen

Chief Copy Editor Lucy Frith

Deputy Chief Copy Editor Holly Quayle

Copy Editors Polly Dennison, Ceri Thomas, Katie Wyartt

Picture Editor Amy Wiggin

Contributing Photographer Tony Ramirez

SHOW MEDIA Editorial

Managing Director Peter Howarth

1-2 Ravey Street, London EC2A 4QP

+ 44 (0) 20 3222 0101

info@showmedialondon.com; showmedialondon.com

HURLINGHAM MEDIA Sales

+44 (0) 771 483 6102

hurlingham@hpa-polo.co.uk; hurlinghampolo.com

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FOREWORD

There are a couple of themes in this issue that I would like to draw your attention to. The first is brands. On the cover, we have England captain James Beim lifting the Coronation Cup. His shirt is Hurlingham Polo 1875 brand. In Features, Theresa Harold writes how Hurlingham Polo 1875 has cemented its reputation for authenticity and charts the development of this global lifestyle brand. In Archive, Alex Webbe looks at the Beverly Hills Polo Club and how successful branding can offer longevity beyond the playing fields.

The second theme is putting some fun back into the game. In Talk, Terry Hanlon gives his views and in Opinion, John Horswell has some good ideas. The best of all is Sébastien Le Page, who details how he has transformed Polo Park Zürich and put some life back into the club!

Finally, as the first game of polo in the United States was played in the arena, Alex Webbe looks at the history of arena polo and gives us an action report on Gladiator Polo in North Carolina. Have a look at the piece in Ponylines about all-weather surfaces on an outdoor field.

As usual, we cover the major tournaments in England as well as a few in Europe and the US.

For all the latest polo news and action, visit hurlinghampolo.com



RODERICK VERE NICOLL
PUBLISHER

CONTRIBUTORS



SÉBASTIEN LE PAGE is a French entrepreneur living in Switzerland. Despite riding all his life, he only discovered polo six years ago and has since bought Polo Park Zürich, and founded the San Eugenio Polo Club in Lobos, Argentina. He enjoys regular competitive polo, and after-game culture.



THERESA HAROLD was born in Hong Kong, but now lives in London and works as a journalist. She writes for *The Telegraph*, *Prestige Hong Kong*, and *Harper's Bazaar UK*. Her love of horses began as a child and she escapes to the stables as often as possible, but classes herself as a polo novice.



AGUSTIN ALMANZA is a veterinarian from Argentina, and grew up among horses and playing polo. He trained in equine surgery in Canada and the US, and has worked in Europe and Asia. He practises in Pilar, Argentina and consults around the world. He founded Redboot, the equine prosthetics company, in 2007.



KAVEH ATRAK has memories of his grandfathers and great uncle playing polo, which triggered his interest. Over the past 25 years he has played and competed in 15 countries. He left the corporate world four years ago and now coaches new players. He is based at Gut Aspern Polo Club, near Hamburg.

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1958 Florence Knoll and Eero Saarinen, Pedestal "Tulip" Chair
2013 Eero Saarinen Pedestal Collection
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ONES TO WATCH

MILLY, INDI, NED AND LOUIS HINE



From left: Milly, Indi, Ned, Robyn, Louis, and Andrew Hine

This season we champion four superstars in the making: Milly, Ned, Indi and Louis Hine. Their father Andrew Hine played professional polo for over 20 years, and he and his wife Robyn have passed their deep love of the sport and horses on to their children.

This year, 16-year-old Milly won two of the most prestigious low-goal tournaments – the Holden White and the Archie David. Brother Ned, 14, was in the original Archie David line-up, but when La Bamba de Areco

recruited him for the high-goal, Milly played the final in his place. She won the title and the MVP award. Ned went on to win two high-goal matches, in the Queen's Cup and the Gold Cup, against King Power Foxes.

The Hine family typically spend April and the October half-term in Argentina. This year, Milly and Ned played the 16-goal at Polo One with Hilario Ulloa, making it to the final. Eleven-year-old Louis is also keeping busy, playing 10-, 8-, and 6-goal tournaments, and

this season he won the Hipwood Trophy for the second year running.

Indi, 13, also has a Hipwood title under her belt, and has won the National Schools Showjumping Championship. This year she is competing in British eventing, and recently achieved a third place finish in her first Novice at The Bicton Arena International.

Milly, Ned, Indi and Louis are all crazy about horses, and it will be fascinating to watch where it takes them.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This season the weather was as bad as it has ever been for the Coronation Cup, but Flannels England avenged their defeat of last year against the Commonwealth, and the Swarovski England Ladies team won against the USA Ladies. Even more important news was that of the five-year sponsorship deal between Flannels and English polo.

Much discussed recently has been the decision of the HPA to trial the ability for some players to have different handicaps for the 22-goal. The upper limit of 10 goals for players creates downward pressure on handicaps with the result that those playing in the 22-goal either gain an advantage in the lower levels or push everyone else down. This step by the HPA will be kept under close review, after they decided against raising the individual upper limit to 12-, 15- or 20-goals.

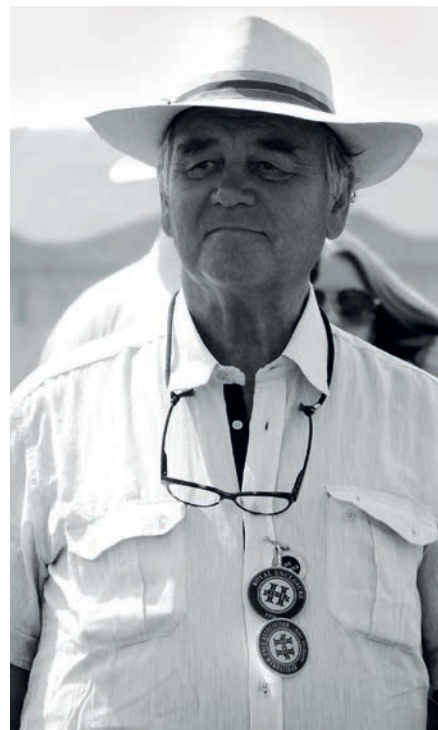
Rule changes are also on the horizon. In July, a meeting was held in England with the AAP and USPA on ways in which the game could be more spectator friendly, sped up and easier to umpire. The AAP agreed to lead on changes. The most significant and potentially game-changing rule will be the 'blocking' rule, from ice hockey.

As the Argentine season kicks off, attention will turn to the FIP 14-Goal World Championships in Sydney. Congratulations to the hosts who have accumulated enough ponies to mount eight teams, a huge achievement. We wish the teams the best of luck.

David Wood

**JOHN TYLOR
JULY 1942 –
SEPTEMBER 2017**

On 9 September, John Tylor died suddenly on his way to the butts during a day of grouse shooting. John was Chairman of the Hurlingham Polo Association from 1991-1995 and a member of the International Committee until the time of his death. He was a quintessential English gentleman, who loved shooting, fishing and polo. He had a wry sense of humour and a twinkle in his eye. One would not be surprised to see John treading in with his beloved wife of 41 years, Heather, wearing bombachas with one of his many twin-cock shooting thumbsticks. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.



GALLOPS OF MOROCCO

The second edition of the Gallops has changed its location from the Sultanate of Oman to Morocco, but Gallops of Morocco will maintain an Omani flavour, thanks to its main sponsor, the Royal Cavalry of the Sultanate of Oman. Taking place from 25 February to 4 March 2018, the 200km ride will begin in Arfoud, east Morocco. The route will be divided into five stages of about 40km through the sand dunes of Merzouga, to be covered in an 'ideal' time – not too fast, not too slow – by teams of five riders on local horses. Teams from Oman (winner in 2014), Morocco, the US, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy and Qatar have already confirmed their participation in the six-day adventure. For further information visit: gallopsofmorocco.com



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**HOOKED ON POLO
ANDREY BORODIN**

Originally from Russia, Andrey Borodin has rapidly risen up the ranks since he started playing polo five years ago. He has played 18- and 15-goals with Park Place this year, and the team is planning to enter 22-goal tournaments next year.

I started playing polo in 2012, as a pastime to share with my wife Tatiana and our daughter Varvara, who were taking beginner lessons at Coworth Park. They kept talking about polo and how exciting it was, so I decided to give it a go. Back then I did water ski slaloms, and skied at a very good level for an amateur. Initially, polo didn't look challenging enough to me, but the first time my pony went into canter during a stick-and-ball session, I felt so much adrenaline and thought, 'This is quite fun, actually!' I used to play ice hockey during long Russian winters, and it's similar to polo in that it's all about winning, team effort and being fearless. But what makes polo unique is the bond between a player and his horse, and a good horse makes you feel like you're one being, like ancient centaurs. For me, the perfect polo game is achieved by a combination of team players who are all desperate to win; excellent horse power; all team members coming together behind the scenes; and a strong opposition. You may not win, but you should be happy after a perfect game. My most memorable game was the final of the Royal Windsor Cup this year. My goal for this year was to be in the Windsor semi-final, so to win, and to receive the Cup from the Queen, was truly unbelievable.



ALL-WEATHER FLOORING AT IPC

The International Polo Club of Palm Beach is to launch an innovative regulation-size polo practice field with all-weather footing during the 2018 season. The special mix of sand, felt, fibre and unique binding agent is currently being tested at Tryon International Equestrian Center in Mill Spring, and provides a safe surface for players and horses, by reducing divots created by horses' movement. The new surface is not intended to replace grass polo fields, but will allow six to eight daily practices per week, regardless of the weather.



ALUMNI POLO

The Inner Circle and Alumni Polo Club Summer Polo Festival 2017 saw 800 singles descend on The London Polo Club (Ham). Dating app, the Inner Circle, hosted the festival, which began with four polo matches between four Alumni teams. After exciting qualifiers, the final's first chukka was close, with team Nuutrition (Adil Bux, Gaston Devrient, Sam Browne and Nik Roessner) beating the Heads team (Flora Babot, Thijs Povel, D'Artagnan Giercke and Rich Hine). Nuutrition showed their excellence in the second chukka and pushed on to win the Inner Circle Summer Polo Cup. Third place went to Dog Buddy (Richard Setterwall, Carl-Henric Heimdal, Youssef Kadiri, Hector Worsley and Alex Hancock), after beating Cuckoo Club (George Shelton, Charlie Minns Shearer, Nathaniel McCullagh and Jasper Upton).

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RH

POLO



CONGRATULATIONS ON
THE 2017 QUEEN'S CUP!

CHUKKAS

Next year all helmets in the UK must meet the standard PAS015:2011 with a CE mark. Charles Owen produces a number of approved helmets. Casablanca and La Martina are testing new helmets. Falcon has decided not to certify.

XI FIP World Polo Championship Sydney will take place from 21-29 October, an eight-day festival of activities and polo. Eight teams from Argentina, Australia, Chile, England, India, New Zealand, Spain and the US will compete.

Eduardo Novillo Astrada is the new president of the AAP. He has come out with a number of changes. Ten teams will compete in the Triple Crown. There is a new anti-blocking rule and throw-ins from the boards will be replaced by free hits.

The AAP is looking at playing night games at Palermo during the Open. Lighting companies have been contacted, but only one test has been carried out. Games have been played under lights in Asia but never above the 30-goal level.

Chip Campbell was elected as chairman of the USPA in the 28-30 September meetings in Stevenson, Washington, after Joe Meyer decided not to stand. The other elected officials are Anthony Coppola, president, Stewart Armstrong, secretary and Samuel Ramirez Jr, treasurer.

Valiente have signed the two best players in the world (Adolfo Cambiaso and Facundo Pieres) for the 26-goal season in Florida 2018. At this point no other teams have been confirmed for the 26-goal season.



MASHOMACK INTERNATIONAL POLO CHALLENGE

Mashomack Polo Club hosted the 20th annual Mashomack International Polo Challenge and Luncheon in June, presented by Turkish Airlines. The New York State Trooper Honor Guard led the players onto the field with a parade of international flags, and in a historic first, six father-son teams competed, including Davis and Bruce Colley, Adam and John Klopp, Gian Franco and Giorgio Brignone of Mexico, and Philip and Uwe Zimmerman of Hungary and Germany. Team Nihi-Sumba Swordsmen beat Quest Magazine Team 3-1 to win the cup in what was a fast and furious final game.

ROYAL SALUTE POLO EDITION

The 'King of Whisky', Royal Salute, has unveiled a new 21-year-old polo edition with a more delicately flavoured blend, created to be enjoyed in the sunshine at sophisticated sporting occasions such as polo tournaments. The new drink has been developed by Royal Salute's director of blending Sandy Hyslop, and is endorsed by Royal Salute Polo Ambassador Malcolm Borwick, who has signed each limited-edition box. With notes of honeydew melon, berry jam and creamy toffee, the new balance has been developed from a combination of fragrant grains and fruity malt whiskies for a smooth and refined blended whisky, and is housed in Royal Salute's iconic handcrafted porcelain flagons with a distinct polo theme.



TONY RAMIREZ/IMAGESOFPOLLO.COM



**SADDLE UP WITH...
JAMES FEWSTER**

**COUNTRY: UK
HANDICAP: 2-GOAL
AGE: 18**

When did you start playing polo?

My dad got me into polo at Kirtlington Stud when I was eight. He played professionally and wanted me to play too.

Who do you respect most in polo?

It has to be the Pieres brothers. They are so talented, and have taught me a lot of things that have improved my game. Their little tips make a huge difference on the field.

How many tournaments have you played this year and how many did you win?

So far I have played about 45-50 games and won most of them. The biggest tournament I won was the Gold Cup, but I also had a great run with Snake Bite in the 8-goal Victor Ludorum, playing three tournaments, winning two and getting to the final of the Archie David.

What are you doing this winter?

In January, I'm going to Dubai with Ghantoot, where I'm playing with Facu Sola and Guillermo Terrera.

What is your most memorable Polo Game?

It has to be the final of the Gold Cup, probably the best game I have ever played. Everything clicked, and the horses were amazing on the day.



LOVE OF MY LIFE

**PONY'S NAME: JEB
SEX: GELDING
ORIGIN: SOUTH CAROLINA**

I first met Jeb in 2013 in Florida while playing with Mariano Aguerre at White Birch Fields. I jumped on Jeb before the practice and immediately thought he had a smooth, calm action. Despite him being 200lbs overweight, I agreed to put him in our barn on our training regime, and after 17 days I took a much trimmer Jeb for a 20-goal practice with Aguerre, where he kept up with the pace of play. I felt he was strong enough to win, but calm enough to be maneuverable. He is not the best looking horse, but this didn't matter, as the next year he played for the US Open-winning Alegria team ridden by my brother Julian. Jeb went to the UK this summer and played in the Queen's Cup, Gold Cup and Coronation Cup. His name? The story goes that breeder and trainer Tom Sawyer retrained a former cart horse from a South Carolina Hutterite community to play polo. The head elder in those communities is typically called Jebidiah, hence his name Jeb. *Fred Mannix*

**SWAROVSKI
BESPOKE ARMIS
HELMETS**

The Swarovski England Ladies team triumphed 8-3 against the US Ladies in July at Royal Salute Coronation Cup Day at Guards Polo Club. They claimed the coveted Diamond Jubilee trophy, sporting bespoke helmets by Emily London. Swarovski collaborated with milliner Emily Baxendale to decorate the Armis helmets, featuring hand-embellished rose fabric with precision-cut Swarovski crystals.





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BEGINNER'S LUCK

Julia Allen is surprised by what she achieves in a single morning of tuition at Polo Club de Chantilly



Surrounded by ancient royal forest, the beautiful Polo Club de Chantilly is one of the largest in Europe with nine grass fields and two winter fields offering tuition for riders all year round.

I'm here to take part in a polo clinic led by the celebrated 10-goal player, and Richard Mille brand ambassador, Pablo Mac Donough. Mac Donough senses my nerves as a complete beginner to the sport and advises me to just enjoy myself. But it is not often your first-ever polo lesson is with one of the best players in the world. The main sponsors of the club, Richard Mille, kindly kit me out in suitable polo attire and even lend me a watch for the occasion. Polo, after all, is all about timing.

My lesson begins with basic stick-and-ball technique, where I grasp the concept of

mallet control and try to perfect the swing. After a few practice shots I quickly move onto a wooden horse which, at more than two metres tall, seems daunting. But with Mac Donough's excellent instruction, I soon find myself hitting balls towards the target.

Connecting mallet to ball takes practice and my lack of power to drive the ball farther than five metres is something I'm keen to improve. Mac Donough reminds me to focus on timing and achieving the correct angle. He recommends I adopt a fluid motion when extending my swing through the wrist and to maintain a continuous bodyline from the shoulder, assuring me that power will come with a more consistent swing and longer stroke. My confidence improves and on a 10-penalty challenge I score 7/10 – not bad for a beginner. I start to realise why polo

Above: Pablo Mac Donough (centre) leads the Polo Clinic with Julia Allen (right) at the Polo Club de Chantilly

is such an addictive sport – the feeling of a good, on-target shot is priceless.

For the next challenge I am paired with Elegancé, one of the club's current 600 ponies. Co-ordination and focus is key and under Mac Donough's watchful eye I encourage Elegancé into position, working on the right pace, so that when I lean out to reach for the ball it flies towards the goal. My technique is coming together and I score three penalties. I would never have imagined someone with no prior experience of horses, or playing polo, could learn so much in the course of a single morning.



SAVING GRACE

Prior to Dr Agustín Almanza's pioneering work, deformed or injured foals and horses had few options for recovery. Here, he discusses how his invention has helped shape the future of this area of equine medicine

Every year thousands of foals are born with flexural and angular limb deformities, preventing them from reaching their top performance level in sports or at the sales. This occurs most commonly at the fetlock or knee joints, due to contracted tendons or bent bones. There is not a well-defined cause, and foals born with this condition

are referred to as 'crooked'. Many can't even stand up to nurse and sadly end up being euthanised. However, most of their problems could be solved if they were addressed correctly at an early age. Casts and homemade devices using PVC pipes are sometimes used, but they are difficult to apply and can leave marks on the foal's legs.

In a quest to improve the assistance available to foals, I have designed a line of orthopaedic devices that help to manage these problems much better.

I grew up among horses on a family farm in Argentina. After working with polo horses in several parts of the world, I became a veterinarian and took my first job with

Opposite: Dr Agustin Almanza assists a foal using his orthopaedic invention. *This page, from top:* the boot can be opened and closed for ease of removal; Redboot is more efficient than traditional casts

a practice in Kentucky in 1999. There I was exposed to various cases of foals born with crooked legs. We used to use casts but they needed replacing regularly to prevent injury to the foal's skin. I had previously worked as a taxidermist, and through this I had learned how to work with fibreglass and other resins, so I had the idea to make something that could be removed and re-applied more easily, even by the owner. My colleagues

challenged me to attempt it. So I invested in a \$30 fibreglass repair kit and a few days later I had created a handmade boot that could be opened and closed, fastened with Velcro straps. It worked well and, as it was red, when vets saw it they would ask: 'Can you make one of those little red boots for me?'

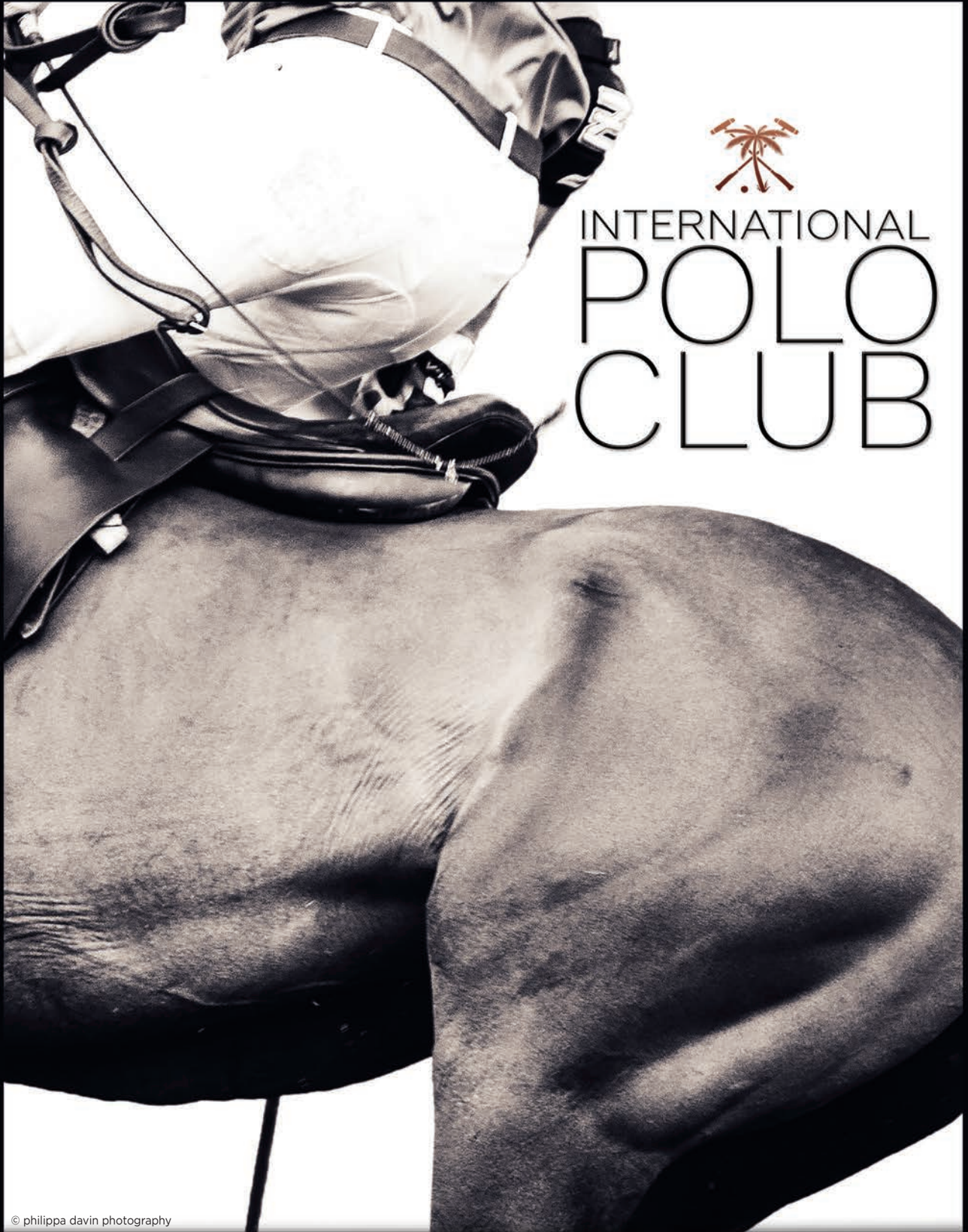
That was 17 years ago. Today, Redboot is a well-established brand, producing various models of leg-saving devices – not only for foals, but also to manage fractures and wounds in horses. In some cases the use of traditional acrylic long-term casts is being replaced. Redboot has also created the first modern designs of equine braces – in lighter and more durable materials, with the advantage being that they can be applied, removed and replaced easily when needed, saving time and money.

To ensure the best possible outcome for a horse that has suffered a distal (lower) limb fracture, it is essential for the limb to be properly immobilised while the animal is transported to a referral clinic. At the request of an orthopaedic equine surgeon in Lexington, I created the first model of the Emergency Compression Redboot to help in this scenario. Then, two years ago, I created the first prosthetic limb, for a mare that had suffered an amputation. She and a few other similar cases are now enjoying a good quality of life. Although this is currently only viable in special cases, with better understanding and advances in materials and technology, I hope many more will be saved in the future.

My private practice is just outside Buenos Aires. I work mainly with polo and race horses, but I am permanently assisting in cases of deformed or injured foals and horses from clinics, teaching hospitals, horse breeders and owners all over the world. It brings me great satisfaction to be able to help them. I hope my work will inspire others to join me in improving our knowledge in this area, and to discredit the myth that a horse with a broken or badly crooked limb has to be put down.

Dr Agustin Almanza trained in equine surgery and internal medicine in Canada, and in diagnostic imaging at the University of California, Davis. He now lives and practises in Argentina, but consults worldwide. He founded Redboot in 2007; redboot.com.ar





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SAVE THE DATE
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PEAK PERFORMANCE

With success both on the field and at the stud, Charlie Hanbury is making waves in the polo world, as Carolina Beresford discovers



TONY RAMIREZ/IMAGESOFPOLO.COM

El Remanso had a killer season. Any team that beats Facundo and Gonzalito Pieres once deserves respect, but any team that beats the 10-goalers twice deserves a medal. Sure, El Remanso lost out on the trophy, stumbling at the finish line and losing the final of the Gold Cup to double champions King Power Foxes – but they won the admiration of the international polo community, a triumph in itself.

Charlie Hanbury is the heart of the team, and at age 31 he is playing his best polo yet. After the 2016 season, El Remanso regrouped and vowed to work harder, on and off the field. 'We all went out and invested in more horses,' says Hanbury. 'We had a personal trainer, Gus, with us throughout Argentina and England, who got us all on a training and dietary programme. We also spent two weeks out in Argentina playing together as a team in April, before coming back to play the Trippetts Challenge, and we had Eduardo 'Ruso' Heguy coaching us, who got us playing more open, four-man polo.'

Their hard work paid off – 2017 saw El Remanso make it to the semi-final of the

IT'S MY PASSION, I LOVE
HORSES – IT'S THE
REASON I PLAY POLO



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Queen's Cup and qualify for the final of the Gold Cup. 'El Remanso obviously had a fantastic season. Having played the previous year together definitely helped,' Hanbury confirms. The tournaments may not have concluded in Hanbury's favour, but he is as determined as ever to claim those high-goal titles. 'We will be giving it one more shot next season with the same team,' he says. 'We will all be looking to improve our strings and hope to be able to add at least three new horses each. We will be in Argentina together for the small season, playing practices and, if dates work, tournaments too.'

When Hanbury is not competing in Europe's most prestigious polo competitions, he keeps busy as managing director of Lovelocks Polo Stud, one of the top breeding programmes in both England and Argentina.

'My goal is for the Lovelocks brand to become a regular sight on polo fields around the world, playing with the best players,' Hanbury discloses. With the hype around cloning in polo, the 4-goaler (5 in Argentina) is well grounded in his opinions. 'I think cloning is interesting,' says Hanbury. 'I am not against it. However, I do believe that my best horse today is a lot better than my best horse five years ago. Had I cloned five years ago, I would feel like I was standing still a bit.'

Hanbury is quick to acknowledge the range of possibilities cloning offers though. 'It's incredible that you can get a gelding to come back as a colt,' he says. 'This is exciting as great horses like Dolфина Toro and Colibrí can come back and breed. There are a lot of great geldings playing around the world that we can now see adding their genetics to breeding pools.'

*Previous page and above:
Charlie Hanbury
during the Gold Cup
this summer*

So far, Lovelocks has made a huge mark on the polo world through breeding alone, and they have no intention of slowing down any time soon. 'This year we had fourteen horses play the semi-final of the Gold Cup and nineteen play the complete UK high-goal season,' says Hanbury. 'Lovelocks wants to breed the best horses possible. It's my passion. I love horses, it's the reason I play polo.'

It certainly looks like Hanbury has a lot more to contribute to polo, and whether talking about playing or breeding, the best is yet to come.

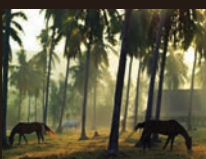


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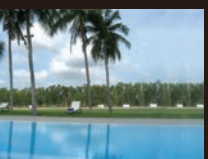
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POOL

FAST TRAK

Polo veteran Kaveh Atrak explains how his academy, KA Polo, turns novices into fully fledged players in just 21 hours



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In almost 25 years of playing international polo, I have often witnessed newcomers to the sport either giving up after a few lessons, or continuing without a strong foundation to feed their commitment or build on to improve their skills.

When I left the corporate world in 2013, I decided to dedicate my time to helping polo grow, and to ensure its continuity among new recruits. During three seasons in Stockholm, we managed to substantially increase the membership, with new people becoming

regular chukka members after just one instruction season, and being enthusiastic to improve. The catalyst for this was a 16-event programme (see below) that I developed, comprising 21 hours of instruction and coaching. In almost all cases, the programme results in individuals confidently engaging in the club chukkas thereafter.

Success comes more easily when you know where you're heading, you know how to get there, you're equipped with the right tools, and you can anticipate what will greet you at the point of

THE 16-EVENT PROGRAMME

1 Polo riding: Seat and riding aids
Wooden horse, 1hr

Polo riding: Seat and riding aids
Horseback, 1hr

5 Stick work and riding:
S&B offside forehand
Horseback, 1hr

2 Stick work: Foot mallet practice
On foot, 1hr

Polo riding: Seat and riding aids
Horseback, 1hr

6 Stick work and riding:
S&B offside forehand
Horseback, 1hr

3 Stick work: Long mallet practice
Wooden horse, 1hr

Polo riding: seat and riding aids
Horseback, 1hr

7 Stick work and riding:
S&B offside forehand and backhand
Horseback, 1hr

4 Stick work and riding:
S&B offside forehand
Horseback, 1hr

8 Stick work and riding:
S&B offside forehand/nearside
fore and backhand
Horseback, 1hr

arrival. My long corporate career provided me with plenty of practice in engaging, motivating and inspiring individuals and teams to achieve higher levels of self-development and performance. A five-point leadership model that served me loyally in business was exactly what I applied to instructing my new polo recruits, with noteworthy success. Here is a break down of the five stages:

1. CLEARLY DEFINE THE POINT OF ARRIVAL

The 'promise' here is that after instruction the student will be assessed and, if successful, officially handicapped and celebrated as a 'polo player' with a set of unique new skills and the possibility to explore a new lifestyle. Visualising a point of arrival provides tremendous motivation.

2. DESIGN THE ROAD MAP, WITH MILESTONES LEADING TO THE END GOAL

A set of 16 events, comprising 21 hours of instruction in riding skills, stick work, hooking and riding off, rules and tactics, and instructional chukkas, culminating in a rules test and handicapping. The model can also be extended to include other aspects, such as stable management.

3. EQUIP STUDENTS WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

This relies on the quality and depth of instruction. For the plan to work, the instructor's highest commitment to the cause is fundamental. It is about genuinely working to help each student succeed by explaining 'why' at every step and by demonstrating and allowing practice. Students should be encouraged to watch videos and practise on a wooden horse as much as possible.

4. CONTINUALLY ASSESS, REGULARLY FEEDBACK, AND BE WILLING TO ADJUST COURSE IF NECESSARY

Sessions or events should be extended as necessary to ensure a minimum competency before progression to the next session.

These potential adjustments may extend the programme a little beyond the initial 21 hours.

5. CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Achieving success in the final test and being officially handicapped is a large milestone, which requires recognition – parties with bubbly are absolutely recommended.

This model can and must be adjusted to suit individuals and their needs, and can contain any number of sessions. However, the key is for the programme to be lengthy enough to ensure an adequate starting level by the end, but not so long as to make it impractical or too expensive. As a concept, it provides a framework for motivating and inspiring newcomers to make progress in a practical, time-sensitive, systematic and structured manner, with an all-important 'end point' in sight.

I believe polo has the ability to change people's lives in ways that not many other sports do. We know well that polo offers a unique way of life. A well-founded and structured instruction programme can provide newcomers with an entry point to this lifestyle and community, which is a proposition that holds a very strong value. The promise to deliver a set of unique skills and a passport to a new lifestyle, in around 21 hours, is compelling. This could be covered in an intensive five-day period or stretched over a season, and I have found that many aspiring players feel much happier to invest time and money in such a programme than if offered sporadic polo hours. *kapolo.se*

Opposite: Kaveh Atrak in the white helmet (left of centre) with some of his students

9 Stick work and riding:

S&B all shots
Horseback, 1hr

10 Stick work and riding:

S&B all shots
Horseback, 1hr

11 Riding off and hooking:

Play simulations
Horseback, 1hr

12 Riding off and hooking:

Play simulations
Horseback, 1hr

13 Game theory: Rules and tactics

Clubhouse, 1.5hr

The rules practice: S&B

Horseback, 1hr

14 The game:

Instructional chukka #1

Horseback with other players, 1.5hr

15 The game:

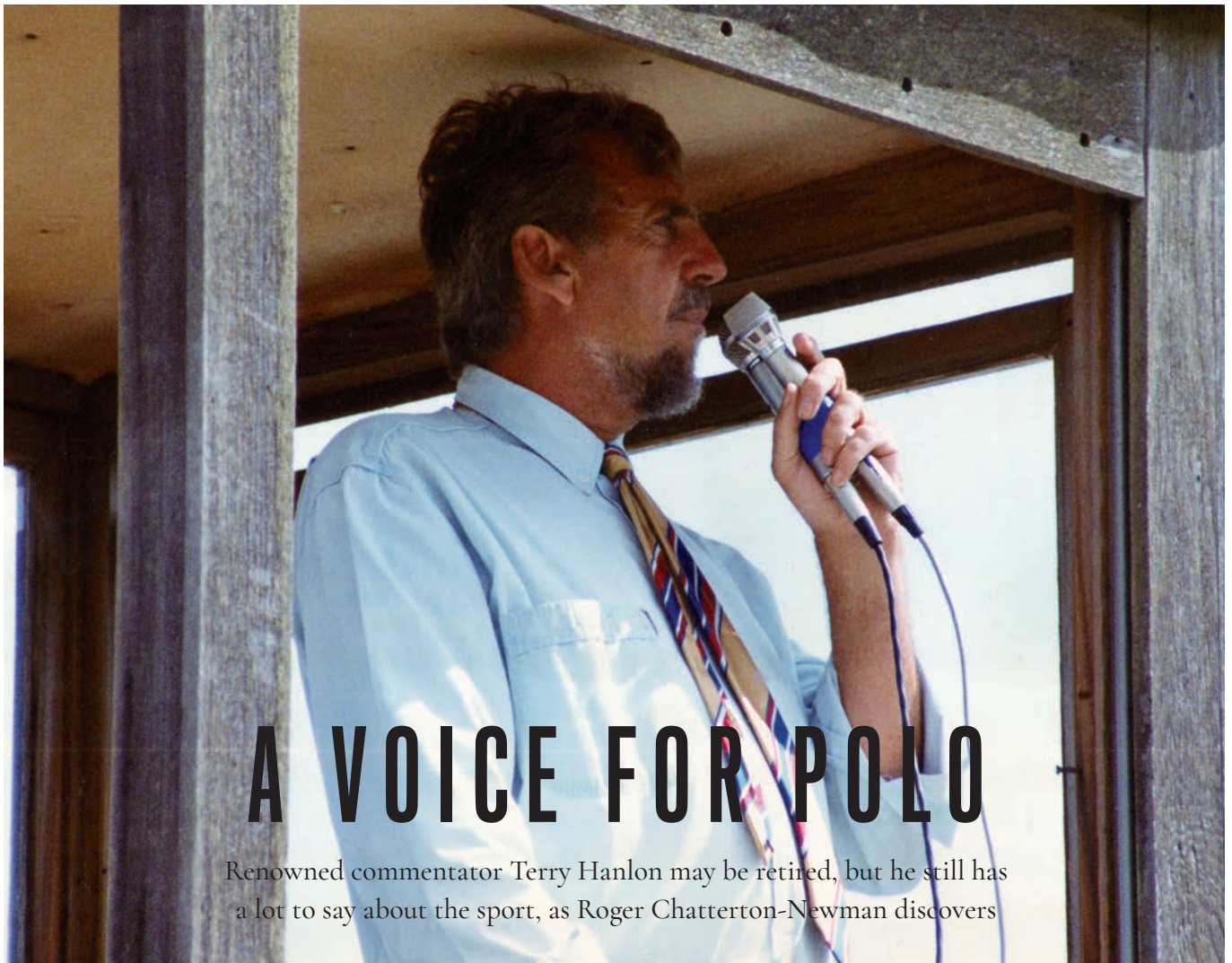
Instructional chukka #2

Horseback with other players, 1hr

16 The game: Rules test

Clubhouse, 1hr

GRADUATION!



A VOICE FOR POLO

Renowned commentator Terry Hanlon may be retired, but he still has a lot to say about the sport, as Roger Chatterton-Newman discovers

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When Terry Hanlon was at school, little did he imagine he would be the celebrated voice of polo. His first job was with the *Liverpool Echo & Post*, a world away from polo.

Terry's introduction to polo came when, after losing his way near Runnymede on an outing to see the Magna Carta memorial, he drove into Windsor Great Park and found a match in progress. 'I thought, "Trust those bastards to keep this to themselves"; and I walked across the ground to tread-in, doing what everybody else was doing,' he explains. 'Something told me that I was going to play this game, although I hadn't the slightest idea at the time how that would happen.' Four years later he was commentating at Guards for the International Coronation Cup.

Hanlon joined Cowdray Park as a playing member in 1975 and on the orders of the polo manager, Lt Col Philip 'Bolshie' Tatham, he began to commentate. 'The regular commentator hadn't turned up,' Terry recalls. 'So Bolshie turned to me and said, "You've usually got enough to say – pick up the microphone!"'

Hanlon not only made his name as commentator nonpareil, but also as a redoubtable and internationally renowned coach, who never charged pupils. Former Cowdray captain Paul Withers described Hanlon as the 'finest coach for beginners in the world'. His first pupil at the Ambersham Polo Academy back in 1980 was Colin Emson, who a season later in a team put

together by Hanlon, won the popular Jersey Lilies Cup. Of the 100 pupils Hanlon taught, four of them went on to play at high-goal level.

Terry's numerous personal victories include the Royal Windsor and the County Cup – the second oldest tournament in the world – with Gordon Roddick's Bodyshop. Julian Hipwood, captain of England and, to my mind, the finest player in Europe, was in the team,' Hanlon reminisces. 'I remember playing once on a very slow horse and asking Julian what I could do about it. I have never forgotten his advice: "Don't get caught up in a race, Tel!". Although, I am afraid that polo, certainly at professional level, has now become a race.'

Opposite: Terry Hanlon announcing at Ambersham.

This page: Hanlon receiving a trophy from Caroline Nelson (wife of then local MP, Anthony Nelson), and Lord Cowdray



LET'S MAKE HIGH-GOAL FAIR, SO WHEN ENTERING, YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN. THERE MUST BE NO HIGH-GOAL CEILING

With his commentating days behind him, Terry now concerns himself with the safety aspect of the game, which often seems to be sidelined. 'Polo is not rugby on horseback,' he says. 'Today, the game proceeds at far too great a speed, which is not as it was, or should be played. I believe firmly that all beginners should ride in cross-running reins. These, in effect, provide the horse with a fifth leg and would reduce the number of accidents that are all too frequent today.'

A lot has changed in the four decades Hanlon has been involved with polo. In addition to the increasing speed and a desire to win at all costs, one of the most obvious changes is the obsession of overseas patrons with 10-goal players, and

with the 'patron's handicap' of zero or, at the very most, 1-goal. Of course, patrons hold the purse strings and without them there would be no high-goal polo, but now that a brace of 10-goalers per team is allowed, younger homegrown players have little chance of playing at top level for more than a season. As Hanlon points out, 'They are picked because of their low rating to make up a team aggregate. This results in their handicap going up, and their hopes of being picked again the following year going down.'

His remedy is simple: get rid of the 10-goal handicap limit. 'Whoever thought of the 10-goal ceiling was wrong. Twenty years ago you came to play starting at a -2 rating, and played for one season. The following

season you became -1 and, after another, went automatically to zero. You had to be rated at 1-goal before you could play medium-goal polo; and, for high-goal, have a 2-goal handicap. Now it is reduced to zero, and this cannot be correct. Patrons of 2-goals in high-goal made it impossible for two 10-goalers to play in teams at that level. Let's make the high-goal fair so when entering you have a chance to win. There must be no high-goal ceiling. If a player is playing above his handicap, he must go up automatically; and unless we correct the situation now, we stand to lose high-goal polo here altogether.'

Hanlon's voice of polo is also that of experience, and should be heeded.



RULES OF ATTRACTION

The All Pro Polo League is spearheading change and the Argentine Polo Association is onboard, says Carolina Beresford

Javier Tanoira's All Pro Polo League (APPL) has had a year to remember, hosting eight exhibitions in five countries over eight months, and involving two 10-goal legends, nine Argentine Triple Crown players and hundreds of impressed spectators.

The league was founded in late 2015 with the aim of encouraging entertaining, dynamic polo. What originally seemed like a far-fetched ideal has now gained the respect of many. After an impressive four-team

tournament in Pilar Chico, Argentina, in November 2016, the APPL headed north in February to host a series of exhibitions at International Polo Club Palm Beach. Another match was hosted in Argentina in April, before Tanoira went to Europe to follow the polo circuit. France was the first stop on the APPL European Tour, with a fun exhibition hosted at the Polo Club de Chantilly in June. The first English APPL match was held at Cowdray Park Polo Club in July, but the

turning point came in August, in Sotogrande, when high-goal players voiced their support for the league after exhibitions at Dos Lunas and Santa Maria Polo Club. Here, players such as Facundo Pieres, Pablo Mac Donough and Facundo Sola highlighted the benefits of the APPL, while not hesitating to mention ways in which the game could be improved.

'I particularly like the focus on not losing rhythm,' Pieres shared. 'If the ball goes out, we have to hurry back and be planning

Opposite: Juan Zubiaurre takes the ball in an APPL exhibition at Deauville Polo Club, France

POLO NEEDS TO CONTINUE EVOLVING – MANY OF THE RULES ARE OUTDATED AND RESTRICTIVE

the next play straight away. The aim is to eliminate dead time – we can't just be waiting for something to happen. After you score a goal, you have to run back to defend quickly – the same happens when you are attacking, or when you start the chukka. The game never stops and that is fundamental for what we are trying to achieve in polo. We want to keep people entertained, especially those watching on TV.'

APPL's success has been noted by many polo organisations and, after months of rallying cries for the sport to change, the Argentine Polo Association (AAP) moved in.

It announced in August that certain changes would be introduced in the Argentine Triple Crown to encourage fast, open polo and create a more attractive spectator sport.

Many of these modifications echo APPL rules: no blocking, penalties for slow play, castigation of overly vocal players and blowing only dangerous challenges. The most notable change is the elimination of the throw-in to restart play – a rule taken from Tanoira's league. The match will start with an initial throw-in, as is customary, but this will not be done when the ball goes over the boards. Instead, the team that did not

send it out will restart the game with an indirect shot. To make it easier to determine which team hit it out, the horse will be considered a continuation of the player.

Polo needs to continue evolving; many of the rules are outdated and restrictive, and the APPL offers a way of showing what those changes might look like. 'Anything that makes polo more dynamic, easier to commercialise, and improves the spectacle as a whole is great and should be supported by everyone,' says Mac Donough. 'We then have to decide which changes are the best – but change is needed.'



BEZANT



BESPOKE SILVERSMITHS

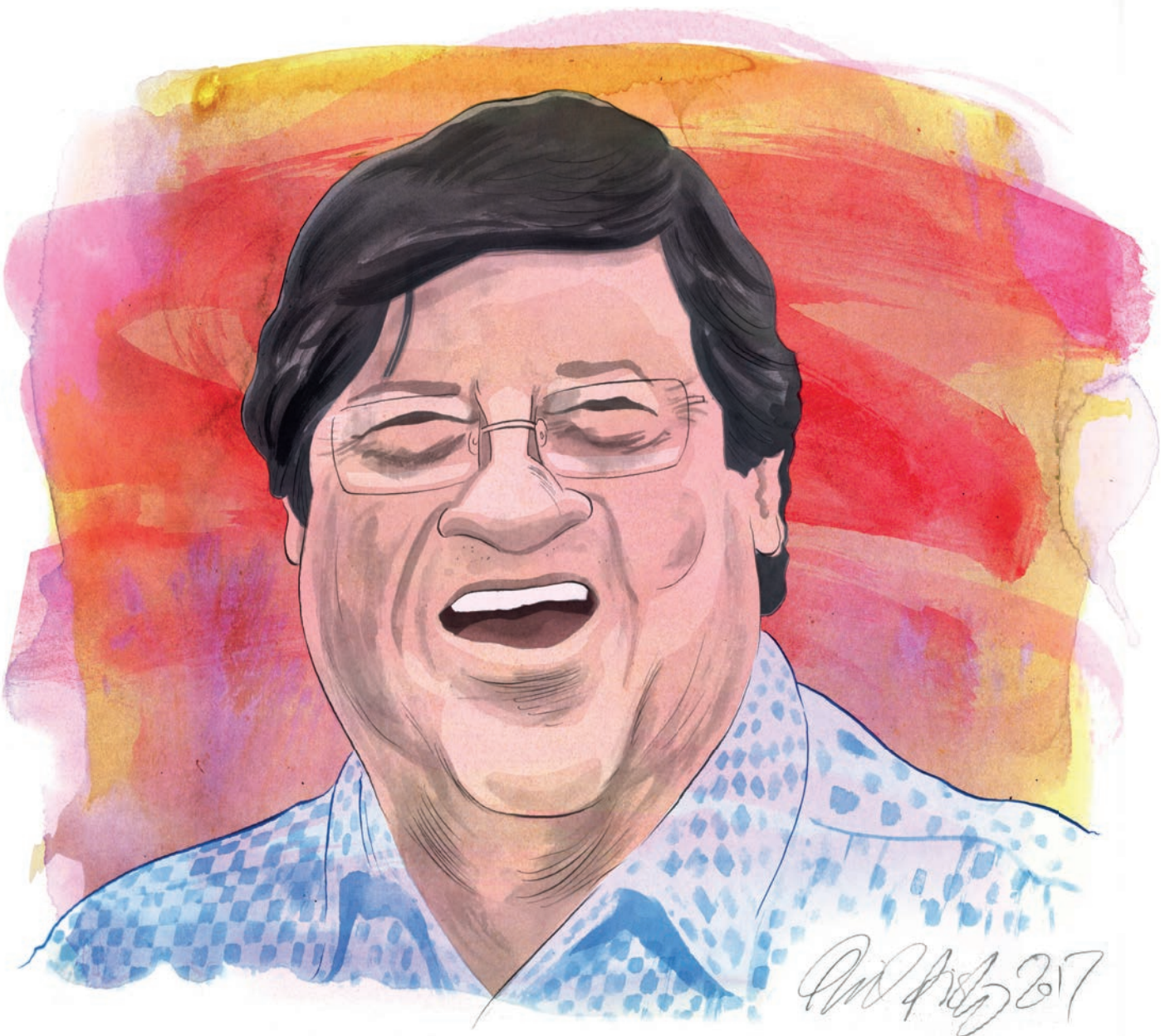
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JOHN HORSWELL

The former international player is now a highly respected coach, commentator and all-round influential figure in British polo. Here, he shares his thoughts on the changing ethos of polo, and how the sport can turn itself around to become great again



YOU CAN PLAY TO WIN, BUT YOU CAN STILL ENJOY A LOSS IF YOU'VE BEEN INCULCATED WITH THE AUTHENTIC VALUES OF THE SPORT

In a troubling trend, there is a continuing decline in the number of new patrons coming into polo. There are many reasons why, such as the proliferation of clubs and their generally protectionist attitude, the loss of the one genuinely vibrant and open point of entry, Ascot Park, and the school of 'well done' instructors who don't do much more than simply offer praise if the pupil happens to get lucky and hit the ball, rather than actually teaching.

Nor do individual professionals understand the need for a personal supply chain of future patrons, rather than competing on price and win/loss records instead. And then there's the fact that the cost of entry-level ponies is now closer to £20,000 than £15,000 – if you can find them, that is. The cost of a winning ticket in the high goal has become so big that it discourages upward mobility.

I could go on, but for me the main problem is an increasing lack of understanding that polo is a pastime and not a sport. As soon as winning and losing became more important than entertainment, polo was on a sticky wicket. People need to be reminded of the true ethos of polo – you can play it to win, but you can still enjoy

a loss if you've been inculcated with the authentic values and essence of the sport.

Back in time, it was said that polo was a sport where eight friends gathered together and split into two teams of four, became enemies for an hour or so and afterwards were friends again. In this modern age, time pressures from work and changes in the family dynamic have made that more difficult to achieve, but care and thought needs to be given to the enjoyment of not only the players, but their families too.

Anyone who visited Ascot Park in its heyday will surely remember the sheer number of people there with their families and friends at weekends. Some small clubs still survive on the same ethos, but the sport, in general, has forgotten the need for an inclusive, fun attitude that involves all the key members of a player's entourage.

Entertainment is key, on and off the pitch. You need a connection between teammates, a sense of friendship and camaraderie that all can enjoy, as well as an encouragement of 'the love of the game'.

Polo is a sport with many facets and nuances, and these need to be shown to new players, who should then be encouraged to improve and enjoy their polo. I cannot see

the long-term value of encouraging new players to not hit the ball, to block and potentially put themselves at risk, all for the sake of the mighty win. When wins turn to losses, teams get changed. And when losses continue, people give up.

I did a telephone survey of a dozen or so players I know who have given up polo in the past few years. They gave various reasons why, but the main one was that they had simply fallen out of love with the game; they do not like the way polo is played today. However, they all gave the same answer to my final question – they still have the boots and hat.

There is no cure for polo if you actually get to experience the true spirit of the game. Polo has a responsibility to itself to find a way to give people a love of the game again. Lower levels should be regulated in such a way as to encourage this and to foster enjoyment and entertainment. Those who love the game need to respect it, and pass that respect and love on to new players coming in, whatever their age and resources. Only then do we stand a chance of reversing the trend and welcoming a new era of players who are passionate, in the right way, about this great game.

THRILL OF THE INDOORS

Alex Webbe examines the ebb and flow of arena polo's popularity in the USA,
and makes a case for why this version of the game of kings matters



This page: Indoor action at Valley Forge Military Academy

It may surprise the average polo fan to learn that in the US the game was first played indoors. It has been reported that after seeing polo being played in Europe, *New York Herald* publisher and sportsman, James Gordon Bennett collaborated with businessman Hermann Oelrichs to orchestrate the importation of the game to the US. Oelrichs travelled to England to source balls and mallets for the new club and Bennett dispatched New York riding master Harry Blasson to Texas to procure suitable mounts. In early 1876 the game got underway indoors at Dickel's Riding Academy on the corner of 5th Avenue and East 39th Street.

In Horace Laffaye's book, *Polo in the United States: A History*, he writes: 'Most likely James Gordon Bennett and his friends did not realize that they were starting a new

game, but in fact it was the first time the indoor version had been played anywhere.' The outdoor version of the game exploded in the spring, following the construction of a field at Jerome Park, however its roots in the US began at Dickel's Riding Academy.

In the late 19th century, New York City boasted a number of riding schools and academies, and there were plenty of mounts available to rent. When the game was picked up as a training exercise for the army and National Guard, additional horses, participants and facilities became available to the burgeoning game.

Relegated to a second-tier status by the outdoor game, indoor polo (as it was referred to) offered players an opportunity to stay in shape during cold winter months and a more economical approach to the game.

In January of 1910, over 60 prominent polo players gathered at Durland's Riding Academy on New York's West 66th Street to form the National Indoor Polo Association, electing Harry Gugenheimer as its first president. Five years later, under the leadership of George C Sherman, the group was reorganized as the Indoor Polo Association of America and flourished for decades.

With just three players on each side, early games consisted of two ten-minute chukkas separated by a ten-minute intermission, allowing the players to compete with only one or two horses. Arena polo requires much more nimble turning, checking and racing than the outdoor game. There is a much higher premium on teamwork and expert handling

of the ponies. The inflated leather arena ball is larger than the hard plastic ball used in the field, measuring 12.5"-15" in circumference. Expert players take advantage of the boarded sides as they career passes to teammates, driving the ball into the boards to send them in the opposite direction, instead of trying to turn them.

Following the end of the First World War, the growth of Reserve Officers' Training Corps units on campuses caused the collegiate polo ranks to swell. In 1921 John R Townsend presented the cup for the Class A Championship (15+ goals). In 1923 Thomas L Leeming put up the Class B Championship cup (10-14 goals), Milton M Powell Jr offered the Class C Championship trophy (5-9

goals), and the Class D Championship (0-4 goals) trophy was presented by Walter P Bliss. In 1926 Charles E Danforth gave the association the Open Championship cup.

Following a 1921 Squadron A Armory tournament that attracted 20 teams, Townsend donated a cup to be played for as an intercollegiate championship. Although Harvard fielded the first collegiate indoor polo team in 1883, the first recorded intercollegiate indoor championship didn't take place until 1922, when Princeton's team of Edgar Stabler, Alton Hall and William Fleming defeated Yale.

The indoor game was attracting thousands of spectators who could watch the galloping game up-close and personal.

In 1924 there were 48 teams in the National Championships of the Indoor Polo Association, and 46 teams in 1925. And in 1926 Winston Guest led his Yale team to both the Indoor Polo Association's Open Championship, and to the intercollegiate title as well.

By 1932 there were 52 indoor polo clubs registered with the Indoor Polo Association, and 53 teams took part in the 1934 National Tournament, which saw the East (William Reynolds, Winston FC Guest and Arthur Bordon) beat the West in an epic battle.

The Great Depression of 1929-1939 had a severe effect on the indoor game, with competition reduced from four classes to just two – the Senior Championship and Junior



Right: Mrs George Biddle with indoor arena players George Biddle, Frank Reilly Jr and Johnny Casey



ARENA POLO ALLOWS ENTRY-
LEVEL ACCESS TO THE GAME,
WITH MINIMAL INVESTMENT

Left: Squadron A playing arena polo in 1937, with Walter Phillips on the left

Championship. However the game managed to bounce back following the end of the Second World War in 1946, despite the loss of the cavalry and government mounts.

In the late 1940s, Michael Phipps (10), Stewart Iglehart (10) and George Oliver (9) put together the Orange Bowl Polo Association in a display of arena polo that fielded eight, nine and ten-goal players in front of crowds of thousands in Miami. The professional games were preceded by collegiate matches that featured a University of Miami trio, coached by George Oliver,

that won the intercollegiate championship in 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1951.

The decline of the indoor arena game has often been blamed on the loss of the cavalry and National Guard mounts, but that isn't the entire story. A lack of club-owned or available rental mounts pushed the Indoor Polo Association to move for divisional play, and the intensity of the National Tournament was dismantled.

In 1955, the membership of the Indoor Polo Association had sunk to 225 while the United States Polo Association was holding

on to just 408 members. It was decided to put all polo under one roof, and the two associations merged.

In his foreword to the 1955 USPA Blue Book, Devereux Milburn Jr stated that arena polo 'affords a wonderful opportunity for the young beginners. Fewer ponies are required and, hence the expense for the individual is greatly reduced.' He added that 'in addition, clubs will find it possible to acquire and maintain a string of club ponies, a solution to the problem of young men who do not have ponies of their own or do not have stabling facilities.'

Separate arena committees failed to be established, as arena polo took a back seat to the field game until professional leagues emerged in Los Angeles, Dallas and Fort Worth in the 1980s. A resurgence of polo at the Chicago Avenue Armory led to the creation of the United States Open Arena Polo Championship in 1980, with Wisconsin's Joy Farm team (Billy Stevens, Rick Warren and Jimmy Stevens) beating Chicago in a 10-9 final.

The Los Angeles Equestrian Center played high-goal polo to a packed house of 5,000 spectators every weekend. Hollywood celebrities such as William Devane, Alex Cord and Pamela Sue Martin took up the sport and played regularly, while a school programme kept two additional arenas busy throughout the week.



This page, left: 10-goaler Joe Henderson of the LA Colts. Right: A high-goal arena polo match in Denver, Colorado, with Ginger Baker, former drummer of the band Cream, on the far left



But sadly, weekly games and the polo school weren't enough to save the money-losing property and it was sold by the City of LA to be used as a multi-purpose venue hosting only an occasional polo match, putting an end to the uninterrupted association of the 70-acre facility with the polo community.

After the loss of the LA Equestrian Center, and the end of arena polo in Texas (also due to financial struggles), the spotlight on the smaller version of the game ended, with the association and the clubs failing to see how important the arena game was in terms of introducing new players to the game. In the US, there's a widespread preconception that only the

rich can play polo and nobody can see it because when played outdoors, the field is nine times the size of an American football field and can only be followed easily with the use of binoculars or a drone. Arena polo, however, compresses the game's action within the spectators' range of visibility, and on occasion, when horses, players and ball converge on a corner, the game is dropped right into the spectators' laps.

The arena version should therefore be looked at as one of the game's most valuable assets. It allows for entry-level access to the game with minimal investment of time or money, and delivers an exciting spectator sport which is easier to watch.

But there is hope. With the resurrection of the Townsend International Cup and the Bryan Morrison Trophy, international high-goal arena polo has returned, and with it, top international players. For the first time, the arena game boasted two 10-goal players, England's Chris Hyde and Tommy Biddle from the US, and although both are now playing off 9-goal ratings, the popularity of the game has attracted a host of young talented players. And, possibly the best news for arena polo, is the recent support of the game by Wellington's Mark Bellissimo, with his \$250,000 Gladiator Polo series. It seems the resilient nature of arena polo is seeing it rise up once again. Get involved.

ASTRID HARRISSON PHOTOGRAPHY

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FAMILY AFFAIR

The owner of Polo Park & Country Club Zürich, Sébastien Le Page, describes the philosophy behind his transformation of the club





ROBERT W. KRANZ

O

ver the last six years I have gone from taking one polo lesson to owning two polo clubs, a farm in Argentina and 37 polo ponies, hiring dozens of employees, meeting sports champions, famous DJs, actors and businessmen, becoming polo champion of Switzerland, playing high-goal and making new friends all over the world. I am amazed by how this whirlwind has changed my life, and that of my family, in such a short time.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Sébastien Le Page and I am a 46-year-old French national living in Switzerland, married to a lovely Belgian lady and the happy father of a 15-year-old son. When I was 19, I took up rugby and it was my sport of choice for many years. But at 40, rugby was becoming painful to play and I thought of finding another sport. By chance, I saw Prince William's wedding on television, and it made me think of polo. I found a beginner's course at Polo Park Zürich (PPZ) and told my wife that I wanted to try it out. I was surprised when she told me that all her life she had dreamed of playing polo, but had never mentioned it. So off we went, and we loved it from the first hit of the ball.

We took regular lessons with the manager of Polo Park Zürich, Francisco Podesta, who is a wonderfully enthusiastic teacher. He is partly responsible for the love we developed for polo, because he introduced us to everything surrounding the game – the atmosphere, the work and the people. Podesta was also very smart in holding me back at first. A few months after our first lesson, I told him I wanted to buy ten horses but he said no, one horse

would be enough to start with – and he was right. Polo takes time to discover, and rushing it is the best way to have people drop out after two years. So we attended our lessons with patience, spent a lot of time at the club, and explored polo with a passion. After a couple of years, the owner of PPZ approached me. He saw our interest in the sport, and wanted a fresh set of eyes for the club. When he offered to sell it to me, I said yes.

As the owner of PPZ, I started to think about how we could improve its atmosphere. People were coming to play, but they weren't sticking around for a drink or a chat and I wondered why. Meanwhile, I hired some professional players full-time, bought more horses and started to organise small drinks gatherings and barbecues for the pros and grooms. I only really did so because I enjoyed the socialising myself, but slowly people began to join in, bringing along beer or bubbly or some food. And although not a formal, regular get-together, it happened that friendships in the club grew.

I've noticed that the best way to make things happen in the world, whether in business or otherwise, is to do it yourself. If you lead by example without asking for anything in return, people tend to join you. This was also the reason why I hired five

THE POLO CLUB MUST BE MORE THAN A PLACE TO PLAY THE GAME, IT HAS TO BE A MEETING PLACE

full-time polo professionals: I wanted to ensure that I could play at a quality level any day, without having to ask who was available. As a result the standard at PPZ increased and people started to hire their own professionals to join in. What I undertook for myself, in essence, gave an impulse to others and the club as a whole.

The presence of more professionals at the club, along with more horses and their grooms, meant that there was always someone around for beginners or other players to chat with, which made it an even friendlier place. This is my ultimate goal because for me, polo is a family lifestyle. Sure, there is the Coronation Cup, the Palermo Open and all the great tournaments, but it's first and foremost a congenial and family-friendly sport.

This leads back to my earlier point: why were people not sticking around after games or practices? There are many reasons, of course – work, meetings, appointments –

but I think there is also something vastly overlooked in many polo clubs, and that is the importance of non-playing family members. Polo players spend time and money on their passion, but if it's not shared with family, they will feel the pressure to go home to spend time with them.

The polo club must, therefore, be more than a place to play the game. It has to be a meeting place where polo just happens, almost as an after-thought. When I bought the club, it consisted of two fields, a plastic toilet and a storage container that also served as a changing room. It was a disaster for the women and not particularly enticing for men. It's unsurprising that spectators had no interest in staying for hours during and after a sweaty polo practice in a place without a proper toilet or showers.

So I built a proper clubhouse with a bar, sofas and a fireplace, separate changing rooms and showers, plenty of toilets, a laundry and nine apartments. And to ensure that members and their families understood the philosophy of the place, we changed the name to Polo Park & Country Club Zürich. It is now in full swing with people even coming to watch practices, and joined by their families. The non-players don't feel like polo is an enemy of family life any more, but a friendly group they can join. This includes members of local communities who had never been to the polo park, despite being its neighbours for 19 years. The local impact has been huge, with many of these people now visiting daily to watch and chat.

Once the clubhouse was up and running, I began to focus on the players themselves. Our philosophy is to offer polo to as many people as possible, at all levels. The three things players complain about the most are lack of horses, bad or bent umpires and poor fields. So, I built another 57 boxes with all facilities for horses, including a covered walker. We have two umpires of different



Opposite: Polo Park Zürich stables in the early morning. This page right: Sébastien Le Page in purple. Below: Polo manager Francisco Podesta and his wife Clara, secretary of the club

nationalities at all high-profile tournaments and I change them regularly. I also warn sponsors they might not be in the final, and that's how the sport is. At PPZ there is no bending the rules to uphold sponsors' egos. And finally, we now have an extra full-size field to complement the existing two, which means there is always a field to play on, whatever the weather.

We offer daily lessons and games for beginners and once in a while we include them in the medium-goal practices, sometimes even in the tournaments. This gives them a taste of what real polo is like and encourages them to improve, to play at full speed. I don't believe in segregating 'good' and 'bad' players – we were all beginners once and they should have access to the higher level once they are not a danger. Even during beginners' practice chukkas, we ensure that each team has at least one professional to make the game more open, flowing, and interesting. This is



very successful, but strangely I have not seen it in many clubs across Europe.

After all these investments and efforts, we are now reaping the benefits. However, the world we live in is making it more difficult to secure big companies to sponsor polo tournaments. So we have changed our strategy for this as well: instead of asking for

big money from a small amount of sponsors, we either create tailor-made events for a single sponsor or larger tournaments with many sponsors, where we sell tables as people do at charity events. It is much easier for sponsors to justify inviting guests for a fun event than to sponsor an event that might have no return. We have tested this for two years now, and the return from sponsors is excellent. I have also found that it's easier to find sponsors for ladies tournaments, so we organise a big one every year at PPZ, with two levels of handicaps, the highest being 8-10 goals. The results have been excellent.

I have been asked if I want to organise high-goal tournaments, but I think not. I believe the world of polo is changing, and that patrons are mostly happy to play where they can be of use to a team. Except for the traditional patrons, of which there are increasingly few, I think it will become more difficult to find teams for the high-goal in the future (that's also due to fewer high-paying sponsors). So we organise low-league tournaments and medium-goal at the moment, up to 10-goals. This is a level that most people are happy to play at, but is competitive as well. Time will tell whether I am right or wrong. I'm still learning, after all – it's only been six years!



ROBERT W KRANZ, EVELINA JAKOVLEVSKAJA

BEYOND THE FIELD

Since launching, Hurlingham Polo 1875 has cemented its reputation for authenticity and design. Theresa Harold charts the development of this global lifestyle brand



For a sport known as the game of kings, polo's uniform is surprisingly democratic. Even those who don't happen to own a pair of jodhpurs are likely to have a polo shirt knocking around the back of their wardrobe. Call it the Ralph Lauren effect, but no matter where you are in the world, a polo shirt represents a level of respectability and style that other forms of sportswear cannot match. Can you imagine going to a smart restaurant wearing a football jersey? Exactly.

And yet, until recently, the majority of polo-inspired fashion brands had no active involvement with the sport. They were fashion brands first and foremost, with an appreciation of the game's aesthetics – and the commercial savvy to capitalise on it. But that all changed last summer. On a gloriously sunny Saturday at Guard's Polo Club, captain Fred Mannix led the Commonwealth Team to victory in the 2016 Royal Salute Coronation

Cup. He and his teammates were wearing royal blue and yellow shirts, with a distinctive 'H' on the chest. It was, of course, the logo of the Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA). Photographs of the triumphant team lifting the enormous gold trophy circulated around the world – this was the beginning of a lifestyle brand that has been evolving ever since: Hurlingham Polo 1875.

At this year's Royal Salute Coronation Cup, the two sides played a tense match in the pouring rain and the English team took home the prestigious trophy. And just like the previous year, Hurlingham Polo 1875 was there providing the teams with their playing shirts, caps and training wear. In fact, the label has been in the spotlight more often than not. Mannix, the brand's first global ambassador, wore the shirt in the 2016 Argentine Triple Crown and his brother Julian wore it when he won the 2016 La Copa Cámara de Diputados.

HURLINGHAM HAS INTEGRITY
AND AUTHENTICITY. IT
COMBINES HERITAGE,
QUALITY AND STYLE



‘I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time for the Hurlingham Polo 1875 project,’ admits Mannix, Canada’s highest-ranked polo player. ‘I was actively involved in my polo products company, Millarville, and had been looking for a partner to branch out of the polo space and into lifestyle clothing.’ Initially, Mannix’s agent reached out to Hurlingham Polo 1875 CEO Simon Hawkins about a sponsorship opportunity. A meeting in Miami followed and soon the talks were about more than just an endorsement deal. ‘We decided that with the combination of my on-field knowledge and Simon’s capabilities in the lifestyle clothing space, that a great partnership was in the making,’ explains Mannix. ‘From that moment, we have been working on all aspects of the project together – it has been great for both of us.’

Although not from a polo background, Hawkins’ CV reads like a who’s who of sporting giants: Reebok, FIFA, Pace Sports Management, and the PGA. As Hurlingham Polo 1875’s guiding partner, he brings formidable expertise in brand building, licensing, and sponsorship.

‘The HPA approached me back in 2013 to ask if I would look into the brand and advise them on how best to bring it to market via a consumer goods strategy, while maintaining the integrity of the association,’ says Hawkins. ‘It was something they had been looking at for a while, but hadn’t progressed. Since that initial work we’ve been on quite a journey, building the brand, its offer, and ensuring a solid foundation for growth.’

When asked whether polo was a bit too niche to support a whole lifestyle brand, Hawkins is quick to respond. ‘You’d think so, wouldn’t you? Although it’s one of the oldest team games, it’s currently growing in a lot of countries – particularly among the young. It seems to capture people’s imagination,’ he adds. ‘Hurlingham has integrity and authenticity. It combines heritage, quality and style with an immense commercial opportunity on a global scale, setting the Hurlingham Polo 1875 brand apart.’

Mannix believes Hurlingham Polo 1875 can speak on the same level as other British heritage brands such

as Barbour, or even Burberry. 'For 140 years, what is now the HPA has been the spiritual home of polo,' he says. 'It's the sport's oldest and most international governing body, recognised and respected around the world. Polo is played in 77 countries, 38 of which are affiliated to the HPA. While no one knows who invented polo, it first came to western eyes in the 1850s when tea planters in India started playing the sport. The Calcutta Polo Club was formed in 1862, and then in 1869 the 10th Hussars organised the first ever match in the UK against a team from the 9th Lancers. Six years after this match the Hurlingham Polo Committee drew up the game's first formal set of rules, designed to protect the interests of the sport, players and horses. These were issued in 1875, hence why we call the brand Hurlingham Polo 1875.'

With several clothing categories under way (Essentials, HP Active, Polo Team Wear and a premium Made in Britain line), the label is already making a name for itself both on and off the field. A fact that did not go unnoticed by luxury fashion retailer Flannels, who has

signed a groundbreaking five-year partnership with HPA in support of British polo, including the shirt sponsorship of all England polo teams and umpires.

'The Flannels sponsorship is going to enable the HPA to promote polo on a wide spectrum,' says David Woodd, chief executive at the HPA. 'Within the HPA itself it will be a huge help for the England team at all levels, the development among the young, and the umpiring. With Flannels getting behind polo, I think we will see it promoted through its stores and online, and this will also be a huge help for the brand.'

So, yes, it's a big deal for international polo, and one that has captivated the England Polo Team, James Beim, enthused: 'It's a massive step forward for our sport and it's a partnership that ties in very well for both parties,' he says. 'It gives us an influx of funds to reinvest in our youth and exhibit our international team on a big stage.'

'The funds available from the partnership will improve all aspects of English polo,' agrees Mannix. 'It could be transformational in the sense that funding will

Previous page: Fred Mannix, brand ambassador, at The Royal Salute Coronation Cup. *Opposite:* Francisco Elizalde during the Camara de Diputados final at Palermo. *This page:* Mannix leads the pack during the 2016 Coronation Cup





be available to the team to play more matches throughout the year. Obviously, more matches require more funding. But with that part of the equation sorted, the question is now how to create the opportunities for English polo going forward.' And with typical good cheer, Mannix adds a friendly challenge: 'I would be happy to have them for a match at our farm, La Alegría in Argentina.'

Ah yes, the jet-setting life of the professional polo player. From Sotogrande to Santa Barbara, the polo season is one of heady glamour and non-stop sunshine. Even for those unfamiliar with the sport, you can see the appeal of a clothing line such as Hurlingham Polo 1875. While Polo Team Wear (and to an extent, HP Active) caters to those actually swinging the mallet, the Essentials range is suitable for everyone, with its preppy collection of T-shirts, polo shirts, hoodies, and caps. HP Active is similarly versatile, with technical fabrics and designs marrying form and function for all sports, or just kicking back. It's the polo world's answer

**HP ACTIVE IS VERSATILE
WITH TECHNICAL FABRICS
AND DESIGNS MARRYING
FORM AND FUNCTION**





Opposite from top: England Polo captain James Beim in a Flannels sponsored polo shirt; England player, Jack Richardson.
 This page, from top: Ultra Light Gilet, £130; T-shirt, £25; Full zip hoodie, £60, and T-shirt, £25, all Hurlingham Polo 1875



to the ubiquitous 'athleisure' trend. Made in Britain is a collection of classic British styles, shirts, chinos and jackets, meeting the needs of both the polo player post-match, and the polo enthusiast looking for the very best in tailoring.

'I absolutely love the Active Wear collection,' says Mannix. 'It's such a well thought out and versatile collection for a sportsman with styles that are great for riding, such as the hybrid jacket and performance mid-layers, along with more casual styles to relax in. One of my favourite pieces is the red polo shirt. I use it on the golf course to try and copy the iconic Tiger Red that was used by Tiger Woods – if I can't play like him, at least I can try and copy the way he looks on the course.'

Who would have thought it? One of the greatest polo players North America has ever produced wishes he was better at golf. Well, as Sylvester Stallone once said: 'playing polo is like trying to play golf during an earthquake', so perhaps Canada's number one just isn't used to standing still.



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Action in front of the big screen at the Gold Cup final

THE ACTION

48_QUEEN'S CUP

La Indiana met RH Polo at Guards Polo Club in a final full of unexpected twists and turns

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Siblings went head to head as King Power Foxes took on El Remanso at Cowdray

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Ivy League teams battle Oxbridge for the title

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Santa Barbara Polo and Racquet Club played host to an exciting final between Farmers & Merchants Bank and Klentner Ranch

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Spectators enjoyed another installment of the fast and physical game at Tryon

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The highlights of the 2017 season in Zürich

QUEEN'S CUP

La Indiana and RH Polo met for an exciting and unpredictable final, with Adolfo Cambiaso joining the ranks of Ben Soleimani's team, writes Carolina Beresford



48

The Cartier Queen's Cup at Guards was a thrilling affair this year. King Power Foxes, one of the stronger teams of the competition – boasting 10-goal superstars Gonzalito and Facundo Pieres – were knocked out by El Remanso in the quarter-finals. A strong British foursome, El Remanso proved they were ready for high-goal glory, but lost in the semi-final against RH Polo.

After a disappointing season last year, RH Polo patron Ben Soleimani recruited La Dolfina legend Adolfo Cambiaso, who parted

with Dubai after 16 successful years. Flanked by 8-goal Brazilian Rodrigo Ribeiro de Andrade and 4-goaler Tomas Beresford, RH Polo reached the final undefeated.

They would face last season's sweethearts, La Indiana, in the final. Michael Bickford's team would once again battle Cambiaso in the Queen's Cup final, this time with Luke Tomlinson accompanying Tincho Merlos and Nic Roldan. The final was set to be a spectacular show. Celebrities flocked to the Cartier enclosure, while die-hard polo

fans braved the heat in the stands. Both teams played a solid first chukka, but RH Polo pulled ahead of La Indiana in the second. A few quick runs and a penalty conversion gave RH Polo a 6-3 advantage by half time. The clash of the titans was proving more predictable than anticipated.

But if politics has taught us anything, it's to expect the unexpected. With Merlos leading the attack, La Indiana came back and scored five goals in four minutes to go 8-7 up. The crowd could not believe their

eyes; what seemed to be a straightforward match suddenly turned into the most exciting game of the tournament. The fifth chukka was hard fought, but La Indiana were able to maintain their one-goal advantage (9-8).

All eyes were on Cambiaso as players rode back onto the field for the sixth and final chukka; the Argentine has a reputation for coming through in the last seconds – a supernatural ability to shine brighter in moments of tension. He didn't disappoint. He tied the game before fighting every opponent on the field to win the ball again. As the final bell rang, he charged towards

goal, avoiding hooks and ride-offs, and sent the ball flying between the posts – his determination leaving teammates, opponents and spectators in awe. RH Polo won the final 10-9 and claimed their first high-goal title.

The defeat fell heavy on La Indiana. After losing in the final seconds before the end of the match last year, it was bitterly disappointing. 'La Indiana is an established team, we proved that last year,' explains Merlos. 'It was bad luck we lost today, but this isn't over. La Indiana is here to win and to play well.'

The prize-giving drew an atmosphere of respect and admiration, as polo fans pushed forward to see Cambiaso claim his tenth Queen's Cup title. But Beresford was MVP of the final. 'It's a dream come true,' he shared. 'My father [Charles Beresford], uncle [Gabriel Donoso] and great-uncle [Lord Patrick Beresford] all won the Queen's Cup; it's an honour to be on the trophy with them.'

The 21 year old has undoubtedly learnt from Cambiaso: 'Adolfo is an unbelievable player, completely unique in how he sees the game; he creates space where it seems there isn't any. I try my best to make room for him.'



Opposite: Rodrigo Ribeiro de Andrade in the centre, chased by Tincho Merlos, left. *This page:* A flying Ben Soleimani in black and Merlos on the left



King Power Foxes swept through the tournament at Cowdray Park Polo Club to beat El Remanso, in an event that saw its fair share of sibling rivalry, writes Carolina Beresford

50

Excitement and anticipation filled the air at the Jaeger-LeCoultre Gold Cup on 27 June at Cowdray Park Polo Club. Several surprises during the Queen's Cup indicated the Gold might not be a monotonous repeat of past years and so inspired spectators braved the rainy weather in search of a new champion. Yes, Adolfo Cambiaso claimed the Queen's Cup yet again, but favourites King Power Foxes had fallen in the quarters. There was space for a new warrior to come through, and people were eager to see how La Indiana and El Remanso would perform.

Gasps echoed as Michael Bickford's La Indiana melted under Sommelier's heat in the quarter-finals. Further drama struck, to the delight of many, as RH Polo stumbled. Without Cambiaso, their 10-goal leader, Ben

Soleimani's team couldn't handle the force of Habtoor's Francisco Elizalde and Nico Pieres. Two favourites were out before the semis. Things were getting good.

Sibling rivalry was a feature of the semi-finals, as Facundo and Gonzalito Pieres of King Power Foxes took on younger brother Nico of Habtoor. The Foxes won and secured a place in the Gold Cup final. El Remanso were still flying high in their semi-final, and soared into the final after a fantastic Hanbury brothers duel, where Charlie defeated George of Sommelier. With a place in the final, they were on course to face El Remanso for a third time this season, a team who had shown they could win. After defeating the Pieres brothers in the Queen's Cup quarters and in a Gold Cup league game,

Above: Charlie Hanbury, right, hooks Gonzalito Pieres. Opposite top: Airborne Facundo Pieres. Opposite below: Winners, King Power Foxes from left, Facundo and Gonzalito Pieres, Hugo Taylor and MVP, Jimbo Fewster

they could not be underestimated. King Power Foxes had so far failed to be the inspirational team we swooned over in 2015. In the words of Gonzalo Pieres Snr, 'This has been the worst season since Facundo and Gonzalito started playing together'. But as great champions know, finals are a peculiar breed of polo circumstance, and not all players are born to win big trophies.

PLAYING GOOD, FOUR-MAN POLO WITH FRIENDS IS WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT

As of the second chukka, it was clear that King Power Foxes would claim the Gold Cup for a third consecutive year. Gonzalito reminded us what type of player he can be; Jimbo Fewster and Hugo Taylor blocked as if their lives depended on it; and Facundo raced up and down the field scoring end-to-end goals. It took them a while, but King Power Foxes found their style of play. By half time they had gained a three-goal advantage, which grew steadily over the fourth chukka. El Remanso went into the sixth chukka four goals down, looking as defeated as the crowd felt, but their rivals did not ease their grip. A goal apiece made it 13-8 as the bell rang, and Facundo salvaged his season by claiming the most prestigious tournament in Europe.

Post match, Facundo explained how their previous losses were a key part of their



final victory: 'Those defeats were good for us. We had lots to improve on and that helped us concentrate. They are a great team and we were scared coming in, but we were able to play our game and luckily it paid off. The Gold Cup is a tournament we always want to win.' Facundo came out as top scorer of the final, but MVP deservedly went to young English player James Fewster.

El Remanso did not get the result they wanted, but what a season they had. 'It has been an amazing experience; four English guys have not made the final since 1969,' says Hanbury. 'We are very proud. Sadly we couldn't play our game today, but playing good, open, four-man polo with friends is what it is all about, and we did that this season.'

CORONATION CUP

On a horrendous rainy day at Guards Polo Club, England took the trophy in both the men's and the new ladies' finals, reports Diana Butler



52

James Beim led Flannels England to a 7–1 win over GT Bank Commonwealth in the HPA Royal Salute Coronation Cup at Guards Polo Club. After having been narrowly beaten by an almost unchanged Commonwealth team last year, the England squad were determined to win back this mighty trophy. So there were smiles all round when Peter Prentice – chairman of the Keepers of the Quaich, and a Royal Salute Ambassador – the South Korean actress Han Go-Eun and

HPA chairman Stephen Hutchinson, presented Beim with the magnificent trophy.

His teammate James Harper, who was named MVP, later revealed the team's winning tactics. 'We knew if we used our horses and let our opponents make mistakes we would be ok. We just had to keep our shape and not rush and watch the ball too much,' said Harper. 'I think we started well, creating a lot of space and time with the ball. The Commonwealth didn't have their best

game, but we didn't really let them either. We were very disciplined with our man-marking and each of us did our jobs well.' These tactics certainly paid off, with the Commonwealth struggling to convert chances to goals in the torrential rain. England established an early three-goal lead, which they gradually increased during the game as their confidence grew.

Harper admits that his recent run of success with the high-goal El Remanso team

Opposite: MVP, James Harper, on the ball, chased by Fred Mannix, left. This page: England captain, James Beim, scores a goal



WITH TWO GREAT WINS FOR ENGLAND, THIS WAS, WITHOUT DOUBT, A DAY TO REMEMBER

– which also featured James Beim – was great preparation for the Coronation Cup. The duo reached the semi-finals of the Cartier Queen's Cup and the final of the Jaeger LeCoultre Gold Cup. 'The El Remanso team is similar to the England team in that we have four good players and we play open polo. We are also up to speed to play at that level, as were the horses – which is a big plus.'

Sourcing ponies for the Coronation Cup has not always been easy, coming so late in

the high-goal season. This was not a problem for England this year though. 'Our team were very organised with our horses,' explained Harper. 'We each might have rented the odd one, but they were just to top up the string. I played the same horses that I'd played in the Gold Cup, plus one horse that I rented from Max Routledge.' However it was the Commonwealth team that received the BPP blanket, for John Paul Clarkin's Magpie, a nine-year-old New Zealand-bred mare.

Of course, the highlight of this day for any player is to represent their country. 'For me, we don't get to wear the England shirt enough,' said Harper. 'There are only a few test matches, but it always means a lot.'

The ladies' team, however, have had more opportunity to play for England. The Coronation Cup match was followed by the Thai Polo Club Ladies' International for the Diamond Jubilee Trophy – the first time that ladies' polo has featured on the schedule. The home side did not disappoint, producing a fast-paced game led by Nina Clarkin, who played off her 10-goal handicap. England defeated a competitive Llangollen USA Ladies team 8–3, although it should be noted that the Americans were beginning to adapt to the conditions in the second half.

The addition of this match to the Coronation Cup programme highlights the growing importance of ladies' polo in the global polo calendar. Thai Polo Club's Harald Link, accompanied by Swarovski's Andrew Drummond Moray and the US team patron Donald Brennan, presented the prizes, which included the Swarovski MVP prize to England's Hazel Jackson. Clarkin followed in husband John Paul's footsteps and received the BPP prize for Jess, a grey mare owned by Sue McGregor.

With two great wins for England, this was, without doubt, a Royal Salute Coronation Cup day to remember. So who would Harper like to see England play in a future Coronation Cup match? 'I would like to play Uruguay as I think they would be a very tough opponent, which is what you want. You want to push yourself and your horses on days like this. Otherwise teams like the USA, Brazil and Argentina are always tough to play against.'

Let's hope the HPA is writing out the invitations at this very moment.



ATLANTIC CUP

Oxford was victorious over Cambridge, Harvard, and Yale in the annual battle for the Atlantic Cup, Jacqui Gilbert reports

On a blustery afternoon at Cambridge County Polo Club in June, the atmosphere was buzzing as the battle to become the Atlantic Cup polo champions took place. The teams of Harvard and Yale had crossed the ocean to take on Oxford and Cambridge. They played a fast, furious game of polo demonstrating the impressive alliance between human, horse, athleticism and competition that underpins the sport.

The beaming, hundreds-strong crowd was attracted not only by the combined 535 years of club polo history, but also by the garden-party atmosphere of the day, which celebrated polo, transatlantic friendship and the talented students bringing their A-game to the sport and life.

It is this notion that makes the tournament significant. The ties of world-leading universities to a luxurious sport may

not seem surprising, but the changing demographic of student teams and the growth reported in all of the clubs makes the success of the tournament all the more important. These students who are positioning themselves for success, through academic endeavours, will also be agents for the sustained growth of polo in the future. And that narrative will now include friendships formed on the fields

Opposite: Sophie Menard of Yale (in blue) rides off Kelsey O'Connor of Harvard ahead of the finals

of the Kirtlington Polo Club in Oxfordshire and the Cambridge Country Polo Club.

Heading into the finals, Oxford (including player of the tournament, Hayes Hagan) were in a winning position having defeated both Harvard and Yale on day one. The competition was fierce, with the round-robin format meaning that all teams were still in with a chance to take home the coveted trophy. The Yale and Cambridge match, led by captains Leila Chang and Ben Lawrence

respectively, started slowly with Cambridge sneaking in a slow build to victory in the final chukka of the match. Cambridge then went to battle against their rivals with the hope of disrupting a back-to-back Oxford title. However, Oxford dominated play from the outset.

This power was matched by Harvard in their final match against Yale, resulting in a Harvard win led by Kelsey O'Connor. As the results were tallied, the guests

enjoyed the generosity of sponsors Cobra Beer, Champagne Gratiot-Pillièrre, Camford 1209, La Martina, The Cambridge Satchel Company and Cambridge University, and danced in the Cambridge County Polo Club bus to the favourite local band Truly Medley Deeply. The tournament victors were Oxford University Polo Club but the real winners were the hundreds of attendees, the student players and their supporters, well wishers and, of course, the polo itself.

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PACIFIC COAST OPEN

Farmers & Merchants Bank won the Gulfstream Pacific Coast Open in a nail-biting second overtime chukka, reports Alex Webbe

Few can deny the rich tradition of the Pacific Coast Open, a tournament that dates back to 1909 when the home Burlingame team of Richard M Tobin, Walter Hobart, Thomas Driscoll and John Lawson defeated Ranelagh (England) by 5–2. The England team (Major GW Hobson, Frank B Hurndall, Frank Gill and Major HR Lee) returned the following year and downed Burlingame 8–4, and the tournament was in play.

Over the years, the Pacific Coast Open has fielded teams with players ranging from 10-goalers Tommy Hitchcock, Cecil Smith

and Robert Skene to Hollywood producers Hal Roach and Darryl F Zanuck. As recently as 2012, Adolfo Cambiaso was on hand to lead John Muse's Lucchese team to a third consecutive title and Gulfstream Aerospace returned in 2015 as the title sponsor, binding its legacy with the historic tournament.

Since 2015, the Pacific Coast Open has been played at the 16-goal level. While players such as Adolfo Cambiaso and David 'Pelón' Stirling might not populate the current team rosters, there is a plethora of up-and-coming younger players looking

to make their mark on the polo scene. As a result, Nico Escobar, Felipe Vercellino, Jared Zenni, Hilario Figueras, Costi Caset and Joaquin Panelo were allowed to compete, and all made impressive showings.

Leading up to the Pacific Coast Open final, Klentner Ranch had won two of the three 16-goal tournaments, capturing the Mayors Cup as well as the Bob Skene Trophy. Farmers & Merchants Bank (FMB) beat Santa Clara in the final of the USPA America Cup.

Both FMB and Klentner Ranch swept through preliminary Pacific Coast Open play

without losing a game, entering the final with perfect 4-0 records. Klentner Ranch were young and physical while FMB were led by veteran 8-goaler Lucas Criado.

Facundo Obregón scored the first two goals of the final on penalty conversions but FMB fought back. A well-executed neck shot by Criado was followed by goals from Bray and Escobar, and the early lead belonged to Klentner Ranch.

In the second period, Bray scored on a pass from Geronimo Obregón. Klentner Ranch were held scoreless for the balance of the chukka, with Felipe Vercellino scoring

the only other goal of the period on a 60-yard penalty shot. Overly aggressive play by Klentner Ranch resulted in a rash of penalties that cost them dearly. Vercellino tied the game with an opening 30-yard penalty conversion, followed by a goal from Criado that gave FMB their first lead, 5-4. Rough play continued, with FMB adding two more penalty goals from Vercellino. A stunned Klentner Ranch team trailed by three goals, 7-4, at the end of the first half.

Penalties continued to rain down on the players, with Klentner Ranch being the recipient this time. A penalty 1 and a penalty

2 (spot hit) were answered by a single FMB goal, and Klentner Ranch were within two goals of the lead, 8-6. Facundo Obregón tied the game in the fifth with a goal from the field and a penalty conversion, 8-8. Escobar got the lead back for FMB with a goal in the final seconds for the 9-8 advantage.

Vercellino scored on a penalty shot to open the sixth for a two-goal edge, 10-8. Another Penalty 1 awarded a goal to Klentner Ranch, with Geronimo Obregón scoring the final goal of the chukka for a 10-10 tie and a sudden-death overtime chukka. But some disciplined defence on both sides resulted in a scoreless overtime chukka, and both teams rode to the sidelines in search of another fresh overtime mount.

At 5:56 in the second overtime, FMB's Criado got free and sent a goal through the Klentner Ranch posts for the win. Criado was named MVP for his efforts, while Bray's grey, Disney, earned BPP.

SOME DISCIPLINED DEFENCE ON BOTH SIDES RESULTED IN A SCORELESS OVERTIME CHUKKA



Opposite: Klentner Ranch's Jesse Bray takes the ball on the nearside while Farmers & Merchants Bank's Lucas Criado defends. This page: Felipe Vercellino carries the ball down field

DEAUVILLE GOLD CUP

Cibao La Pampa took the Gold Cup in front of a record turn out, to complete a superb season at Deauville International Polo Club, reports Gemma Latham



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The 67th Barrière Deauville Polo Cup took place at the Deauville-La Touques racecourse in Normandy this August. The Deauville Gold Cup is one of Europe's most prestigious tournaments, with both French players and the best Argentine professionals competing. A record audience of more than 2,000 spectators watched the final on 27 August. The fine weather certainly helped to boost turn out, as did the chance to see Francisco Elizalde (8) play, ahead of competing in Argentina in November.

Elizalde will play the prestigious Argentine Open tournament as part of an excellent team with Santiago (8) and Ignacio Toccalino (8), and the striker Alfredo Capella (9) – a foursome that may go far. But in Deauville, Elizalde demonstrated his mind was not already drifting towards Argentina, but was firmly in the here and now, focused on leading his team Cibao La Pampa, of Jorge (1) and Juan Pepa (2), Pato Cieza (5) and Elizalde (8) to a second victory in Deauville, after having won the Silver Cup on 13 August.

Cibao La Pampa played a fast and efficient game – not showy, just a fine sports spectacle centred around a team game where each player knows his role perfectly.

Their opponents Barrière (Martin Joaquin (4), Juan Chavanne (5), Martin Aguerre Jr (7) and Tommy Rinderknecht (0)) – who won the 2016 French Open in Chantilly – fought to the end, reducing the score in the final chukka, with captain Martin Aguerre Jr scoring three goals including two penalties. However, they could

Opposite: Winners of the Gold Cup, Cibao La Pampa, with friends and family. This page: Juan Peppa takes the ball on his nearside

not outstrip Cibao La Pampa. Elizalde scored five goals for the team, all from penalties and captain Jorge Pepa scored three goals including a winning shot under the neck.

Awarded the MVP accolade, Jorge Pepa paid tribute to Jean-Édouard Mazery, president of the Deauville International Polo Club, and his team, adding that: 'Winning this prestigious Gold Cup here in Deauville is a great moment. This tournament is simply wonderful, both on and off the pitch. It was a really tough game. We had a great team against us and Martin Aguerre delivered a great performance. They fought

until the last minute and it was very close. But I think it gave a very fine match to watch. One thing is for sure, we will be back in Deauville next year.'

The BPP award went to Middy, a nine-year-old thoroughbred mare born in England, ridden by Elizalde.

Furthermore, on the back of their success at Deauville, Cibao La Pampa made history on 17 September when they became champions of the French Open at Chantilly to win the Triple French Crown: the Silver and Gold Cups in Deauville and the French Open.



**CIBAO LA PAMPA PLAYED
A FAST AND EFFICIENT
GAME – NOT SHOWY, JUST
A FINE SPORTS SPECTACLE**

OPEN DU SOLEIL

The high-goal and low-goal tournaments marked the end of a thrilling season at the Polo Club Saint-Tropez, says Jemima Wilson



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As an incredible season came to an end at Polo Club Saint-Tropez, the Open du Soleil 2017 proclaimed two winners.

ALF Investments won the high-goal ADS Securities Cup and Amanara raised the low-goal Argentina Food Polo Cup.

The final of the high-goal tournament was a spectacular match, with ALFI's Scott Wood (0) – standing in for Alshair Fiyaz – Hugo Taylor (1), Joaquín Pittaluga (7) and Pablo 'Polito' Pieres (9) prevailing over EFG Aravali's Karan Thapar (0), Ignacio Kennedy (4), Bautista Ortiz de Urbina (7), and Jaime

Garcia Huidobro (7). They played a good last chukka by putting the pressure on EFG in the final seven minutes. In the fourth chukka, EFG was leading with a difference of 1½ points, but ALFI shot an efficient 8½–8 in the last chukka to win. Pieres was named Most Valuable Player and Best Playing Pony went to his mount, Rusita.

'I first came to Saint-Tropez six years ago, but this year Polito called me at the beginning of August and invited me to play with him and ALFI,' said Pittaluga. 'We had played together when we were kids.

The season was an amazing experience.'

A spokesperson for the title sponsor, ADS Securities, said, 'Every year the Polo Club Saint-Tropez improves its facilities and the quality of its tournaments. Philippe Ghanem, CEO of ADS Securities, is committed to supporting the development of the club. The ADS Securities Open du Soleil is now in its third year and the venue is becoming an important part of the firm's commitment to client hospitality.'

Los Nocheros played Amanara in the Open du Soleil low-goal tournament,

*Opposite, from left: Jaime Garcia Huidobro with MVP, Polito Pieres
This page top: Pieres, centre, dribbling and Bautista Ortiz de Urbina. Below Lovelocks playing EFG*



organised by Polo Club Saint-Tropez and Argentina Food. Los Nocheros – Sebastian Schneberger (1), Gonzalo Bernal (3), Hugo Taylor (1), and Valentin N Astrada (5) – played a great first chukka and led the game. While the match was even throughout the four chukkas, Los Nocheros were unable to produce enough scoring chances and Nicky Sen’s Amanara came out on top (7–5).

‘I often come to play at the Polo Club in Saint-Tropez and it’s amazing how much they have improved the facilities this year,’ remarked Sen, whose winning team consisted of Fabián Bolanterio (3), Marcos Harriott (2) and Pablo Jauretche (6).

The Most Valuable Player award for the final was given to Bolanterio, while the Best Playing Pony accolade went to his horse Embarcado. Leonardo Constantino, head of economy, trade and investment at the Argentine Embassy in France, presented Amanara with the Argentina Food Polo Cup.

Polo Club Saint-Tropez is currently working its way towards becoming self-sufficient and one of a kind on the global polo circuit. The club offers innovative structures and services for players, team owners and horses, with an ever-expanding programme. A fitness centre, sports hall, swimming pool, virtual golf, tennis, polo club, and coaching, along with other facilities and activities are available throughout the year, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the Gulf of Saint-Tropez.

The club’s owner, Alshair Fiyaz, has intentions for it to become one of the most attractive polo sites in the world, encompassing wellness, hospitality and entertainment. Next year’s tournaments are set to bring even greater excitement to the burgeoning venue.



From left: Facundo Pieres, Santiago Laborde, Iñigo Zobel, Gregorio Gelosi

COPA DE ORO

Argentine superstar Facundo Pieres fulfilled a dream for Iñigo Zobel in the final of Spain's most prestigious tournament, reports Carolina Beresford

The high-goal Copa de Oro marked the apex of the Spanish season at Santa Maria Polo Club in Sotogrande – five competitive teams, three 10-goalers, one mission: to win Spain's most prestigious tournament.

Plenty of plot twists and turbulence kept spectators engaged. An unexpected loss for Silver Cup winners Lechuza Caracas saw La Indiana squeeze through to the final. Michael Bickford's team was pulled through the trenches this month, suffering injury after injury, but raw determination put them in another high-goal final.

They would face Iñigo Zobel's Ayala team. Zobel, who had promised to retire from high-goal polo at the end of the season, asked for only one thing: to win

the Copa de Oro, as he had in 2007, one last time. He recruited Ellerstina frontman, Facundo Pieres, for a second season, convinced he would have the golden touch.

Pieres brought his A-game with him, and controlled the final from the first throw-in. By the fourth chukka, Ayala were 10–4 up. La Indiana got it together in the fifth, scoring three quick goals to make it 7–11, and, for a fleeting moment, it seemed as if they might make a historic comeback. But Pieres quickly reminded those on and off the field who's boss. He scored twice more to seal the convincing victory (13–8) and fulfil Zobel's last polo wish.

'We knew this was important for Iñigo, as it was for us. This is a big achievement for

any player,' said Pieres, who was named MVP of the final. 'We had a good game plan and we knew what to do. We started the game on top, and that was the key to our victory. We didn't give our opponents any chances.'

Former Spanish King Juan Carlos presented the trophy to the champions, while his daughter Infanta Elena awarded Pieres's outstanding mare, Cube, the BPP prize.

It was a particularly heavy loss for La Indiana, who have come up short in a few finals over the years but it is not over for them yet. Pieres will be joining Bickford in England next summer, 2018 might see La Indiana finally claiming the champion status they have been craving.

COLORADO OPEN

The inaugural tournament was a big success for Valiente, reports Alex Webbe



Pablo Spinacci in yellow, followed by Bob Jornayvaz and Kian Hall in blue and Rob Jornayvaz (in yellow, far right)

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The debut of the 20-goal Colorado Open Polo Championship at the Valiente Polo Club in Littleton, Colorado, attracted four teams and ended in a Saturday extravaganza – the Rocky Mountain Polo Festival, featuring six bands, family activities and refreshments.

Bob Jornayvaz's Valiente team was headlined by the number-one rated player in the world, Adolfo Cambiaso. Jornayvaz and Cambiaso were coming off a US Open Championship win in Florida and looked to be the pre-tournament favourite, but anything can happen in polo and there were many talented players on hand.

Cambiaso's presence was historic, marking the first time a 10-goal player has appeared on Colorado polo fields

since Foxhall Keene competed in Colorado Springs in 1896.

Victories over Colorado and Kentucky left Valiente undefeated at 3-0 and facing Colorado (2-1) in the tournament final.

In a replay of their earlier meeting in the tournament, Valiente took an early lead and coasted to an 8-7 win.

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper presented the MVP award to Diego Cavanagh while congratulating the Jornayvaz family for bringing world-class polo to Colorado.

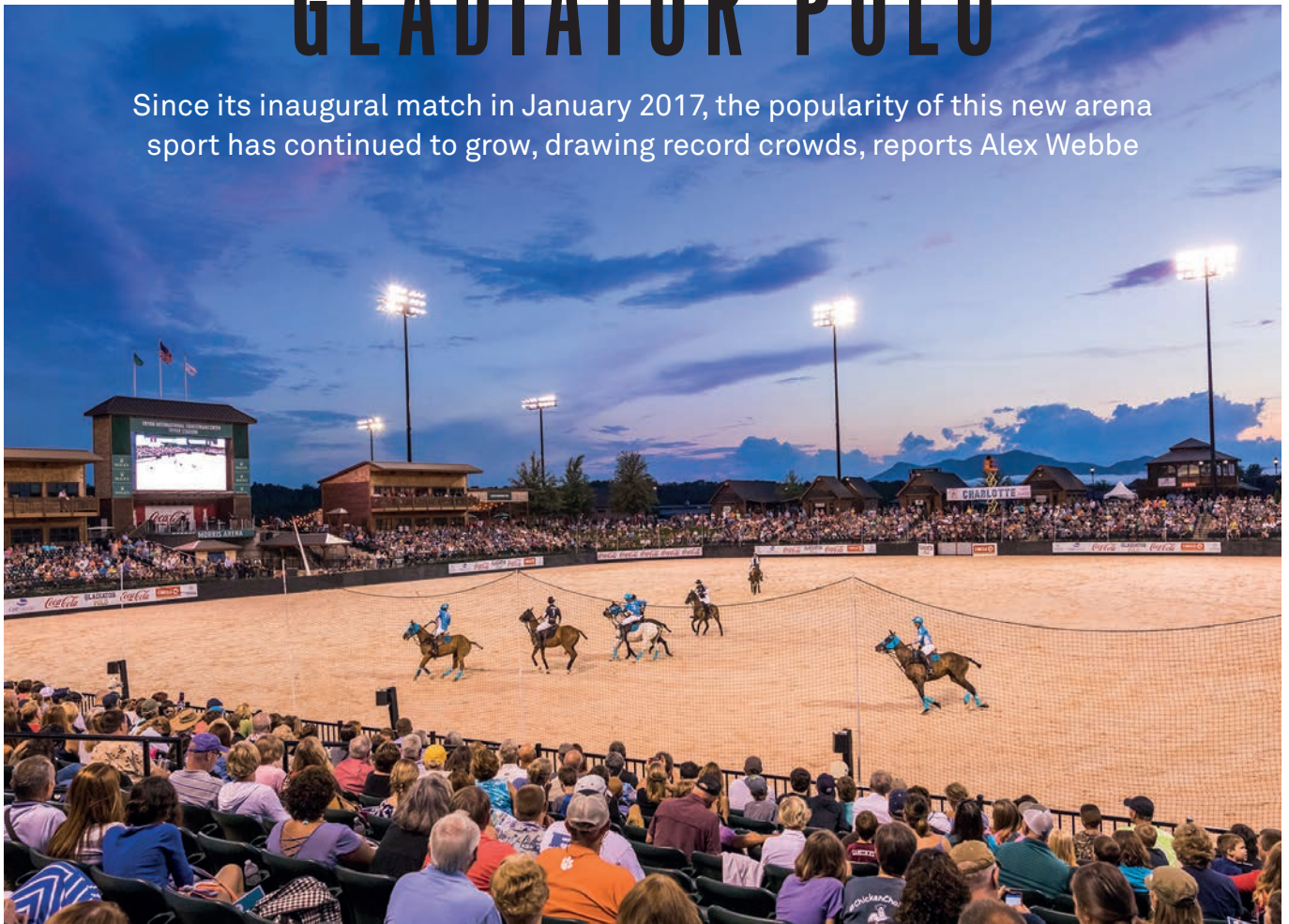
The festival was a fundraiser for the Equine Partnership Program, a local nonprofit organization that provides therapy to at-risk children and adults.

'We want to increase opportunities for up-and-coming players to compete in a tournament that will give them exposure and the chance to improve their skills,' said tournament organizer, Rob Jornayvaz, who anticipated making the Colorado Open an annual event.

The main rule change in the 2017 Colorado Open allowed teams to bring the ball into play immediately following a score, as opposed to switching sides and returning to the centre of the field for a throw-in. The idea was to keep the game flowing and easier to understand from the vantage point of a spectator. Most of the players enjoyed the rule because it made the 'set plays' much more important and kept the game rolling.

GLADIATOR POLO

Since its inaugural match in January 2017, the popularity of this new arena sport has continued to grow, drawing record crowds, reports Alex Webbe



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Mark Bellissimo is the founder, managing partner and largest shareholder of a series of equestrian-related entities that are focused on creating sport, entertainment and commerce centered around his love of horses. His recent purchase of the International Polo Club in Wellington, Florida put polo firmly in his sights.

Building on the success of his horse-show properties, Bellissimo has honed in on the arena game. With just three players on a side and an all-weather playing arena about one-tenth the size of a regulation polo field, Bellissimo's creation, Gladiator Polo, drops the action into the lap of the spectator. The game is fast, physical and displays both

expert equestrian skills and the ability to hit the ball with a 52-inch wooden mallet while travelling at speeds of over 35mph.

Gladiator Polo debuted in Wellington, Florida in winter this year and offered a US\$250,000 purse, the largest in the history of the game of polo. In June, Gladiator Polo made its first appearance at Bellissimo's Tryon International Equestrian Center in Mill Spring, North Carolina, where it attracted over 10,000 spectators. The crowd watched Greenville edge a win over Charlotte, 6-5, in a spirited and fast-moving six-chukka match.

'I've never played in front of a crowd that big before,' said Greenville 7-goaler Mariano

Charlotte and Greenville compete in the inaugural Gladiator Polo game at Tryon International Equestrian Centre

Obregón. 'Everyone was cheering so loudly and it was just a great experience.'

The popularity of Gladiator Polo prompted a US\$120,000 autumn series of three more games at the North Carolina equestrian facility. And with plans to create a professional league to include a draft, team owners and significant purses, the sky appears to be the limit for Bellissimo's Gladiator Polo franchise.

POLO PARK ZÜRICH

The summer season at the Swiss polo park and country club culminated in high spirits and home success, says club owner Sébastien Le Page



Owner of Polo Park Zürich, Sébastien Le Page (front) at the San Francisco de Asis Polo Cup

This year has been very special for Polo Park & Country Club Zürich. The club hosted many events and tournaments during the summer season, which began with an event to celebrate the opening of the clubhouse on 6 May, with more than 400 people in attendance, marking a new era in the polo club's history.

This was followed by the traditional San Francisco de Asis Polo Cup, played over the last weekend of May. Eight teams competed in two leagues, presenting great polo with a wonderful atmosphere.

In June, the club hosted two medium-goal tournaments: the In Vino Challenge and the Zürich Championship Medium Goal. Well-known Argentinian players including

Francisco Fucci, Martin Podesta, Facundo Kelly and Pato Bolanterio participated, to the delight of spectators.

Polo Park Zürich welcomed back two special +8/+10-goal tournaments in July: the Polo Park & Country Club Cup and the Gold Cup. But the highlight of the month was the 18th International Ladies Polo Cup, with seven teams, two leagues, and players from all across Europe; coached by England's Hazel Jackson. 'The ladies this year was a great success, it was an eye opener for me,' said Jackson. 'Polo Park Zürich is planning to put the level up for the following year, to encourage international teams in the future. The club is absolutely stunning. The entire weekend was superb, with an amazing

supper on the Saturday night.' Champagne Jacquart won the medium-goal, and San Francisco de Asis the low-goal.

The Luxury Trophy, the last medium-goal tournament (+6/+8) of the season, took place in early September to great success and was sponsored by Nespresso, Hato, Kensington and Champagne Jacquart. The winning team was Hato, consisting of Sébastien Le Page, Facundo Kelly, Harry Muddle and Martin Podesta (MVP).

The season closed with the Zürich Championship Low Goal Patron's Cup from 23-24 September. A team of younger players beat the more seasoned players, which just goes to show – the new generation has a great future at Polo Park Zürich.

FASHION ICONS

As proven by the Beverly Hills Polo Club, successful branding can offer longevity beyond the playing fields, says Alex Webbe



From left: Bob Fletcher, Tony Veen, club president and founder Russell Havenstrite, his wife Edith, Bob Skene, Carlton Beal, actor Charles Farrell

The first time the United States Open Championship was played west of the Mississippi River was back in 1952, when the Beverly Hills team of Bob Fletcher, Tony Veen, Bob Skene and Carlton Beal beat a team from San Francisco in the final, 9-6, on the team's home field at the Riviera Country Club in Santa Monica Canyon, in suburban Los Angeles.

Beverly Hills won the 1952 US Open Championship and captured the Pacific Coast Open in both 1951 (Bob Fletcher, Bob Skene, Cecil Smith and James Stimmel) and 1952 (Bob Fletcher, Tony Veen, Bob Skene and Charles Huthsing). The Beverly Hills Polo Club affiliated with the United

States Polo Association (USPA) in 1948 and went on to host the 1952 US Open Championship, as well as a 1949 international series against Argentina.

The club disbanded in 1952, following the sale of the grounds – which were leased from the country club – but the name has been kept alive through the Beverly Hills Polo Club brand. Created in 1982 by a couple of college students, a logo – that looked eerily similar to a Paul Brown drawing – was screen-printed on a few dozen T-shirts and voilà, the brand was born.

The owners of the Beverly Hills Polo Club brand came to an early agreement with Ralph Lauren that allowed them to market

their products without any legal difficulties – and this was a big step in allowing the brand to flourish over the years.

Today, Beverly Hills Polo Club products can be found in 80 countries around the world, and cover a comprehensive range of product lines, from fashion and fragrances to home textiles.

The principal competitors of Beverly Hills Polo Club products are La Martina, US Polo Assn and Hurlingham Polo 1875 – the HPA's own line, which has recently entered the scene. The US Polo Assn brand has generated millions of dollars in revenue for the USPA, and Hurlingham Polo 1875 is hoping to replicate its success.



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