

POLO⁺¹⁰ WORLD

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POLO+10 WORLD

Since 2004, POLO+10 has been reporting on Polo, mainly in Europe, but starting now, our international edition POLO+10 WORLD will be published twice yearly.



Polo is an international sport, a meeting place of all the cosmopolitans and a language that is spoken throughout the world. We are pleasantly surprised that our friendships keep expanding across the globe. A Carousel of professional athletes and enthusiasts, horse fanatics and ball acrobats is circumventing the world. Which is why, beginning now, we are releasing an international edition POLO+10 WORLD twice yearly. With this decision we are sticking to a philosophy, one that has withstood the test of time, which we hold true ourselves. Polo players never get tired of quoting, “Polo is more than a sport. Polo is a way of life.” POLO+10 has followed this philosophy from the start. As a polo magazine we have our eyes set on the enthusiasts, on the sideline as well as on the field. We aren’t only interested in the goals, rankings and statistics, but how a polo heart beats, how the polo community lives, and what kind of dreams and goals have found their home here. POLO+10 has chosen to visit nothing less than the entire world of polo and its attitude towards life. Therefore we have the aim to be the first magazine that is present in all the hotspots throughout the world.

In this issue: because in the last few years more women have climbed into the polo saddle and exclusive ladies tournaments have sprung up almost everywhere, we have devoted ourselves to writing a large piece about ladies polo. How did it all begin and who were the first amazons? Where do the ladies play and who are the international stakeholders? Additionally, we have taken on the not-so-simple topic of Umpiring and we interviewed one of the most well known polo field designers in the world, Alejandro Battro. We previewed the European Championships in Germany and in the fourth chukka we focused on the polo land of South Africa. Thank you to everyone for being so welcoming. We would like your feedback, topic recommendations, photos, and updates from your polo clubs and your polo life – after all, this is where the polo world comes together. •

STEFANIE STÜTING
Editor-in-Chief POLO+10 WORLD

WWW.POLOPLUS10.COM // WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/POLOPLUS10

ENGLISH THOROUGHBRED CONTINENTAL GTC V8

Polo is more than a sport to us. It's a British tradition. Not only because polo horse breeding traces back to an English thoroughbred stallion, but also because of the power and the refinement of the game. A great reflection of another British icon: the all-new Continental V8. Experience Bentley and Polo in 2012 in Hamburg (2-3 June), Duesseldorf (6-8 July), Ascona (13-15 July), Oberursel/Frankfurt (17-19 August), Gstaad (17-19 August) and Berlin (21-23 September).

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EC 2012 IN HANOVER MASPE

Wolfgang Kailing, President of the Lower Saxony Polo-Club brought the European Championship to Hanover/Germany.



WOLFGANG KAILING
President of the Lower
Saxony Polo-Club

"It is a great pleasure to be working on the setup and organisation of the IX FIP European Polo Championships 2012. Taking over this prestigious event at short notice is a tremendous opportunity for the equestrian region of Hanover and one we will fully take advantage of. The procedures for these European Championships are regulated by the Federation of International Polo based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We are extremely pleased that the Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, David McAllister, thoroughly enjoyed his time at the

German Polo Championships in Maspe last year and has agreed to assume the patronage of the European Polo Championships 2012 based on those experiences.

At this event, you will have approximately 20,000 square metres of grounds at your disposal here in Maspe on which to play, train, park and accommodate your horses. This is a huge undertaking for a small club such as the Lower Saxony Polo Club. We are supported in this endeavour by various partnerships, including with the City of Langenhagen and various businesses and other partners across the Hanover region.

The weather and light in this region can be fantastic during the first half of September and we're hoping this year will be no different. We want to ensure that all the polo players from a total of ten European nations feel extremely welcome here in Maspe. Dressed in their national kits, they will be able to ride their horses on the quick surfaces and drive fans of the sport wild with the beauty and speed of their polo playing skills." •



USA / Miami 14



120 Jodhpur



98 Carlos Gracida



110 Argentina

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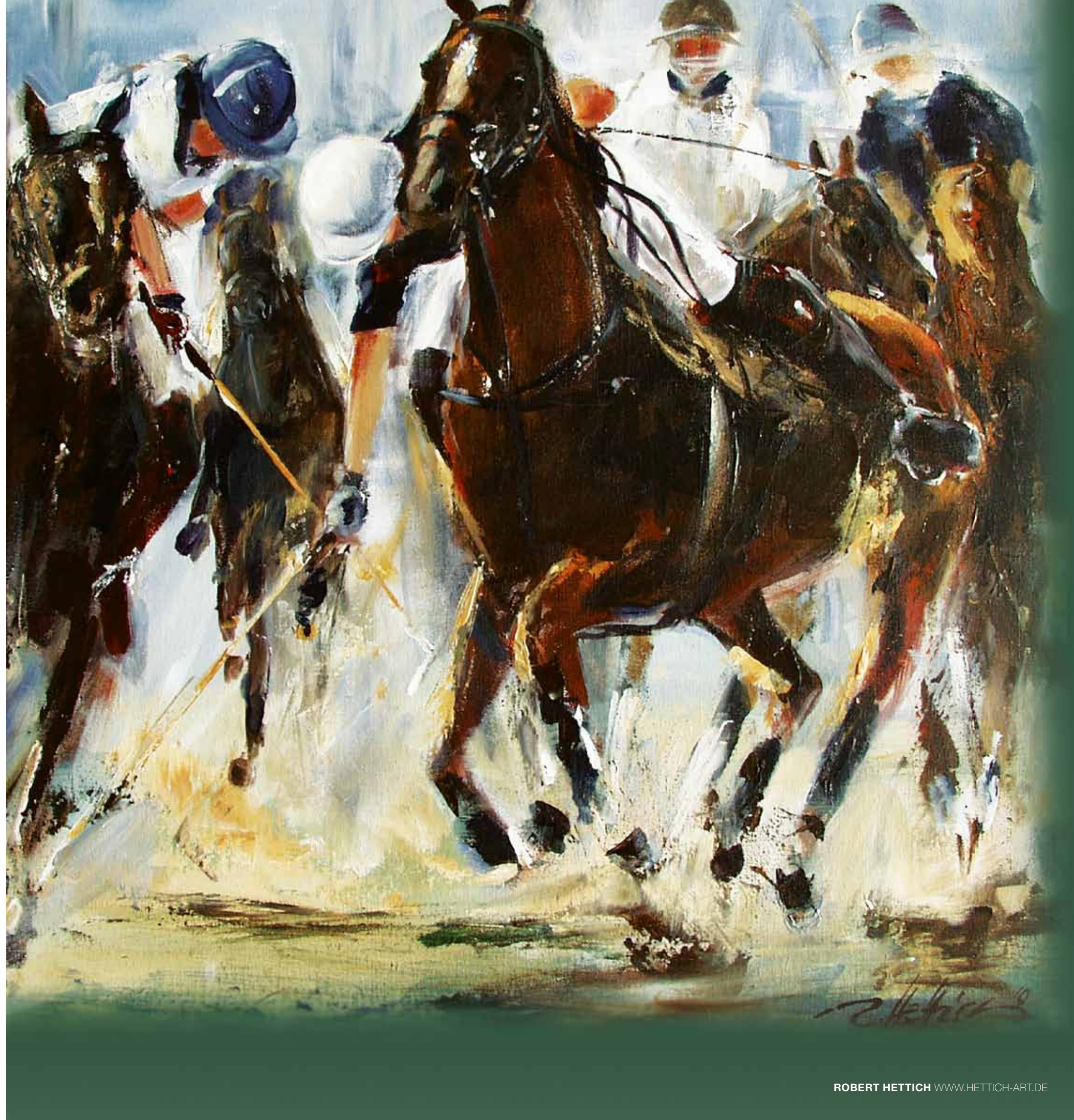
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1ST CHUKKA



NEWS

Current news and facts from the world of european and international polo.



POLO IN THE ANDALUSIAN SUN

One of the most important polo destinations in Europe – the Santa María Polo Club in the Spanish resort of Sotogrande – hosts the BMW International Tournament, which regularly attracts top international players.

It is difficult to believe that Sotogrande was almost deserted until the beginning of the 1960s. Only in 1964 was Sotogrande, which is located in the San Roque (Cadiz) region, established as one of the most exclusive luxury resorts in Europe.

Just one year later, the first polo field was built at Sotogrande, the legendary “La Playa”. With this field, the foundation stone for the establishment of one of the most important polo destinations in Europe was laid. The first tournament took place two years later with four teams. “La Playa” fell victim to a severe storm in 1984 and was completely destroyed. Today, polo is played on nine polo fields at the Santa María Polo Club Sotogrande. The most important tournament in the Spanish polo season is the BMW International Polo Tournament, where top international players compete for the bronze, silver and gold trophies over a period of five weeks. The first Gold Cup was awarded in 1971

and the first Silver Cup in 1973. Today, both the Gold and Silver Cups are part of the World Polo Tour and regularly attract the best players in the world to Andalusia. Last year marked the 40th anniversary of the Gold Cup, with players such as Pablo MacDonough (+10), Facundo Pieres (+10) and Eduardo Novillo Estrada (+9) taking part. International polo stars are once again expected to take part in this year’s BMW International Polo Tournament from 28th July to 1st September. At the start of the European season in April, players competed for the Jose Ignacio Domecq Memorial for the 33rd time. The Scapa – Los Dragones team rode to victory with a close and hard-fought 13:12 win over the Bayswater London Gin team.

More information and current dates for polo tournaments at the Santa María Polo Club Sotogrande can be found on the Internet at www.santamariapoloclub.com

Image: Santa María Polo Club



A GRAND LIAISON

Following a successful Ascona Polo Cup 2011, anticipation is already mounting for the unique event this year.

All good things come in threes and in this case, they mark the start of what will surely be a great liaison: polo and Ascona have made a name for themselves over the past two years as an unforgettable combination. The 3rd Polo Cup Ascona promises to be another sporting and social masterpiece. Four international teams will compete for the Ascona Polo Cup on the former airport grounds for four days.

Well-known team sponsors such as Bentley-Giardino, Styger+Partner, Julius Bär and Andermatt Swiss Alp will each send three players into the arena. It has become something of a tradition that the polo players take part in a parade through Ascona before the tournament. Uwe Zimmermann, president of the Polo Club Ascona, said, “The Polo Club Ascona was founded at the end of 2009 and the first Ascona Polo Cup took place by the shores of Lake Maggiore the following summer. The club and tournament are now a permanent fixture of the national and international polo calendar. The tournament has become a great social event and attracts more and more visitors every year. Ascona, which is rich in joie de vivre and glamorous style, has entered a new chapter in its history with the Polo Cup and club.” www.poloclubascona.ch

Images: Ticino Ascona, The Gaucho Polo International/ KK Communications



GAUCHO POLO

England beats Argentina at the Gaucho International Polo in London.

At the end of the normal match time, the score was 15:15 and the winners had to be decided by penalty shootout. The English team led by Jamie Morrison (+4) held their nerve better – with England beating the Argentinian team under Ignacio “Nacho” Figueras (+6) by just one goal.

Katie Price and Leandro Penna, Denise van Outen, Lydia Bright and Lauren Pope from “The Only Way Is Essex”, as well as Zoe Hardman from comedy dating game show “Take Me Out” were in attendance at the Gaucho International Polo tournament. Music was provided by the Grammy-award winning Argentinian/Uruguayan electrotango band Bajofondo.



MUSEO DEL POLO

Laying the groundwork: a new polo museum is planned for Buenos Aires.

In April, measures were put in place to establish a polo museum in Buenos Aires. Argentina’s president Cristina Fernandez led a meeting at which Luis E. Lalor (President of the Argentina Association of Polo), Arturo Puricelli (Argentina’s Minister of Defence) and Enrique Meyer (Tourism Director for Argentina) signed a declaration of intent to establish a polo museum on the Campo Argentino de Polo grounds in Palermo.

In addition to high-ranking statesmen and stateswomen, the polo players Francisco Dorignac, Facundo Pieres, Gonzalo Pieres Jr. and Miguel Novillo Astrada also took part in the meeting.



HIGH GOAL POLO IN FRANCE

The most in-demand polo locations in France: Polo Club de Chantilly, Polo Club St. Tropez and Polo Club de Deauville.

It was the French tennis legend René Lacoste who created the polo shirt and changed the way that sportspeople dressed. The short-sleeved shirt was originally developed for tennis but has since been adapted by other types of sport. France is not just famous for its sense of fashion, however: it is also one of the strongholds of European polo. With eight playing fields and a stick & ball practice field, the Polo Club de Chantilly in Apremont, 50 km north of Paris, is one of the largest clubs in Europe and the main centre for polo in France. International polo players such as the Argentinian player and +9-goaler Pancho Bensadon (see picture) and the best players in France are regular guests here. An increasing number of players from across the world also enjoy the glamour of the Polo Club St. Tropez on the Côte d’Azur, which has made huge progress over the past few seasons. The highest handicapped tournament in France is the Deauville Gold Cup at the Polo Club de Deauville with a handicap requirement of +18 to +20. The tournament, which is part of the World Polo Tour alongside the French Polo Open at the Polo Club de Chantilly and the International Polo Cup at the Polo Club St. Tropez, has been played since 1950 and is one of the four greatest tournaments in the world outside Argentina.



THE FAR NORTH

Polo news from Stockholm: closure of the Almare Stäket Polo Club, foundation of the Nordic Polo Club and great plans for the Stockholm Polo Club.

Following 14 successful years, the Almare Stäket Polo Club will be forced to close its doors this year. As Caroline Seth explains, “For personal reasons, it is no longer possible for me and my father to carry on running the polo club. This also means that the international EFG Bank Scandinavian Polo Open will not be played this year.” The Almare Stäket Polo Club, located to the northwest of Stockholm, was instrumental in introducing and establishing polo in Sweden. In order to carry on the work of Almare Stäket, the active players in the club founded the Nordic Polo Club in May. Founder member Katarina Wolk says, “We want to continue the tradition of polo in Sweden and we will place particular emphasis on encouraging young players. However, we do not have any major tournaments planned for 2012.”

The Stockholm Polo Club is also the talk of the town. In the autumn, the club hosted the Stockholm Polo Open for the first time, a medium goal tournament with two Swedish and two international teams. Stockholm has great plans for the coming year, as Sören Hullberg explains: “To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Stockholm Polo Club, we are planning a high goal polo match in Stockholm’s Olympic Stadium for 2013.”



DPV YEARBOOK

Book of polo history commemorates: 40 years of the German Polo Association.

It is unique and gives an overview of 40 years of polo in Germany. Together with Regina Jage and Barbara Schütz from Munich, POLO+10 has created the yearbook in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the German Polo Association (DPV). The 300-page reference work gives information about the development of the sport, every German polo club and the areas of responsibility of the German Polo Association. In various reports, some of which have not previously been published, the authors describe four decades of polo in Germany and have created the only overview of all the winners of the German Championships in all performance categories. The book can be ordered at buch@dpv-poloverband.de

THE AMERICAN WAY OF POLO

An eventful retrospective: the three major tournaments in the American Triple Crown have now been played – as well as some adventurous beach chukkas in South Beach.

BY JULIETTE RAHN



1



2

1 The beautiful part of the polo audience 2 Parade of polo ponies on the beach at South Beach.

RAYMOND WEIL

GENEVE



INDEPENDENCE
IS A STATE OF MIND



3



3 Nacho Figueras (+6) 4 The winning team Zacara playing.

Fans were treated to some top-class polo in the USA early in the year, starting in February 2012 with the first of the three major 26 goal tournaments in the American Triple Crown: the Royal Salute C.V. Whitney Cup. At the International Polo Club Palm Beach in Wellington, Florida, Bob Jornayvaz (0), Polito Pieres (+6), Miguel Astrada (+10) and Nacho Astrada (+10) from the Valiente I team catapulted themselves to the winning position in a first-rate final against Robert Jornayvac (0), Matias Torres Zavaleta (+6), Pelon Stirling (+9) and Adolfo Cambiaso (+10) from the Valiente II team. Just a few days later, twelve teams contested the USPA Piaget Gold Cup in a series of hard-fought matches – during which +10-goaler Adolfo Cambiaso showed why he is considered the best polo player in the world. In the quarter final alone, he scored 15 goals for his team Valiente II – and also scored six goals in the final before he was injured on the field and had to be replaced by Juan Martin Nero, who also has a +10-goal handicap. Nero proved a worthy replacement: the four beat the Valiente I team with a victory of 11:9 and thus got revenge for their defeat in the final of the C.V. Whitney Cup. The highlight of the polo calendar came at the end of March: at the Nespresso U.S. Open Polo Championships, the Zacara team comprising of Magoo LaPrida (+8), Lyndon Lea (+1), Facundo Pieres (+10) and Mike Azzaro (+7) caused a stir early on in the competition. With amazingly skillful playing, they played one winning shot after another into the opposing goal, achieving a 10:8 victory over the La Lechuza Caracas team, making them the undisputed champions of the American Triple Crown tournament.

Following the first exciting ladies beach chukkas in the Maserati Beach Women's Polo Cup IV, which was the first tournament to be played as part of the 8th Maserati Miami Beach Polo World Cup 2012, the Heys team emerged victorious. Unfortunately, the weather had other ideas and all the matches on the final day had to contend with the wet conditions. In spite of the weather, the 29 of April 2012 saw a clear winner emerge on the beach at South Beach, Miami: the Yellow Cab team with Simon Garber, Kris Kampsen and Juan Monteverde. "We had lots of positive feedback from our sponsors, players and spectators and the weather did not dampen people's spirits at all", stated Bruce Orosz, president and co-founder of The Polo Life, LLC.

WINNERS OF THE AMERICAN TRIPLE CROWN 2012:

C.V. Whitney Cup:
Valiente I with Bob Jornayvaz (0),
Polito Pieres (+6), Miguel Astrada (+10)
and Nacho Astrada (+10)

USPA Piaget Gold Cup:
Valiente II with Robert Jornayvaz (0),
Adolfo Cambiaso (+10), Pelon Stirling (+9)
and Alejo Taranco (+6)

Nespresso US Open Championship:
Zacara with Magoo Laprida (+8),
Lyndon Lea (+1), Facundo Pieres (+10)
and Mike Azzaro (+7)



Is Molas – Sardinia Luxury designed by Fuksas

Sardinia – dream destination in the Mediterranean: pristine bays, untouched dunes, endless beaches, picturesque hinterland, and in addition the Mediterranean Sea in all the colours of the sky.

Star architect Massimiliano Fuksas designed the “Is Molas” luxury resort, which is located near Pula in fascinating southern Sardinia. The resort boasts exclusive villas and a new 5-star hotel and spa, which are complemented by a beach club, boutiques, restaurants, and tennis courts.

The 18-hole golf course lies amidst breath-taking natural scenery and is being extended to include a Gary Player-designed 18-hole course and an additional 9-hole course.

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The detached and uniquely-designed villas have their individual pool, garden, and generous, partially-roofed terraces. Each consists of several buildings which have different functions and are situated around a “piazza”. Fifteen villas will be built in the first stage of construction, which begins in June 2012.

You have the choice of four exceptional types of villas and they can be purchased from € 2.2 million, commission-free. Our first class service ensures that all your wishes will be fulfilled.

We look forward to your call or email.

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RESORTS



Prince Harry comfortably beat Argentinian Nacho Figueras' team with a score of 6:3 at the Sentebale Royal Salute Polo Cup in Brazil.

ROYAL POLO PLAYER

Prince Harry on state visit to Brazil: at the Sentebale Royal Salute Polo Cup, the 27-year-old competed against Nacho Figueras' team and won spectators over with his playing skills and fighting spirit.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS JACKSON / 2012 GETTY IMAGES

During his first official visit to Brazil at the beginning of March, Prince Harry revealed his sporty side. After showing off his running and rugby skills, the three-day royal tour concluded with the Sentebale Royal Salute Polo Cup. Prince Harry once again proved that it's no easy task to get him out of the saddle. Together with Jose Eduardo Kali, Carlos Alberto Mansur and Calao Mello, the British redhead comfortably defeated the St. Regis team comprising of Argentinian polo player Nacho Figueras and his Pakistani colleague Bash Kazi with a score of 6:3. The charity event in aid of the Sentebale Foundation, which was established by Prince Harry and Prince Seeio of Lesotho to help orphans and vulnerable children in Lesotho, inspired both national and international polo fans at Haras Larissa in Campinas (São Paulo), including super-model Fernanda Motta who presented the winning team with their trophy.



Since the introduction of polo to Great Britain at the end of the 19th century, the sport has been very popular with the British Royal Family. King George V (1865-1936) and King George VI (1895-1952) both enjoyed the fast-paced sport. Queen Elizabeth II is also an avid follower. The Queen breeds her own polo ponies and is a welcome guest at various tournaments. She presents the winners' trophies at the Queen's Cup, which takes place at the Guards Polo Club and is one of the most important tournaments in the country. The president of the Guards Polo Club in Windsor Great Park, which is situated to the west of London and is one of the most renowned and traditional clubs in the country, has been her husband Prince Philip ever since it was founded in 1955. Prince Charles has been a passionate polo player for the past 40 years and Prince William and Prince Harry can regularly be seen in the saddle.

More information about the Sentebale foundation can be found at www.sentebale.org

THAILAND

THE POLO MECCA OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Fast-paced polo action, dream polo locations, glamour and lifestyle – the whole of South-east Asia meets to play polo at the Thai Polo & Equestrian Polo Club in Pattaya.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN



Andy Hine (former England Team Captain and England Team Manager) in front of the Chukka Bar; Yvonne Liang, Joyce Klammanee, Mameaw Tanyatorn and Pakdee Sarinna.



**REGE LUDWIG
INTERNATIONAL POLO SCHOOL**

In 2008, the internationally renowned polo trainer Rege Ludwig opened the Rege Ludwig International Polo School at the Thai Polo & Equestrian Club.

Since then, the polo coach, who is much in demand worldwide, has taught polo players and teams in all categories from around the globe and supports them in improving their game.

Harald Link (0) can look back on a highly successful season. Together with his daughter Caroline Link (0), Manuel Cereceda (+3) and Lucas Labat (+6), he won the B.Grimm Thai Polo Masters, as well as the Asian Beach Polo Championship with Caroline Link (0) and Suphachai Sukhampha (-1) and just missed out on victory at the BMW B.Grimm Thai Polo Open. Only the final bell ended the Thai Polo Team’s valiant attempt to catch up. The team was able to turn the last chukka around by scoring three goals and only narrowly missed out on winning with a score of 8,5:8 as the bell sounded. With a lead of just

half a goal, Quzier Ambak (0), Pablo Dorignac (+6), Benjamin Araya (+7) and Asad Jumabhoy (0) from the La Sarita team were assured of victory. Caroline Link (0), Harald Link (0), Lucas Labat (+7) and Guillermo Terrera (+7) were relegated to second place.

Manuel Cereceda from the Thai Polo Club said, “The BMW B.Grimm Thai Polo Open 2012 was very successful – we would like to thank all our helpers for their generous support and look forward to hosting the BMW B.Grimm Thai Polo Open once again next year.”



Chesa “A” – 500 years of history on 1000 m² living space



Pure cashmere lifestyle

The construction of this historical estate began around the year 1600. Over the past years the estate has undergone numerous comprehensive renovations and no compromise has been made regarding quality. For example, almost all fabrics used for the refurbishment (curtains, walls, plaids, furniture) are made from cashmere.

10 minutes from St. Moritz

Today, the property offers all kinds of luxury and can accommodate up to 12 guests plus 4 staff. The impressive master living room called Talvo has a surface area of more than 70 m² and an 8m-high ceiling. The entire house is tastefully decorated with ancient paintings, antiques and works of contemporary art. Most bathroom fittings are by designer Philippe Starck.

The safest place on earth - In the heart of Switzerland

The estate is suitable for year-round occupation. Foreign nationals who decide to make Chesa “A” their primary residence may enjoy an attractive Swiss lump-sum tax arrangement. Chesa “A” is considered to be one of the few and best maintained Patrician estates in the Engadin region. It might have been 100 years since an estate of such cultural and historical significance, quality, and beauty has been up for sale.

A triple “A” investment

Chesa “A” is available for sale, complete in its restored and renovated condition, including all of its inventory. Acquiring this estate means continuing the history of a Swiss Patrician family that began almost 500 years ago.



Image: Asian Beach Polo Championship



Image: Asian Beach Polo Championship



Images (3): Thai Polo Club



Image: Anake@siamconveyor.com

1 Winners of the Asian Beach Polo Championship: Thai Polo team with Harald Link (0, middle), Caroline Link (0) and Suphachai Sukhapha (-1) 2 The Asian Beach Polo Championship was played on Hua Hin beach 3 Emiga Vilasmongkolchat, Pimolpat Thanu-sutiyaporn, Wanchompoo Choem-varachart and Javamond Pavarodom 4 relaxed polo atmosphere 5 Polo spectators 6 Well sheltered at the B. Grimm Thai Polo Masters 7 The British ambassador Asif Ahmad (middle) with Harald Link (second from left) at the British Polo Day. Claudia Zeisberger (0, left) played in the Thai Polo Club team.

In recent years, the Thai Polo & Equestrian Club in Pattaya, which is run by Harald Link and Nunthinee Tanner, has become the meeting place for the polo elite of Southeast Asia. With its unique concept of combining all types of equestrian sport, the club has made a name for itself on the equestrian scene. Harald Link, who is also president of the Thai Riding Club, says, “We have polo here, as well as eventing, which used to be called military, we have long-distance races, endurance, show-jumping derbies, occasional show-jumping and dressage. We can see what others in the equestrian world are up to, which is something that doesn’t often happen.” In addition to the BMW B.Grimm Thai Polo Open, one of the most important and renowned polo tournaments in Southeast Asia, and the B.Grimm Thai Polo Masters, the polo club has also organised the Asian Beach Polo Championships for the past three years. Four teams participated in Asia’s only beach polo tournament this year on the magical beach of Hua Hin.

More information about the Thai Polo & Equestrian Club can be found on the Internet at www.thai-polo-club.com

www.deRham-Sothebys.ch

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HOT CHUKKAS

Polo in the Persian Gulf region has long been a fixed element of the international polo calendar. Highlights of the past season include the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series, the H.H President of UAE Polo Cup and the Cartier International Dubai Polo Challenge.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN



Image: Dubai Gold Cup/Gonzalo Etcheverry



Image: Tony Ramirez/www.imagesofpolo.com



Image: Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club

Charlotte Casiraghi, daughter of Princess Caroline of Monaco, and Saeed Bin Draï with the La Martina Best Playing Pony; the winners of the HH President of UAE Polo Cup: Team Zedan with Amr Zedan (0), Manuel Elizalde (+2), Matias “Bocha” (+3) and Ignacio “Nachi” Heguy (+8); chukka at KBL Dubai Polo Gold Cup.



Image: Dubai Gold Cup/Gonzalo Etcheverry

When the hot, humid months start at the beginning of May, the temperature reaches above 40 degrees and rainfall falls to zero, the United Arab Emirates can look back on seven months of excellent polo action.

The most prestigious events in the Arabic-speaking countries, which regularly attract top players from across the world to the Persian Gulf, are the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai and the acting president of the United Arab Emirates. Seven international polo teams met at the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club to contest the title for the third time. Mohammed Al Habtoor, Chairman of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series, said, “It gets better every year – more well-known names on the field, bigger sponsors and even more spectators.” Despite a severe sandstorm and substitution of players due to injury, Al Yabhouni (0), Neves (+6), Capella (+5) and Bourghi (+4) from the Abu Dhabi team managed to win the coveted Dubai Silver Cup. Winner of the KBL Dubai Polo Gold Cup was the Habtoor team with Guillermo Cuitino (+6), Ignacio Acuna (+3), Francisco Elizalde (+6) and Mohammed Al Habtoor (0). With eight teams, the HH President of UAE Polo Cup under

the patronage of HH Sheikh Falah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan is the biggest tournament in the region. After two weeks of exciting chukkas, Amr Zedan (0), Manuel Elizalde (+2), Matias “Bocha” (+3) and a stunning Ignacio “Nachi” Heguy (+8) from team Zedan beat the winners of the KBL Dubai Polo Gold Cup, team Habtoor Polo with Mohammed Al Habtoor, Guillermo Cuitino, Fran Elizalde and Hamza Mawaz. Ignacio Heguy, who has only played with his team for one season and was goal-scoring king of the tournament with 28 goals, said: “I am very happy that I was able to help my team win this tournament, but it was a team effort. This has been a great season for us. We’re very pleased to have won the biggest tournament of the year and are looking forward to playing more tournaments together.”

International polo players also take part in the Cartier International Dubai Polo Challenge at Ali Albwardy’s Desert Palm Resort and Desert Palm Polo Club in Dubai every year. This year is the seventh time this renowned tournament has taken place, with title sponsor Cartier’s team made up of Adriano Agosti (0), Mohammed Bin Draï (-1), Francisco Elizalde (+6) and Juan Jose Brane (+7) winning the Challenge for the first time with a hard-won 10:9 victory. ●

KITZ

SNOW SPECTACLE

For many years, Kitzbühel has been one of the most important locations for snow polo in Europe, but you certainly have to learn how to cope with the weather.

BY STEFANIE STÜTING PHOTOGRAPHY LIFESTYLE EVENTS



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3 Sebastian Schnberger (+2) and
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entertainer Peter Grimberg and wife
5 Designer Werner Baldessarini
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7 Werner Baldessarini and wife and
Uschi Glas and spouse Dieter
Hermann 8 Dr Andreas Insam (CIO
Valartis Bank) with the Valartis Bank
team: Henk van Druten (sharing play-
er), Stefan Proietti (+1), Alan Martinez
and Tito Gaudenzi (+2) 9 Heino und
Marie-Jeanette Ferch (both +1) with
Roman Dorn (Parmigiani) and
Ignacio Garrahan (+6).

Following the unusual and unfortunate weather conditions in 2011, where there wasn't enough snow for snow polo, Kitzbühel is now playing it safe. Following last year's experiences, the organisers focused on ensuring that match conditions were in place for this tournament. Frank Bahrenberg from event organiser Lifestyle Events in Berlin said, "Several players who have keenly observed the condition of the pitches over a number of years were very enthusiastic about the quality and ease of playing on the new pitch." The most important days when it comes to setting up a match are the two to three days before the start of the event, but unfortunately this time round, the temperature was still not ideal. There was a lot of snow, but it was still a bit too warm.

Without the use of a special snow compacting procedure, there might have been some problems, but fortunately organisers were able to take advantage of this technology. Around 10,000 visitors, including the usual celebrities such as Uwe Ochsenknecht, Hansi und Ramona Hinterseer, Uschi and husband Dieter Herrmann, Horst Lichter and his wife and Till Demtröder and Saskia Vester enjoyed top quality snow polo. Some new teams and players such as the strong "arena specialists" Jonny Good and

Tarquin Southwell from Great Britain made sure this was the case. Eight teams with three players each plus substitute players kicked off proceedings in Kitzbühel, with around 200 people working behind the scenes every day to make sure the event was a success and that guests were happy. The Lifestyle Events team has also set high targets for the next Snow Classics: "We're currently working on a new concept for the Polo Players Night. The event area is being extended and arrangements are underway."

For Frank Bahrenburg and sevendays poloevent GmbH, the next major event is just round the corner: the German Polo High Goal Championships on Berlin's Maifeld in August. "Several interesting new partners have now come on board, meaning that the German Championships on the Maifeld will be bigger and better than ever before. We want to reach more spectators and establish the 'Engel&Völkers Berlin Maifeld Cup' as a social highlight in Berlin. We would like to make the event more accessible to a wider audience and get rid of the preconceptions surrounding polo. We want to see the terraces at the Maifeld full again!"

The latest news is available at www.maifeldpolocup.de



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5 YEARS

OF BEACH POLO ON SYLT

Anniversary chukkas: the Beach Polo World Cup will take place for the fifth time in 2012, with six international teams due to kick off the tournament in Hörnum. The event will once again be sponsored by the Swiss banking group Julius Bär.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY HOLGER WIDERA



Together with Gastón Maíquez (+6), Siegfried Grohs (0, left) from team Audi won the Julius Bär Beach Polo World Cup 2011. In the final, the two emerged victorious against the Julius Bär team with Lukas Sdrenka (0, right) and Sven Schneider (+3).

It has become somewhat of a tradition: every Whitsun, polo players meet to play beach polo on Sylt. Over the past five years, the Beach Polo World Cup on Hörnum's Oststrand beach has become one of the most prestigious events on the polo calendar, attracting over 10,000 spectators. The Swiss bank Julius Bär first sponsored the tournament in 2011 and will play a major role in the event again this year. As event organiser Kiki Schneider explained, "Thanks to the generosity of Julius Bär last year, we were able to take a major step forward with the event. We received a lot of positive feedback from our guests and they got to see lots of top-class competition, including some very close and dramatic matches. We are very pleased that Julius Bär will be sponsoring the event again this year." Six international teams will launch the event on 26th and 27th May in the grounds of

the Sylt Catamaran Club. Players include last year's winners Siegfried Grohs (0) and Gastón Maíquez (+6) – but in spite of the success they have enjoyed while playing together in the past, they will be on different teams this year. Argentinian Maíquez will play for team Audi, supported by Christian Grimme (0), and Grohs will play in Team Lanson alongside Germany's best polo player and two-time winner of the Beach Polo World Cup, Thomas Winter (+5). The exceptionally talented up-and-coming player Lukas Sdrenka (+1) from Hamburg – who won the Sylt tournament in 2010 as a 14-year-old – is also never able to resist the lure of beach

polo on Sylt. Together with Sven Schneider (+3), he will contest the title once again, this time as part of Team Julius Bär.

According to Kiki Schneider, "Adrenaline, tempo, teamwork, beach, polo, Sylt – this combination is what makes Beach Polo unique. We hope you have lots of fun at the fifth Julius Bär Beach Polo World Cup Sylt 2012."

More information about the teams and the current timetable, can be found on the Internet at www.polosylt.de

EC CLOU

IN THE HORSE-RIDING STATE OF LOWER SAXONY

It is a mix of luck, spontaneity, willpower and sporting spirit that has brought the European Polo Championships to Lower Saxony for the first time. Interview with event organiser Wolfgang Kailing.

INTERVIEW STEFANIE STÜTING PHOTOGRAPHY HELMUTH HERGARTEN, ULRICH ZUR NIEDEN



WHAT WERE YOUR INITIAL THOUGHTS WHEN YOU HEARD ABOUT THE CANCELLATION OF THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ZÜRICH IN JANUARY?

I felt sad for all the European polo players who've been looking forward to this international competition for two years. As a player, I was affected by this kind of thing myself in 2001 when the Berlin tournament was cancelled. I remember being very grateful that the Rome Polo Club agreed to host the Championships at short notice.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE SWISS CANCELLATION AND THE WAY IT WAS DONE?

I've never experienced anything quite like it. I actually found out about it from a POLO+10 report.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT AT THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 2012? GIVE US SOME ORGANISATIONAL AND LOGISTICAL FACTS.

10 nations; 200 horses; stall tents in Maspe; players in the tournament hotel Holiday Inn Hanover Airport; grooms in the nearby Eichenkreuzburg; 2 playing fields – the well-known field next to Langenhagen Golf Club and a second field with a particularly sandy surface 1 km away down the A 352; umpire

appointed by FIP; between 12,000 and 20,000 spectators; games to take place between 7th and 16th September in the early afternoon; sponsors so far: Langenhagen city, Projekt Pferdestärken Langenhagen, Niedersächsische Lotto-Sport-Stiftung, NORD/LB, TUI, Helmer, Herrenhäuser, Holiday Inn Hannover Airport, Partylöwe.

BEFORE THIS, HAD YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT APPLYING TO HOST THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS OR HAD IT NEVER CROSSED YOUR MIND?

I've dreamt about it, certainly, but when you live in a small village on the edge of the Lower Saxon capital of Hanover, it's not exactly regarded in quite the same way as London, Paris, Berlin, Rome or Vienna.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PREPARATIONS AND MILESTONES YOU STILL NEED TO ACHIEVE BY SEPTEMBER?

We have reserved accommodation for players, grooms and horses. Our main field is in a fantastic state. The second field, the highway field, has been painstakingly restored and sown. Now the grass is growing and we have to find and involve more sponsors.

YOU ARE KNOWN AS A VERY CREATIVE AND METICULOUS ORGANISER AND YOUR TOURNAMENTS ARE AMONG THE FINEST IN GERMANY – HOW ARE YOU GOING TO SURPRISE CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPANTS OFF THE POLO FIELD?

We have an art exhibition featuring the work of international artists on the theme of polo in the Depelmann Gallery and also horse demonstrations, but we're keeping quiet about those for now. The Swiss Polo Association will jointly host an evening for invited guests.

PROTECTION OF ANIMALS WILL BE A HOT TOPIC IN MASPE – WHAT'S THE LATEST ON THIS?

The answer is a difficult one and even after 20 years of debating it, we're still no closer to resolving the situation.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THE CHAMPIONSHIPS IN TERMS OF PLAYERS AND GAMES?

That the players will give their all for the sport and their country and that the appreciation that all of us and the fans have for the horses will go into overdrive during the tournament.

WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE AND HOW WELL DO YOU THINK THE GERMAN TEAM WILL DO?

I feel a bit torn with this question. We're playing a Championships qualification event from 25th-28th May with six teams in the +6 to +8 categories to find out. Germany is the only country which traditionally nominates its team via a qualifying competition. In the past, a maximum of three teams took part. The fact that the number has now grown to six indicates that the sport is developing well in this country, particularly amongst younger players. But when you look back at past championships, England and France always produce very strong, fresh teams and have intelligent coaching techniques.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE PLAYERS AND GUESTS WILL REMEMBER MOST WHEN THEY LOOK BACK ON THE CHAMPIONSHIPS IN HANOVER IN A FEW YEARS' TIME?

That Lower Saxony is the top location for equestrian sport in Germany and the city and region are generous hosts. ●

More information at www.polo-in-maspe.de

DR. PIERO DILLIER

FIP EUROPE

POLO+10 interview with Dr. Piero Dillier about the cancellation of the European Championships in Zurich.

INTERVIEW STEFANIE STÜTING PHOTOGRAPHY HOLGER WIDERA



AS THE EUROPEAN DELEGATE FOR THE FIP, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CANCELLATION OF THE EUROPEAN POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS THAT WERE DUE TO TAKE PLACE IN ZURICH IN 2012?

I personally was also very surprised that the European Championships in Zurich were cancelled. The president of Polo Park Zurich, Markus Gräff, made a strong argument for obtaining binding approval to host the EC as far back as 2,5 years ago – i.e. at the same time that the EC was awarded to Vienna for 2010 – in order to give him time to advertise for sponsors and make all the necessary arrangements. He also applied to host the 2010 European Championships. In November 2011, I received a call from Gräff stating that he had encountered some problems. I gave him the names of potential sponsors to contact – which he could have done as there was still time. On 12th December, Gräff publicly announced the cancellation of the Championships without even consulting the SPA (Swiss Polo Association) or me beforehand.

DO YOU EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM THE EUROPEAN POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS IN MASPE, HANOVER?

I'm really pleased – Maspe in Hanover is an excellent location for the European Polo Championships 2012. I played there during the World Exhibition in 2000 and really enjoyed the atmosphere. The Italian city of Siena was also a contender to host the EC this year, but a longer period of time would have been needed to make a decision. This is why, after consulting and obtaining the agreement of all European countries, the FIP decided to award the championships to the German Polo Association and thus Hanover and Wolfgang Kailing this time round, just to get things moving. Siena is now applying to host the World Polo Championships in 2014. The final decision in this respect will be made at the FIP General Meeting in Buenos Aires in autumn 2012. Siena's chances look really good at the moment. I have never experienced a situation like Zurich before in my whole time as an official.

HOW HAS THE SPORT OF POLO AS A SPORT DEVELOPED OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS?

European polo has developed mainly in peripheral countries. Countries such as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Russia have all joined the ranks of polo playing countries. Portugal now also has a healthy polo scene now. In general, the economic situation plays a huge role in determining how the sport will develop in a particular country. Times of economic hardship, such as those we have experienced over the past few years, will naturally have a direct impact on the development of the sport. The main issue is how we can make polo more popular. The media has a important role to play here, particularly television. However, for television, you need a sport with rules that are easy to follow. Polo is actually very difficult to understand. Within the FIP, we are currently discussing how we can make the sport more media-friendly and accessible for a wider audience. For example, we could change direction of play after every chukka rather than every goal. Goals could be scored from the goal line to enable a quicker finish to the game rather than setting up and hitting from the centre line. However, the three main polo countries must agree on these ideas before they can be implemented – after all, even they are feeling the financial pressure.

“THE FIP IS THE TOP BODY IN INTERNATIONAL POLO – WHEREVER AND WHENEVER THE GAME IS PLAYED.”

DR. PIERO DILLIER European delegate for the Federation of International Polo (FIP)

WHAT IS THE FIP CURRENTLY WORKING ON IN EUROPE?

WHERE IS THERE THE GREATEST NEED FOR ACTION?

The FIP is currently working on establishing a mobile finance department to make sure that business operations can continue without interruption. It's just not feasible for the FIP office to move from one country to another and have to be set up all over again every time a new president is elected. Offices and a permanent general secretary are an absolute must. After all, the FIP presidency is a voluntary role and the various tasks that a president is required to undertake far exceed what can be expected of someone in a voluntary capacity. The FIP will continue to support and manage tournaments which make a certain monetary contribution to the organisation in this respect, such as the current FIP Polo World Cup at the Chinese Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club. We are also looking for additional sponsors.

WHAT IS THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL POLO (FIP) CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

At the moment, disciplinary proceedings. The FIP must be able to impose sanctions. Whenever boundaries are overstepped, the current statutes mean our hands are too often tied. We are also continuing to work on our long-term aim of trying to establish uniform international rules. The FIP is also working intensively on regulating all new polo disciplines. The number of new arena, beach and snow polo events has increased at an incredibly fast pace. The FIP is the top regulatory body for these fields and disciplines and must lay down rules in order to prevent new types of organisations such as a new association for women's polo in England or a snow polo association in Finland from being established. This should be avoided at all costs. The FIP is the top governing body in international polo sport – wherever and on whatever surface the sport is played.

YOU YOURSELF ARE AN EXCELLENT AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL POLO PLAYER.

I am originally from St. Moritz and first got involved in polo through Reto Gaudenzi, the founder of snow polo. After I learned a bit about polo by helping him during the first Snow Polo World Cup, which took place on the frozen Lake St. Moritz, he convinced me to get on a horse myself. I was enthusiastic right from the start, but I wasn't a very good rider. The first two horses I rode I sold again because I was so frustrated by constantly falling off. Then one day, the professional polo player Adrian Laplacette said to me that it was actually my fault I kept falling off the horse, not the horse's fault. The horses weren't to blame in the slightest. So I went to Argentina and learnt to ride and play polo properly. •

THE NEW SWISS RESIDENT

Chris Kiesel has worked as a trainer and manager at the Polo Club Bern in Switzerland for just over a year. POLO+10 met the +2 player and chatted with him about his new job, polo plans for the 2012 season and the moving boxes he has yet to unpack.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN

Even though Chris Kiesel has lived in Berne for just over a year, he hasn't really made himself at home yet – as proven by his many unpacked moving boxes. "I'm really enjoying it though and the members are very supportive. I also really like the Swiss attitude to life – and not just because everyone told me that the Bernese were very laid back (laughs). It's certainly not the case on the pitch – they're often far too quick, quicker than the ball", said Chris Kiesel with a big grin, reminiscing about his first days in Switzerland.

Since the start of last year, the +2 player has worked as a trainer and manager at the Polo Club Bern and is responsible for making sure everything runs smoothly – from training the horses and organising tournaments to planning and implementing lessons and courses. "With our board of directors and employees, we have taken a step in the right direction this year. This is proven by the high level of interest shown in our lessons, courses, events and also our members. In spite of this, we still have a lot of work ahead of us. But I'm looking forward to it!"

Following an injury to his right wrist last year which meant he had slow down a bit in terms of his polo playing, Chris Kiesel is now looking forward to the new season, "My right wrist is still a concern. It's still not as good as it should be. But I think I'm on the road to recovery. The 2012 season in Berne will be played on a new pitch which we prepared last year. Our Berner Polo Trophy

will of course be the highlight of the calendar once again. We also have two or three smaller invitation-only tournaments which are mainly about having fun and giving new members and beginners the opportunity to get a taste of playing in a tournament."

Kiesel, who used to work as a coach with Thomas Winter in Hamburg, will also pay a return visit to Germany this year, where he will play some tournaments with his former colleagues and take part in qualifying events for the European Championships in Maspe with Heinrich Dumrath (+2), Caspar Crasemann (+2) and Niclas Sandweg (+1). "I'm really looking forward to playing with some of the Hamburg boys from the youth team again. Most of them have since become men and we can now look each other in the eye – not just in terms of height, but also in terms of playing skills." He will also play the German Medium Goal Championships with his brother Marco at Gut Aspern and take part in Springtime Polo in Landsberg with his father Dr Günther Kiesel. •

THE MOST IMPORTANT SWISS POLO TOURNAMENTS 2012

Swiss Low Goal Championships, Veytay, 14th-17th June 2012

Swiss Medium Goal Championships, Zurich, 21st-24th June 2012

Berner Polo Trophy, Berne, 7th-8th July 2012

Ascona Polo Cup, Ascona, 13th-15th July 2012

Hublot Polo Gold Cup, Gstaad, 16th-18th August 2012

Jaeger-LeCoultre Trophy, Veytay, 22nd August-2nd September 2012

33-year-old Chris Kiesel not only cuts a good figure on a polo pony, but is also one of the youngest trainers in the business.

LUXEMBOURG GOES TO INDIA

True cosmopolitan polo spirit: the Luxembourg Polo Club found sporting inspiration and established new friendships in India.

BY STEFANIE STÜTING

Image: Volker Hoffmann – Fotolia.com



1 Polo training in Luxembourg with coach Chris Kiesel from Berne 2 Warm reception from the maharajah in Jodhpur, India 3 Winners' ceremony 4 The Luxembourgers following their trial session of elephant polo at Dera Amer – the valley camp in Kukas 5 Minou Weber with Sameer Suhag (+5), India's best polo player.



Images (6): Minou Weber



While elsewhere in Europe the polo balls may be put away for the winter season, the Polo Club Luxembourg headed to India on an initiative set up by steering committee member Minou Weber – where members swapped their horses for elephants. From 19th January to 3rd February, the Rajasthan Tour visited places such as Delhi, Jodhpur, Agra, the Taj Mahal and Jaipur. As Minou Weber said, “In Jaipur, we enjoyed the tremendously exciting and very close final of the Sirmur Polo Cup between the Tarun Sirohi-led Cavalry and the Aravali Crusaders Team, which ended in a score of 10:9.5. The best player, well worth seeing, was the player who also happens to have the highest handicap in India: Sameer Suhag (+5).” Following the match, even the maharajah turned up for high tea to greet the players and welcome the polo delegation from Luxembourg.

Enthusiasm for travelling and international polo inspiration: this sums up the Luxembourg Polo Club in a nutshell.

As was the case one hundred years ago, elephant polo is still played today in Dera Amer – the valley camp at Kukas, which was turned into a modern facility at the turn of the last century. Today, polo on the good-natured thick-skinned animals is a tourist attraction,

and one that the Luxembourgers just couldn't resist. “We couldn't let such a good opportunity pass us by and we had so much fun.”

To start the new season, the Luxembourg Polo Club has been training at the Ecurie Biren, coached by Chris Kiesel. At the end of January, the French professional polo player Flavien Pécatte hosted an indoor polo course for the Club. We are now looking forward to an exciting, vigorous and enthusiastic summer of polo. On 16th May, the Luxembourg season will begin with a cocktail polo night in Rue de la Loge before the opening chukkas take place on 19th and 20th May. Other events are also firmly fixed in the calendar: the Luxembourg team will take part in the Coupe Franco Luxembourg in Chantilly on 1st and 2nd September. The team is also fully booked on 22nd and 23rd September. As Minou Weber explains, “Some of our players will then take part in the Gold Cup in Frankfurt and our ladies will play a women's tournament in the Dutch town of Wassenaar over the same weekend. The season will then finish at the end of September, but not before we have played tournaments in the English town of Sandhurst and also in Antwerp.”

More information can be found on the Internet at www.poloclub.lu



SAL. OPPENHEIM GOLD CUP 2012 GERMAN POLO MASTERS

One of the biggest and most important polo tournaments in Europe celebrates its 15th anniversary this year: from 20th to 29th July the 15th German Polo Masters Sylt – Sal. Oppenheim Gold Cup will take place on Germany's most popular island.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY HOLGER WIDERA

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The Argentinian polo player Gastón Maíquez (+6) regularly plays in the German Polo Masters Sylt – Sal. Oppenheim Gold Cup. In 2011, he played in the title sponsor's team.



It is the unique mix of top-class international sport, a summer island atmosphere and the fact that it is a hip social event that has made the German Polo Masters one of the most prestigious and renowned polo tournaments in Europe for the past 15 years. Polo on Sylt – not just a place for top international polo stars and excellent standards of polo, but also an event for people to “see and be seen”, coupled with relaxed island life and a trendy location. The great and the good meet on Sylt – and not just on the famous “whisky mile” in Kampen, but also on the polo field in Keitum-Siidik. The German Polo Masters Sylt – Sal. Oppenheim Gold Cup, which is organised by the Schneider family, is one of the highlights of the European polo calendar. As Kiki Schneider explains, “The unique summer atmosphere of Sylt, inspiring polo full of dynamism, adrenaline and speed, and the fantastic viewing public are what make the German Polo Masters an unrivalled experience.”

Nerve-wracking matches such as last year's final – one of the most dramatic and exciting in the tournament's history – contribute to the tournament's legendary status. The finalists König Pilsener and Bombardier were head-to-head right up until the end of the match. Only

in the fifth extra chukka was the winning team able to gain the upper hand. Just before the chukka bell rang, Aki von Anandel (+3) scored a goal from a sharp angle – making the score 6:5 for the König Pilsener team, which comprised of the two Dutchmen Martijn van Scherpenzeel (+1), Aki van Anandel (+3), the Argentinian Micky Duggan (+4) and Alexander Piltz from Düsseldorf. The Bombardier team with Team Captain Steve Rose (0), the Berliner Mortiz Gädeke (+3), Manuel Guevarra (+3) from Argentina and Tatu Gomero (+4) from Britain was relegated to second place.

The 15th German Polo Masters Sylt – Sal. Oppenheim Gold Cup will take place from 20th-29th July.

Third place went to the Swiss player Piero Dillier (0), the Frenchman Gastón Gonzales (+2), Argentinian (+7) goalkeeper Lucas Labat (+6) and Paulo Netsch (+1) from the Grandios.de team, who won their match with a score of 6:4 against the Mercedes-AMG team comprising Rico Richert (0), Christopher Winter (+3), Argentinian Tuki Caivano (+4) and Oliver Winter (+2). Fifth place was secured by Matthias Grau (0), Max Nussbaumer (0), Thomas Winter (+5) and Adrian Laplacette (+5) from Team

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1st CHUKKA • POLO+10 WORLD 51



Lanson with a 6:5 victory over the Tom Tailor Polo Team made up of Uwe Schröder (0), Tomás Aguirre (+4), Eduardo Anca (+6) and Naomi Schröder (0). A total of eight international teams competed for the Sal. Oppenheim Gold Cup, while over 12,000 spectators avidly watched the matches unfold.

The public will also expect to see more thrilling matches and experience the Sylt atmosphere at the anniversary chukka from 20th to 29th July 2012, which will also take place on the polo field in Keitum-Siidik (on Landstrasse in the direction of Morsum). As Kiki Schneider stated, “This year marks the 15th time that we have hosted the German Polo Masters in Keitum and we look forward to celebrating this anniversary together with visitors and guests. We expect even more exciting matches this year and lots of live entertainment. For polo players, the Sylt spectators create a particularly special atmosphere as they put their heart and soul into supporting the event every year! Reserve has no place here and everyone is made to feel very welcome.”

More information, including about the teams and current timetable, can be found on the Internet at www.polosylt.de

1 Thomas Winter (+5) with his “Best Playing Pony” 2 The event organisers of the German Polo Masters Sylt, Kiki and Jo Schneider 3 Auction of paintings by Hamburg artists Pierre Kunkel (second from left) in aid of Dunkelziffer e.V. 4 Winner’s ceremony 2011: eight teams battled for victory on the polo field in Keitum-Siidik 5 2012 marks the seventh time that Sal. Oppenheim will be the title sponsor of the German Polo Masters Sylt.



2ND CHUKKA

A POLO FIELD

IS A POLO FIELD

For 35 years, Battro Polo Fields has built the best polo fields in the world. Over 500 polo fields in more than 27 countries were created by the experienced agricultural engineers, including the “Cathedral of Polo” in Palermo.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY BATTRO POLO FIELDS

“A POLO FIELD IS A POLO FIELD. IT’S NOT A SOCCER FIELD OR A GOLF COURSE OR A COURSE TRACK, NOT EVEN A GARDEN. IT MUST THEREFORE BE DESIGNED, PLANNED, BUILT AND MAINTAINED WITH POLO IN MIND.”

ALEJANDRO BATTRO Founder of Battro Polo Fields



Top: The team from Battro Polo Fields (from left to right): Alejandro Dominguez Hoffmann, Ignacio Martinez Sarraague, Alejandro Battro, Arturo Pasman, Agustin de Magalhaes and Alejandro Battro (jun.). Bottom: topdressing with the sandblaster.



Every polo field is different and has its quirks. There are several factors which must be taken into account during the design and planning of a polo field. This includes the location of the field, watering and drainage systems, type of ground and ground movements. Alejandro Battro, founder of Battro Polo Fields, explains the typical process for building a polo field, “The first thing to clarify is what kind of polo matches will be played on the field. Are low or high goal tournaments planned? How many chukkas per year will be played? How often do tournaments take place? Questions such as these determine the type of field. Other related issues must then be discussed, such as the budget available and expected level of usage. A project plan is then created on the back of this. This plan is the key to success in building a high-quality polo field. The biggest mistake, and the one that is most often made, is underestimating the building process and not leaving enough room for manoeuvre.” The planning process can take two months or more. The complex building process then usually takes another two months but it may take longer.

Founded by Alejandro Battro, one of the best-known and most renowned polo designer, Battro Polo Fields has built some of the best polo fields in the world over the past 35 years.

Creating a match-ready polo field from a simple plot of land also involves taking several other factors into consideration. According to Battro, the most important aspects are the surface and choosing the right type of grass, tailoring them to respective location and level of expected usage. Battro states, “the greatest challenge is making sure that a good surface can be achieved using materials from the local area. Safety is the highest priority. Polo players must be able to concentrate on the match and be sure that they are playing on a level and predictable field.” A good polo field is much more than this, however: it must be able to withstand a great deal of wear and tear, be able to regenerate itself quickly

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Top: Planting Tifway 419. This particularly hard-wearing grass is often used for professional grass sport pitches because of its robustness. Bottom: spiking and aeration with an airator.

following chukkas and dry out quickly following rain or watering. The original surface of a future polo field is not as important, “Regardless of whether the weather is tropical or cold or the ground has a surface of snow, sand or rock, whether it is boggy or desert-like, at a high altitude or at sea level – our aim is always the same: to build a high-quality polo field. We have built polo fields under the most varied of conditions and to various requirements. The most important prerequisite for success is the willingness to work in harmony with the respective environment and conditions.”

35 years of experience in polo field construction serves the agricultural engineers from Battro Polo Fields well. Theory is only a small part of the work for those who construct polo fields for a living. What really counts is a comprehensive knowledge of the sport, awareness of how the surface and grass will react, as well as a good feel for the best way to maintain a particular field. “Over the past 35 years, we have seen and analysed hundreds and thousands of the most varied chukkas played under a wide range of conditions. This forms the basis of our experience – and is something which cannot be found in any textbook in the world.” Years of experience, a good understanding of people, open-mindedness, numerous hours spent analysing as a spectator and, above all, a passion for the polo field is the secret of the global success of Battro Polo Fields. Alejandro Battro is keen to point out a particular aspect of his work that seems astonishingly obvious but is often

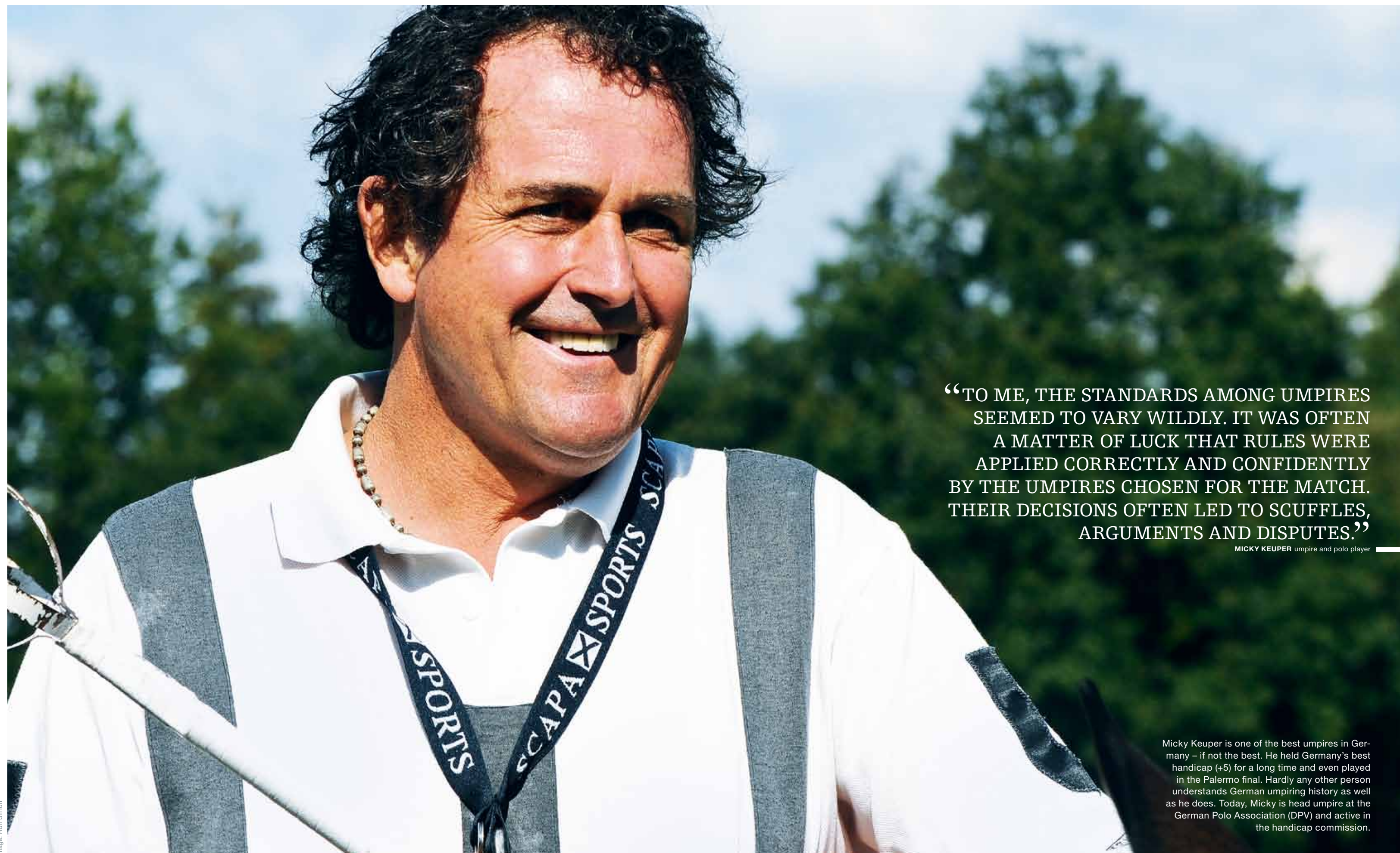
forgotten, “A polo field is a polo field. It’s not a soccer field or a golf course or a course track, not even a garden. It must therefore be designed, planned, built and maintained with polo in mind.” Founded by Alejandro Battro, one of the best-known and most renowned polo designers in the world, Battro Polo Fields has specialised in the construction and maintenance of grass sport pitches (golf, football, rugby, hockey and polo) for the past 35 years. Providing advice on the construction of polo fields and building them has always been a particular focus of the company. The experienced agricultural engineers have now built more than 500 polo fields in over 27 countries. Every year, the seven-member team, which works from Argentina and has also an office in Brazil, builds around 30 new polo fields. Battro Polo Fields has constructed fields for the best polo clubs, teams and players in the world. The list of customers reads like a who’s who of polo, including Ellerstina, La Dolfina, La Aguada, Chapa Uno, the Tortugas Country Club, the Hurlingham Club and the Jockey Club Argentino, as well as Sotogrande, Polo Club St. Tropez, La Lechuza in Palm Beach and many more. The “Cathedral of Polo” in Palermo was also designed by Battro Polo Fields. So which is the most beautiful polo stadium in the world? Alejandro Battro considers the question, “That’s a really difficult question. It’s like asking a father which of his children is his favourite.”

More information about Battro Polo Fields can be found on the Internet at www.battropolofields.com

UMPIRING

Umpiring is a hot topic and perennial issue in the sport of polo. POLO+10 took stock of the situation with the best umpires in Germany and the Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA).

BY STEFANIE STÜTING



“TO ME, THE STANDARDS AMONG UMPIRES SEEMED TO VARY WILDLY. IT WAS OFTEN A MATTER OF LUCK THAT RULES WERE APPLIED CORRECTLY AND CONFIDENTLY BY THE UMPIRES CHOSEN FOR THE MATCH. THEIR DECISIONS OFTEN LED TO SCUFFLES, ARGUMENTS AND DISPUTES.”

MICKY KEUPER umpire and polo player

Micky Keuper is one of the best umpires in Germany – if not the best. He held Germany's best handicap (+5) for a long time and even played in the Palermo final. Hardly any other person understands German umpiring history as well as he does. Today, Micky is head umpire at the German Polo Association (DPV) and active in the handicap commission.



Image: Rolf Simon

A jack-of-all-trades: when acting as an umpire, the Argentinian professional player César Guinazu was sometimes known to correct bridles on polo ponies if he didn't think they were sitting right.

Henry C. Stevens is one of the most experienced umpires in European polo. He is regularly called upon to act in an official at German events, such as here at Gut Aspern near Hamburg.

At the Hurlingham Polo Association in England, Arthur Douglas-Nugent is the person to go to for any questions related to umpiring and regulations. Talking about when polo was a sport new to England, he said. “As soon as the rules were written down the time around 1870, an umpire was required to make sure that the game was being played fairly and safely on the pitch. Before then, matches were characterised by mass brawls and injuries, particularly when it was played, as it used to be played, in northern India, despite the fact that the pace was slower. As with all types of sport, a lot of work has since been put into the rules and ensuring that rules are adhered to, especially in terms of safety and animal protection, but also to make the game more attractive for spectators.”

Polo is still considered to be one of the hardest games to umpire because of the complexity of the rules, the fast pace of the game and of course the size of the playing field – which means that umpires really do have keep on top of the game. The work of the “impartial few” was honoured as early as 1907 by Heinrich Hasperg, who dedicated a whole chapter to umpires in his book POLO, providing an excellent and expressive description of the difficulties they face and requirements they must meet. Professionally paid umpires were first introduced to the game 20 years ago. Even today, it is a common occurrence to see players who have played in an earlier match umpiring other matches in a tournament and who are reluctant to use the whistle to enforce the rules – not exactly the best option.

The rules and regulations of polo is a long-standing issue: even in England, there is still a long way to go insofar as umpiring is concerned.

The idea that England is somehow better off than the rest of Europe when it comes to umpires is dismissed by Douglas-Nugent, “In terms of top umpires, the situation in England is unfortunately almost as bad as in the rest of Europe, where there are some fantastic polo players, but no professional umpire associations. Argentina and the USA are the only other countries which have professional umpire associations, although there are excellent individual umpires in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.” Micky Keuper is one of the best umpires in Germany – if not the best. He held Germany’s best handicap (+5) for a long time and even played in the Palermo final. Hardly any other person understands German umpiring history as well as he does. Today, Micky is head umpire at the German Polo Association (DPV) and active in the handicap commission. “Ten years ago, it was perfectly acceptable in German polo for players to umpire the top high goal matches even if they were playing in the same tournament. That would be like an injured Schweinsteiger refereeing Dortmund/Schalke. It’s an unbelievable conflict of interest.” He points out that it is particularly difficult in Argentina where several players may be from one of the big polo playing families and are related to each other. You also have the issue of horse sales in the background, as well as instances of players making other players look bad because they want to play themselves.



“THE UMPIRE SHOULD MAKE A QUICK, CORRECT AND IMPARTIAL DECISION FOR ALL TEAMS AND PLAYERS WITHOUT BEING PREJUDICED BY INDIVIDUALS’ PERSONALITIES.”

ALEXANDER SCHWARZ umpire, polo player and tournament organiser

Alex Schwarz, who has been a polo player for 30 years and German champion over 20 times, as well as an experienced umpire and facilitator at tournaments, confirms this, “Using players in tournaments who also play a leading role in other parts of the tournament has always been beset with the problem of them taking sides to further their own interests. This has often led to problems and disagreements. With this fact on the one hand, as well as increased pressure in terms of more regulations, reduction of discretionary powers and professionalisation of the tournaments, the old model of “player-umpires” is under threat. However, this has led to an improvement in the quality and standardisation of umpiring which was not the case when players used to umpire matches.”

The greater use of professional umpires over the last decade means that players now no longer get experience of applying the rules directly.

However, Schwarz also thinks that the previous system also had some positive effects which have now been lost, “In the nineties, players with higher handicaps and professional players knew a lot more about the regulations and the setup than they do now because they were required undertake regular umpiring duties. You only get this level of knowledge now in players who have been playing for a long time because they have that kind of experience and can apply it. This resulted in rules being widely and consistently adopted and implemented, which had a positive effect on the understanding of the sport as a whole. The greater use of professional umpires over the last decade means that this job is now often taken out of the players’ hands.” The consequences of this are being felt throughout the sport, which is why the German Polo Association (DPV), in particular presiding committee member Günther Kiesel, is renewing its focus on the issues of umpiring and regulations. He is currently setting up links with and seeking support from the HPA in England. Two years ago, the DPV put concrete measures in place aimed at improving the umpiring situation. During the Low Goal German Championships at the Polo Club Berlin Brandenburg e.V. in June 2010, members from the umpiring committees of the individual clubs came together to establish



Alexander Schwarz has been a polo player for over 30 years and German champion 20 times, and is also an experienced umpire and facilitator at tournaments.



“WE WANT TO IMPROVE
THE STANDARD OF UMPI-
RING ACROSS THE UK – AND
ABROAD.”

ARTHUR DOUGLAS-NUGENT Chief umpire HPA

an overall umpiring committee as required by the DPV’s constitution. Alexander Schwarz was chosen as committee chair, with Micky Keuper as head umpire and Christopher Kiesel as his deputy, and all three were sworn in by the presiding committee. Henry Stevens, HPA Pro Umpire from England, then explained the most important changes that have been made to the rules over the past few years. Some measures have been undertaken to make polo more spectator-friendly, improve the level of safety and ensure a smoother game. As Arthur Douglas-Nugent summarises, “The HPA has revised the rules considerably over the past ten years to speed up the game and prevent matches, particularly high level matches, from becoming one-man shows with players showing off their virtuoso ball skills but with little playing actually happening on the field. That type of game is boring to play and boring to watch. The rule changes focus on the use of backhand strokes and restrictions on possession of the ball. This has speeded up the game immensely.”

The various organisations have long established and followed their own rules.

Polo is played with almost the same rules across the world, but there are a few differences between individual countries. The APA, USPA and HPA have met several times to forge links and some progress has been made, but each organisation still has its own rules, e.g. regarding horse welfare. There are also differences in the rules surrounding penalties and the length of the last chukka in case of a draw. As Arthur Douglas-Nugent explains, “The chief executive of the HPA has drawn up a draft of a set of regulations that explain the basis of how a game should be played and each country can add its own additional rules. On the playing field, a quick decision is normally reached as to which rules apply to which area of the field.” In polo, as in many other sports, umpiring is often dependent on the performance of the individual. It is not unheard of for patrons to threaten to withdraw funding if an umpire insists on sticking to a particular decision. Players have apparently also sometimes refused to get back in the saddle following a long Players’ Night. Officials need to have self-confidence and the ability to implement decisions. As Alex Schwarz states, “Umpires who act consistently and in accordance with the rules can help channel emotions in the right direction. The umpire should make a quick, correct and impartial decision for all teams and players without being prejudiced by individuals’ personalities. Continuity in terms of umpiring enables players to adapt to situations that may arise and know exactly who they are dealing with. An umpire who is respected is ideally positioned to calm and monitor heated exchanges effectively.



The Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA) is the leading organisation in Europe in terms of the professionalisation of umpiring.

Image: Rolf Simon

Consistent performance gives players the chance to get used to the parameters and focus on their own playing.” Arthur Douglas-Nugent agrees, “To judge a particular episode of playing correctly and quickly is the most difficult thing for any umpire to do. Some people are able to read the situation quickly, but it requires instinct, concentration and experience. Bad decisions quickly undermine the authority of an umpire and quickly lead to rules being broken and unpleasant scenes.” For him, behaviour on the playing field is often influenced by the overall situation and the history behind the game a polo player finds himself or herself in. He refuses to confirm outright whether the patrons are the most reluctant to take advice. “Patrons on the whole are successful men who generally get interested in polo later on in life and often do not have the keenest sense of what fairness in polo or equestrian sport actually means. Polo is a very difficult game – and it can be very frustrating to learn from scratch, particularly if you’ve never sat on a horse or had to keep an eye on the ball. Polo is also a very expensive sport. If you’ve invested a considerable sum, you will of course expect results, but you may not always get the results you expect. Professional players tend to blame bad results on the player with the lowest handicap or the umpire because they want to secure their place in the team. The patron sees this and it can lead to almost

violent behaviour on the field. I think you have to bear in mind just how much commitment it takes to set up a team before you are too critical of patrons, but someone should really take a patron aside if he gives an umpire too much grief.”

Many players have experienced making the wrong umpiring decisions themselves – and have had to bear the brunt of the consequences.

Micky Keuper has more of a pessimistic view, “In many things, Germans are known for being very disciplined and structured. But not in polo. And we waste a lot of energy and miss out on a great deal of fun because of this.” For Alex Schwarz, it was his negative experiences with umpires that inspired him to take up the issue, “As a player, there were situations where the umpire’s decision decided the match and we disputed those decisions and regarded them as fundamentally wrong. Application of the rules during tournaments is coming under increasing scrutiny in other sports as well. To me, the standards among umpires seemed to vary wildly. It was often a matter of luck that rules were applied correctly and confidently by the umpires chosen for the match. Their decisions often led to scuffles, arguments and disputes. I became involved

Image: Arthur Douglas-Nugent

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“LEARNING BY DOING IS THE BEST WAY OF IMPROVING OUR UMPIRING SKILLS.”

DR. GÜNTHER KIESEL DPV presiding committee

in umpiring early on, at the end of the 1970s. From then on, I umpired matches regularly and spent a lot of time coming to grips with the rules.“ Arthur Douglas-Nugent, who is one of the leading European experts in polo umpiring, became involved in a different way, “I’ve played a lot of polo, much of it in Germany. As my playing career came to an end, I was happy when I was offered the post of HPA chief umpire in 2000 and so I began to get more and more interested in umpiring. Until then I’d thought that being an umpire must be boring and arduous and not really something to be taken seriously – when I was still at Cowdray Park I was of the opinion that anyone entitled to wear a striped shirt could also be a good umpire. When I started the job, the professionals’ association was already well established, having been set up by my predecessor, but the rules were still in a bit of a mess, so we had to put a lot of work in. We had to react to the situation at the time and as I’ve already mentioned, introduce new rules and improve the flow of the game. We also worked together with the professionals’ association and taken steps to help umpires improve their general skills.“

In England, a lot of effort is being made and numerous measures put into place to improve umpire training.

The pioneering role England is often thought to have, in matters of discipline, rules and umpiring, is put into perspective by Douglas-Nugent, “If you replace the word England with Argentina, then you might be right. In any case, we set up a group for professionals back in 1992. Since then it has existed as a distinct body and can now draw on a wealth of knowledge and experience. We have also founded a second group formed mainly of players who are still active, with the aim of implementing professional umpiring on all levels. But we still have a long way to go, not least because of the costs involved. We are making every effort to coach our groups using meetings, performance evaluations and post-game analyses on DVD. We encourage our umpires to be active abroad and many are – whether in China, Nigeria, Dubai, Malaysia or Thailand. This means they gain experience and can recruit umpires in the respective locations.“

In Germany, Günther Kiesel is a valuable asset to the cause and is determined to improve the situation, “An important decision was recently made by the presiding committee and umpiring committee and was made public in February 2012, namely the decision to establish a “Professional Umpiring Group”. As well as the DPV umpiring committee, its members include the experienced players





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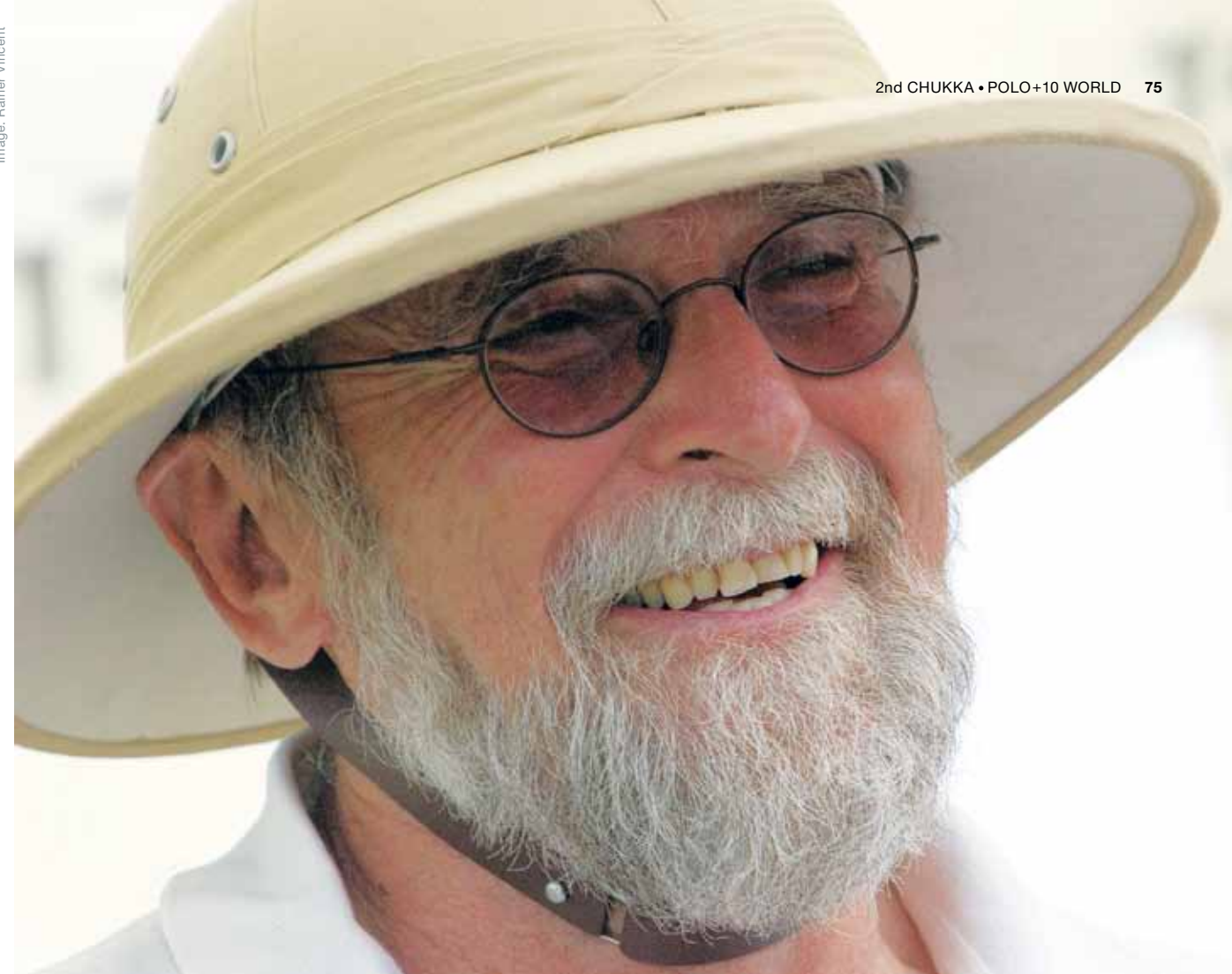
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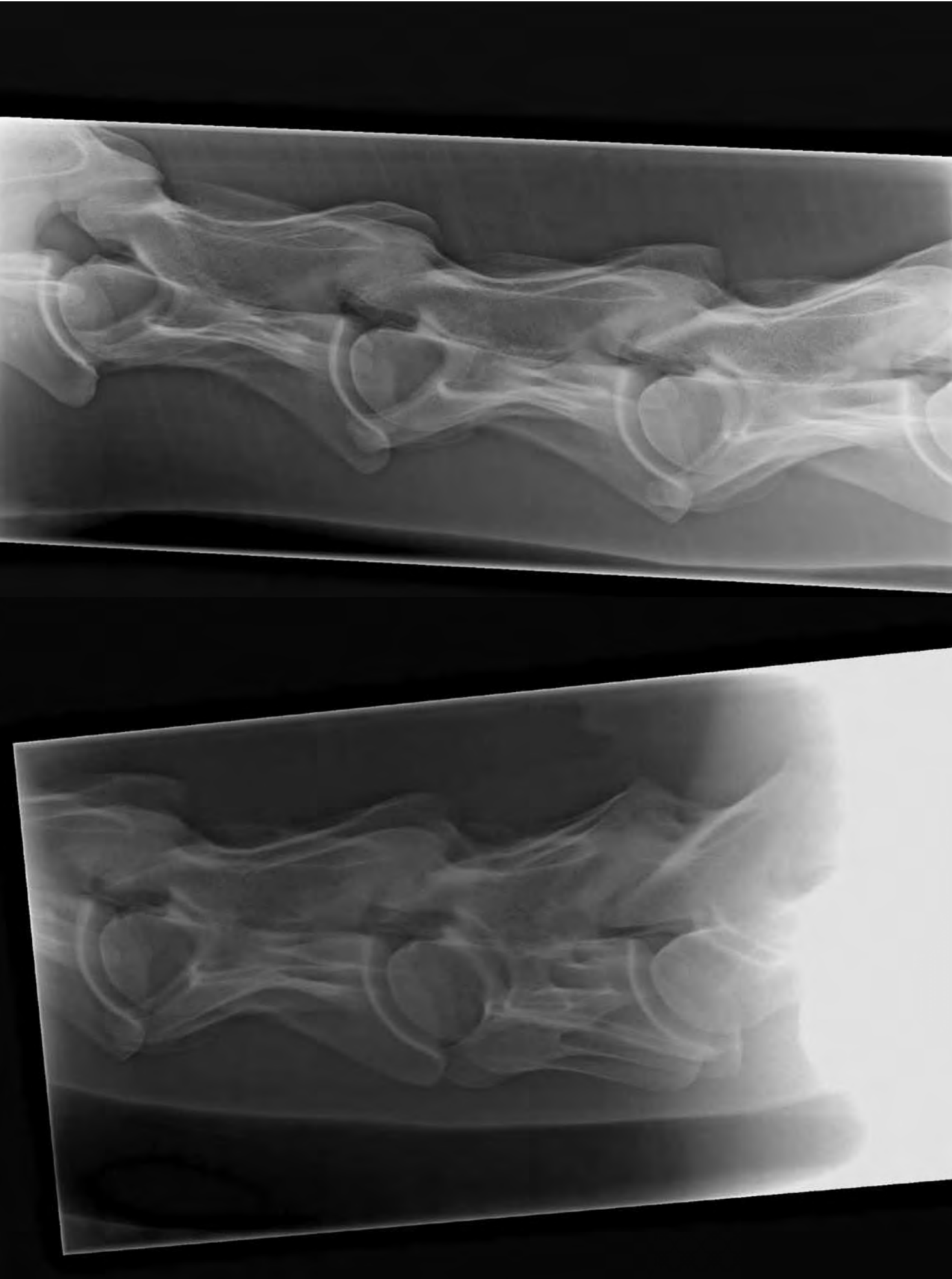
Left: As member of the presiding committee, Dr Günther Kiesel places great importance on the issue of umpiring.

and umpires Thomas and Christopher Winter and Carlito Velazquez. Kiesel states, "its main task is to provide training in regulations and to provide umpires for matches. It is funded by the German Polo Association. We still need the support of experienced HPA umpires from England. At the training session for pro and club chief umpires in England in April 2011, I asked several professional umpires to help the DPV in setting up the umpiring body. Whenever we engage an umpire from England, we should take advantage of the opportunity by putting theory into practice and co-umpiring a match with them. We have taken the first steps towards setting up theoretical and practical training for umpires during tournaments. Learning by doing is the best way to improve our umpiring skills."

An intense dialogue is taking place about the best way to improve umpiring.

For Günther Kiesel and the DPV, it is important to ensure that experienced players (from handicap 0 at the latest) are willing and motivated to take part in umpiring. This means that there will be more and more older players in the future who can act as professional umpires for the Association once their active playing days are over. This also has the major advantage that they cannot be said to

favour a particular outcome. Alex Schwarz agrees, "Only by actively teaching polo players the rules can we ensure that they have a good grasp of regulations and umpiring. Every single player in a club must have this training. Experienced players in clubs should be proactive and train and coach their members – particularly as it is in their own interests to do so. Club chukkas should be umpired by at least one umpire that the time can be taken to explain rule infringements, which is not the case in a tournament environment. Continuous training in the rules of the game should be a permanent fixture of the polo programme and clubs should invest in special umpiring courses. It really helps players to know and understand the rules and relevant contexts." Arthur Douglas-Nugent confirms that England is also working hard to bring the issue of umpiring to the forefront and establish the relevant structures, "We want to improve the standard of umpiring across the UK – and abroad. It is important that we improve on current standards which are often not good enough, particularly at lower levels and especially when professionals with lower handicaps are involved. All players expect to receive good service for their money. And if they don't get it, they'll quickly become disheartened with polo. Our main aim must therefore be to raise standards overall."



Roentgen pictures of a horses cervical spine with bodily changes of the small vertebral joints C6 and C7.

ORTHOPAEDIC PROBLEMS IN POLO PONIES

The Swiss vet Dr Patrick Blättler Monnier specialises in orthopaedic problems in polo ponies. In his guest contribution, he explains the way polo affects horses, the most common injuries and what measures players can take to prevent injury in their horses.

BY & PHOTOGRAPHY DR. PATRICK BLÄTTLER MONNIER, ORTHOVET

“Just as car drivers have to take their cars for annual inspections, it is also important for polo ponies to undergo specific preventative treatment. Polo is an intensive and fast-paced sport: the horse has to speed up quickly and be able to stop abruptly, as well as turn quickly. This has a great impact on the legs and spinal column, and particularly affects the cervical spine and lumbar spine. In terms of the extremities, the suspensory ligament is of particular concern. In the first half of this article, I would like to explain the major injuries that can occur to the cervical and lumbar spine, as well as the treatment and preventative measures for these. In the second part, I will focus on tendon injuries.

With the spinal column, it is firstly important to note that the shoulders have a supporting function: 60% of a horse’s body weight is supported by the ‘front axle’. Secondly, the shoulder is connected to the trunk by soft tissue, i.e. muscles, ligaments and tendons. The shoulders must cushion the forces produced by quick turns, abrupt stops and quick acceleration during polo

games and act as support. It is therefore understandable that these extreme shear forces will have some kind of impact on the cervical spine. The rider also has an impact, particularly if the horse is then required to carry out more changes in direction.

These extreme forces may cause dislocation of the vertebral joints, resulting in inflammation and pain in the cervical spine, lameness in the shoulder and/or lower limbs. It is a comparable to a stiff neck in humans, where cold surroundings or sitting in a strong draught may cause sprains in the throat or neck area. The pain and inflammation is not just felt in the neck or shoulders, but also in the hands. With some individuals, this pain can even cause migraines. In horses, it often results in shoulder lameness, as well as reduced flexibility and manoeuvrability. It also leads to resistance to being ridden and bucking. These horses are often no longer easy to ride, not because they are unwilling but simply because they are experiencing pain. It is these situations that I often see in polo ponies. This kind of behaviour is often misinterpreted. The



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Dr Patrick Blättler Monnier completed his veterinary studies in 1993 and from 1995-1998 undertook further study in the field of veterinary chiropractic in the USA. From 1998-2000, he managed a clinic for horses and small animals with a colleague in Stansstad and has run an orthopaedic practice for horses and small animals in Frenkendorf since 2001. Dr Monnier has built up an international clientele comprising competition-level horses and dogs. He regularly undertakes continuing professional development courses at home and abroad.



horse is not being difficult or unwilling, but has pain and finds it difficult to do the work asked of it. For a non-specialist vet, these problems can be very difficult to diagnose, let alone treat. Thanks to targeted orthopaedic investigations, I am able to recognise these problems, explain them to the horse owner and offer a solution. In my experience, it is very important to treat the affected neck area chiropractically, i.e. help it to function normally by mechanical manipulation. Only then can you treat the inflammation in the affected areas. Normally, inflammation is treated medically using a paste or powder but in serious cases it may be necessary to spray the affected cervical joint with anti-inflammatories using ultrasound scans. This enables the injury to heal efficiently and quickly. Regular preventative checks can reduce susceptibility to these problems or even prevent them. We have also seen similar injuries in the back and pelvis area of horses. If you look at a horse's skeleton, you can see that the pelvis is a ring-like structure connected to the lumbar spine area.

The pelvis is connected to the spinal column by muscles and a pseudo joint, the iliosacral joint. Anatomically speaking, this connection is quite fragile and quick turns and extreme 'stopping and starting' can cause dislocations in the area where the lumbar spine and pelvis meet. We also see pelvic obliquity which results in inflammation in the iliosacral joint and back. Inflammation in this area leads to back pain and lameness in the hindquarters, resulting in reduced activity and reluctance to be ridden.

In order to ensure successful treatment, it is important to correct the obliquity first and then treat the inflammation by targeted infiltration of the intervertebral spaces and iliosacral joint.

If the inflammation and pain are treated and healed in an optimal way, the horse will be able to participate fully in the sport again. Unfortunately, polo ponies often suffer from these injuries. However, regular checks and preventative investigations can uncover pelvic obliquity or inflammation in the early stages, improving the chances of full recovery considerably. Injuries to the suspensory ligament behave in a similar way. Quick turns, sometimes on uneven ground or because of poorly fitting horseshoes place the coffin joint, fetlock and carpal joint under great strain. If the horse sprains its carpal joint, this results in injuries to the superficial or deep flexor tendons and suspensory ligaments. Without treating the underlying causes, these injuries will only heal slowly or not at all. It is therefore prudent to keep a close eye on injuries to the suspensory ligaments, as well as keep an eye out for poorly fitting shoes, injured fetlocks and reduced movement in the carpal joint. If such injuries are observed, stem cell treatment or platelet treatment may be the best option to ensure an optimal healing process. However, in spite of these precautionary measures, polo is an intensive sport and injuries can occur even if the utmost care is taken." •

More information is available on the Internet at www.orthovet.ch

Image: Thai Polo Club



Nunthinee Tanner brought Pink Polo at the Thai Polo Club into existence. It is now one of the most well known ladies tournaments in the world.

POLO FOR THE SETTLERS

The first ladies polo history:
how it all began.

BY TRACEY SHEERAN



“THE GIRLS ONLY TOURNAMENT HAS BECOME A VERY INSPIRING AND SPORTIVE MEETING POINT FOR FEMALE PLAYERS FROM ALL AROUND THE GLOBE.”

ANNA PRINZESSIN ZU OETTINGEN-WALLERSTEIN organiser Girls only at Wallerstein castle

“Girls only” – with a lot of attention to detail and athletic daring, the ladies tournament is held at Wallerstein Castle.
Image: Mummy Bellande (+2) from Argentina playing for team Rolls Royce.



Ladies teams at the “Girls only” Ladies Tournament in front of the Orangerie at the Wallerstein Castle.

Image: Polo Club Wallerstein

“THE HISTORY OF POLO HAS BEEN SHAPED BY WOMEN WHO FIGHT TO PROVE THAT THEY ARE EQUAL TO MEN IN THE SPORT OF POLO. THEIR DETERMINATION HAS PERSEVERED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.”

TRACEY SHEERAN POLO+10 author (Ireland)

You’ve Come a Long Way, Baby: Women have been known to play polo since antiquity and many have become highly proficient in the sport. It was in ancient Persia that the first recorded game of polo took place in 600 BC and the game was part of court life in the golden age of Chinese classical culture, where ladies participated in the game in the Tang dynasty. Persian women were thought to have played as far back as the 4th Century, with many accounts of polo matches played between princesses. The poet Nizami Ganjavi recounted the 7th Century Persian tragic romance of the King Sassanid Khosrau II Parviz of Persia and one of his wives, the beautiful Shirin, who was highly skilled on the polo field, playing with her ladies-in-waiting against her husband and his courtiers. From the Persia of antiquity to today’s leading players on every continent, the story is of women fighting to prove themselves as the sporting equals of men. Their determination spans from exhibiting their prowess at the game in the earliest records of polo, to playing disguised as men in 1970s America to the resurgence of women’s polo in modern day Iran, proving once again that polo is one of the only sports where women can compete “on an equal playing field” with their male peers.

Later, polo (then called chaugan) became popular with Mughal noblewomen, who observing strict dress codes, played on teams of five per side. One of the most extraordinary polo players of the time was the fearless Nur Jehan Begam, wife of the 19th century Emperor Jahangir. Unusual for her era, Nur Jehan was a renowned literary figure, played a role in Mughal politics and was one of the few women to have participated in lion and tiger shoots, mounted on the back of an elephant. (Allegedly she improved her shooting skills to compete with a rival wife of the Emperor, who was a better shot).

During the 19th century when polo gained popularity in Europe and the United States, the biggest barrier to ladies entering the sport was traditional attitudes to women’s role in society. The etiquette of the time prevented women from engaging in vigorous or dangerous sports, with widespread scepticism about women’s physical strength being sufficient to allow them to play polo. The sporting dress code for polo made the sport seem “a step too far” and it was deemed “inappropriate” for ladies to take up the game. Even as late as 1935, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, (the father of the modern Olympic Games) declared, “I personally am against the participation of women in public competition. At the Olympics, their role should be like at the ancient tournaments, the crowning of victors with the laurels.” Many women in the preceding centuries were highly accomplished horsewomen, particularly in the realm of hunting, but ladies usually rode side-saddle in long woollen skirts. It is therefore not surprising that one of the earliest modern accounts of ladies’ polo involved the participants playing the game side-saddle: Riding side-saddle left the ponies’ near side clear, thus facilitating hitting the ball with the mallet. In 1890, Captain George Younghusband’s book “Polo in India”, described a team of married ladies playing a team of single ladies (with the addition of a man to each team). However, Younghusband’s story was considered so scandalous that he swore an oath of secrecy never to reveal where or when the game took place.



Clare Milford Haven (0), brand ambassador for Jaeger-LeCoultre and captain of the Cowdray Park resident British +12-goal team is a very successful player. Earlier, Clare won the British Gold Cup with the Bucking Broncos. Today, she often takes part in charity events.



Below: The first ever ladies exhibition match in China, which took place during the Royal Salute China Open, October 2011 at Tang Polo Club, Beijing. Above: Even the youngsters are kept in sight and fostered with optimal training and coaching opportunities. Right: In the Thai Polo Club near Pattaya, Nuthinee Tanner created the Pink Polo Ladies Tournament – an original polo spectacle, which has generated noteworthy donations for charitable purposes. La Martin designed a pink saddle for the tournament, which was auctioned off for charity.



Images (2): Tang Polo Club, Tracey Sheeran

Images (2): Thai Polo Club

The Lady Pioneers: In the early 20th century, as polo spread to England from India, it became socially acceptable for women to ride astride while wearing split skirts and eventually... breeches. As early as 1905, Queen Alexandra witnessed an all ladies match at the Ranelagh Club in England, in which some wore breeches. By 1920, Taunton Vale boasted the country's only registered lady player, Noëla Whiting, who had learned to play in Burma and held an impressive +2-goal handicap.

Women were accepted by the British polo establishment relatively easily, and comparatively early, with the creation of the Ladies Polo Association in 1938. Many important figures became prominent on the polo scene, including Daphne Lakin (sister of Lord Cowdray, owner of the Cowdrey estate, "the home of British polo"), Judy Forewood and Mrs Peter Flemming (better known as the actress Celia Johnson, star of "Brief Encounter" and sister in law of James Bond creator, Ian Flemming). By the 1970s, the biggest challenge was for women to be accepted in high goal circles. Two highly influential women were instrumental in changing this: Claire Tomlinson (née Lucas) and Lavinia Black. Claire, who comes from an influential polo family (her father Arthur Lucas, ran the

Woolmer's Park Polo Club and her mother and sister played in the 1940s) truly pioneered the breakthrough for women into high-goal polo. In 1979 Claire was the first woman ever to win the Queen's Cup and in 1991 she captained the English team who won the first ever worldwide Ladies' International Polo Tournament. She was the highest rated woman polo player in the world at +5-goals (a record she shared with the American Sunny Hale), was England team coach from 2001-2008 and now runs the Beaufort Polo Club, which focuses on encouraging young players and hosts many Pony Club events. Her sons Luke and Mark are both international professionals and her husband Simon is a Steward of the Hurlingham Polo Association. Continuing in Britain's tradition of producing world class lady players, her daughter Emma plays off an impressive 2 handicap and Nina Clarkin (née Vestey) at +4-goals is currently the highest rated lady player in the world.

Another successful lady player is Clare Milford Haven, the 0-goal Brand Ambassador of Jaeger-leCoultre and captain of their UK 12 goal team, based at Cowdray Park. Previously, Clare won the British Gold Cup with the Bucking Broncos team and now also participates in charity events with fellow Jaeger-leCoultre Ambassador,



A refreshing swim for the players of the O’Neills Ladies Tournament at the Spanish Club de Polo Ampurdan.

the Argentine Lia Salvo. The International Women’s Polo Association was founded at Ascot Park in 1989 by Pippa Grace and now has representatives in 31 countries and is involved in the organisation of 10 international tournaments.

USA: A Bumpy Start: Although women players now represent about a third of the USPA membership, the beginnings of women’s polo in America were more difficult than in England. Although as early as 1901 the New York Times reported on a polo game between two women’s teams in Aiken, South Carolina, it was not until the late 1970s that women were fully accepted. The American public thrilled at such headlines as the one in 1910 which read “Women Play Polo: Miss Eleanor Sears and Sister Players Cause Sensation at Narragansett Pier”. Although by the 1920s several women were registered with the United States Polo Association, in 1935 the USPA officially removed them - writing that “it was not the policy of the association to handicap women.” Women were denied membership until 1956 and even as late as 1977 the Chicago Tribune Magazine wrote in shocked tones that, “There may be one thing worse than death out in California. Someone named Sue Sally Hale has been given a 1-goal rating and is playing with the men’s team out of Sleepy Hollow Polo Club.”

Sue Sal (as she was known) fought years of opposition from the polo establishment, sometimes disguising herself as a man to play, wearing a false moustache and hiding her hair beneath her polo helmet. However she was much more than a ground-breaking player, she was also an influential coach and won the first U.S.

Women’s Championship with her daughters Sunny and Susan. In 2004, Sue Sal was awarded the Philip Inglehart Award for her contributions to the world of polo, presented by the National Museum of Polo and Hall of Fame. Her daughter Sunny was instrumental in establishing the American Polo Horse Association and in 2005 Sunny founded the Women’s Championship Tournament. “The WCT has become a season filled with polo destinations to play really fun and competitive polo, where you meet a whole new group of friends at each stop.” Now playing off a +3 (but previously a +5), Sunny is one of only two women players to have won the +26-goal U.S. Open. Adolfo Cambiaso once said Hale “has the mind of a +10-goal player.”

The other woman to win the U.S. Open was Gillian Johnston, a +1-goal player who competes in high-goal competition with her Bendabout team. Meanwhile, Piaget’s Melissa Ganzi also plays at the top level of the game. Melissa owns the Grand Champions club in Wellington, Florida with her husband and polo rival Marc, who captains the Audi team.

Germany Takes Its Place Internationally...: In Germany, ladies polo was slow to take root although there are now almost 60 ladies registered with the DPV, mostly concentrated in the north of Germany around Berlin and Hamburg. In 2009 Princess Anna zu Oettingen-Wallerstein launched the Girls Only Polo Cup at Wallerstein Polo Club, the family’s ancestral home. Princess Anna, herself a -1-goal player is dedicated to the development of ladies polo in Germany had the vision to establish a truly world-class event that



Since the reintroduction of Polo in Russia, in 2003, the sport has regained its popularity. 15 women are active within two polo clubs. Anastasia Rodsjanko (0) plays at the Moscow Polo Club. She is the daughter of the club’s chairman Alexis, and she has refined her technique on the Skidmore College Polo Team in New York State. At the Russian Open in 2011, she played with the Beluga Vodka Team, who collected the most wins.

Image: Olive Bennett



would attract some of the best players from around the globe. Starting from a modest -4 to 0 event in 2009, the 2011 event saw a crowd of 2,000 spectators, which was sponsored by Rolls Royce and won by the Giza/Tamara Comolli team of Jeanette Princess of Fürstenberg, Beata Pfister Leibold and British players Sophie Heaton-Ellis Cook and Sarah Wiseman. Many of the international guests from eleven countries stayed at the historic Wallerstein castle and the three day event included a lady players’ White Night cocktail party and four course, black tie dinner sponsored by Ruinart champagne. On Saturday morning at the Court Riding School of Wallerstein Castle, the famous “horse whisperer” Andrea Kutsch gave a fantastic demonstration. After the polo, there was another formal dinner held at Baldern Castle in association with Rolls Royce and Procar Automobile, where polo player Marie-Jeanette Ferch was honored with the Parmigiani Woman of Exception award. This year the +2 goal tournament will be held on 29th June – 1st July and will welcome 6 teams with sponsors including Rolls Royce, Ruinart, Falke, Acqua di Parma, Barbour, Glenmorangie Whiskey, Architare and Ona Polo. Gut Ising Polo Club in Chiemsee, Bavaria also hosts women’s tournaments, which is only fitting as the club is the base of Germany’s highest ranked lady polo player, the +2-goaler Eva Brühl, who also lives for part of the year in Argentina.

One of the guests at Wallerstein Girls Only Polo Cup was Spain’s Eva Villacampos from the Polo Club de Ampurdan. Eva is an enthusiastic supporter of ladies polo and is the organizer of the José O’Neill Polo Cup, which is now in its ninth year. The event was held on March 24th/25th at Ampurdan, in Figueres, Spain, with players representing Kenya, United States, Holland, France and Germany. There was a special “polo baptism” ceremony for Susana Pino, who played her first ladies tournament. As the tradition goes, Pino ended up in the swimming pool. José O’Neill also sponsored the first ever ladies tournament in Spain, at the Real Club de Polo Barcelona in 2004. In September of this year, Ampurdan will host the Spanish Ladies’ Championship, which is held at a different club each year.

Another high profile German player is Claudia Zeisberger, who is based in Singapore where she is a Professor at INSEAD and Academic Co-Director of its Global Private Equity Initiative. Claudia plays off a 0-goal handicap with her family’s Maple Leaf team, which is based at the Thai Polo Club near Bangkok. Claudia has competed in the Thai Open (12 - 14 goals) in 2009, 2010 and 2011 and was on the Asian ladies team that played the British ladies team at Guards Polo Club in Windsor. Claudia has won the prestigious Queen’s Cup in Thailand three times since its inception. The St. Regis Pink Polo Queen’s Cup has established itself as one of the highest profile ladies’ polo dates in the international calendar and is the brainchild of entrepreneur Khun Nanthinee Tanner, Managing Director of LBG. The Pink Polo event raises funds for the Queen Sirikit Center for Breast Cancer



Image: Tracey Sheeran

Clare Milford-Haven (above: at the award ceremony of the Royal Windsor Cup) is among one of the most successful female polo players in England. She also participated in the Snow Polo World Cup in St. Moritz. Right: “Girls only” is one of the most notable polo events in Germany.

ARGENTINA: A PARALLEL HANDICAPPING SYSTEM

In 2009 the AAP subcommittee created a parallel handicapping system for women, which now governs ladies tournaments, so women in Argentina have two handicaps: the general one for mixed tournaments and one for women’s events. Nowadays there are more than 300 lady players in Argentina, mostly around Buenos Aires (Pilar, General Rodriguez and Open Door), Santa Fe and Córdoba. The “Golden triangle” around Lobos also has several clubs and teams. In 2010, Samantha Perrusi launched the Ladies Polo Tour with the aim of organizing tournaments and promoting the sport, resulting in a series of matches, tournaments, and invitations, including a recent tour to Brazil. Many of the famous Argentine clubs also hold women’s tournaments, including the La Aguada, La Indiana, El Remanso, Chapa Uno and La Espadaña.



Image: Polo Federation of Islamic Republic of Iran

Iran, where polo has its roots, is witnessing a revival of women’s polo. At the moment, the country has twelve female players who play against each other, as well as international women’s teams who visit Iran.

at the King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital. Khun Nanthinee realised she had a golden opportunity. “To have access to a fully-equipped club in the Thai Polo and Equestrian Club is very fortunate, so we decided to host the inaugural Pink Polo Charity Event there in 2009. It went so well that we thought ‘why not make this an annual fundraiser.” She continues, “we want to raise awareness of this huge health issue for women and also put riding sports on the map in Thailand – it would be great to think that events like those organised by Pink Polo will inspire a young generation of Thai riders, particularly girls and young women. The game might not be as aggressive and as fast-paced as the men’s but believe me, it is competitive and played with heart in the knowledge that it is aiding the fight against breast cancer in Thailand.”

The Pink Polo event’s atmosphere was made even more special with a performance by the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra, junior polo competition, an auction of 10 all-pink outfits and polo equipment designed exclusively for the event by La Martina. All eyes were on the glamorous horseback fashion show, with riders accessorized with pink hats and showcased outfits by famous couture names including Escada, Burberry and La Perla. Guests also had the opportunity to admire the special edition pink Maserati, Ferrari and Bentley that were on show. This year the Pink Polo tournament will be held on November 17th.

Ladies Polo around the World: Russia, a culture long associated with dominant men role (with a few historical exceptions, such as Catherine the Great, who rode astride), is now seeing a resur-

gence in talented lady players. Since the reintroduction of polo to the country in 2003, the sport has become popular, with 15 ladies now active in two clubs. At Moscow Polo Club, Anastasia Rodzianko (daughter of Chairman Alexis) is now playing off zero and is also honing her skills with the Skidmore College Polo team in New York State. She was a member of the winning Beluga Vodka team in the 2011 Russian Open. Another Anastasia (Nastia, wife of President’s Polo Club founder Victor Huaco) shares the honours at 0-goals. Victor often jokes that the reason he wanted kids was “to slow down Nastia from becoming a better polo player than him – but it didn’t work, she just got better and stronger!” At the Russian Snow Polo Championship in March of this year, four ladies participated and in July 2012 there will be the first ever Russian Women’s Polo Open, which will have two teams composed of three local players and one foreign player.

Like Russia, China has embraced ladies’ polo. With the opening of several clubs since 2006, women are at the centre of the renaissance. Rachel Wyatt, formerly of Nine Dragon’s Hill near Shanghai blazed the trail and in October 2011, Tang Polo Club in Beijing staged the country’s first ever ladies exhibition match during the China Open. This year Tang will be holding training courses and hopes to introduce more women to the game. At the Goldin Metropolitan Club in Tianjin, Polo Director Derek Reid oversees the Junior Polo and Equestrian Programme, which was launched last year where almost 40% of the participants were girls. The new Polo Girls World Tour, based in California is planning a series of events in 2013 and aims to hold tournaments in Palm Beach, Los

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**LADIES POLO: AN OVERVIEW OF
THE MOST IMPORTANT LADIES
TOURNAMENTS 2012 AT A GLANCE:**

Girls Only Polo Cup Wallerstein:
29th June to 1st July
Polo Cup Wallerstein (Germany)

Ladies Polo Cup Paris:
7th to 15th July
Polo Club Chantilly (France)

Russian Womens Polo Open:
14th to 15th July
President's Polo Club (Russia)

IV International Ladies
Polo Tournament:
20th to 22nd July
Argentario Polo Club (Italy),

British Ladies Open:
15th to 21st July
Cowdray Park Polo Club (Great Britain)

Ladies Polo International:
22nd October
East Rand Polo Club (Australia),

U.S. Women's US Open:
1st to 11th November
Houston Polo Club (USA)



Pink Polo, Thai Polo Club.

Angeles, Hong Kong, Thailand, India and Dubai, growing to 8 locations in 2014. On 17th November this year, South Africa will hold its first ever ladies tournament at the Glen Beach Country Club in the spectacular oceanside setting of Clifton, near Cape Town. The Black & White themed match will be held between two three-side teams, which will be sponsored by Warwick Wine Estate, who produce First Lady and Black Lady wines, which will undoubtedly be enjoyed by the event's guests.

Ladies' Polo Comes Full Circle: Returning to the very earliest roots of the sport, Iran has seen a resurgence of women playing polo and the country now has 12 lady players, who also play against visiting international ladies teams. However, they are somewhat hampered by the clothing that they are obliged to wear, in adherence to the Islamic dress codes, which means that not only do they wear the "Hijab", covering all hair and neck but also spe-

cially designed coats made of cotton that cover down to the knee and well over the wrists as well as up to the neck. Matches are played only amongst ladies and the clothing is sometimes uncomfortable, "We're always worried about the headscarf and overcoat staying in the right position", said Shella Ilkhanizadeh in an interview with the BBC, but added, "The game is so exciting that you forget all these problems." Inconveniences aside, most women players feel it is a sign of progress that they can play polo at all. The goal of the Iranian Polo Federation is to re-establish polo's credentials as the national sport and an important cultural tradition of Iran and not the just the domain of the elite. Iranians take great pride in the fact that they created such a game, one that is now played across the globe. As ladies polo continues to grow in popularity, it is encouraging to see the game come full circle to a country where in the 7th Century polo was reportedly more even more popular amongst the ladies than it was amongst the men. ●



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Today at the age of 51 Carlos Gracida is still playing off an impressive +9-goal handicap in Argentina (+8 in the USA) Carlos continues to play all over the world.

CARLOS GRACIDA: MONARCH OF THE SPORT OF KINGS

He is regarded as the perfect player, unique in his ability to anticipate the game and “read” it. 51-year-old Carlos Gracida (+9) has won more high goal tournaments in the history of polo than any other player. POLO+10 went along to meet the polo legend.

BY TRACEY SHEERAN PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID LOMINSKA



1 Carlos Gracida also won the Queen's Cup at the English Guards Polo Club where Queen Elizabeth II traditionally presides over the winners' ceremony 2 Princess Diana and Gracida 3 Gracida played with a handicap of +10 for 21 years 4 Prince Charles, who has been a passionate polo player for 40 years, was also one of Gracida's pupils.

Carlos Gracida is considered by many to be a living polo legend, having won more high-goal tournaments than any player in the history of the game, including every major title in the world. He was a member of Kerry Packer's famed Ellerstina team and also La Espadaña, considered by many as the best polo team of the last twenty years.

Polo commentators claim that Carlos Gracida is the perfect, complete player, who is unparalleled in his anticipation and ability to "read" the game. He has won the British Open Gold Cup ten times (more than any other player), the US Open nine times and the Argentine Open five times. He is the only player in history to win the Grand Slam, a feat he achieved in 1987, 1988 and again in 1994. Carlos has won Player of the Year in America five times (a record he shares with his brother "Memo" Guillermo) and he is the only foreigner to win the Olimpia de Plata, Argentina's Most Valuable Player Award, which he won in 1988.

At the age of 51 and still playing off an impressive +9-goal handicap in Argentina (+8 in the USA) Carlos continues to play all over the world. On 17th February, Carlos will be inducted into the Living Hall of Fame at the Museum of Polo in Wellington, Florida, where Carlos now lives with his wife and two sons, Carlitos (aged 21 and +2 goals) and Mariano (18 years old and +3-goals). To mark his award, Carlos spoke exclusively to POLO+10 World and when asked about the honour he was incredibly modest. "I don't see the award in terms of recognition, but an opportunity to celebrate over 30 years as a professional polo player with my friends, family and savour a special moment in my life, surrounded by those I cherish most." His brother Memo was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1997 and there has always been a healthy level of rivalry between

the two: "Being the younger brother, as a kid I always wanted to beat him, even in practice games, but as we have gotten older and are no longer playing the big tournaments, that has calmed down and we have a really great relationship – he's my best friend and we still play together a lot. We would really like to play together as a Gracida team with Roberto and Julio – we could field a pretty good team of +24 goals and have a lot of fun."

With so many incredible wins to his credit, it is hard to choose a career highlight, but Carlos's most gratifying and fulfilling achievement was in 1988 when he won the Argentine Open for the second time, playing on the La Espadaña team, scoring an incredible +10 goals during the finals. Asked about the secret of his success, Carlos replies simply, "the love of the game; it has to be your number one passion, your reason to live. It is only when I started playing in the US that I became totally obsessed with polo, as I had been playing +16 goal polo in Mexico up until then (there was no high goal polo in his native country) and not entirely convinced that I wanted to turn professional. I was incredibly lucky, that I managed to start winning at a competitive level in America quite quickly and then got completely bitten by the polo bug."

Like all top players, Gracida credits much of his good fortune to the quality of his ponies. "I completely believe that you win the game before you set foot on the field – having the right ponies, the right team and the best possible mental preparation. Good horsemanship is also really important if you want a long-term career in high-goal polo, you need to understand the horses, which is why I am spending a lot of time breeding and developing my own ponies." Indeed he is so passionate about his ponies – which he likens to finely tuned Formula 1 cars – that he has established breeding



“I COMPLETELY BELIEVE THAT YOU WIN THE GAME BEFORE YOU SET FOOT ON THE FIELD – HAVING THE RIGHT PONIES, THE RIGHT TEAM AND THE BEST POSSIBLE MENTAL PREPARATION.”

CARLOS GRACIDA

programmes in Argentina in conjunction with Adolfo Cambiaso and Matias Magrini and a cloning operation in association with Daniel San Martino at his embryo centre in Pilar. The first foals from Carlos's top mares (including Romanza, who won 7 US Opens in addition to the Gold Cup and Palermo) will arrive next spring.

In 2011 Carlos launched Gracida Polo (in association with the New York based G2 Investment Group) as a lifestyle brand focusing on luxury products, real estate development and athlete management. Gracida Polo has already begun the development of its initial real estate projects in China, Mexico and the UK. Getting polo onto TV is another of Gracida's goals: For a player steeped in generations of tradition and four generations of Gracida players, Carlos is surprisingly forward-thinking. "I really believe that getting polo onto TV is key to developing the sport and, for it to work well, the rules of polo should be simplified to ensure a faster, more flowing, open game that can be broadcast in an exciting way. What could be more thrilling than watching a fast, well filmed 40 minute match featuring the best international high goal players?"

Staying at the top for so many years is hard work. "My father always told me that the most difficult thing in life is not to get there, it's to stay there! I first reached +10-goals in 1985 and the last time was in 2006, so it was 21 years – on and off – at 10. When you are +10 goals, you always have to prove yourself but I still want to be as good as I can possibly be... and for my age, I think I'm still doing OK", he laughs.

Carlos is a renowned polo coach, having given lessons to Prince Charles, Princes William and Harry, King Constantine of Greece, the Sultan of Brunei, the Prince of Jordan and Sylvester Stallone among others. "Hard work, dedication and always look for a good teacher", is his advice to players wishing to improve their game. Wise words from a legend celebrating a third of a century at the top of the game.

EMERGING POLO NATIONS

The Central European Polo Association (CEPA) was established three years ago with the aim of promoting polo playing in Central European nations. What has happened since then? POLO+10 visited countries new to the sport of polo to find out.

BY JULIETTE RAHN





The Estancia Polo Club near Budapest was founded by Swiss polo visionary Uwe Zimmermann in 1998. Today, the club numbers ten active polo players. The Budapest Polo Open has taken place here since 2000 and has made a name for itself on the international polo scene.



The Magyar Polo Club, located 40 kilometres from Budapest, is one of the four polo clubs in Hungary.

It is not just because of the Central European Polo Association (CEPA) that Ebreichsdorf, which is located about 30 kilometres south of Vienna, has become the focal point of polo in Central Europe. Ever since the era of the Habsburg monarchy, the region has linked Vienna, Bratislava and Budapest both geographically and culturally – and this was an important factor in encouraging the development of polo in these countries. “CEPA has managed to gain a foothold in Poland, Hungary and Austria,” confirms Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg, President of CEPA. But how has the Central European polo scene developed beyond the borders of the CEPA member countries? Has CEPA managed to inspire people to set up new clubs?

For the CEPA president, the Slovakia Open is one of the most important tournaments in the region.

For Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg, one exception within the CEPA member countries is Slovakia. “As the majority of polo players live close to Ebreichsdorf and have used the polo facilities there for many years. Some of them are also members of the Poloclub Schloss Ebreichsdorf, which has made it possible to establish the Slovakia Open here. As this tournament was well established many years before CEPA came on the scene, it has a special status as a ‘joint venture’ between the Slovak Polo Association and the Poloclub Schloss Ebreichsdorf”, explains the president of CEPA and owner of the Poloclub Schloss Ebreichsdorf. Uwe Zimmermann,

co-founder of CEPA, adds, “It was the more the lack of infrastructure that led to the tournament being held in Ebreichsdorf.” Looking to the future, the event organiser of the Slovakia Open, Peter Godanyi, wants to drive polo forward in Slovakia, “We have been trying to improve the infrastructure of our clubs for some time now – after all, our long-term aim is to establish polo properly in our own country.” Uwe Zimmermann states, “The impetus to re-establish polo in Slovakia came from Ladislav Agárdi and what is now the Danube Polo Club (CEPA member) over ten years ago. He still does a lot of work in this field, particularly encouraging young players.”

Polo has enjoyed growing popularity in the Czech Republic for a number of years.

This popularity is done to Sal. Oppenheim and Uwe Zimmermann, who is no longer in the Central European Association. “With the establishment of the Czech Polo Open at the Prague Polo Club, we have also been able to push forward with the development of the sport in the Czech Republic”, reports Uwe Zimmermann. Spirit of optimism: in 2011, the La Republica Club set up the first BMW Czech Polo Open in cooperation with the Slovak I. Polo Klub Bratislava 1888. A new polo club, the Aviator Polo Club, has also recently opened in the Czech Republic. “Mission accomplished” confirms polo visionary Uwe Zimmermann, who has dedicated himself to making polo more popular in Hungary for the past 20



The most prestigious tournament at the Hungarian Magyar Poloclub is the International Diplomats’ Cup.

MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN POLO ASSOCIATION (CEPA):

- Austria: Ebreichsdorf and Rapottenstein
- Poland: Buksza and Warsaw Polo Club
- Slovakia: Danube Polo Club
- Czech Republic: La Republica Poloclub
- Hungary: La Estancia and Kali Polo Club, Magyar Poloclub
- Romania: Royal Polo Club Rasnov

years. In 1998, he founded the La Estancia Polo Club in Budapest, and has since established three additional Hungarian polo clubs. “With colleagues such as Richard Drasche-Wartinberg, Georgy Dvoracek, Pawel Olbrych, Ladislav Argádi and Peter Godanyi, to name but a few, it has been possible to create a network of clubs. Good tournaments have been organised and the public are becoming more and more aware of polo”, observes Uwe Zimmermann. He knows, however, that there are still problems that threaten to slow down the development of the sport. “Polo in Hungary is unfortunately still very much affected by the economic situation in the country, but even more so by the loss of polo culture and the continuing lack of understanding on the part of most of the population. Unpleasant feuds between certain individuals also unfortunately have a negative impact”, explains Uwe Zimmermann. For Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg, there are also still a number of organisational problems to deal with, “Often the problem is the lack of a permanent facility, which is the case for our member La Republica Poloclub in Prague, and this is a necessary prerequisite for a polo club to grow and thrive. At present, CEPA’s membership circle is large but this doesn’t really reflect the amount of polo that is actually being played.”

CEPA has not yet been able to attract potential members such as the Ukraine or Bulgaria.

CEPA’s main aim is to focus on promoting polo amongst its members. The FIP is responsible for all other countries outside CEPA’s region. According to Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg, in spite of everything that CEPA has achieved, the establishment of successful polo clubs and facilities in some countries is primarily down to the independent initiatives of private individuals. The association often only becomes involved in the second phase. “In Croatia, a polo facility is currently being set up near Zagreb – despite

Images (2): George Ivanics Dr. (Magyar Poloclub)

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Image: Tomas Sereda – Fotolia.com

Prague (top) and Bratislava (right): their geographical proximity to Vienna is advantageous for the development of polo in the region.

the fact that Croatia is still not an active member of CEPA", says Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg. Uwe Zimmermann also admits, "It is not possible for everything to develop at the same time. Polo must be wanted and promoted in these countries." Discussions regarding setting up a polo tournament in the Slovenian town of Maribor are ongoing.

According to Uwe Zimmermann, a tournament will also shortly be played near Bucharest in Romania.

Given the numerous problems still facing polo in Central Europe, not everyone is convinced of the effectiveness of CEPA. "I personally do not see much sense in this organisation. If we want to develop polo sport on a regional basis, all we need is money and good organisation", says Peter Godyani, going on to state, "I would prefer to see a

strong FIP with Olympic aims and robust dialogue between the clubs instead of CEPA." Uwe Zimmermann disagrees, "CEPA has an important function that complements the FIP. Issues specific to a particular country are best addressed by a regional association and it is also a much easier way for regional problems to be discussed and solutions found." Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg also highlights the close relationship CEPA has with the FIP. The coordinator of the FIP, Dr Piero Dillier, is automatically entitled to a place and a vote on the CEPA management board. Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg hopes that successful new polo playing countries such as Poland, Hungary and Slovakia will serve as examples and attract new members on board. "The economic crisis has admittedly slowed our progress over the past two to four years, but as president of CEPA, I hope and believe that we will start to see countries where polo is not currently played being inspired to take up the sport."



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ARGENTINE TOUR

A total of 23 teams took part in the four tournaments of the Argentine Tour this year. These tournaments were originally established primarily for foreign players. Matches took place in the “Cathedral of Polo” in Palermo, Buenos Aires for the first time this year.

BY ERIC WEIL

Image: Carlos Weygang



Winner of the second tournament of the Argentine Tour at the La Picazada and La Aguada clubs: the La Natividad team.

“IN ADDITION TO THE ARGENTINE OPEN, ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT OF THE ARGENTINIAN SEASON IS THE COPA DE LA REPUBLICA – THE WORLD’S ONLY TOURNAMENT THAT DOES NOT HAVE SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS ON HANDICAPS.”

ERIC WEIL

Early this century, two of Argentina’s leading polo players, Gonzalo Pieres and Adolfo Cambiaso thought of organising a series of tournaments mainly for foreigners – especially team patrons – to come to the country to play on its good fields and excellent horses to gain experience playing with Argentines with a higher handicap and, at the same time, get to know a bit of the country as the tournaments were to be held at different venues. It also afforded an opportunity for foreigners to buy horses after personally trying them out in play also and to establish new friendships. Thus, the Argentine Tour was born and held for the seventh time this year.

This year’s tour, in March and April, was composed of four tournaments in which 23 teams participated, but only five of them played in more than one tournament. The economic situation in Europe must have contributed to the fact that few of the over two dozen foreign visitors from nine countries stayed for more than one tournament. Players came from Italy, United States, France, Chile, England, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand and Malaysia, the most distinguished from Malaysia – Crown Prince Ismail Ibrahim, heir to the throne with a +3 handicap, and his brother, Prince Adul Rahman Ibrahim with a +1-goal handicap and who played in the last two tournaments. There were also some women playing together with men. As usual, Argentine players were included in teams according to their handicaps so as to have even teams with +15 to +16 handicaps in the first three stages and +21 to +22 in the fourth. Patrons had either no handicap or one, while a dozen high handicap Argentine, Brazilian and Chilean players with handicaps of +8 to +10 took part, although the United States Open was being played at Palm Beach at the same time with 27 Argentinians participating.

Noone could resist the opportunity: never before have so many foreign players taken part in a tournament as in this one at the “Cathedral of Polo”.

The Tour tournaments are usually played at polo clubs around the province of Buenos Aires, but due to heavy rain in certain parts of the province at the beginning of March, the first tournament was, for the first time, played at the Palermo stadium in Buenos Aires where foreigners commented on the excellent state of the field and the unexpected pleasure of being able to play at



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Photo: Adolfo Cambiaso (second from left) was the best player in the world for a long time and was initiated into the Argentine Tour seven years ago. Seen here at an award ceremony in Palermo in Buenos Aires.

what is generally known as the “Cathedral of Polo”. This was the tournament in which most foreigners participated and they said they would love to come back. Although these were open tournaments, most of the games were close due to teams being formed with equal handicap totals. Standard of play was as could be expected, in accordance with handicaps, with the higher handicapped Argentine players always standing out. Rain postponed games a couple of times and it was just enough to keep the grass fresh and fields from becoming too hard. The first three tournaments were for quartets of +15 to +16 handicaps, but in the last one teams could total up to +22. That is why La Natividad, arguably the best team of the Tour, replaced Ignacio Kennedy (+2) with Eduardo Heguy (+8). The winning teams were: First tournament at Palermo stadium, Buenos Aires – La Genoire: Luca D’Orazio (Italian patron) (0), Juan Zubiaurre (+3), Julian Ruiz Guiñazu (+7), Santiago Solari (+6). Second tournament at La Picaza and La Aguada clubs – La Natividad: Norberto Dabas (0), Gustavo Usadizaga (+5), Ignacio Kennedy (+2), Bartolome Castagnola (+9). Third tournament at Centauros Polo Club – HP Polo Team: Ignacio Acuña (+3), Ludovic Pailloncy (+2), Juan Zubiaurre (+3), Ignacio Tocalino (+8). Fourth tournament at Ellerstina Polo Club – La Natividad: Norberto Dabas (0), Gustavo Usandizaga (+5), Bartolome Castsgnola (+9), Eduardo Heguy (+8).

Best team of the Argentine Tour 2012 was La Natividad which won two of the four tournaments.

The Tour was probably the highlight for foreign visitors – and there is every intention to repeat it next year – but the busy season also included a Four Nations International Tournament with Chile, Brazil, Rest of World (England and US) and Argentina and will end with a test match for the annual Copa de las

WINNERS OF THE ARGENTINE TOUR:

First tournament in Palermo stadium, Buenos Aires – La Genoire (+16): Luca D’Orazio (0, Italian Patron), Juan Zubiaurre (+3), Julian Ruiz Guiñazú (+7), Santiago Solari (+6)

Second tournament at La Picaza and La Aguada clubs – La Natividad (+16): Norberto Dabas (0), Gustavo Usadizaga (+5), Ignacio Kennedy (+2), Bartolome Castagnola (+9)

Third tournament at Centauros Polo Club – HP Polo Team (+16): Ignacio Acuña (+3), Ludovic Pailloncy (+2), Juan Zubiaurre (+3), Ignacio Tocalino (+8)

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Naciones in which a team faces Argentina this time and Brazil at Palermo. At the same time, numerous open tournaments were played at clubs all over the country – also for women and minors – generally as many as four in the same week with the highlight being the annual Copa de la Rebuglica, the national handicap championship. The Copa de la Republica, played for the 84th time, must be the biggest tournament in the world – the second most important of the season after the Argentine Open – and the only one in which players of 0 to +10 individual handicaps play together. Zonal and subzonal tournaments are played all over the country to eventually find 12 teams to take part in the final round in Buenos Aires in three groups of four each with the winners and second best in group qualifying for

the semifinals and final. As the Argentine Polo Association does not organize these zonal tournaments, they had no figures on how many teams took part and how many games were played. But there is little doubt that both totals make this the biggest tournament in the world.

A number of high handicap (even +10) players took part, but of course, it does not suit a team with a total high handicap as it would have to give away too many start goals to its rival. As it happened, both finalists were from Buenos Aires (although this does not always happen) – +22-goal La Esquina and +17-goal La Alexandra – and in spite of having to give their rivals a sizeable handicap start, La Esquina were the winners.

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Première: because of heavy rain, the first tournament took place in the "Cathedral of Polo" in Palermo for the first time, where the Argentine Open is also held.

SHILAI LIU

China is currently well on the way to discovering the joys of polo and establishing it as a popular sport. POLO+10 met the founder of the Tang Polo Club and the best player in the country, Shilai Liu, to talk about playing polo in China.

INTERVIEW STEFANIE STÜTING PHOTOGRAPHY TANG POLO CLUB

HOW DID YOUR PASSION FOR POLO START?

It is the sport itself that fascinates me rather than the social side or the so-called “beau monde” atmosphere; they don’t mean anything to me. I love polo because it’s difficult to play, requires speed and is full of passion.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE THE BEST PLAYER IN THE COUNTRY DURING THIS NEW ERA OF POLO IN CHINA?

Honour, pressure, motivation. I see it as my responsibility to encourage the rapid and extensive take-up of polo in China.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO FOUND THE TANG POLO CLUB AND WHAT AIMS HAVE YOU SET FOR YOURSELF?

The Tang Polo Club was established on 10th October 2010 with the aim of creating an impressive location for polo and equestrian sport – at all skill levels. We are proud to be China’s first polo club and regarded as such across the world. Since its foundation, the club has hosted several tournaments, such as the First Tang International Cup, China Polo Players Rating Tournament, Royal Salute Tang Cup, TPC Cup, Tang Night and the prestigious +16 Goal Royal Salute Gold Cup 2011, as well as the China Open Polo Tournament.

WHAT’S THE SITUATION AT THE TANG POLO CLUB NOW?

We are continually seeking to expand the member list. Today, the Tang Polo Club is home to 18 active polo players and over 100 horses. A “Social Membership” category will be introduced this year to establish a social scene at the club. We have put a lot of work into the 2012 programme over the winter and there will be a wide range of polo and equestrian events to enjoy. Encouraging young players is of course a major part of this. We also want to expand our family-oriented offers.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THE ROYAL SALUTE CHINA OPEN IS IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASING POPULARITY POLO IS EXPERIENCING IN YOUR COUNTRY?

It is a milestone in terms of promoting the overall development of polo tournaments in China. In terms of the duration alone, it is the longest tournament to take place in the history of polo

“I LOVE POLO BECAUSE IT IS HARD TO PLAY, IT REQUIRES SPEED, AND IT IS FULL OF PASSION.”

SHILAI LIU

in China, in modern times at least. It is a +4 to +16 goal tournament, ranging from the +10-goal Argentina Cup to the ladies’ exhibition match. Twelve teams will be participating in the tournament. In terms of players’ skills, the event has attracted several +6 and +7 players. It is the first time that such a prestigious event has taken place in China.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE TO ENSURE THAT POLO CONTINUES TO GAIN IN POPULARITY OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

We must be able to breed polo ponies. With the right pony breeding programme, we will be able to get more people involved in the sport. We must also ensure that high-quality training is in place. To this end, we need to train more Chinese instructors.

IF YOU COULD INVITE ANY POLO PLAYER IN THE WORLD TO PLAY AT THE TANG POLO CLUB THAT YOU HAVEN’T YET MANAGED TO ENTICE THERE, WHO WOULD IT BE?

The +10-goaler Facundo Pieres.

HAVE YOU SEEN POLO IN ACTION IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD? WHERE?

I have been lucky enough to experience some of the greatest tournaments: Cartier Day in England, the US Open, the Argentina Open and many more.

WHICH MATCH HAS BEEN YOUR FAVOURITE TO WATCH?

La Dolfina against Ellerstina in 2010. ●

The most important tournaments at the Tang Polo Club 2012:

16th-17th June 2012, Amateur Cup Tournament (0)
23rd-26th August 2012, Warrior Cup Tournament (+10), 4 teams
15th-30th September 2012, China Open Polo Tournament, Amateur (+4, +8, +16)
13th-14th October 2012, Cartier International Challenge (+10)
20th-21st October 2012, TPC Cup Tournament (+2 to +4)

Tang Polo Club, Beijing, Tel. +86 (010) 8051-9200/9201,
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IN DIA

ROYAL SALUTE MAHARAJA

The Royal Salute Maharajah of Jodhpur Golden Jubilee Cup in the Indian city of Jodhpur welcomed international guests for the third time, including the legendary Mexican polo player Carlos Gracida and the chair of the Hurlingham Polo Association, Nick Colquhoun-Denvers. An exotic polo adventure...

BY TRACEY SHEERAN PHOTOGRAPHY JODHPUR POLO CLUB

Over the New Year, His Highness Maharaja Gaj Singh II Jodhpur and Torquhil Ian Campbell, the 13th Duke of Argyll hosted the third Royal Salute Maharaja of Jodhpur Golden Jubilee Cup, with distinguished international guests including Prince Carl-Eugen Oettingen-Wallerstein, legendary Mexican player Carlos Gracida and Hurlingham Polo Association Chairman Nick Colquhoun-Denvers. 150 VIPs enjoyed five days of exciting +10-goal polo (contested between eight teams), spectacular parties and events that included a vintage car rally, procession of Marwari horses and camel polo and racing in one of the most unique and beautiful events in international polo.

Polo was brought to India in the 16th Century and Jodhpur in Rajasthan, famed as “the Blue City” due to the blue-painted houses that surround the Mehrangarh Fort, was always an important polo center, boasting six polo grounds and rivaling Calcutta (the oldest polo club in the world) in its number of players. In 1922, Jodhpur beat Patiala to become Champions of all India in a match described as the “finest ever”. A crowd of over a hundred and fifty thousand people watched as the Jodhpur team scored in the last minute of the final chukka to win: The defeated Maharaja of Patiala let his horses loose in the streets of Delhi and ordered his team to burn their mallets: they never stepped onto a polo field again... Jodhpur

was the first Indian team to play internationally and the club remained a key polo venue until 1949, when the game began to decline in popularity. The Maharajah of Jodhpur, who inherited the honorable title from his father at the age of four, is passionately committed to promoting the unspoilt and authentic city of Jodhpur as a tourist and polo destination. The charismatic Eton and Oxford educated philanthropist re-launched the Jodhpur team in 1993 and at his initiative a new grass polo ground was laid at the club. The Maharajah’s son, Prince Yuvraj Shivraj Singh, a talented +3-goal player, had taken the revitalized Jodhpur team to play in Kenya, Brazil, Zambia, England amongst others. However, in 2005 while playing in Jaipur, the Prince sustained a serious head injury and remained in a coma for two months. Happily, now on the road to recovery, the Prince is fully committed to assisting his father in promoting the city of Jodhpur. Determined to help his old friends the Maharajah and Prince Shivraj host a world-class polo tournament, Peter Prentice, Vice-President Asia-Pacific of Chivas Brothers (the parent company of Royal Salute, the world’s leading luxury Scotch whisky) was also key in reviving polo in Jodhpur. Primarily known for his role in developing the sport of elephant polo, Prentice set up the Royal Salute Golden Jubilee Cup in 2009 and helped devise a week of unparalleled entertainment and polo in the “Blue City”.





Robert Hettich

ROBERT HETTICH WWW.HETTICH-ART.DE

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11

MICHAEL POLIZA SOUTH AFRICA

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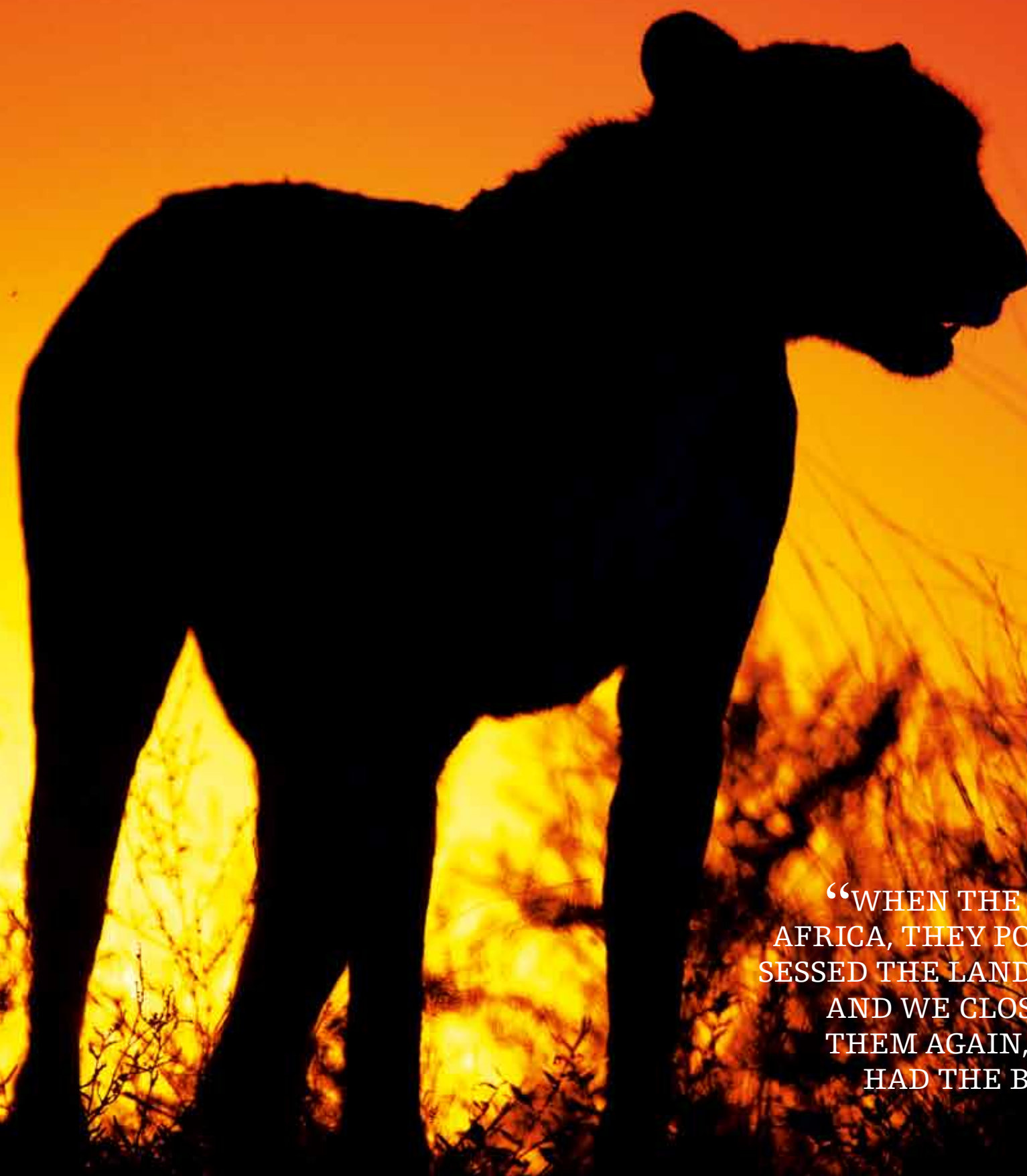
PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL POLIZA

“PAIN IS TRUTH; EVERYTHING
ELSE IS UNCERTAIN.”

JOHN MAXWELL COETZEE Writer from Cape Town



Cape Town: the imposing backdrop of the 1,087 metre high Table Mountain has become a landmark of South Africa's third largest city.



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“ONCE YOU’VE CLIMBED ONE MOUNTAIN,
YOU REALISE THERE ARE LOTS OF OTHER
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NELSON MANDELA President of South Africa (1994-1999)

MICHAEL POLIZA

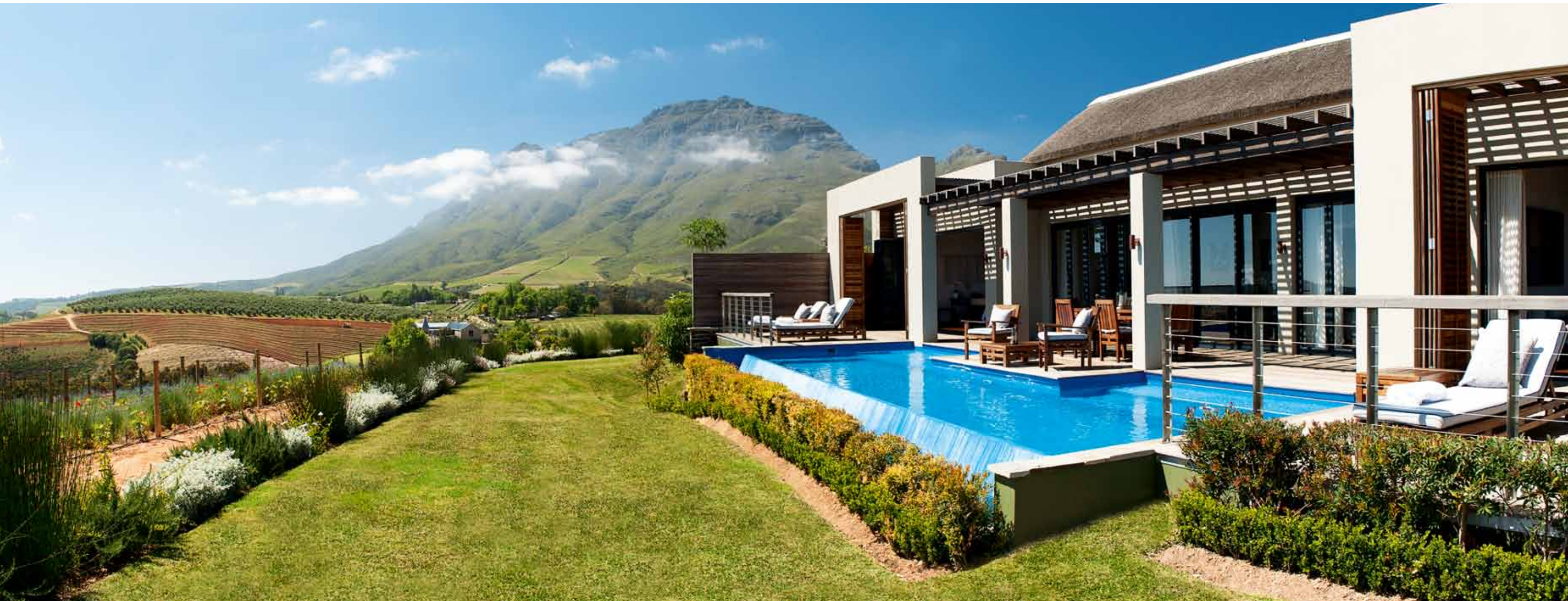
Following his award-winning tomes “Africa” and “Eyes over Africa”, the photographer Michael Poliza, who is originally from Hamburg, returned to his adopted home of South Africa. Together with some of the most renowned photographers in South Africa, he created the photo book “South Africa” – a homage to one of the most exciting countries on Earth. The book, which has 280 pages and 113 amazing large-format colour photographs, is published by teNeues Verlag and can be ordered at www.teneues.com for 75 euros (hardback).



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WORLD



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Images (from top to bottom): guests are welcomed in the spacious Lodge Reception Lounge; the wine cellar of the Delaire Graff Estate is one of the most modern in the southern hemisphere and has every kind of conceivable equipment needed for the production of world-class wines; a 22 metre-long infinity pool and jacuzzi on the spa terrace invite you to spend some time relaxing.





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PHOTOGRAPHY KENSINGTON PLACE, POLO+10



There is certainly no lack of hotels in Cape Town, but the POLO+10 team has uncovered a little gem in Higgovale, one of the greener and quieter suburbs of a metropolis that is home to 3,5 million residents: Kensington Place. Located on the slopes of Table Mountain, this luxurious boutique hotel appeals not only because of its amazing view of the city, harbours, mountains and the Atlantic, but also because of its unique mix of design, style, comfort and service.

This is a small but perfectly formed hotel, with a total of just eight rooms, seven Superior Suites and a Standard Room. The stylish, modern furnishings make for a stimulating ambience and relaxed living space. Rooms are equipped with twin/king-size beds, a private terrace, iPod docking station, electronic safe, laptop and underfloor heating. You can relax and escape from the hustle and bustle of

Cape Town is one of the hippest destinations in the world. A accommodation tip: the wonderfully located and stylish luxury boutique hotel Kensington Place is one of the most beautiful hotels in the city.

everyday life by the fireplace in the lobby, in the pool, at the bar with a view of the terrace or in the garden. Cape Town's most popular beaches and major sights and attractions can be reached in just a few minutes. Kensington Place impresses not only because of its location, but also because of its amazing design and service. It is one of the most beautiful hotels in the city and the perfect place to make your trip to the Cape a success. It feels more like a home away from home than a hotel.

Further information about Kensington Place is available on the Internet at www.kensingtonplace.co.za



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Giorgio Armani

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Conciergerie

In medieval France, the “Comte des Cierges” — meaning the “Candle keeper” — referred to the person responsible for managing all the guests and functions in palaces or castles. Since then, the name has been used in leading hotels around the world to name an expert in arranging all Client needs from common things to the most challenging requests.

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“Earth Lodge” – the clue is in the name: this lodge has been built using only natural materials from the local area. Loam and straw-covered walls create a unique atmosphere.



WILD SOUTH AFRICA

The oldest private game reserve in the world is located in the heart of South Africa – the Sabi Sabi. The reserve promises an unforgettable experience on an exclusive safari trip through the South African wilderness.

PHOTOGRAPHY **SABI SABI LUXURY SAFARI LODGES**

No one knows the wilderness as well as they do: by tracing footprints deeply embedded in the soil of the savannah, the gamekeepers at Sabi Sabi can see when an elephant last passed by. For visitors to Africa, it is the height of luxury to go on safari with them and then enjoy being spoiled in one of the four luxury Sabi Sabi safari lodges after an adventurous day. Safari wildlife coupled with luxury and relaxation has been a tradition here for over three decades. Thanks to the charter airline Federal Air and the on-site landing strip, the reserve can be reached in about an hour from Johannesburg airport.

The nature protection area stretches southwest from Kruger National Park. A POLO+10 secret tip: if you’re always on the lookout for the perfect wildlife photo opportunity, the Sabi Sabi reserve will never disappoint you. It is also a pioneer in terms of sustainability: its trailblazing nature protection concept and contribution to the economic development of the region was awarded the “Fair Trade in Tourism

South Africa” award in 2007. The four luxury safari lodges provide a gateway to 100 years of safari history. Each is furnished in the style of a different era. The romantic “Selati Camp” on the disused Selati railway evokes long lost pioneer times with its nostalgic furnishings. The contemporary “Bush Lodge” and “Little Bush Camp” – the newest lodges – incorporate the modern shapes of the present day. The “Earth Lodge” gives an architectural insight into the future. It is one of the most environmentally friendly game lodges in South Africa and was described by Condé Nast Traveller as one of the “best locations in the world”. The gamekeepers refer to their “big wild stars” as the “Big Five”, namely the lions, leopards, elephants, rhinos and buffalo. These can often be seen at close quarters from the open-topped all-terrain vehicles. The safari at the Sabi Sabi game reserve is an unforgettable experience.

More information about Sabi Sabi luxury safari lodges can be found at www.sabisabi.com and www.exclusivetravelchoice.com

DREAM CRUISE AROUND THE INDIAN OCEAN

Spend Christmas Eve and New Year on the high seas. Escape the stress of the holidays and visit magical locations in the Indian Ocean with the dream ship MS Deutschland and the POLO+10 special.



For this unique dream cruise, POLO+10 readers will receive an exclusive on-board voucher worth 200 euros per person, as well as a bottle of champagne in their cabin at the start of the trip. When booking, please use the code/key word “Dream ship – Christmas trip POLO+10”.

Spend Christmas on Madagascar and start the New Year with a visit to three of the most beautiful islands in the world. Leave all your stress firmly behind on land and enjoy a fantastic festive cruise on board the MS Deutschland. This dream ship will spend 20 days cruising around the most beautiful destinations in the Indian Ocean, including amazing sites of natural beauty, heavenly islands, white beaches and crystal-clear water.

It will be “anchors away” on 18th December 2012 in Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius. Following a stopover in the French overseas territory of La Réunion, the MS Deutschland will celebrate a first: this will be the first time in its history that the luxurious ship has visited the Madagascan islands of Mangabe and Lakandave with their unique flora and fauna. With these magical islands

as a backdrop, you will celebrate Christmas Eve with a gala dinner at sea. The islands of Mayotte and Njazidja, which are part of the Comoros archipelago, are also not found on cruise ship timetables all too often.

On Zanzibar, an island renowned for its spices off the coast of Tanzania, you will be able to smell the fragrance of clove and pepper plantations in the air. A jewel on Africa’s coast is Mombasa, Kenya’s second-biggest city and the most important harbour city in Eastern Africa. The final highlight of the trip is the Seychelles. The cruise will end on 6th January 2013 with a fantastic New Year’s Eve ball and a visit to three of the most beautiful islands in the world –

Mahé, La Digue and Praslin. The MS Deutschland is the only cruise ship to sail under the German flag. Numerous awards, including the Six Star Diamond Award, “Five Star Elite” and “Ship of the Year 2012” awarded by the Schlummer Atlas are all evidence of the high quality of this luxurious cruise ship. As the “German Ship London 2012”, the MS Deutschland will be moored in London during the Olympic Games. Its owner, the Deilmann shipping company, will also be celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2012.

Information and brochures can be ordered by email: dirk.schiewer@deilmann.de, by phone on +49 4561 396 191 or on the Internet at www.dastraumschiff.de, code/key word “Dream ship – Christmas trip POLO+10”

Image: Ben Bürger – Fotolia.com

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The current European distance-riding championship runner-up Sabrina Arnold at the European Championships 2011.

RIDING OFF INTO THE HORIZON

Covering 160 km in the saddle in one day? Most riders find their backside starts to ache at the mere thought of this. But that would be the least of your problems on a long-distance ride, especially given that riding at walking pace isn't really an option.

The discipline is one of the oldest in the world. Hardly surprising really, when you consider that travelling long distances quickly used to make the difference between victory or defeat. In Germany, the discipline goes back to the cavalry, which used to test the mettle of its officers and horses over long distances. Only in the 1970s did this endurance sport experience a regeneration in Germany. Today, there are 350 rides and 4,500 riders, and the numbers are increasing all the time.

Internationally, this long-distance sport has long since outgrown its humble beginnings. The ever greater number of professionals becoming involved means that the pace is now much faster: average speeds of 20 km/h are increasingly common. Long-distance routes in Germany vary from entry-level rides over 25 km to the ultimate ride – the hundred miler – over 160 km. Professionals line up alongside amateurs at the start, with all participants abiding by the traditional motto, “To arrive is to win”. While Arab breeds dominate in the top echelons of the sport, a wide range of breeds take part in the sport at national level. In contrast to other disciplines, the

vet is the most important person in these events. During regular breaks in the ride, i.e. at the obligatory vet gates, he or she decides whether the rider and horse can carry on or not. Loss of even cadence, a girth sore or abnormal bowel sounds can signal the end of the race for a horse. Animal protection is of the highest priority in endurance sport.

Following a team bronze medal at the Kentucky World Equestrian Games and individual silver at the European Championships in 2011, Germany's long-distance riders are regarded as contenders for a medal at the coming World Championships in England. Travel tickets will be distributed at the German Championships in Luhmühlen at the start of June, which also serves as the qualifying event. The international event with a nations cup looks certain to attract top-quality riders and promises to be well worth watching in any case.

More information: Association of German Long-Distance Riders and Drivers www.vdd-aktuell.de German Long-Distance Riding Championships: www.glchallenge.de

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SINGLE-HAND WATCH FROM MEISTERSINGER
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There may be 60 minutes in an hour, but all the time in the world. For the past ten years, MeisterSinger has provided a quicker way to tell the time.



Singulator, stainless steel, glass back with 4 screws made from sapphire glass, power reserve 46 hours, 4,798 euros.

Images (2): MeisterSinger

Even in the life of a single-hand watch lover, there may be times when seconds and minutes are important. For such times, Münster-based company MeisterSinger has created the world’s first single-handed watch with three individual hands. The large hand for the hour and two smaller ones for minutes and seconds. It’s as simple as that – even though we practically had to reinvent the wheel to do it. A complex technical procedure was required to ensure that the built-in spring wheel that replaces the normal gear could count minutes and seconds with the highest level of precision and minimal deviations.

When the watch lover and designer Manfred Brassler founded MeisterSinger ten years ago in Münster, he had a clear aim: to create original timepieces. Watches that were clearly differentiated from those already on the market and which were not influenced by short-lived fashion trends. A timeless watch, in other words. Having the courage to do away with the minute and second hand paid off: ten years later, the philosophy of time at the heart of this original watch style has won a legion of fans all over the world. Back in 2011, Brassler could never have dreamt that MeisterSinger would become the market leader in single-hand watches.

That a single-hand watch can be a success is proven not only by its amazing technology, but also by the many awards that Manfred Brassler has won for his masterpiece. In addition to the red dot award 2010 and GOOD DESIGN Award 2010, his latest success is reflected in his nomination for the Federal Republic of Germany’s Design Prize.

More information is available on the Internet at www.meistersinger.de

ISLAND DREAMS

The Sainte Anne Resort & Spa in the Indian Ocean is one of the most beautiful hotels in the Seychelles. The motto of the five-star-plus resort: luxury in harmony with nature.



A unique natural backdrop and the luxurious atmosphere make the five-star-plus Beachcomber Resort Sainte Anne one of the most beautiful hotels in the Seychelles.

Unspoilt beaches, tropical jungles and a breathtaking underwater world – as soon as you step on the boat for the ten-minute journey from Mahé, one thing about this spectacular natural harbour becomes clear: the five-star-plus Beachcomber resort Sainte Anne is not only one of the most beautiful hotels in the Seychelles, but also fascinates visitors because of its amazing natural backdrop.

Located in the heart of the largest marine national park in the Indian Ocean, the island of Sainte Anne is surrounded by an exotic underwater world which is best discovered by taking a trip on a glass bottomed boat or by going snorkelling. You will encounter spectacular corals, anemones and algae, as well as colourful parrot fish, clown fish, trumpetfish and coral fish. With a bit of luck, you may even see some rays and turtles. If you prefer solid ground beneath your feet, the three hiking paths across the 2,1 kilometre long and 1,7 kilometre wide island are the best way to get to know this amazingly beautiful island with its hidden beaches, ancient forests, mysterious ruins and fascinating vegetation – including the rare “Coco de Mer” coconut palm trees.

The Sainte Anne Resort & Spa is located in the south west of the 220 hectare private island and has 87 luxurious villas, 29 of which have private pools. The wooden furnishings and light colours reflect the tropical elegance of the resort. All villas have their own gazebo, an open-air shower and bicycles. You can unwind and relax on one of the island's four beaches, as well as in the tropical Clarins spa with its five individual massage rooms, two double massage rooms and various rooms for Ayurveda, yoga, stretching and balneotherapy. Two hammams and saunas, as well as a comprehensive sport and fitness programme with kinesis, power plate, cardio training and workouts complete the range of wellness services on offer. A total of five restaurants spoil guests at the Sainte Anne Resort & Spa with one of the best gastronomic offers in the Seychelles. The “All Inclusive Island Package” is unique, offering an unlimited selection of food and drink from the hotel's bars and restaurants. •

More information is available on the Internet at www.sainteanne-resort.com

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* Our expertise and our passion is the creation and enhancement of a special force field that makes real estate objects stand out and shine. We accomplish this with dedicated teams that become one with the project.



The Is Molas resort offers an unrestricted view of the mountain ranges, lush green fairways of the golf course and the Mediterranean. Three golf courses with a total of 45 holes invite you to enjoy a relaxed putting session.

SARDINIAN VISIONS

Real estate: located on the second-largest island in the Mediterranean, the Is Molas Resort combines luxurious villas, luxury hotels and a golf club with first-rate comprehensive service and maintenance packages.

PHOTOGRAPHY IS MOLAS/ENGEL & VÖLKERS RESORTS

According to plans by star architect Massimiliano Fuksas, a spectacular luxury resort is currently being built in the south of Sardinia. Inspired by the classic beauty of Sardinia, the Italian artist has created a fascinating piece of architecture whose organic shapes appear to blend in seamlessly with the landscape. As Fuksas explains, "The basic idea was to create an exceptional landscape. This area of Sardinia should represent joie de vivre and cater for the desire to meet new people, but also enable people to enjoy being alone. The essential elements of the project are the geography and nature. The architecture simply complements the thoughts and the discoveries it inspires." On an area of approximately 600 hectares, there are plans to build 241 villas, two luxury hotels with spa areas and a piazza with



shops, restaurants, conference centre and mini club. The main buildings have a surface area of between 1,000 and 2,500 square metres and are spread across the resort. The exclusive villas – built using natural materials such as granite, loam and wood – offer a living space of between 110 to 220 square metres and have two to four bedrooms, plus living/dining room, three to six bathrooms, kitchen, terrace (also covered) and pool. Construction is planned to start in June 2012 and the first 15 villas should be ready by 2014. Villas are priced between 2,2 and 4,6 million euros (commission free).

Further information is available on the Internet at www.engelvoelkers.com/ismolas



THAI POLO & EQUESTRIAN CLUB

Pattaya Thailand



www.thai-polo-club.com

Images (3): Beachcomber



4th CHUKKA • POLO+10 WORLD 151

Owners of private villas in the Domaine Royal Palm complex will automatically become members of the prestigious Royal Palm Country Club and benefit from special golf course packages.



ORIENTAL SPIRIT

South of Marrakesh, a visionary project is underway: the building of the Domaine Royal Palm, a complex with 89 luxurious villas, a country club, a golf course and a five-star hotel.

Marrakesh – just the sound of the name conjures up the smells and images of the Orient and makes you yearn to visit distant places. Exotic, lively and cosmopolitan, the “Pearl of the South” casts a spell over everyone who visits it. Around twelve kilometres south of the historic centre, a unique building project is currently taking shape: the Domaine Royale Palm. Currently in its initial phase, the extensive 231-hectare complex will have 89 luxurious villas, a country club (the Royal Palm Golf & Country Club), an 18-hole par 72 golf course and the five-star hotel Royal Palm Marrakesh. The luxurious complex is due to open in 2013.

Inspired by traditional Berber architecture, the design of the private villas is characterised by cubic shapes and smooth lines. All villas are built at ground level and are spread out over 2,500 square metres. Each villa has a private pool,

beautiful garden and shady terrace, offering complete privacy. Villa owners can decorate the interior of their property to suit their own requirements. The builders of the complex, Beachcomber Hotels, place great importance on preserving Morocco's cultural heritage and natural resources, with particular emphasis on environmental protection and sustainability. Concepts incorporated into this visionary complex include intelligent management of water resources, organic farming, solar energy and natural heating. Traditional building methods have been used where possible to ensure maximum insulation while minimising energy losses. •

Contact: Moritz Kaiser, RE/MAX Lebenstraum-Immobilien, Tel. +49 (0)89 189 51 98 24, Moritz.kaiser@remax.de; further information is available on the Internet at www.domaineroyalpalm.com



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CALENDAR 2012

Polo – an international sport and a language that is spoken across the world. Although the polo season has now finished in countries such as Thailand and the United Arab Emirates, it is just beginning in France and Germany. Below is an overview of the most important international tournaments at a glance.

POLO WORLD

- 19TH MAY TO 9TH JUNE
COPA ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO
Rodovia Santos Dumont, Brazil
- 22ND MAY TO 17TH JUNE
THE CARTIER QUEENS CUP
Windsor Great Park (London), Great Britain
- 15TH TO 24TH JUNE
AUSTRIAN OPEN
Ebreichsdorf, Austria
- 19TH JUNE TO 15TH JULY
VEUVE CLICQUOT GOLD CUP
Midhurst, Great Britain
- 19TH TO 23RD JUNE
ROME SUMMER POLO AUDI GOLD CUP
Rome, Italy
- 24TH JUNE
SOUTH DOWNS POLO DAY
Midhurst, Great Britain
- 30TH JUNE TO 1ST JULY
RUSSIAN POLO CUP
Moscow, Russia
- 5TH TO 15TH JULY
INTERNATIONAL POLO CUP SAINT-TROPEZ
Gassin, France
- 6TH TO 9TH JULY
BERENBERG HIGH GOAL CUP
Düsseldorf, Germany
- 8TH JULY
ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR CUP
Midhurst, Great Britain
- 11TH TO 15TH JULY
USPA ROBERT SKENE CUP
Carpinteria, USA
- 13TH TO 15TH JULY
ASCONA POLO CUP
Ascona, Schweiz
- 20TH TO 29TH JULY
GERMAN POLO MASTERS SYLT –
SAL. OPPENHEIM GOLD CUP
Keitum (Sylt), Germany
- 19TH TO 29TH JULY
OPEN DE GASSIN
Gassin, France

- 22ND JULY
THE AUDI INTERNATIONAL DAY - THE CORONATION CUP
Windsor Great Park (London), Great Britain
- 27TH TO 29TH JULY
INTER-PROVINCIAL
Bergville, South Africa
- 28TH JULY TO 1ST SEPTEMBER
TORNEO INTERNACIONAL BMW DE POLO
Sotogrande, Spain
- 1ST TO 12TH AUGUST
USPA PIAGET SILVER CUP
Palm Beach, USA
- 3RD TO 12TH AUGUST
GERMAN HIGH GOAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
Berlin, Germany
- 16TH TO 19TH AUGUST
HUBLOT POLO GOLD CUP
Gstaad, Switzerland
- 1ST TO 16TH SEPTEMBER
OPEN DE FRANCE
Apremont, France
- 6TH TO 16TH SEPTEMBER
EUROPEAN POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS
Maspe (Hannover), Germany
- 09.TH TO 23.TH SEPTEMBER
JOCKEY CLUB OPEN
Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 25TH SEPTEMBER TO 14TH OCTOBER
TORTUGAS OPEN
Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 6TH TO 7TH OCTOBER
KURRI BURRI CLUB TOURNAMENT
Richmond, Australia
- 7TH OCTOBER
THE JEEP AUSTRALIAN OPEN
Doomben, Australia
- 16TH OCTOBER TO 4TH NOVEMBER
119 HURLINGHAM OPEN
Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1ST NOVEMBER TO 1ST DECEMBER
NORTH AMERICAN CUP
Wellington, USA
- 17TH NOVEMBER TO 8TH DECEMBER
119 ARGENTINE OPEN
Buenos Aires, Argentina

POLO+10
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