

POLO +10 WORLD

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POLO+10 CONNECTIONS

Since 2004, POLO+10 has been reporting on Polo, mainly in Europe. Our international edition POLO+10 World covers worldwide polo connections and is published twice yearly.



Now, on the eve of its 10th birthday, the POLO+10 team has once again enjoyed taking in a deep breath of air from the international polo scene and proudly presents the new issue of our international POLO+10 World magazine.

Dr. Richard T. Caleel, President of the Federation of International Polo (FIP) since December, explains to POLO+10 in an interview what direction the international federation intends to take to fight for more transparency and more visibility of the polo sport. Polo is possibly to be featured at the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Normandy and that would enhance the sport’s public profile considerably.

We should also mention what a fantastic warm welcome we received in March in Paris and Chantilly when we started to prepare the first French edition of POLO+10. This issue of POLO+10 World already offers a preview on that new magazine with a huge reporting about polo in France. At the peak of the season, in September, up to three tournaments run parallelly on the nine playing fields in Chantilly and the quality of the ground is sensational. In 2012, Chantilly was host to nearly fifty tournaments, with sixty-five teams coming just for the French Federation’s venues. And of course we have gathered polo news and connections from all over the world again.

We hope you enjoy reading this new issue of POLO+10 World and find much of interest in it. Please write to us if you want to give us any feedback, and if there’s a topic you find especially interesting, we’d like to know it. Our very best wishes until the next issue of POLO+10 World in October 2013. ●

STEFANIE STÜTING
Chief Editor POLO+10 World

On the cover is the world’s number one player Pablo MacDonough (+10). Mark Crislip took that wonderful photograph at the Tortugas Open in Argentina on october 14 last year. Pablo played there together with his team mates Adolfo Cambiaso (+10), David Stirling (+10) and Juan Martin Nero (+10) for the La Dolfina team, who defeated La Aguada with 16:9.



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BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA



Emirates Polo 14



48 The French Way



82 10 Goaler: Guillermo Caset



99 Marrakesh

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THE NEW MAN AT THE FIP

American Dr. Richard T. Caleel has been the president of the Federation of International Polo (FIP) since December, when he succeeded the Argentinian Eduardo Huergo, who headed the FIP for three years. POLO+10 spoke to Dr. Caleel about the FIP's main targets and aims and goals.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY FIP



Dr. Richard T. Caleel (right) is a global player. His activities as a doctor and a polo player have taken him around the globe. He has been in the saddle in more than twenty countries and battled it out against sporting greats such as Adolfo Cambiaso (left).

1
ST
CHUKKA



Passing the baton: At the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of International Polo in December, Dr. Richard T. Caleel was elected as the new president of the FIP, succeeding Eduardo Huergo (left).

DR. RICHARD T. CALEEL

Richard Thomas Caleel was born on September 16th 1936 in Detroit, Michigan, in the USA. His parents were Lebanese immigrants. After studying medicine in Detroit and Chicago, Caleel worked for twenty years in general surgery, then twenty-five years in cosmetic surgery. In 2006 he retired from medicine. His many years of acclaimed medical work brought him many awards and honours, including presidential appointments, and a papal knighthood for his volunteer work in India, Kenya and Papua New Guinea. Dr. Richard T. Caleel is married to Annette Canalia, a model from Chicago, and they had four children: Maria (deceased 1988), Thomas, Giovanna and Richard, all enthusiastic players of equestrian sports – while the women are passionate riders, the men are dedicated to polo. In his forty-year polo career that started in the Oakbrook Polo Club in Chicago, Dr. Caleel played in more than twenty countries throughout the world (grass, arena, snow and beach polo). His best handicap was +1. Following a back injury in 2011 he had to give up active involvement in playing polo.

Caleel has been an active member of the FIP since the 1990s and was responsible, among other things, for compliance with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Anti-Doping Code. He has also represented the FIP on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and other international organisations, such as the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). Now 76 years old, Dr. Caleel is a governor-at-large in the US Polo Association (USPA) and was chairman of the International Committee of the USPA. When he took over the office of FIP President, he was already a member of the Council of Administration of the FIP. Caleel currently lives and works in Santa Barbara, California, USA.

YOU WERE ELECTED PRESIDENT IN DECEMBER AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL POLO. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU BEING PRESIDENT OF THE FIP? It is an honor to be selected by my peers to represent the Federation of International Polo and to work on behalf of our sport of polo.

WHAT ARE YOUR MOST URGENT TARGETS AND AIMS OF YOUR WORK? The FIP has been fortunate, under my predecessor Eduardo Huergo, to grow substantially through contacts in China. We now have to budget carefully and spend wisely to ensure that the federation serves all its 87 members in developing their polo and to encourage the establishment of the sport in other countries in the world. One of my priorities during my presidency is to maintain a policy of transparency and good communications amongst our members and the wider polo community and to enhance the FIP's standing in the eyes of the general public as the global governing body of our great sport.

WHAT PLANS DOES THE FIP HAVE FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS? We have the 14th World Polo Cup coming up 2014, and, for the first time, polo exhibitions will be included in the 2014 FEI World Equestrian Games in Normandy, which we hope will lead eventually to polo becoming a regular competitive discipline in the games. Both these events will require substantial organisation and funding, a difficult task in the current economic climate. Also, several Ambassador Cups are planned for 2013. The next General Assembly is scheduled for Thursday, December 5, 2013 in Buenos Aires. FIP is growing rapidly and we encourage all of our members

to attend and participate in all FIP sponsored events. FIP is celebrating their 30th anniversary this year with a one year special logo, and soon to be released book documenting FIP's historical role as the worldwide governing body of polo.

HOW HAS THE SPORT OF POLO DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS? Polo has developed internationally at a very rapid pace. Also, women have assumed a very important position in the sport of polo with a constant increase in membership and in Women's Tournaments worldwide. Children's programs and training centers including umpire clinics have also developed very significantly over the past ten years. These are all very positive developments for the benefit of our sport.

IS THE FIP TRYING TO MAKE POLO MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR THE MEDIA, PARTICULARLY FOR TELEVISION? WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO SUCCEED IN THAT EFFORT? Media coverage has increased significantly for the sport of polo over the past years. Recently polo in China has been televised to a large audience. Internet streamings of recent international polo events have increased significantly. Print media has continued to increase in circulations and quality worldwide.

ARE YOU PROPOSING NEW STRATEGIC WAYS FOR THE FIP OR ARE YOU GOING TO FOLLOW THE POLITICAL PATH OF YOUR PREDECESSORS? FIP is involved in many development projects, for example the Marketing Committee is extremely active. We are producing an exhibition day at the World Equestrian Games for the first time in 2014 and we are negotiating for an Exhibition Polo Day at the 2014 Pan American Games.

WHAT ABOUT THE POWER OF THE "BIG3" (ARGENTINA, USA, ENGLAND)? ARE THEY WILLING TO ALLOW MORE INFLUENCE TO THE SMALLER POLO NATIONS? They've always been willing to work with the smaller polo nations. Those smaller nations are well represented on the Executive and the Council of Administration.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO ATTEND POLO VENUES THIS YEAR? Having just returned from the World's Snow Polo tournament in Tianjin, China, my future plans to attend polo venues this year include, the U.S. Open in Wellington (Florida), the FIP Ambassador's Cup in Palm Beach (Florida), both in April, Rome's Italian Gold Cup Polo Circuit Tournament in June, the Westchester Cup in England in July, the U.S. Pacific Coast Open in Santa Barbara (California) in September, back to China in October for the Super Nations Cup, the Argentine Open and the FIP Ambassador's Cup in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in December. Other venues may be added as time goes on. ●

“ONE OF MY PRIORITIES DURING MY PRESIDENCY IS TO MAINTAIN A POLICY OF TRANSPARENCY AND GOOD COMMUNICATIONS.”

DR. RICHARD T. CALEEL President FIP

FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL POLO: COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

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1 Dr. Caleel with his family in the 1980s on his farm near Chicago.
2 Awarding the FIP Snow Polo World Cup China 2013.

NEWS

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



NEW ZEALAND’S CHAMPIONS

The BMW NZ Polo Open in the Auckland Polo Club has been the sporting and social highlight of the New Zealand polo season for 36 years.

James Worker (+2), Glenn Sherriff (+4), Ignatius du Plessis (+8) and Kit Brooks (+4) of Team Veuve Clicquot are the victors in the 2013 BMW NZ Polo Open. In a nail-biting final, the four-man team won through in the Auckland Polo Club to beat Matt Bayley (+2), Craig Wilson (+6), Tommy Wilson (+7) and Pedro Harrison (+3) of Team Bayleys by 12:8. Tony van den Brink, President of Auckland Polo Club, says of the grandiose performance of the South African +8 goaler Ignatius du Plessis, “It was obvious from the start that Nachi was going to dominate the game, and that’s exactly what he did, and he scored most of the goals for Veuve Clicquot.” Bayleys played extremely well too, and it was a hard fight, but in the end Veuve Clicquot’s superiority showed through. Tony van den Brink says, “Bayleys played tremendously well together and were totally over the moon about beating the favourites, BMW, in the semi-final. But they really didn’t have a chance against Veuve Clicquot.”

A polo event with tradition – this was the 36th BMW New Zealand Polo Open in 2013. This +18 goal tournament in the Auckland Polo Club in Clevedon is one of the highlights of the New Zealand polo year.



POLO D’ELEGANCE

A dazzling first: the inaugural Polo d’Elegance Charity Match.

The Empire Polo Club played host to the very first Polo d’Elegance Charity Match at the end of March. Two high goal teams with team handicaps of +18 duelled to raise money for the Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley. One of the players was polo star and Ralph Lauren model Nacho Figueras (+6). “The success I have had with Ralph Lauren has given me more fame and publicity than polo has. So I am trying to use that publicity as a platform from which to promote the game I love so much, to make it more accessible to the general public.”

Beside Nacho Figueras in the saddle were Bash Kazi (0), Mariano Fassetta (+6) and Kris Kampsen (+6).



HIGH GOAL POLO IN ENGLAND

The Cartier Queen’s Cup and the Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup will again be among the highlights of the British polo season in 2013.

The Guards Polo Club has been host to the Cartier Queen’s Cup since 1960. This high goal tournament played on Smith’s Lawn in Windsor Great Park is one of the absolute highlights of the British polo season. The Queen’s Cup regularly attracts the world’s best players so that the teams’ line-up reads like a polo Who’s Who. This year, the high-calibre teams will be battling it out on Smith’s Lawn from 21 May to 16 June. The Cup is traditionally handed to the winning team by the Queen in person. The Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup for the British Open Polo Championship is another regular meeting of the international polo elite. Sixteen to twenty first-class teams will be competing for victory in the Cowdray Park Polo Club for five weeks between 25 June and 21 July. Another highlight taking place in the polo club near Midhurst is the Jaeger-LeCoultre Trippetts Challenge from 11 to 19 May. One of the highest-handicap tournaments is the Gloucestershire Cup. This +26-goal tournament will be taking place in the Cirencester Park Polo Club, some 150 kilometres north-west of London, from 18 to 23 June. Around a month later, from 23 July to 11 August, the Warwickshire Cup will also be held there. Another highlight of the British 2013 high goal season is the Prince of Wales Trophy, to be held in the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club near London from 8 to 15 June.



VERY BRITISH

British Polo Day bringing the British polo lifestyle to nine cities in 2013.

Although polo had been known for centuries in Asia before the British ‘discovered’ it, it was the British who were mainly responsible for the sport spreading around the world. And so British Polo Day is a world-wide celebration of the tradition and heritage of the world’s oldest team game.

Once again in 2013 there will be nine destinations around the globe. Starting in the cradle of British Polo Day in the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi and Dubai), the tour will be moving on to Germany, Great Britain, Russia, China, Singapore, Mexico and India. For more information about the British Polo Day, please visit www.britishpoloday.com

EMIRATES POLO

Polo is booming in the United Arab Emirates. The sport has been making huge strides in the Persian Gulf over the past few years. A look back over the polo highlights of the 2012-2013 seasons.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN





“OUR AIM IS TO PUT ON EVENTS OF THE STATURE OF THE US OPEN, THE ARGENTINE OPEN AND THE QUEEN’S CUP HERE AS WELL.”

MOHAMMED AL HABTOOR initiator of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series

The idea of British Polo Day was created five years ago in the United Arab Emirates. Now it encompasses ten destinations around the world. In the picture: British Polo Day 2013 in the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club, won for the third time in a row by Team Habtoor.



POLO

ADCB LONG LIVE AMBITION

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Trophy presentation at the 2012 Pink Polo in Abu Dhabi. Team St. Regis comprising Abdulla Bin Desmal (0), Ahmed Bin Desmal (0), Nasser Al Shamsi (+1) and Nicolas Petrachi (+4) beat the defending champions ADCB in the Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club.



The Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club is one of the region's main polo destinations.

The best-known and most prestigious event in the region is the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series. For one-and-a-half months teams and players from around the world battle it out in February and March for the Silver and Gold Cups. Mohammed Al Habtoor, the initiator of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series, says, “The Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series has made a major contribution to the popularity of the sport in the United Arab Emirates. Before we started the series in 2010 polo was mainly played for fun here. Now players play to be the best. Without competition there’s no success. It’s exactly that element of competition that’s so important for the sport of polo here.” The tournament is held in the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club. Founded in 2006, the club has two polo fields and a training area, and is one of the region’s main polo destinations. Mahra Alfalasi of the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club says, “The quality and quantity of the tournaments in Dubai have risen incredibly in the past few years. Our aim is to raise the bar even further by having more and better tournaments and improving our work with young, up-and-coming players in the Dubai Polo Academy. As well as improving our clubhouse facilities for events with more than 5,000 visitors, we’re planning to host an Ambassador’s Cup in 2014.”



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1 Facundo Sola (+8) of Team Ghantoot at the 2013 Dubai Polo Silver Cup **2** The winners of the 2013 Dubai Polo Gold Cup: Ali Al Merri (0), Pelayo Berazadi (+4), Juan Zubiaurre Canal (+4) and Facundo Sola (+8) of Team Ghantoot **3** Zedan versus Abu Dhabi at the 2013 Dubai Polo Gold Cup.



Coutts Polo at the Palace celebrated a grand premiere at the end of November 2012. The four-team tournament was held on a specially laid out polo field in the gardens of the Five-Star Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi Hotel, probably the world's most luxurious and spectacular hotel. Rory Heron, CEO of the event organiser City Events Ltd., says, "Coutts Polo at the Palace has brought polo to the heart of Abu Dhabi for the first time. We are immensely pleased that the première went so well and hope that the spectators enjoyed it as much as we did. We're already looking forward to this year's event."

Polo in the UAE: prestigious tournaments, international players and renowned clubs.

The major tournament in Abu Dhabi is the H.H. President of UAE Polo Cup in the Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club. In 2013 five teams with team handicaps of +16 competed over two weeks for victory. The Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club was founded by HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan in 1994 and is now under the patronage of his son, Sheikh Falah Bin Zayed Al Nayhan. The club covers an area of 300 hectares, with eight polo fields and stabling for more than 300 polo ponies. The Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club is one of the region's most prestigious polo clubs and is the only one in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Another event held in the Ghantoot Racing & Polo Club in November 2012 was the third Pink Polo event. The organisers' aim was to focus public attention more strongly on the issue of breast cancer and increase awareness of the disease. Carrie McNeill, the initiator of the event, says, "Breast cancer is the most frequent cancer diagnosis here, but the cultural background in the Middle East means that it's a totally taboo subject. I started Pink Polo because I wanted to create an event that would provide information



4 Polo action in the 2013 H.H. President of UAE Polo Cup
5 In November 2012 the Coutts Polo at the Palace tournament celebrated its première in front of the Emirates Palace
6 Talking shop at the 2012 Pink Polo in Abu Dhabi.

Image: Dominic James/Pink Polo Abu Dhabi

about breast cancer, but also be fun – for men as well as women. Hardly anyone knows that breast cancer can affect men as well. In any case, it’s culturally very important to get the approval and support of the men in the family.”

Perspectives on the future: big visions and ambitious aims, but a lot of challenges too.

The United Arab Emirates are also the birthplace of British Polo Day, a tradition that started here five years ago and is now hugely popular around the world. British Polo Day now takes place in ten countries. In 2013 it kicked off with events in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Tom Hudson, co-founder of British Polo Day, says, “The idea for British Polo Day started off in the United Arab Emirates. We have a similar tradition and love of horses to the British. The event has grown organically over the years through word of mouth and the turnout has been spectacular. The friendly rivalry and alumni present always creates a very special atmosphere.”

The Emirates showed pioneer spirit with Beach Polo too – the world’s first Beach Polo tournament was held in Dubai in 2004. Players and fans alike were thrilled by the action on the sand, so much so that it went on to conquer the globe. After a few years’ break, Beach Polo is now going back to its roots – the Julius Bär Beach Polo Cup is taking place in Dubai on 19th and 20th April 2013.

Another of the highlights of the polo season in the United Arab Emirates is the International Dubai Polo Challenge. This renowned tournament in the Dubai Desert Palm Polo Club was held in 2013 for the eighth time. Mohammed Al Habtoor, who, with his Habtoor Polo organisation has been a huge supporter of polo in the United Arab Emirates for many years, has big plans for the future. “It’s important for us to make our tournaments and possibilities known around the world,” he says. “We have good horses and polo fields, and most importantly we have the necessary money. So our teams and players must play all over the world to gain experience and build up an international network. Our aim is to put on events of the stature of the US Open, the Argentine Open and the Queen’s Cup here as well. We need to organise the polo here. If we don’t have a committee, a proper tournament schedule and proper umpiring, then people will not have the trust to come and participate with us. And we still have too few polo fields, but we’re working hard on that.” Tom Hudson of British Polo Day adds, “Almost everyone who lives in the United Arab Emirates goes to see a polo match at least once every season. But polo has become almost too popular. It’s hard to organise all the polo fixtures without clashes occurring. It’s incredible the way the sport has developed here. At the end of every season we say that was the best and most successful yet, and then we always go one better the next time. I’m looking forward to some great surprises in the season ahead.”

•



Emirates Palace plays host to a spectacular cultural calendar including host for the Middle East International Film Festival, the largest Hotel Art Gallery with regular exhibitions, popular and classical music concert programme.

EMIRATES PALACE IN ABU DHABI

Built as an iconic landmark showcasing Arabian culture and hospitality at its finest, Emirates Palace, managed by Kempinski, has created an enviable niche in luxury hospitality welcoming world leaders, celebrities and global business travellers.

PHOTOGRAPHY EMIRATES PALACE

The Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi provides its guests a truly memorable and unique experience, luxurious contemporary facilities and amenities in comfortable and traditional Arabian surroundings with personalized world class service. Situated on a 1.3 km stretch of private white pristine beach and on 100 hectares of manicured lawns and lush landscaped gardens, Emirates Palace comprises 394 luxury rooms and suites and a variety of award winning dining options. The resort’s leisure facilities include two intricately landscaped swimming pools one to refresh and relax and one perfectly designed for adventure and family fun, an Anantara spa, tennis courts, and a state of the art fitness centre. Emirates Palace houses the most luxurious and technologically advanced meeting facilities in the region which

include an auditorium with up to 1,100 seats, the ballroom for up to 2400 guests, over 40 meeting rooms, a Media Centre and a Business Centre and outdoor venue capacity for up to 20,000 guests. As a world-class leader in the Meetings, Incentive, Conference and Events market, Emirates Palace plays host to a spectacular cultural calendar including host for the Middle East International Film Festival, the largest Hotel Art Gallery with regular exhibitions, popular and classical music concert programme. With a FIFA standard football pitch and home to Manchester City’s winter training ground, Emirates Palace offers the best in world sports action.

For more information, please visit www.emiratespalace.ae



Image: hesbeck - Fotolia.com

AMERICA

POLO IN

A foray through the history of polo in the United States.

BY ALEX WEBBE



Polo action at the International Polo Club Palm Beach: Sugar Erskine (team Coca Cola) and Magoo Laprida (team Villa Del Lago).



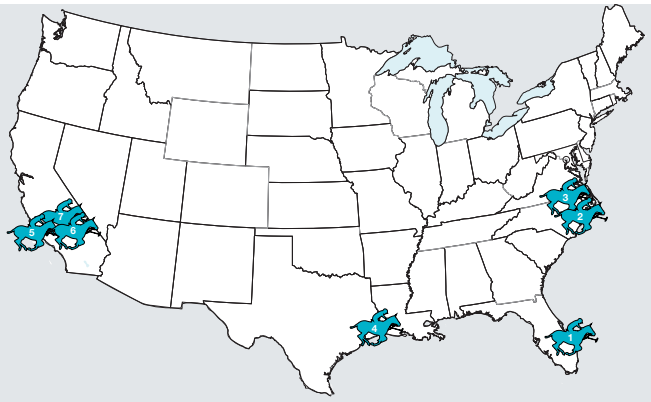
AMERICA'S TOP POLO CLUBS:

1. International Polo Club Palm Beach
Wellington, FL
2. Bridgehampton Polo Club
Bridgehampton, NY
3. Greenwich Polo Club
Greenwich, CT
4. Houston Polo Club
Houston, TX
5. Santa Barbara Polo Club
Carpinteria, CA
6. Empire Polo Club
Indio, CA
7. Eldorado Polo Club
Indio, CA

AMERICA'S TOP PLAYERS INCLUDE:



- Julio Arellano-9-goals
Polito Pieres-8-goals
Nic Roldan-8-goals
Mike Azzaro-7-goals
Stuart Erskine-7-goals
Luis Escobar-7-goals
Jeff Hall-7-goals
Jeff Blake-6-goals
Jason Crowder-6-goals
Pelon Escapite-6-goals
Hector Galindo-6-goals
Kris Kampsen-6-goals
Owen Rinehart-6-goals
Adam Snow-6-goals
Santi Torres-6-goals

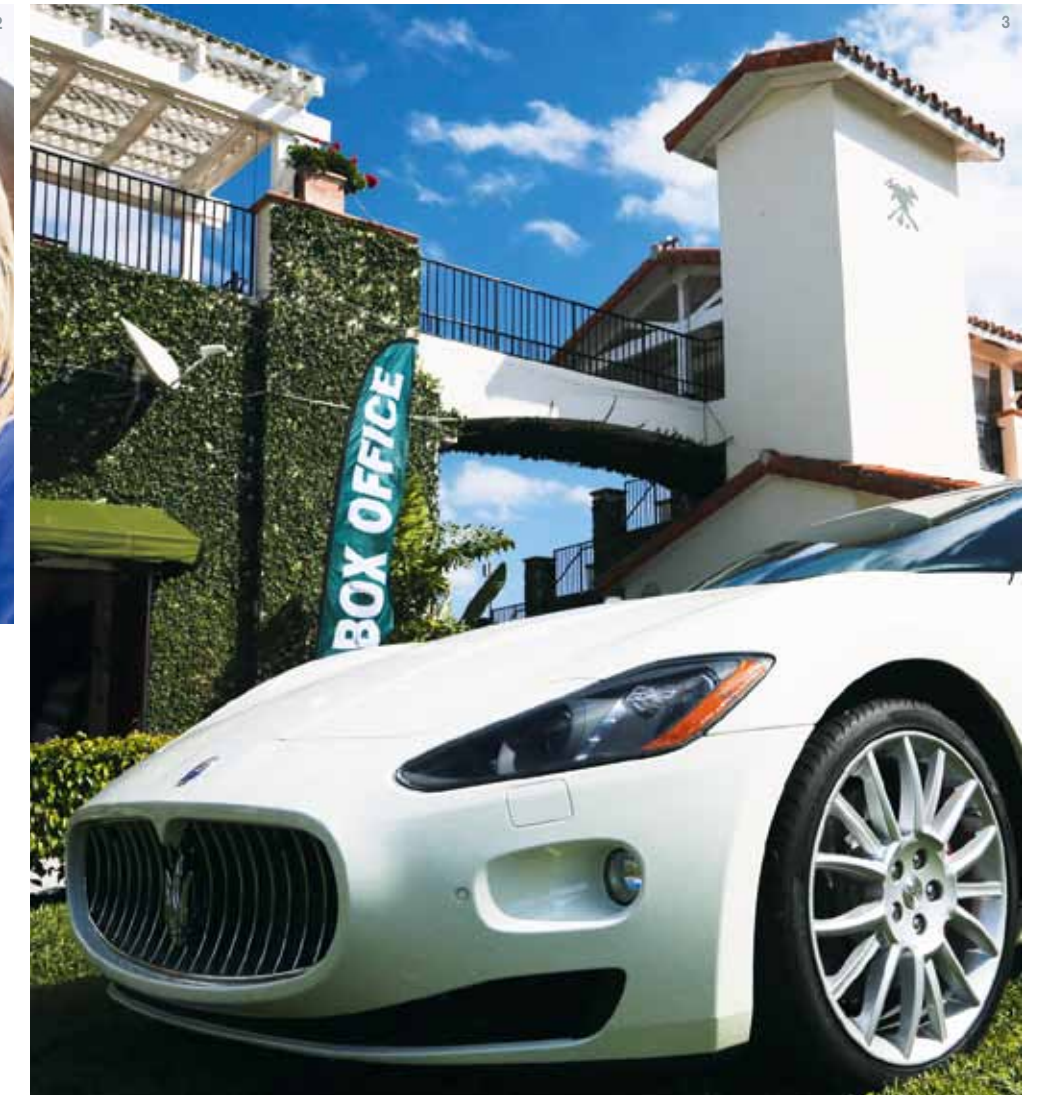


The major clubs in the country today are led by the International Polo Club in Wellington, Florida that hosts a series of four 20-goal tournaments and three 26-goal tournaments that include the C.V. Whitney Cup, the USPA Piaget Gold Cup and the U.S. Open. The International Polo Club continues to attract every 10-goaler in the game and many of the world's top players for the club's four month season.

Image: LULA PHOTOS



1 For the finals of the USPA Piaget Gold Cup, Piaget showcased its Couture Precieuse Collection to the delight of member and spectators at the International Polo Club
 2 The International Polo Club Palm Beach celebrated its 10th Anniversary Season with actress Bo Derek, "The Perfect 10", doing the ceremonial honors
 3 USPA Maserati 109th U.S. Polo Championship is sponsored by Maserati from March 31 – April 21, 2013. Press and media guests were treated to a "Ride & Drive" day at the International Polo Club
 4 Adolfo Cambiaso at the U.S. Polo Open 2013
 5 the winners of the USPA Piaget Gold Cup 2013: Bob Jornayvaz (0), Pelon Stirling (+10), Adolfo Cambiaso (+10) and Santi Torres (+6) of the Team Valiente
 6 U.S. Open Trophy
 7 Dramatic action shot during the 26-goal Piaget Gold Cup.



HAVING A YARD IS OVERRATED. LIVING IN THE ENGLISH GARDEN ISN'T.

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6



6 Established in 1987, Empire Polo Club has been an intricate part of polo history here in the California desert. Empire Polo Club has put together a fun polo season filled with competitive polo tournaments, parties and many opportunities to meet new people. Games are open to the public and spectators are invited to attend matches throughout the season. 7 Pricegiving at the Grand Champions Polo Club 8 Team Audi winning at the Grand Champions Polo Club in Wellington in Florida which is focused on building player skills, teamwork and quality polo throughout the year.



The history of polo in the United States dates back to the year 1876 when publisher/sportsman James Gordon Bennett was said to have returned from Europe with a supply of polo mallets and balls, sent off to Texas for a carload of ponies and the game was introduced to America. Within ten years, there were major clubs all over the east including Long Island.

Over the next 50 years, polo achieved tremendous popularity in the United States.

By the 1930's, polo was an Olympic sport and crowds in excess of 30,000 regularly attended international matches at the Meadow Brook Polo Club on Long Island, but there was a definite divide between the Eastern United States and the Western United States. Although polo was introduced to the United States on both coasts at roughly the same time, there was no initial coordination between the two forces. In Cali-

fornia a group of British expatriates got the game going and even created their own polo association, the California Polo Pony and Racing Association, playing under British rules. The year 1909 marked the first time Californians started joining the U. S. Polo Association, but cultural differences would remain one hundred years later. The major clubs in the country today are led by the International Polo Club in Wellington, Florida that hosts a series of four 20-goal tournaments and three 26-goal tournaments that include the C.V. Whitney Cup, the USPA Piaget Gold Cup and the U.S. Open. The International Polo Club continues to attract every 10-goaler in the game and many of the world's top players for the club's four month season.

Florida's Gulfstream Polo Club in neighboring Lake Worth remains as the longest continuously operating polo facility in Florida and features medium and low goal play. The fact that there are nearly 70 polo fields in the Wellington area

The world-renowned spa resort in the foothills of the Black Forest in Southern Germany

Baden-Baden



Baden-Baden, the elegant spa and event town with its international flair, offers health and relaxation of the finest kind with its modern Caracalla Spa, the historic baths of the Friedrichsbad and its numerous spa hotels. Romantically located at the heart of the Black Forest, only a few minutes away from Alsace, the green, picturesque town, where everything is within easy reach, impresses with its wide ranging, top quality offer: wellness and beauty, the magnificent gardens of the “Lichtentaler Allee”, exclusive shopping, a host of

museums where art can be cherished and numerous open air events. Kids and families can find extensive leisure activities nearby as, for example, the Europa Park, one of the world’s leading theme parks. In the evening, the first-class restaurants, the world-famous casino, the Festspielhaus – Europe’s second largest concert hall & opera house, the Theater and the “Kurhaus” – the social meeting point of the city – attract and allow holidaymakers to round off a fulfilling day in style. ■

Please find below some exclusive Baden-Baden event highlights 2013

July 12th to 14th, Kurhaus
International Vintage Car Meeting
Every year the Kurhaus garden turns into an open air museum when more than 350 vintage cars of all brands and types are on show in front of the Kurhaus

July 12th and 13th, Castle Neuweier in Baden-Baden’s wine region “Rebland”
Philharmonic Castle Concerts
The Baden-Baden Philharmonic Orchestra will entertain with top-class classical music in the illuminated courtyard of Castle Neuweier

August 24th to September 2nd, Race course Baden-Baden/Iffezheim
International Horse Races “Great Festival Week”
Sportive and social highlight of the year

August 31st, Kurhaus
Grand Prix Ball
The Gala happening of the year on the occasion of the International Horse Races

November 2nd, Kurhaus
World Dance Gala
Rendezvous of the World Champions. Extraordinary dance contest with world’s best dancing formations and couples

November 25th to December 30th, City Center
Christmas Market
One of the region’s largest and prettiest Christmas markets located in front of the impressive Kurhaus building in the heart of Baden-Baden



INFORMATION, EVENTS, BOOKING: Baden-Baden Kur & Tourismus GmbH, Solmsstraße 1, 76530 Baden-Baden, Germany, Tel: +49(0)7221-275 200, info@baden-baden.com, www.facebook.com/badenbaden

www.baden-baden.com

Image: LILA PHOTOS



Beautiful audience at the International Polo Club.

alone is a testament to the commitment to polo in the area. When the summer season rolls in, the high-goal players disperse with a number of them traveling to the Bridgehampton Polo Club in New York and the Greenwich Polo Club in Connecticut where a series of 20-goal games are played. Others players make the trek west to Houston, Texas and Santa Barbara, California, but there are hundreds of alternate options for lower-rated players. Houston continues to be a strong link between the cowboy of the west and the game of polo while the Santa Barbara Polo Club is over 100 years old. Home of the Pacific Coast Open and a number of additional 20-goal tournaments, the Santa Barbara Polo Club is the most important polo club in the west, in the summer. In the winter Californians make the trip to the Palm Springs, home of the Empire and Eldorado polo clubs, once the winter home for high-goal polo in the west. Today the competition is capped at the medium goal level with efforts being made to return it to its glory days.

Today there are over 250 clubs with a total USPA membership reported at 4,353.

The number of women players continues to expand and junior and collegiate programs are steadily growing, and clubs are finding the prospect of building a playing membership around arena polo an attractive alternative.

The Mashomack and the Southampton Polo Clubs in New York service a strong following of lower-goal players and the historic Saratoga Polo club continues to serve up a steady

schedule of tournaments and matches as well. The Westchester Polo Club in Portsmouth, Rhode Island continues to have great success with their “international series” attracting thousands of spectators to cheer on local favorites and visiting foreign teams in the 2-4 goal range. Smaller clubs flourish throughout the Midwest and renewed growth in both the southwestern and northwestern United States are promising signs of continued growth of the game. Inter-scholastic and Intercollegiate programs are supported by youth programs throughout the country in an effort to educate and instruct potential players of the future and the certification of umpires and instructors by the USPA serves to reinforce the training process. The recent revival of the John R. Townsend International Challenge Cup, and arena competition that was first introduced in 1923, has returned, with England sending teams to compete against the United States at California’s Empire Polo Club and Palm Beach Polo & Country Club in Wellington, Florida has created a tradition of Friday night polo under the lights in an arena that was constructed just last year.

The influx of revenue to United States Polo Association by its brand marketing of products and apparel has generated a cash flow that has allowed it to greatly expand its services to member clubs and players. A number of Regional Polo Centers have been created to assist in the training and instruction of aspiring and current players; USPA tournaments at all levels have been organized across the country while Umpire training programs are being modified and refined. ●

AUSTRIAN^{POLO}

Reigning European polo vice-champion Austria is getting off to a good start in the 2013 polo season, with eight tournaments lined up in all in the Schloss Ebreichsdorf Polo Club. And preparations for the coming season are well under way in the new Schloss Niederweiden Polo Club as well.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN

Images (2): Power Horse



1st CHUKKA • POLO+10 WORLD 39

Walter Scherb (+1), Gerhard Hermann (+1), Martin Bleier (+2) and Diego Braun (+4) still get a tingle of excitement when they think of the final of the 2012 European Polo Championships in the Santa Maria Polo Club in Sotogrande in Spain. Although the four of them were soundly beaten 8:2 by the Spanish favourites, the Austrian national team was nonetheless thrilled to receive the title of European Polo Vice-Champion. National player Gerhard Hermann says, “We hadn’t expected to get that far in the European Championships. That was without a doubt the greatest achievement of the Austrian national team.”

The coming polo season promises to be another good one for sporting performance. In all, eight tournaments are lined up for 2013 in the Schloss Ebreichsdorf Polo Club calendar. When Baron Richard Drasche-Wartinberg founded the club just outside Vienna in 1991, he unleashed a renaissance for the sport of polo in Austria. The Schloss Ebreichsdorf Polo Club is now one of the most important polo locations in the Alpine region and a meeting place for international players and high society. The 65-hectare park includes four playing fields and stables for 130 polo ponies. Richard Drasche-Wartinberg, President of the Schloss Ebreichsdorf Polo Club and President of the Austrian Polo Association, says, “We can look forward to some high-quality, challenging tournaments again this season. I’m really excited by the prospect of the wide range of tournaments from the Youth Trophy (-2 to +2) right through to the top tournament (+8 to +12) and am very pleased to have already got the line-ups fixed for the eight excellent teams from Austria

and around the world for each of the three Spring tournaments, the Spring Cup, the Slovakia Open and the Austrian Polo Open.” The sporting and social highlight is sure to be the Austrian Polo Open. With a handicap of +8 to +12, exciting high-calibre polo is guaranteed. But as well as sport, the focus here is on the ‘good cause’ – since 2011 the Schloss Ebreichsdorf Polo Club has been supporting the pink ribbon campaign of the Austrian Cancer Aid fund, and this year’s tournament, too, from 14th to 16th and 21st to 23rd August, will again be showing the pink ribbon and doing its bit for the fight against breast cancer.

High-class polo has been played in eastern Lower Austria since 2012 as well, after polo player and horseman Dr. Gerhard Hermann bought the old Schloss Niederweiden estate and restored and extended it with great love and commitment, making a dream come true by building a new polo club on the 80-hectare site. The first polo tournament took place in the Schloss Niederweiden Polo Club in 2012, and the national team player has ambitious plans for 2013. “In 2013, we’ll be able to play on two big fields and a training ground in the Polo Club Schloss Niederweiden. The first season highlight will be the Niederweiden Cup, a +6 to +9 goal tournament, from 24 to 26 May. We’re planning another +6 goal tournament for the Summer.” Richard Drasche-Wartinberg is pleased that Austria has a new polo location, too. “I welcome Dr. Gerhard Hermann as a new tournament organiser and wish him all the very best for his new Schloss Niederweiden Polo Club and the tournaments he’s planning.”●

2013 TOURNAMENTS AT THE SCHLOSS EBREICHSDORF POLO CLUB

Spring Cup (+4 to +6)
3rd to 5th and 10th to 12th May

Slovakia Open (+7 to +9)
31st May to 2nd June

Austrian Polo Open (+8 to +12)
14th to 16th and 21st to 23rd June

Summer Cup (0 to +4)
5th to 7th and 12th to 14th July

Amateur Generations Cup (-2 to +2)
26th to 28th July

Amateur Cup (-2 to +3)
23rd to 25th August

President’s Cup (+6 to +8)
6th to 8th and 13th to 15th September

Youth Trophy (-2 to +2)
TBA

Image: Stefanie Stilling



Coutts | Polo at The Palace

The sport of kings is coming back to Emirates Palace in November 2013.

This exclusive two day event, in the regal setting of the iconic Emirates Palace will see teams from around the world compete once again for the Coutts Polo Cup.

Come and watch all the excitement on the field, whilst experiencing the exquisite service and hospitality of the Emirates Palace.

Mark this weekend as one of the most important events of the year.

VIP tickets and corporate hospitality packages available.

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MAX MAILLIET

Big plans in Luxembourg: POLO+10 interview with Max Mailliet, polo player, member of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Sporting Committee of the Polo Club Luxembourg.

INTERVIEW STEFANIE STÜTING PHOTOGRAPHY POLO CLUB LUXEMBOURG

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2012 POLO SEASON FOR THE POLO CLUB LUXEMBOURG?

There were several highlights this summer here in Luxembourg. We have a really successful and exciting season to look back on. We had two tournaments in July, one of them being the President's Cup. In August we held the Summer Special Games and finished the season in the last weekend of September with what has become our traditional Closing Chukka.

WHAT TOURNAMENTS OUTSIDE LUXEMBOURG HAVE YOU AND YOUR FELLOW CLUB MEMBERS PLAYED IN?

Our club members have played in the Benelux Polo Festival in Antwerp and the Coupe Franco-Luxembourg-geoise in Chantilly, among others. A few of our players have also represented the club in Frankfurt and Bad Homburg, and in La Baule and the Polo Club des Alpilles in France, as well as playing in a lot of other tournaments.

HOW DID YOU START PLAYING POLO AND WHAT DO YOU FIND FASCINATING ABOUT IT?

I started playing polo through my father, who is in fact the President of our club. In 2007 the Polo Club Luxembourg organised the first Polo Days, a week of events in which people can get a taste for the game. I was hooked from the start, and along with several other enthusiastic rookies started playing polo in the very next season. I have been more and more fascinated by the sport ever since. I'm especially thrilled by the interplay between man and animal and the speed of the game as well as the fact that it's also a team sport in which the cohesion of the team can be constantly developed.

WHAT ARE THE POLO CLUB'S GOALS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD?

Looking to the year ahead, we're working especially on our infrastructure. This year we've already sown



POLO PROGRAM LUXEMBOURG 2013

Opening Polo Days, 27th and 28th April 2013 • Coupe du Grand - Duc, 23rd June 2013 • Luxembourg Open, 5th and 7th July 2013 • Coupe du President, 13rd and 14th July 2013 • Summer games, 4th August 2013 • Chantilly, 31st August and 1st September 2013 • Closing Chukkas, 5th and 6th October 2013

a second field that can be played on from the spring of 2013. We're also expanding our sporting schedule. In 2012 we held our first small one-day tournaments here in the Polo Club, and that's something we want to continue with next year. Our general goals for the year ahead are to concentrate on intensively promoting and developing our sporting schedule and the organising of tournaments, with teams from abroad as well.

HOW MANY MEMBERS, PLAYERS AND HORSES DO YOU HAVE AT THE MOMENT?

At the moment we have about twenty active players and thirty horses, but the number of active players and club members is rising steadily year by year. •

For more information on the web, please visit www.poloclub.lu



2ND CHUKKA



The SPA is planning to hold the first Swiss Junior Polo Championship in July 2013.

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS FEDIER

The President of the Swiss Polo Association (SPA), Thomas Fedier, has been telling POLO+10 about the 2012 Swiss polo season and the SPA's plans for 2013.

INTERVIEW JULIETTE RAHN PHOTOGRAPHY FRANK OSSENBRINK

HOW WOULD YOU SUM UP THE 2012 POLO SEASON IN SWITZERLAND FOR YOU PERSONALLY?
I'm pleased that nearly all the tournaments planned in the various classifications have gone off smoothly and in a sporting fashion without any injuries. As well as the Zurich Polo Park and Polo Club de Veytay, Polo Bern AG has been operational again. The excellent tournament organisation provided by the Polo Club Gstaad and Polo Club de Veytay made up in part for the rather depressing impression made by tournaments having to be called off. I'd like to mention especially the commitment of individual clubs in promoting junior players.

WHAT WERE THE 2012 HIGHLIGHTS?
As well as the Polo Gold Cup in Gstaad, the Jaeger-LeCoultre Trophy in Geneva and the Swiss Championships in Low and Medium Goal we have been making great efforts to get trade mark protection for the Swiss Polo Association (SPA) brand and logo. The royalties that brings in will be used to promote junior players in the future.

WHAT YOUNG UP-AND-COMING TALENT HAVE YOU NOTICED IN PARTICULAR?
Both Zurich and Geneva now have twenty junior members aged between seven and eighteen. The two clubs are making great efforts to encourage and support young talent. Seventeen-year-old Edouard Costes (-1) has already played in the Jaeger-LeCoultre tournament in Geneva, while Zurich's thirteen-year-old Thommy Gräff has also entered various tournaments. But other talent has been discovered apart from those two, and the hope is that sooner or later they'll all be representing Switzerland at international level.

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR 2013?
Plans for 2013 were recently discussed at our annual general meeting. As a logical consequence of our promotion of young players, the first Swiss Junior Polo Championship is to be held in July 2013, possibly with players from abroad as well. We recently admitted a new polo club, the Legacy Polo Club, as a member of the Swiss Polo Association. •



ASCONA

A scintillatingly beautiful polo destination on the banks of Lago Maggiore has won the public's hearts: the Polo Club Ascona.

BY STEFANIE STÜTING



Image: Joelle M – Fotolia.com

POLO+10 INTERVIEW WITH THE CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF THE POLO CLUB ASCONA, UWE ZIMMERMANN.

HOW DID THE 2012 ASCONA POLO CUP GO COMPARED TO LAST YEAR?

The 2012 Ascona Polo Cup was a complete success. In short, crowds of high-calibre visitors, great decorations, amazing food including service and of course excellent polo at the highest level. We are totally satisfied and have once more managed to live up to our aim of giving our guests and the players an absolute treat every year.

HOW DID THE MAHARAJA OF JAIPUR COME TO SEND THE FABRIC FOR DECORATING FOR THE VIP TENT?

We have known the Maharaja and his family since 2006, when we first played polo in India, in Patiala. While we were in Jaipur and New Delhi that year to play polo, we saw those wonderful decorations in the tents and thought it would be a great idea to use them for Ascona as well. So our friend Vikram Rathore was then kind enough to organise everything for us. The theme for the whole polo event in Ascona in 2013 is India, with decorations to match, and we are looking forward to welcoming our Indian friends to the tournament as active players. There will also be players from the USA entering Ascona in 2013, and there will be VIPs coming from all over Switzerland and the rest of Europe. But that's not the main thing for us, of course; the main thing is to organise an event that's family and visitor-friendly.

ARE YOU PLANNING ANY OTHER CHANGES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD?

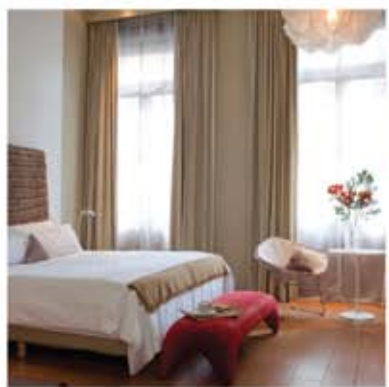
As I've said, the theme for 2013 is India, and we're planning a great event with plenty of wonderful and amazing details. Our event is getting more and more international every year, so of course our sponsors are looking forward to introducing themselves to whole new groups of potential customers.

WHAT DO THE LOCALS THINK OF THE POLO EVENT?

We are very proud of the fact that the local population has responded so well to our event. It's very important to our organisation that we appeal to families and anybody who has yet to come into contact with our sport to give them a feel for the atmosphere of a tournament and the fantastic fascination of polo.

esplendor

HOTEL BUENOS AIRES



EVITA, EL CHE, PERON AND MARADONA BY MONDONGO ART COLLECTIVE

A hotel inspired by art. Located in downtown Buenos Aires, offers 51 rooms, playroom, breakfast room and restaurant. It combines a neo-Renaissance style with cutting edge interiors and an exhibition of the famous Mondongo Art Collective.

Image: Kristina Zimmermann



The traditional parade of polo players through the centre of Ascona.

WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES THE ATMOSPHERE IN TESSIN SO SPECIAL FOR YOU?

We have the optimal combination of several factors here – weather, location, local and international public, highly-motivated sponsors and own well-tuned Polo Club Ascona team, as well as of course the opportunity of inviting friends to come and play and watch in one of the most beautiful places in Europe.

WILL THERE BE ANY NEW SPONSORS NEXT YEAR?

Yes, we are very glad to have Hublot as new title sponsor, we have sponsors from India as well as almost certainly being able to welcome new European sponsors. But the most important thing for us in our relations with sponsors is continuity. After all, it's the quality and visibility of our (team) sponsors that sets the tone for the tournament. Ascona offers participating companies and partners an ideal environment for presenting themselves and their products and reaching a highly-interesting network.

ARE YOU PROUD OF HOW WELL YOUR SON PHILIPP IS PLAYING ALREADY?

Yes, I'm very proud of Philipp and like any father I'm sure I'm very pleased that he and soon his younger brother Maxi as well (he made his first appearance in the Charity Polo this year) are carrying on the family sport.

“OUR AIM IS TO
GIVE GUESTS AND PLAYERS
AN ABSOLUTE TREAT
EVERY YEAR.”

UWE ZIMMERMANN Polo player and host of the Ascona Polo Cup

I'm astounded at how calmly and composedly the next generation are going to work and how technically sophisticated they are. It confirms the rule that getting into the sport young really pays off. As parents we're grateful of course that we've been able to pass on our enthusiasm for polo to our children and give them the chance actively to pursue the sport.

ARE YOU PLANNING ANY OTHER NEW POLO PROJECTS FOR 2013?

2013 should definitely be seeing the first polo tournament in Slovenia. That's a project I've been working on for some time. We're starting 2013 as co-organisers with the Polo Club in Jaipur in India with our own team and Swiss sponsors. Preparations for our tournaments in Gut Basthorst, Budapest and Ascona are well under way as well. ●

You can find more information on the Ascona Polo Cup in the web at www.poloclubascona.ch

THE FRENCH WAY

France is one of the most successful polo nations in Europe and will get a new POLO+10 issue in french language which is coming out in May/June 2013.

BY STEFANIE STÜTING



Image: P. Renaudon/RE Presse

During the high season there are up to 700 horses lodged at the Polo Club Chantilly.



Image: Antoine Delaporte

The Lawyers' Polo Association is designed to bring together people who share a career in law and a passion for polo (either as players or polo ponies' breeders). Goal of the founders Eduardo L. Bérèterbide and Justin R.G. Fogarty is to organize an annual tournament in the city hosting the International Bar Association's annual conference. 2012 the Lawyers Polo Cup was held in Chantilly.



Image: Stefanie Stütting

The castle of Chantilly and at the bottom right an overview of the club facilities and playgrounds of the Polo Club Chantilly.



Image: Antoine Delaporte

The Polo Club du Domaine de Chantilly offers nine polo fields of an outstanding quality. About 50 tournaments have been held here in 2012.



Winners of the first Open de France Féminin 2012 have been the Ladies of the Team "In the Wings Tom Tailor Centre Porsche Roissy", Tahnee (0) and Naomi Schröder (+1) with Lia Salvo (+8) and Lavinia Fabre (+1).

Mid-March. An icy wind is sweeping over the last snow of a never-ending winter lying on the playing field of the Chantilly Polo Club. Here, barely an hour's drive from Paris, a devoted polo community is meeting up on this Saturday morning to train. The official polo season is from April to the end of October, with an overflowing diary of events attracting a Who's Who of French and international polo, but even now, before the season starts, things are buzzing at the Polo Club du Domaine de Chantilly. Stick & ball sessions with a few practice chukkas on the snow-covered field are obligatory even in minus temperatures.

Chantilly, with its wide, green fields, stretching away to the horizon as they have for hundreds of years, and yet only forty minutes from the Eiffel Tower. There are nine fantastic playing fields here. So it's no wonder that this is home to the country's major tournaments. Patrick Guerrand-Hermès, the great patron and friend of the sport of polo and for many years President of the FIP (Federation of International Polo), founded the Chantilly Polo Club in 1996, together with the present FIP President, Count Hélié de Noailles, who helped him build up the club. But this was not the first time Chantilly had come into contact with polo. Inspired by this oasis before the gates of Paris, Baron de Rothschild organised the first polo tournaments here, on the site of the present club, back in the 1920s.

Chantilly today means 220 hectares, of which 150 hectares are grazing, 320 players and more than 700 horses in the high season, as well as 500 players in 44 tournaments. A World Championship and two European Championships have already been fought out here, and under the patronage of Corinne Ricard, the Ladies French Open with main sponsor Chopard is setting standards in sport as well. It's thanks to the last Duc de Domaine de Chantilly that polo is played here in this unique landscape today. He stipulated in his will that his estates should pass to the Institute de France after his death to ensure that the landscape and infrastructure were retained intact as far as possible. When the founding of the polo club by Guerrand-Hermès and his associates was under discussion in the mid-1990s, the Institute gave the new polo club the right to use the Domaine for the next fifty years.



1 Twice a day the polo horses are getting their training 2 Polo at Chantilly always means not only high quality of sport but also good entertainment 3 For the French Open the participation of about ten international high goal teams is expected.



Images (4): P. Renaudon/RB Presse

Today the club is managed by its General Director, Philippe Perrier. His son, Benoit, is also involved in managing and organising the club and has long been an indispensable part of it. He recalls, “When I was a child my father was a successful horse breeder in Lyon. One day a customer asked him about polo ponies, and so my father bought two polo ponies for him in Paris.

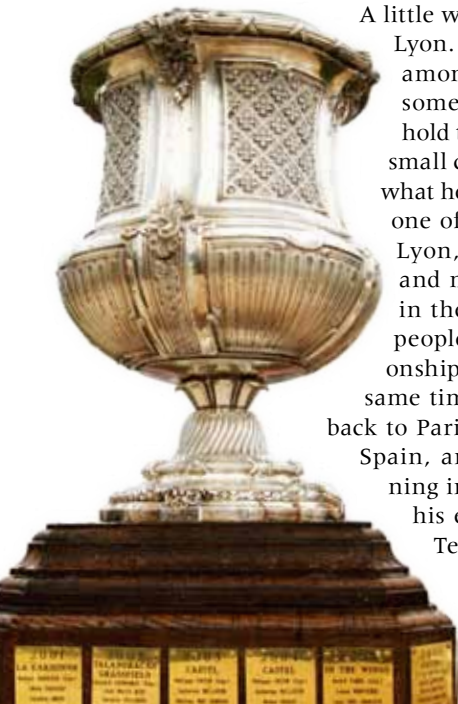
A little while later they started playing polo in Lyon. But it was just a few friends playing among themselves. That was 1987. Then someone asked my father if he’d like to hold the French Polo Championships in his small club, and he said yes, without any idea what he was letting himself in for. By chance, one of his players worked for the Mayor of Lyon, and was responsible for publicity and marketing. They put up huge posters in the city and an amazing five thousand people came to watch those polo championships. A sensation.” That was around the same time as Patrick Guerrand-Hermès came back to Paris from his high goal tournaments in Spain, and he got wind of what was happening in Lyon. He invited Philippe Perrier to his estate in Morocco, where he kept his Team Palmerai, to organise a polo tour-

namement there. Philippe Perrier again showed what he could do. So when the idea of a new polo club in Chantilly began to take shape in Guerrand-Hermès’ mind, he gave Perrier an ultimatum - if Philippe found the right partners and took on the job of director of the new polo club, Chantilly would happen and they would stay here.

In the mid 90ies there have been only pastures and forest where the Polo Club Chantilly is located today.

At that time, in 1996, the site was nothing like the present polo club. There was nothing here but endless meadows and woods and the present clubhouse was just a derelict barn. The Perriers, father and son, built up what is now France’s biggest polo club from scratch.

Benoit Perrier shows us some old photo albums to give us an idea of what those early days in Chantilly looked like, with pictures of players and visitors from the first polo tournaments here. We’re sitting in his office upstairs in the clubhouse, while downstairs players trudge in to warm themselves up after training before the fire crackling in the hearth. Fifteen people work here full-time throughout the year, but helpers are needed with organisation and marketing in the high season, so it’s a full crew that steers Chantilly through the action-filled tournament times. Three green keepers



Images: Antoine Delaporte



The Argentinean +9 Goaler Pancho Bensadon at the French Open 2012, team In the Wings.



Images (3): Antoine Delaporte

Open de France 2012: 4 Patrick Guerrand-Hermès (left) has founded the Club in 1996 and is honorary president of the Polo Club Chantilly. Hélié de Noailles (right) is president of the club and belongs as well to the group of founders 5 With his fashion label Tom Tailor, polo patron Uwe Schröder will be sponsor of Chantilly in 2013 6 The relaxed atmosphere at Chantilly is well known by the polo audience and attracts thousands of spectators every year.

make sure that the playing fields are kept in perfect condition to maintain the club's Europe-wide excellent reputation for their quality. More than 30 per cent of players in France are organised into the Chantilly Polo Club, and the conditions in this, France's biggest club, are good for beginners as well. As Benoit Perrier says, "The club is absolutely open to everyone. We play low, medium and high goal tournaments and sometimes have three tournaments running simultaneously on the same weekend. But as we have nine playing fields, that's not a problem." Dan Deville, the visionary who started France's first student polo association, L'Association Polo Grandes Ecoles, Ecoles & Universités, in 2009, also comes to train regularly in Chantilly. His association already has more than 3,000 members, thus sending a serious message about the sport in France and its work to develop up-and-coming talent.

Chantilly started with just two fields seventeen years ago. They were very soon joined by a winter arena so that stick & ball practice sessions could be played on sand. In subsequent years, Patrick Guerrand-Hermès expanded for his own personal use the two fields in the woods not far from the clubhouse and stables that were formerly owned by Baron Rothschild, but a few years ago he gave them to the club. Perrier says, "We have the huge advantage that we have three wells on the site, which puts us in the fortunate position of being able to water three fields at once. That's an absolute exception."

Chantilly's subsequent development included the construction of the fields Honneur 1 (even now the club's best playing terrain) and Honneur 2 (reinforced with fibre to make the ground highly resilient and especially suitable for early and late season playing). Honneur 2 was constructed for the 2004 European Championships. "At that time we wanted to play at any price, regardless of the weather. So we made the field with fibre and gave it especially good drainage." Nowadays the grass on a polo field can be mowed in just a few hours using giant machines. Every morning at 7 the decision is made as to which field is going to be played on that day. "Then we get the playing field ready and the chukkas start at 11," says Perrier. September will once again be the 'hottest' polo month in Chantilly this year, with the high goal matches for the French Open - the high point of any season.

Of course even a polo club has to make its figures add up. 50 per cent of Chantilly's income comes from the stabling rent for the ponies housed there, 25 per cent from the players' green fees and 10 per cent from events and seminars. "The rest of the budget we need," says Perrier, "Comes from various activities such as the polo school and special club events."

Just like anywhere else in the world, the financial situation affects the French polo clubs as well. Claude Solarz, Vice-President and co-founder of Chantilly and for many years an enthusiastic player



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Images (4): P. Renaudon / RB Presse



Image: Stefanie Stüling

7 Briec Rigaux (+5) is the best french player today. At the age of twelve he started to groom horses at the Polo Club Chantilly. Philippe Perrier recognized the boy's talent with the ball, so Briec started to being patronized by the club and by patrons like André Fabre up to his victory at the Gold Cup in Deauville and his current handicap of +5. Next to Pierre-Henri Ngoumou he is the second Frenchman playing a +5 handicap. 8 The Argentinean Clemente Zavaletta "El Flaco" (+7) in a uncomfortable situation during the French Open 9 Philippe Perrier, general director and manager of the Polo Club Chantilly 10 Diego Zavaletta is a former polo player and team manager of "In The Wings", the equipe of André Fabre, who is considered to be the best trainer of thoroughbred racing horses in France. Diego as well is thoroughbred breeder in Argentina. 11 Claude Solarz is vice president of the Polo Club Chantilly, polo player and one of the most important patrons in the french polo sport 12 Jean Edouard Mazery, Polo Club Deauville and vice president of the French Polo Association, Jean Luc Chartier (president of the Fédération Française de Polo) and Benoît Perrier, manager Polo Club Chantilly.

and patron of the sport of polo in France, frowns when he thinks of the prevailing financial situation in Europe. Solarz is 68 years old and, as Vice-President of the Paprec Group, the owner of thirty companies. He gives us a warm welcome in his office. As well as the sport of polo in Chantilly, the Paris Opéra depends on financial support from him and his group of companies for its existence. In 1994 he was one of the first to believe in Patrick Guerrand-Hermès' idea that a polo club could be built up in Chantilly. His imprint has been on the founding of several more of France's 35 polo clubs as well, such as Deauville and Veytay.

Also the foundation of further 35 polo clubs in France such as Deauville or Veytay bear among others the hallmarks of Solarz.

"It used to be the case that what we had here, like everywhere else, were just a few millionaires playing among themselves," says Solarz. "We wanted to change that. We wanted to open the sport up and not play in a private garden as we used to but in a public club. Chantilly represents our idea of democratising polo. This club is where the others started from." Solarz notes that the effects of the exodus of many of those whose wealth supports polo for Belgium or the USA during the financial crisis are making themselves felt. "This means that we are losing important patrons who used to play high goal polo with their own teams," he points out. "They are not being replaced, but leave painful gaps behind." So it is all the more important to give as many new, young players as possible the opportunity of getting established in the sport, and Chantilly is making a major contribution to that. With its roots in Chantilly, polo in France is on its way into the future.

POLO CLUB DU DOMAINE DE CHANTILLY – DATES 2013

Polo Black Cup (0 to +2)
25th May to 9th June

Charity Cup (+10 to +12)
8th June

Soirée Polo
29th June

Ladies Polo Cup Paris (+8 to +12)
3rd to 7th July

Trophée Chantilly (+4 to +6)
6th to 14th July

Open de France (+14 to +16)
6th to 21st September

Championnat de France (+6 to +8)
28th September to 6th October

For more information about tournaments visit www.poloclubchantilly.com

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POLO UP NORTH

Polo is still a very young sport in Scandinavia. You can count the number of polo clubs on one hand, and there are fewer than a hundred active polo players. But something is going on up north. ‘The Stockholm City Party’ is being planned by the Stockholm Polo Club as a gigantic event to mark their tenth anniversary, and polo history is being made in Denmark as well.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN

Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö and Copenhagen – although polo is not particularly widespread yet in Scandinavia, there is growing enthusiasm for it. And Scandinavia’s polo visionaries are putting a lot of enthusiasm and committed planning into establishing the world’s oldest team sport in the far north. Stockholm is Scandinavia’s biggest city and also, with the Stockholm Polo Club and the Nordic Polo Club, the centre for the sport of polo in Scandinavia as well. The two clubs are just ten minutes away from each other on Lake Mälaren, some thirty kilometres north-west of the Swedish capital. The Stockholm Polo Club motto, “Have fun, improve your polo skills and enjoy playing polo”, is lived out not only by the local heroes Per Jacobson (+1) and Anders Thulin (0), but by countless players from around the world too. The club, founded in 2003, has ambitious plans for marking its tenth birthday this year. Sören Hüllberg says, “To mark the tenth birthday of the Stockholm Polo Club, we’re planning a huge birthday event in Stockholm’s Olympic Stadium. ‘The Stockholm City Polo Party 2013’ on September 14 will combine a high goal polo match with Scandinavia’s best DJs. We’re expecting around 5,000 people.”

Lake Mälaren is also home to the Almare Stäket Polo Club, which played a crucial role in introducing polo into Sweden and getting it established. But this club, which regularly hosted the international EFG Bank Scandinavian Polo Open, was forced to close after fourteen years for personal reasons of its founder, Johan Seth, known in Sweden as “Mister Polo”. “But polo is still alive and kicking on

Almare Stäket,” he says. “The members of the Almare Stäket Polo Club have rented our polo facilities, stables, fields and outdoor and indoor arenas as well as twenty of our polo ponies. And ten or so members have joined together to form the Nordic Polo Club.” Katarina Wolk, founder member of the Nordic Polo Club, says, “We want to continue the tradition of polo in Sweden, and we’re concentrating on working with new, young players. We’re hosting three tournaments in 2013, the Early Summer Cup (April 30) the Midsummer Cup (June 21) and the Scandinavian Open (August 24).”

The Almare Stäket Polo Club has been crucial in promoting the sport of polo in Sweden.

Founded in 2010 by Anna Sofia Olsson, the La Dominguera Polo Team polo school has moved to Malmö in 2012 after two years in Stockholm. “Our aim is to establish the sport in southern Sweden,” says Olsson, “And to take away some of the upper class image it has at the moment. We’ve achieved the first step: in our first season here in Malmö we had more than fifty students, and we already have thirty bookings for next season.” Anna Sofia Olsson is planning an international tournament for 17 to 18 August next year, “And we’re currently laying the foundations for a fantastic collaboration with the Copenhagen Polo Club and the Danish polo player Louise Sandberg. The Öresund region is going to be seeing a lot of polo in future.” Sebastian Seppälä of the Malmö Polo Club also has big plans for polo in Sweden. “The situation for polo is similar to that of golf fifteen



Left-hand picture, bottom row: The founders of the Danish Polo Association: Jacob Klingert Jacobsen (Vice-Chairman), Louise Sandberg (President) and Christian Mellentin (Chairman).

years ago,” he says. “Golf, too, was elitist and expensive then, but over the past few years, mainly by creating an affordable price structure, it has managed to become the number one sport in Sweden. Everyone can afford to play golf, and it’s more popular here than football. And that’s what we want to achieve for polo as well.” But despite being founded amid great enthusiasm in 2007, the Malmö Polo Club is currently dormant due to a lack of time and location. “Our biggest challenge at the moment,” says Sebastian Seppälä, “is finding a suitable polo field and buying our own horses.”

Polo premiere in Denmark. The Copenhagen Polo Open, Denmark’s first polo tournament, is taking place from 22 to 23 June 2013 in the Fælledparken, Copenhagen’s biggest park. Competing will be four teams from London, Sydney, Buenos Aires and Scandinavia, with handicaps from +8 to +10. “I was born in Denmark, but grew up mostly in Windsor, Berkshire, where I was mad about polo,” says Louise Sandberg. “Whenever I visited my family in Denmark I wondered why nobody was playing polo here. After all, a lot of people in Denmark enjoy riding and there’s no shortage of flat land. So my business partner Jacob Klingert Jacobsen and I decided three years ago to make history by founding Denmark’s first polo club and hosting its first polo tournament.”

No sooner said than done. On the night of 13 on the 14th November a group polo enthusiasts headed by Louise Sandberg, Jacob Klingert Jacobsen and Christian Mellentin founded the Danish Polo Associa-

tion. The Danish Polo Association has purchased horses and equipment to start a small club 20 minutes away from the centre of Copenhagen. It’s based at Scandinavia’s largest equestrian centre with two playing fields (three quarter sized) and two indoor riding houses, plus several outdoor schools.

Great aims and visions, but great challenges as well. The sport of polo in Scandinavia still has a long way to go.

The future is looking certain. But there is still a few challenges to be overcome before polo can really get established in Scandinavia. “Our main job will be to find new players and buy horses,” says Ingemar Olsson, President of the Swedish Polo Association. “To give you an idea of our present situation, Sweden has 360,000 horses, of which 80,000 are trotting horses, 1,500 are racehorses and just 65 are polo ponies. If polo is going to have a future here we’re going to have to raise its profile with tournaments, publicity campaigns and press presence.” “Polo is more than just a game,” adds Anna Sofia Olsson. “Most of all we mustn’t forget the horse. After all, the horse is every polo player’s most important partner, and we have to teach that to our future polo players. A horse is not an investment. It loses value quickly and gets injured, so it has to be looked after properly. But that is expensive, and that is something we must work on.” There is no tradition of playing polo in Denmark,” says Louise Sandberg. “So we’re having to create one.” Let’s make history! Polo in Scandinavia has big plans.

MANIPUR

Manipur in eastern India, 1859. What a fascinating sight it must have been, brightly-dressed men on small ponies chasing after a ball with mallets in their hands. The group of British officers witnessing the Game of Kings for the first time were as riveted as now, 150 years later, a group of German visitors who have just come back from a trip to the Indian State of Manipur, the birthplace of the modern sport of polo.

BY BRITTA KRANE PHOTOGRAPHY BRITTA KRANE

Barefoot, with calves bound in colourful fabric and a white turban on his proudly raised head. In his right hand he holds the mallet like a spear decorated with red ribbons. Like a warrior he sits on his horse that gallops across the field with small but fast steps after the ball in a rough game without any rules. And that's how the traditional Manipuri rider looks even today. His horse is a Manipuri pony from the foothills of the Himalayas, less than 1.35 m high and threatened with extinction. The small Manipuri ponies have slipped into obscurity, forgotten in the international polo scene in a sport now, so many decades after the encounter of those British colonial occupiers with the Manipuri riders, dominated by thoroughbreds and Argentinian mestizos.

Manipur Horse Riding & Polo Association has invited to a tournament in the Manipur state capital, Imphal.

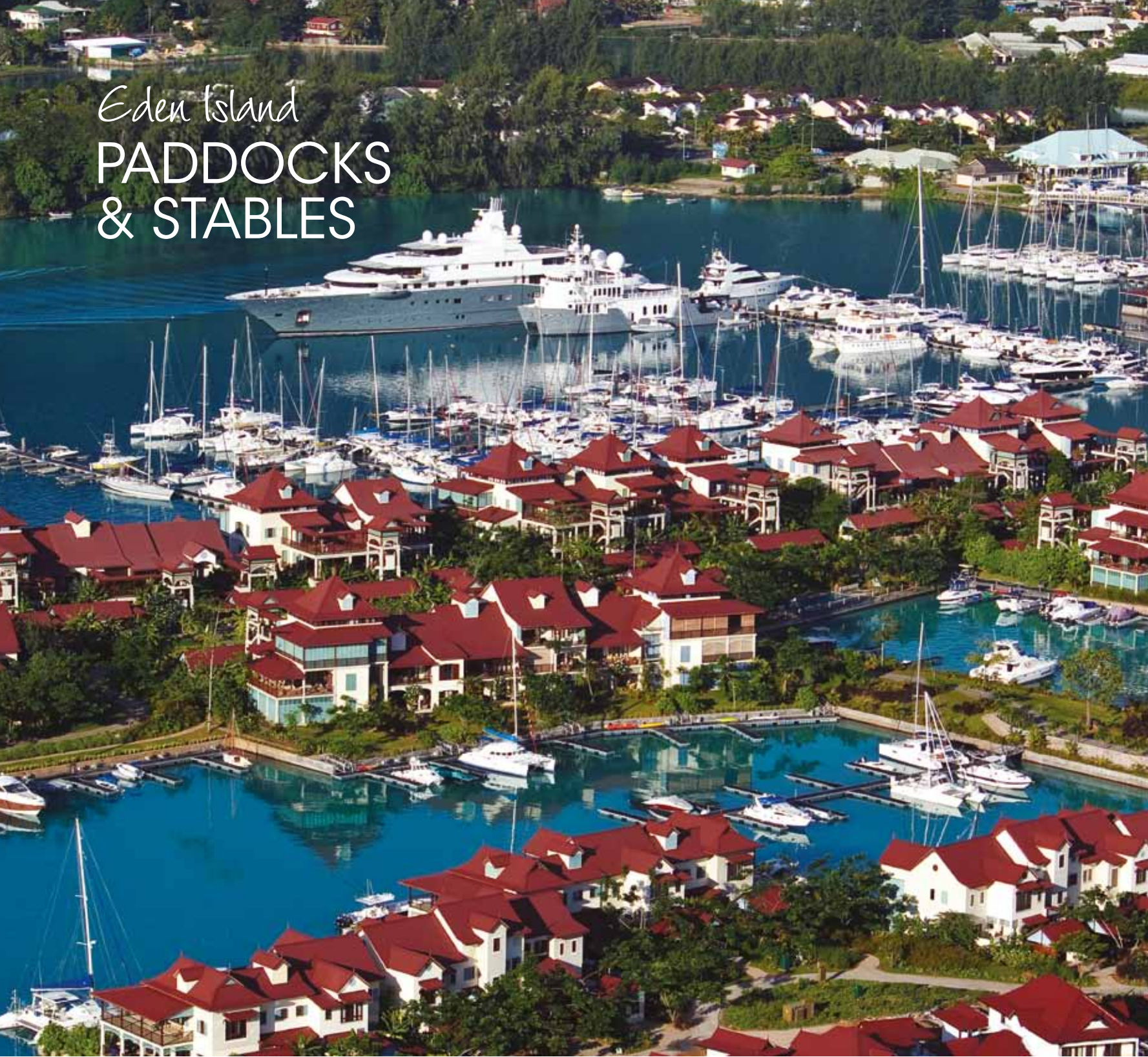
This tournament draws worldwide attention to the need for protecting the endangered horses as well as to the history of the game. And thanks to the worldwide commitment of former HPA Chairman Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers an invitation arrived in Germany, too, so on 21 November the polo players Günther and Jan-Marie Kiesel, Alexander Piltz, Wolfgang Kailing and Philipp Prinz zu Stolberg-Wernigerode set out on the journey to India, for the 6th Manipur Polo International tournament. In a host city of 18 million inhabitants, the tournament is one that none of them will forget in a hurry. Their opponents were Team England, Team France,

Team Thailand, Team India A from New Delhi and – the toughest of all – Team India B from Manipur. But what our German team completely underestimated was the nature of the Manipuri ponies – fast, yes, but with a mind of their own. Even the small stature of the ponies was a bit of a problem for the gents from Germany, so much taller than Indian men, with the contrast providing some unintended comedy. But more than anything it was the way the ponies moved that was so unlike anything that European polistas are used to. Not just our German players had trouble stopping the agile Himalayan ponies once they were in a gallop. Martingale? Forget it! And even the Manipuri saddles caused a few falls for the Europeans, albeit luckily without any injuries because of the low drop height. And that was just in the opening duel for the Germans against Team England, who already had the opening match against Team India B Manipur in front of thousands of spectators in Imphal Stadium behind them. “The English team were a game ahead of us in terms of experience while we were still getting used to Manipuri polo,” says Günther Kiesel to excuse the 9:0 thrashing they got at the hands of Team England. “But we still had a whole lot of fun out there on the field.”

The hospitality of the Manipuris quickly took their minds off the lost match, since Manipur was not just about polo, but about the region's culture as well – the players and their wives were the first tourists the Indian state had received for a very long time. So the members of the Manipur Horse Polo Association laid on a different



The traditional conchblowers with a welcome performance for the honorary guest of the final, Governor of Manipur.



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1 The trophy for the winning team 2 Team from Germany with Philipp von Stoltenberg, Wolfgang Kailing, Alex Piltz and TC Dr. Günther Kiesel 3 the beautiful young ladies of Manipur with presents for the honorary guests 4 The wives of the german guest players were allowed to attend a wedding ceremony. Image: the beautiful bride 5 The german team at the opening ceremony at the oldest polo stadium in the world at Imphal.

programme each day, with the many surprises awaiting the guests including traditional dancers, Manipuri martial arts, an excursion to Lake Loktak, North-East India's largest freshwater lake, and of course a visit to the MHRPA's pony farm where Manipuri ponies are bred. The highlight of the culinary impressions was undoubtedly the traditional dinner of rice with hot and cold dishes held by the Manipuris for their guests on the penultimate evening of the visit with large leaves for plates, the right hand as cutlery and the floor as a table.

Their hospitality is indescribable, despite the many political problems in the region.

Over the last fifty years or so the Indian central government has been trying to quell various terrorist organisations by using the military, including separatist groups such as the underground movement fighting for an independent Naga state and the ethnic Burmese Kuki. This has meant that Manipur has almost constantly been in a political and legal state of emergency for many years, under Indian military administration, resulting in a certain degree of cross-border political instability in the region. But the visitors sensed nothing of all this. The mood among the native spectators each day in the stadium was relaxed.

"It's the sort of crowd you wish you had in Germany," says Jan-Marie Kiesel about the atmosphere during the games. She provided a witty and spirited commentary

on the chukkas, bringing a smile to the faces of even the high-ranking official guests like the Governor of Manipur. The mood spilled over on to the field, where the Germans did manage to score a few goals at least in their 3:15 defeat against the eventual overall winners, Team India B Manipur. Their subsequent 6:3 win in a friendly match against France saved their honour, with two of the goals being scored by Jan-Marie Kiesel, the only woman playing in the entire tournament, who swapped her microphone for a mallet for the occasion.

But in the end it was after all the two teams whose riders galloped across the field on their Manipuri ponies so much more elegantly than the rest facing each other in the final of the 6th Manipur Polo International, Team India A from New Delhi and Team India B from Manipur. Manipur won the duel.

But Germany nonetheless still had one special game to play. Wolfgang Kailing and Alexander Piltz joined in with a traditional Manipuri polo match, known as Sagol Kangjei, in which the home players and the invited guest riders used every means imaginable to get hold of the ball and keep it. No rules. Even dismounting and picking up the ball was allowed. Bare feet in the stirrups, white turbans on their heads and brightly decorated mallets, the Germans made a fascinating spectacle next to the home riders there in the very place where the modern game of polo was born more than 150 years ago.

THAI POLO

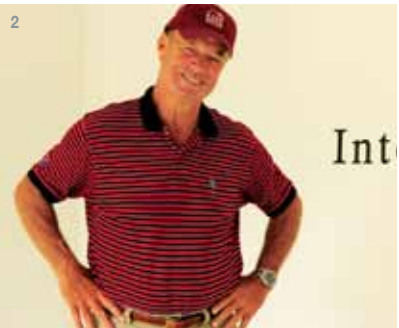
A WORLD-CLASS FACILITY

Polo took off in Thailand in the late 1990s, when polo enthusiasts led by Harald Link, President of the South-East Asian Equestrian Federation, set about revitalizing the game by creating a world-class polo club in the beach resort of Pattaya, just 150 kilometers from Bangkok.

BY NARA OM KETUSINGHA PHOTOGRAPHY THAI POLO CLUB



1 Polo action in front of the Chukka Bar 2 Rege Ludwig's "International Polo School" 3 Harald Link, owner and founder of the Thai Polo Club.



The Thai Polo & Equestrian Club opened in 2003, an outstanding facility that has made Thailand an international centre for polo and Equestrian in East Asia. The Thai Polo & Equestrian Club has fun activities for the whole family and is serious enough to be internationally recognised and registered with the The Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). The FEI, founded in 1921, is the international body governing equestrian sport. Recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), its principles are based on equality and respect, without prejudice to race, religion or internal politics.

With wooded hills as a backdrop, the club's beautifully landscaped setting covering 800 acres, the club evolved to include a full range of world-class equestrian sporting facilities, includes three full-sized polo fields, two practice field, an eventing and endurance course, cross-country, dressage and show jumping stabling for 250 ponies, numerous paddocks and the renowned Rege Ludwig International Polo School. Visitors can relax in the picturesque clubhouse, cricket field, salt-water swimming pool and the Chukka Bar, a re-creation of the famous polo bar at the Langham Hotel in London, complete with original polo photographs, trophies and sporting memorabilia. Players from all over the world regularly visit the Club to play in its prestigious tournaments, such as the Princess's Cup Thai Polo Open every January and Queen's Cup Pink Polo for ladies. In addition to its monthly tournaments, the Club is part of a unique polo league of Thai, Malaysian and Singaporean clubs, with each club taking turns to host a round-robin. Thailand's polo season runs from November to April. Thanks to the patrons Harald Link, CEO of B. Grimm Group, and Mrs. Nunthinee Tanner, co-owner of the Thai Polo & Equestrian Club, polo in Thailand has enjoyed a remarkable resurgence in recent years through excellent training facilities and outstanding tournaments at the Club. However, these annual tournaments are not solely for the entertainment of the many international players who participate, they are also used to raise funds for deserving Thai charities.

Queen's Cup Pink Polo the opening for the tournament season in November provides strong support for the fight against breast cancer. With B. Grimm and St. Regis Hotels & Resorts as title sponsors,

it saw a very international line-up of lady players from Argentina, Germany, Austria, Malaysia, England and Thailand vying for the Queen's Cup. The tournament was a vibrant affair with hundreds of spectators dressed only in pink and included pony rides for children, a fashion parade on horseback, kids' polo match, Miss Pink Polo contest and much more. The day's overall winner was Her Majesty the Queen's Centre for Breast Cancer with 15,000 pounds raised in aid of breast cancer.

Thai Polo Open is held each January, when teams from all over the world vie for the honor of winning the Princess Cup. BMW and B. Grimm Group are the title sponsors for the annual Thai Polo Open with players from Argentina, Australia, England, Germany, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Such strong support enabled the Club to raise 25,000 pounds for donation to the Princess' charity in January every year from 2006.

Asian Beach Polo marks the end of the Thai polo season, when Thai Polo & Equestrian Club organizes a popular beach polo match for Princess Pa's Cup in the royal resort of Hua Hin, which has an ideal beach for this event. Sponsored by B. Grimm Group and InterContinental Hotels, Asian Beach Polo Championship was an outstanding event with HRH Princess Bharakitiyabha in attendance and over 100,000 pounds raised for Princess Pa's Inspire Project to better the lives of female prisoners. Thai Polo & Equestrian Club believes in playing "Chukkas for Charity".

Accommodation

You can stay at the Thai Polo Club in wonderful Thai-style houses, surrounded by paddocks and horses. One is an authentic antique Thai house, which belonged to a member of the Thai royal family and was relocated. It overlooks the Stick and Ball field, a lake and rolling farmland in the distance with mountains and sea breezes. Additional Thai houses are available. One has views over the hills and a spectacular sunrise; the other has vistas of the pineapple fields and ocean sunsets.

Further information: www.thai-polo-club.com

Image: Oliver Duren / British Polo Day

3

RD
CHUKKA



MENTAL PREPARATION BEFORE A GAME

The International Polo Academy (IPA) is working with Clubs, Teams and Players around the world, supplying a range of quality services to help improve the level of service, performance and enjoyment of the sport.

BY MIRANDA BANKS PHOTOGRAPHY IPA

Each issue they will be providing POLO+10 with an article as well as an online article each month, based on a variety of topics including game tactics, performance psychology, fitness, nutrition, horse welfare, etc. The area of focus for this issue is based around sports psychology and how players can prepare themselves mentally before a big game, using expert advice from leading sports psychologist Miranda Banks:

IN PREPARATION BEFORE A GAME, ASIDE FROM WARM-UPS (BOTH PLAYER AND PONY) WHAT EXERCISES WOULD YOU ADVISE TO POLO PLAYERS TO GET THEM IN THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND BEFORE THEY GO ONTO THE PITCH? There are two stages of preparation to be performed in the mind before a game and these should happen in separate exercises; before the game day and on the game day. In preparation before the day (this session would need to be 2-3 days before the game), players need to analyse their strategies, how they are going to meet their strategies, their horse lists, etc. with a main focus on the opposition. At this stage a key tool to perform these mind exercises is using visualisation particularly during the physical warm-ups before the game day. Players should be visualising reaction times, ride-offs, set plays, etc. keeping in mind how they plan all these moves to go when it comes to the game itself. It's a good idea to have a theme in your mind of how you are going to tackle the opposition and then all the visualisation and mental exercises before the game are consistent in the players mind before the match day. On the day of the game the main focus in terms of mental exercises should be based around you (the players and team) and less so on the opposition. When it comes to individual preparation exercises vary depending on what type of person you are; whether you are a performance anxious person or you need a bit more of a nudge to get you focused and in the right



frame of mind to play. If you are performance anxious and can get yourself worked up before a game, it's best to focus all your thoughts before you go on the pitch on your horses, your team and other aspects other than the game. If you are this sort of person then you also want to be encouraging thoughts of positivity and wellness in your body so that you feel confident and self-assured before you go onto the field and play.

Alternatively if you are a character that needs a bit more 'revving-up' to get you in to 'game-mode' then you need to focus on you in the game, your reaction times and mental focus you will have in the first 30 seconds of play. For this sort of person you need to be thinking about throw-ins and other set plays, how you are going to react and get yourself in that positive, active mind-set. When it comes to sports psych and mental preparation on game day it should be about YOU not your opposition, whereas pre-game day mental exercises should mainly be focus on the opposition and your strategies to overcome them. Finally on game day as well as your own individual mind prep depending on the type of character you are, there is also team preparation to be done. As a team you need to be communicating lots in a positive nature, focusing on how you're going to operate as a 'unit'. •



Miranda is a performance psychologist with over 10 years' experience of helping business, sports people and High Goal teams to achieve peak performance. Miranda who has a background in the Australian Institute of Sport, offers a tailor made consultancy service for sporting professionals, businesses, or individuals who want focused guidance to achieve their goals.

GERMAN POLO TOUR

In 2010, Christopher Kirsch founded Germany's first polo league, the German Polo Tour, a tournament series that has become an indispensable feature in Germany's polo calendar.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN





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Images (5): POLO-Tour



1 Polo spectators 2 In 2012 the German Polo Tour stopped in for the second time at the tradition-steeped Berlin-Hoppegarten racecourse 3 Crowning the winners of the 2012 Berenberg Polo Derby in Hamburg 4 Christopher Kirsch (+4), founder of the German Polo Tour, event organiser and polo player, playing with Heino Ferch (0) in Munich 5 Dirk Baumgärtner, President of the Düsseldorfer Polo- & Country-Club 6 Relaxed polo at the Münster polo picnic.

The idea was simple and yet brilliant – to combine polo tournaments happening all over Germany into a single tournament series, finally making it possible for public and sponsors alike to follow ‘their’ teams through the whole season, cheering them on and becoming real fans. Now, three years on, the response from players, teams and sponsors alike has been so huge that the German Polo Tour has become firmly established as part of the German polo scene. In all, 17 teams played in Germany’s first polo league in 2012, with Team Tom Tailor winning for the second time in a row. As Official Supplier, the Hamburg fashion firm also provided all the teams with tricots and accessories in 2012.

Players, sponsors and spectators are thrilled.

Christopher Kirsch, founder of the German Polo Tour, is event organiser and Germany’s second-best polo player (+4). “The German Polo Tour is interesting for sponsors of course,” he says, “Because it gives them a continuous presence in various cities throughout

the entire polo season. That means that we are able to work less with regional sponsorship partners and more with national and international brands. So the concept of the German Polo Tour has absolutely proved itself.”

The German Polo Tour currently encompasses seven German cities: Munich, Hamburg, Gut Aspern, Düsseldorf, Münster, Oberursel and Berlin. Christopher Kirsch says, “Next year there may even be one or two more tournaments as well. We’re already talking.” But of course quality goes before quantity, and only the best three tournaments count for a team’s placing at the end of the season. Christopher Kirsch has announced a few changes to the rules in 2013. “In the coming year we only want to include teams in the overall rankings for the German Polo Tour that have played at least two tournaments. Up to now we’ve been listing all the teams, even the ones that have only played a single tournament.”

You can find more information by going to www.polo-tour.de

THE GERMAN POLO TOUR TOURNAMENTS IN 2013

Bucherer Polo Cup Munich,
10th to 12th May

Berenberg Polo-Derby Hamburg,
24th to 26th May

**Bucherer High Goal Polo Cup
Gut Aspern / Hamburg**,
31st May to 02nd June

Berenberg High Goal Cup Düsseldorf,
5th to 7th July

Polo Picnic Münster,
20th to 21st July

**Berenberg Polo Trophy Oberursel/
Bad Homburg**,
16th to 18th August

Bucherer Polo Cup Berlin,
6th to 8th September

THE VOICE

OF POLO

All of Europe knows him as the witty, sympathetic and competent voice of the sport of polo. Jan-Erik Franck interviewed for POLO+10

BY STEFANIE STÜTING

WHAT IS THE PERCENTAGE OF POLO IN YOUR BLOOD? HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIFE IS CONNECTED WITH POLO?

I'm sure polo is 90 per cent of my life these days. I've been a commentator at polo tournaments for the last five years, I play myself, I teach, and I work with various clubs, mainly in England. Last year I went on 20 trips for polo work.

WHAT IS IT EXACTLY THAT YOU DO FOR THE CLUBS?

My company MIG provides the world's biggest mobile screens for the three most important tournaments in England. The screens are 100 m² in size and allow spectators to watch games live as they happen and up close. In 2013 we'll be equipping the British Open, the Westchester Cup and Polo in the Park with our screens. They are the biggest polo events in England.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES A BRILLIANT COMMENTATOR FROM A BAD COMMENTATOR?

I think a good commentator needs real passion, passion that fires people. And that's something you can hear in their voice. No, I've never practised, and I still don't, even now. I think spontaneity is important, but it helps of course if you know a lot about polo. It's a very technical sport and things need explaining, and not just once. Polo is getting more and more open. The stigma of elitism is still there, but it's not quite as dominant as it was. You can see that from the spectators who come to see it.

WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN POLO IN THE FIRST PLACE AND WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE SPORT THAT EXCITES YOU?

I used to work for Pommery Champagne in England and while I was there I brought the brand into polo. When the brand was sold after many successful years in polo, I started working directly for the polo clubs. I was involved with

marketing and sponsoring with the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club for two years from 2002, and then started my own company MIG (Made In Germany) in 2004. Nowadays I advise some of England's biggest clubs.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR 2013?

2013 has started fantastically well for me. In January I did the commentary for the snow polo in Gut Ising, Kitzbühel and St. Moritz in Switzerland. In St. Moritz I was even able to step in as a substitute player, and our team won the group game. That was a tremendous experience. The whole season is already pretty much booked up now, so that for the first time I'm having to turn down enquiries.

WHAT DO YOU WISH FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SPORT OF POLO?

I wish that something more of a 'hang loose' surfer mentality could enter into the sport and that people could be more relaxed. I love the sport, and especially the ponies, and wish that I were able to bring polo to a much bigger audience.

WHY ARE YOU THE BEST POLO COMMENTATOR?

Am I? I suppose it's my English sense of humour and my German precision (laughs). •

JAN-ERIK FRANCK was born in Düsseldorf in 1967. His German father and Dutch mother went to England in 1975 for professional reasons, which is why the little Jan-Erik had already been attending an English kindergarten in Germany, to prepare him for life in the U.K., which has been his home ever since. But he enjoys coming often to Germany. "I think the polo audience in Düsseldorf is one of the most enthusiastic and spirited in the whole of Europe."



10 GOALER

First in a series of 10 Goal Handicap Polo Players' Portraits in POLO+10 World: Guillermo "Sapo" Caset's Comeback.

BY JOHN FRANCIS JACKSON

We all like to hear stories of sports successes. There is a supernatural aura that surrounds them. What we tend to forget is that often these sports heroes have achieved their greatness not solely on natural born talent alone. In fact, in a number of cases, these athletes have suffered setbacks and disappointments more times than a normal person could tolerate. It is exactly for these reasons that their stories are all the more intriguing. Polo history is no exception to this. Among the current top polo players in the world, Guillermo "Sapo" Caset's story is one of overcoming hurdles that would discourage all but the most driven of souls. His is a story of an unusually talented player who has reached the pinnacle of the polo world by attaining a 10 goal handicap rating; but, it has not been an easy road.

Sapo grew up in the countryside near Lobos, Argentina, the birthplace of national legend President Juan D. Perón. As a baby, playing one evening on the veranda, surrounded by numerous toads feasting on insects, he was told that these creatures were called "Sapo" in Spanish. He started repeating, "Sapo", "Sapo", "Sapo." It was the



1 Young Sapo: A polo player's soul is with his horse



2 Sapo and Lechuza Caracas celebrate a victory.

GUILLERMO CASET (H)

Birthday: November 23, 1985
Nickname: Sapo

Handicap: 10 (USA), 9 (Argentina)

Highlights

- 2013:** 26 Goal Butler Handicap
- 2012:** US Open Final
- 2011:** US Open Championship, USPA Gold Cup Finalist, CV Whitney Cup
- 2010:** British Open Finalist
- 2009:** USPA Gold Cup, CV Whitney Cup Finalist
- 2008:** Hall of Fame Cup (US)
- 2006:** CV Whitney Cup (finalist, US)
- 1997:** Copa Potrillitos Champion
- 1996:** Copa Potrillitos Finalist and MVP

Participation in Argentina's Triple Corona:

- Abierto de Tortugas (2010 - 2012),
- Abierto de Hurlingham (2009 - 2012),
- Abierto de Palermo (2004 - 2006 - 2008 - 2009, 2011 -2012)

Major Teams He Plays With:

- Santa María de Lobos,
- Black Watch, Chapa Uno (Argentina 2011), Lechuza Caracas (US & UK), La Aguada BMW (Argentina 2012), Piaget (US 2013), Enigma (UK 2013), La Navidad (Argentina 2013)

first word out of his mouth. His father said; “He learned the word Sapo” before he could say “Papá.” The nickname stuck. Sapo learned to ride at a young age. Videos show him on his tiny pony at the age of 5, hitting a polo ball with his mallet around a field with the uncanny ability that would make many adult players envious of his style. He was fortunate to have a father, Guillermo Sr., who held a 7 goal handicap, as did his uncle, Marcelo. Thus, he was always involved in the polo world. Later, at age 10, he played in the prestigious Argentine youth tournament , the “Copa Potrillitos”, reaching the finals and being named MVP. The following year he won the tournament.

As a 14 year old, he was taken to Santa Barbara, California to play with his father. He was already a 1 goal handicap player. By the end of that year his handicap was raised to 3. The following year he caught the attention of 10 goal great Memo Gracida who invited him to play with him in Florida on a 22-goal team. Sapo played later that summer with his father in two 12-goal tournaments, which they won. Then he teamed up with Memo again and reached the finals of the 20-goal Pacific Coast Championship, and he had his handicap raised to 6, shortly after his 16th birthday. His handicap had gone from a 1 to a 6 all within a short span of 14 months His father then decided to pull him out of international polo to allow the youngster some time to mature. It is one thing for a 16 year old to be able to compete against seasoned, adult professionals; it is another thing to thrust a developing teenager into the adult world

of glamour and all the attention and responsibilities that come with the life of a professional athlete. In Argentina, Sapo continued to learn his craft. He competed in the top tournaments in the world, including the Argentine Open. During this period he was helped by friends like Adolfo Cambiaso and practiced at Cambiaso's estancia La Dolfina. By 2009 Sapo was in Florida, ready to capture his first major title at the US Open. He was playing for Victor Vargas's team, Lechuza Caracas. Right before their semi-final match, horses from the Lechuza team mysteriously started to fall to the ground. Before the night would be over, 21 of the team's horses would be dead. It was a devastating blow to the team and to the polo world as well. Later it would be determined that the horses were inadvertently poisoned by injections of a legal supplement that had been incorrectly mixed. In spite of this setback, Sapo was back again in the US for the 2011 season.

His team Lechuza Caracas, won the CV Whitney Cup and then capped the season with the US Open title.

It was most satisfying to have his string of ponies awarded Best String of the US Open tournament, only two years after the debacle in 2009. The greatest achievement for Sapo, however, came when the USPA raised his handicap to the coveted 10 goal level, based on his extraordinary play during the American season. He is one of only 10 players ranked at this highest level and is the second youngest of the current players. In 2012, Sapo returned once again

“THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND HE WILL BE ONE OF THE BEST PLAYERS IN THE GAME.”

MEMO GRACIDA speaking about 16 year old Sapo.

to the USA to defend his US Open title. His team made it to the final. All in all a fairly decent showing. What nobody realized at the time of his semi-final and final matches was that Sapo had already contracted a very virulent strain of staphylococcus from a polo injury. After the final match on the weekend, Sapo returned home to Argentina on a Wednesday, but was suffering from a high fever. By Friday he was admitted to a hospital in Buenos Aires. The infection had attacked his heart and his lungs. Sapo was now in a fight for something far greater than just a polo championship. He was put into a medically induced coma and placed on a ventilator, in order to allow him to breathe and to recover while being treated with antibiotics. He spent six days in a coma. Afterwards, he required a couple of weeks at the hospital. During this time, he lost over 15 kgs in body weight, not a trivial amount for a world class athlete who measures only 175 cm and 70 kgs normally.

After coming out of the hospital, Sapo needed time to recover with the help of a physical therapist and a personal trainer. However, immediately after his release Sapo was back at La Dolfina visiting horses that had just been air freighted in from Florida. A polo player's soul is with his horses. At the beginning of the year, before his illness, Sapo received an invitation to play the Argentine season with one of the perennial favorite teams, La Aguada BMW. He made his comeback in the first tournament of the Argentine Triple Crown at Tortugas in September 2012. In his first tournament game since the US Open, Sapo scored 6 goals. He then played the Hurlingham Open. After that, at the 2012 Argentine Open, La Aguada BMW reached the semi-finals. Sapo scored a total of 23 points in three games in this tournament against the best polo teams in the world and was second only to Cambiaso in total goals scored. Sapo is playing once again, in the US season for Piaget, and later in the UK for Enigma. Still young at only 27 years of age, the future looks bright for him. Only time will tell what that future might bring but Sapo remains an inspiration to all of those athletes that might blame their shortcomings on fate. Sapo has taken his fate in hand and stared it down.

Find out more about Sapo at www.SapoCaset.wordpress.com or on Facebook at Sapo Caset Oficial.

BACK TO THE ROOTS

Now, with the first Arena Polo World Cup Azerbaijan, the sport of polo will be taking the Republic of Azerbaijan by storm. The slogan of the tournament in Baku is “Bringing Polo Home”.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY FARID KHAYRULIN



Baku is the largest and most populous city in the entire Caucasus region.



Venue of the first Arena Polo World Cup Azerbaijan is the Elite Equestrian Centre in Baku; M. Ahadpur Khangah is bringing polo to Azerbaijan.



Image: Milla

Polo has its birthplace in Central Asia. But while ‘Chovgan’, the original form of polo that dates back thousands of years, is still played in Azerbaijan, the modern version of the sport has never yet managed to gain a foothold in the land on the Caspian Sea. Now, though, polo is going back to its roots and Azerbaijan is celebrating a polo first. With the slogan “Bringing Polo Home”, four teams of international players will be meeting for the first Arena Polo World Cup Azerbaijan from 6th to 8th September 2013. The venue is the new Outdoor Polo Arena at the Elite Equestrian Centre in Baku. The event’s highlights will include a friendly game between the Azerbaijani team Chovgan and one of the competing teams, to commemorate the roots of the sport of polo in Azerbaijan. The three-day tournament is being presented by the Azerbaijani food company Milla, with World Polo GmbH and local partners responsible for production and organisation.

The aim of the Arena Polo World Cup Azerbaijan is to establish the sport of polo. It is the great vision driving one man, M. Ahadpur Khangah, a 60-year-old engineer and businessman, who discove-

red his passion for polo while studying in Newcastle upon Tyne in England. He has been gripped by the sport ever since. Now M. Ahadpur Khangah, also a great fan of Manchester United, has made it his task to see that polo enjoys the same boost in popularity in Azerbaijan that football is currently experiencing. “Our visions are really ambitious,” he says.

“We need polo players who can represent Azerbaijan on the world’s playing fields and teams that can compete at national and international level. We are also working on expanding polo’s infrastructure so that we can hold tournaments all year round. Since Azerbaijan has a lot of days of sunshine, we think that the prospect of that happening are really good. Polo also gives us the perfect opportunity to promote our famous Karabakh horses. The Karabakh horses are famous for their stamina, endurance and sure-footedness, and they have won a lot of prizes and medals already. Now at last it’s time to make these excellent horses better known outside Azerbaijan as well.



Polo is the only team sport in the world in which men and women play together in ‘mixed’ teams. The number of female polo players is steadily increasing, and ever more ladies-only tournaments have become established over the last few years. To make ladies’ tournaments even more attractive, the Asociación Argentina de Polo (AAP) introduced special handicaps for ladies in 2012. The Ladies’ Handicap only applies in ladies-only tournaments – if ladies and men are playing together, the normal handicap counts. During the season, the ladies’ handicap committee watches the players in the ladies’ tournaments and consults twice a year on their performance and any handicap changes that may be needed. Santiago Gaztambide, Jr., President of the Ladies’ Polo sub-committee of the Asociación Argentina de Polo says, “Ladies’ handicaps mean that more balanced matches can be played and more tournaments can be held in different classes. On the whole we are getting a very positive reaction to this. It’s important to support professional female polo players, as well as the ones who are playing for fun. When ladies play together with men and reach a handicap of +2, +3, or +4, they play a lot better than female players who only participate in ladies tournaments. Therefore the double handicap system is the only approach for fair matches.”

At the end of 2011 the Fédération Française de Polo (FFP) adopted the Argentinian system and set up a ladies’ handicap committee. Anyone who already possesses an Argentinian ladies’ handicap can play with their existing ladies’ handicap in France as well. All other women players get a ladies’ handicap in ladies-only tournaments that is calculated using the normal handicap (e.g. normal -2 = Ladies 0, normal 0 = Ladies +3, normal +2 = Ladies +5). This is the basis at the start; at the end of the season, the Ladies’ Handicap Committee then assesses the handicap of each female polo player based on watching games. This can lead to huge differences opening up between the normal handicaps and the ladies’ handicaps. Yasmine de Givré of the Fédération Française de Polo says, “The Fédération Française de Polo has already organised four ladies’ tournaments, in Paris, Chantilly and Saint Tropez, in 2012. We want to organise more ladies’ tournaments in future. The ladies’ handicaps are clearly driving the standard of the ladies’ tournaments up.”

In the USA, too, thoughts are going in this direction. Peter Rizzo, Executive Director of the United States Polo Association (USPA), says, “The USPA Women’s Polo Committee has set up a sub-committee to assess the need for a special women’s handicap. There has been an online poll of all USPA members, and seventy per cent were in favour of introducing a women’s handicap system. We are currently discussing how to take it further.”

The winners of the first Open de France Féminin in 2012: Tahnee Schröder, Naomi Schröder, Lavinia Fabre and Lia Salvo.

IT’S ALL ABOUT THE LADIES

A special handicap system for women has existed in Argentina since 2010. France introduced it last year, and the United States Polo Association (USPA) is currently also discussing whether to introduce a special ladies’ handicap. How do the ladies’ handicaps work, what are their benefits for polo, and what do the women players say about them?

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY R&B PRESSE/P. RENAULDON

There is no special handicap system for women in any other country. Even women-only tournaments are played there with the normal handicap.

And what do the women players say about ladies’ handicaps? POLO+10 has been asking them. Lucy Taylor (UK), voted Most Outstanding Lady Player at the Audi awards 2012 (normal +1, Ladies +7) says, “Women’s handicaps can help to get more sponsors for ladies’ tournaments. After all, there’s a difference between a tournament being held at +30 goals or as an Open and being held at -2. It will also help professional women players to assess female patrons better, as the handicap difference between them will be greater. That can only improve the professional sport. But we’ve been fighting for so long for equality that we don’t want to give up our normal handicaps now. In any case, the way the ladies’ handicaps are scaled isn’t exact enough at the moment and they don’t apply all over the world.”

Hazel Jackson, UK (normal +1, Ladies +8) says, “If it’s done properly and fairly, then I think ladies’ handicaps are a good idea. But I have to say I prefer the normal handicap system, because I have the feeling that the ladies’ system isn’t really viable. For instance, if I compare the handicaps of Caroline Anier (normal +2, Ladies +6), Lia Salvo (normal +2, Ladies +8), Nina Clarkin (normal +4, Ladies +9) and myself (normal +1, Ladies +7) with each other, it doesn’t make any sense to me. We all know there’s a huge difference between a +1 goaler, a +2 goaler and a +4 goaler in the normal system, and that’s supposed to be reflected in the women’s handicaps as well. At the moment, a lot of ladies’ handicaps just don’t tally with the players’ real abilities. But one advantage of ladies’ handicaps is that women can be more exactly graded with them because of the bigger scale. That means that tournaments are of a higher standard, and that’s more attractive for sponsors as well.” Eva Brühl, Germany’s best woman polo player (normal +2, Ladies +6), says, “I think it makes a lot of sense, because after all the playing standard is much closer tog-

ether from novice to professional for ladies than it is for men (-2 up to a maximum of 4 for men’s handicaps) and so it means that narrower classification is possible. In countries like Argentina where a lot of ladies’ polo is played, the ladies’ handicap is being well received, because you can see really good, competitive teams in tournaments for +15 to +20 goals that beat a normal +4 to +6 amateur goal tournament in Germany hands down.”

Corinne Schuler, President of the St. Tropez Polo Club (normal 0, Ladies + 3), says, “As most amateurs play with a handicap of 0, the existing handicap spread is not good, unfortunately. A 0 goaler can be fairly good, but not really good. Unfortunately that’s the way it is. It’s exactly that that we want to avoid by introducing the women’s handicap.”

While the ladies’ handicaps allow the performance of women to be more precisely graded with a refined and well-thought-out scale, in truth the system does not really seem to be properly weighted yet. A ladies’ handicap can make perfect sense for someone playing only or mostly ladies’ tournaments. But the handicap committees in Argentina and France assess the ladies’ handicaps exclusively on the basis of performance in the ladies-only tournaments, and performance in the normal tournaments does not count. This means that if you only play in a few ladies’ tournaments, your ladies’ handicap will be comparatively low. On the other hand, if you excel in a lot of ladies’ tournaments and only play in a few normal tournaments, you will improve your ladies’ handicap but not your normal handicap. This can lead to huge discrepancies between the normal and ladies’ handicaps. But the player’s still has the same skills, whether she is playing in normal or ladies’ tournaments. So there is the risk that a double yardstick will be applied, and that handicaps no longer reflect a player’s real ability, which would lead to a situation where ladies’ handicaps will be mostly about making tournaments look better from the outside.

POLO+10 VISIT IN PALERMO

POLO+10 attended the grand final of the Palermo Open in december and parts of the 8th Argentine Polo Tour personally and presented the POLO+10 Magazines for the first time with an own booth at the Cathedral of Polo in Buenos Aires/Argentina.

BY ERIC WEIL







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The best of the best on the winners podium:
 Pricegiving ceremony of the 119. Campeonato Argentino.

119o Campeonato Argentino



The Cathedral of Polo in the district Palermo of Buenos Aires is the most popular polo arena in the world.



The enthusiasm for polo is boundless in Argentina – big applause from the fans of players from Uruguay at the Argentine Open.

The first of five stages of the 8th Argentine Polo Tour was again played at the Palermo stadium in Buenos Aires in February/March and, as last year, proved very popular – specially for some 15 foreign players (including one woman) from Brazil, Venezuela, Germany, Italy and Britain – felt honoured to be able to step on what is known as the “Cathedral of polo.” Eight 16-handicap quartets participated in two round-robin groups of four, the winners of which played the final while the two runners-up played for the subsidiary cup.

With the weather fine except for one day’s rain postponement and no entry charged, there was quite a crowd of spectators, specially on the last day of the finals when Venezuelan 60-year-old patron Rafael Zubillaga’s team, Los Cocos, also with Felipe Llorente, Matias Torres Zabaleta and Tomas Lalor, won the Cabaña Argentina Cup by beating the other group winner, Cabreuva, 10-9. Los Cocos won by the goal they received because they played the final with a 15-handicap team. Torres Zabaleta was not only the outstanding player, but top scorer with eight of the 10 goals, including three penalties. Incredibly, the Cabreuva quartet was led by 73-year-old patron Ricardo Portu-

gal, accompanied by Cali Farinati, Martin Aguerre and Juan Martin Obregon. There was also only a one-goal difference in the close subsidiary final in which Chapelco beat La Natividad 13-12 to win the Fernet Branca Cup. In both finals, the lead changed in the final chukka.

German Uwe Schroeder’s Tom Taylor team, with Gaston Marquez, Santos Anca and Santiago Marambio, won two of its three group matches, but failed to reach the subsidiary cup final on a poorer goal difference (38-36) than Chapelco (32-28). They will not be playing in the rest of the tournaments, but Schroeder, who returned to Germany after the finals, said he had left a dozen horses here and will return in October.

The Tour now moves to outlying polo clubs and some new teams will be on view – at La Dolfina from March 3-23, then jointly at La Aguada La Picaza from March 28 to April 6 and at Centauros at the same time, but the tournament at La Aguada La Picaza will be for teams of 22 handicap, while the rest continue with maximum 16 handicap teams. The last stage is at Ellerstina from April 9-20. •



1 Joshua Räsch and Eliza Centurion Arriola from POLO+10 2 Cancha 2 seen from the main tribune of Cancha 1 3 Katharina Hanke with Peter-Phillip Kienast (+2) 4 Patrice Gravière (right) with Alberto Pedro Heguy, former 10 goal handicap player 5 Christopher Kirsch (+4), Valeria Cetraro and Andy Walther (0) 6 Thomas Winter (+5) 7 Nicolas “Nico” Pieres (+9), Ellerstina 8 Juan Martin Nero (+10), La Dolfina 9 Sebastian Schneberger (+1) and Valentin Novillo Astrada (+5) 10 the Team of the Nespresso booth 11 Lali Black and Agustin Kronhaus (+3), Susanne Rosenkranz (0).

MARRAKESH MAGIC

The Kingdom of Morocco is not usually associated with polo, but with its incredible beauty, long tradition of horsemanship and fantastic year-round climate, this is poised to change.

BY TRACEY SHEERAN



4TH
CHUKKA

At present, polo is principally played on grounds owned by the Royal Guard in the capital city Rabat. Now Marrakesh, the famed “Red City” is aiming to become a new polo hot spot, with two new polo clubs currently under construction, a new Royal Guard ground almost complete and the major Royal Ranches project back on track.

With an average of only 5 days rain per year and agreeably warm climate, a short flight from most European cities and within easy reach of the Gulf States, polo can be played in Marrakesh for ten months of the year, making it an ideal destination for those seeking to prolong their polo season. With its French colonial past, the city is a unique blend of Arabian, North African and European cultures where visitors are warmly welcomed.

Two new polo developments

The new Jnan Amar Polo Resort is a major development comprised of a 5 star hotel, country and polo club with two polo fields and stabling for 110 horses, plus luxury villas. The initial phase of development is currently underway and the first polo field has been completed. At the end of April, the club is scheduled to hold their inaugural polo event in aid of the Eve Branson Foundation (mother of Virgin’s Sir Richard Branson) which supports enterprise, education and healthcare programmes in the Berber villages in the Atlas Mountains. On the other side of Marrakesh, lies the Kammelis development, which will boast similar polo facilities, but they do not yet have a playable field. The club will offer villas, apartments, a hotel, two polo fields and also a golf course. With the addition of the new Royal Guard polo grounds and a polo field at Royal Ranches, the city will soon have at least six polo fields within 30 minutes of the city centre.

Marrakesh: jet-set destination

Der Spiegel magazine called Marrakesh “St Tropez without the yachts” and it is clear that the city caters to the political elite and super-model crowd. Marrakesh, with its intoxicating scents and sounds of North Africa, strategically located at the gateway to the Sahara Desert and the lunar landscape of the Atlas Mountains, is a revelation: the city is a cosmopolitan hub that boasts more five star resorts and spas than most European cities. It is fast becoming a “beauty destination” where visitors can pamper themselves and indulge in treatments with the local, highly prized argan oil pro-



Royal procession at the Taj Palace.

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Image: Selman Marrakech

1 Selman stud 2 Jnan Amar – artist’s impression
of the equestrian centre.

Image: Jnan Amar

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ducts. On a visit, get lost in the maze of streets which make up the city’s famous walled Medina with its two miles of secret passages and famed Koutoubia Mosque. Mopeds, mules and Mercedes collide in narrow streets where it feels as if you have stepped back in time. Smell the spices, shop (and haggle) at a local souk, then sip mint tea in the Majorelle Gardens before heading to the famous Djemaa El Fna square to see its snake charmers, monkeys, storytellers and henna artists. The square is the magical heart of the city and deservedly a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. Go at night to enjoy its chaotic splendour and vast selection of food stands, which makes it one of the biggest open air dining experiences in the world!

Visitors can pass “from the sublime to the ridiculous” in just over an hour. Travel from the Medina through a red-tinted desert landscape scattered with cacti, to the rustic ski resort of Oukaïmeden (Africa’s highest ski resort at 3,200m) in the Toubkal National Park. The sight of skiers being taken to the chairlifts on donkeys is not to be missed!

Where to stay:

Polo – playing British Prime Minister Winston Churchill visited Marrakech many times and said of the legendary Mamounia hotel. “It is the most lovely spot in the world.” Or if you are looking for the ultimate discrete retreat, try the super-refined Royal Mansour, which belongs to the King himself and is a magnificent showcase of Moroccan craftsmanship. Opened in late 2012, the five star Selman Marrakech is a horse-lover’s paradise. The opulent Jacques Garcia designed hotel opens onto the longest pool in the

city and is also home to a magnificent Arabian stud: the stables are home to a collection of prize-winning Arabian stallions, which are turned out every day: have lunch while watching them kicking up their heels in their elegant paddocks surrounded by rose gardens. For a unique fusion of Moroccan, Indian and Venetian opulence, try the Stuart Church designed Taj Palace located in the exclusive Palmeraie area. The Taj boasts impeccable service, bedrooms of 80m², the largest swimming pool in the city and three restaurants – as you would expect from the only Taj hotel designated as a Palace outside of India. On arrival, guests are showered with rose petals in the traditional Moroccan greeting. There is also a huge choice of small riads (town houses) within the walled Medina.

However if you would like to enjoy a more relaxing country retreat, head for the beautiful Terres M’Barka on the outskirts of town, where owner Jérôme de Brouwer will take you for a sun-down ride across the plains underneath the Atlas Mountains. The suites are enormous, with open wood fires and private terraces – the ideal spot for unwinding after the frantic activities of the Medina.

King Mohammed VI is already an enthusiastic supporter of polo and in 2006 Morocco became the first African and Arab member of the FIP. With such ambitious new polo developments underway, Marrakesh is sure to become a vibrant new polo destination. The Fédération Royale Marocaine de Polo is bound to see an increase in membership in the coming years as the sport takes root in the Kingdom of the horse.



links in a unique way ancient Thai culture with the lively pulse a modern metropolis. It is precisely this fascinating mixture of tradition and modernity that attracts millions of tourists every year to the city north of the Gulf of Thailand. The Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok is located right in the heart of the ten-million city next to the Erawan Shrine and the capital's business and diplomatic quarter with countless attractive shopping opportunities and prime commercial locations. The elegant hotel complex with full resort facilities has a total of 380 modernly designed, extremely comfortable rooms. There are adequate, fully equipped conference rooms to accommodate up to 750 persons; the large ballroom, which can easily hold receptions of up to 1,500 guests, and The Residence, Bangkok's first residential-style events location with a floor area of 950 square meters, all made the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok an ideal business and event location for conferences, large-scale corporate events, business meetings and marriage celebrations.

Further information available at www.hyatt.com



Photos left: The Hyatt Regency Hua Hin with 205 rooms and an extensive garden and pool landscape located directly on the amazing Hua Hin beach. Right: Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok – the perfect destination for business and individualist, go-it-alone travelers.

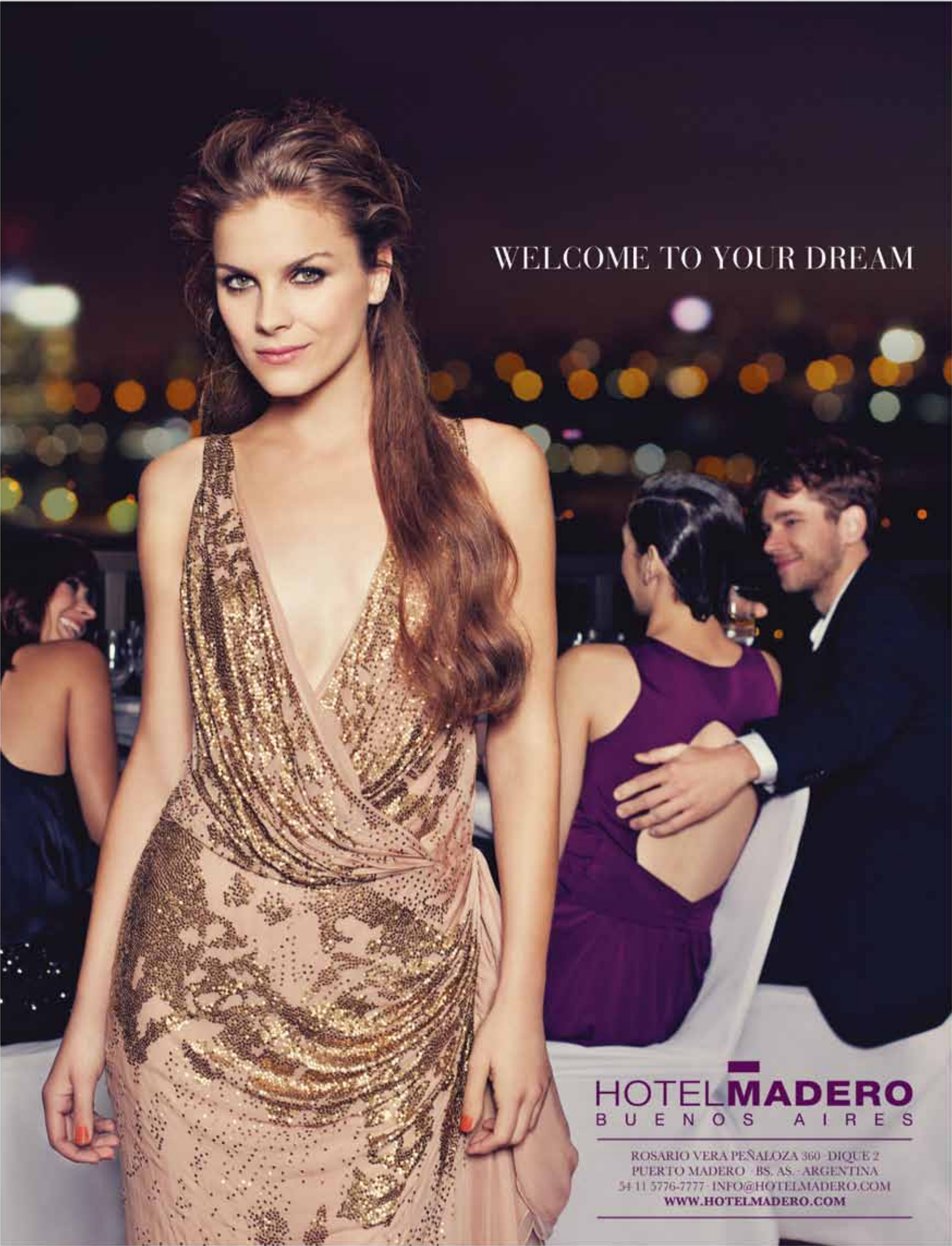
HYATT & BANGKOK HUA HIN

Where kings holiday: The Hyatt Regency in Hua Hin, the classic and most exclusive seaside resort in Thailand, and the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok Hotel, right in the center of the Thai capital, are perfect locations for visitors.

PHOTOGRAPHY HYATT

Hua Hin, around 230 km from Bangkok, is Thailand's oldest and most exclusive seaside resort. The Thai royal family regularly comes to spend the hottest months of the year in the western Gulf of Siam ever since King Rama VII had his summer palace built there in the mid 1920s. Many of Bangkok's inhabitants appreciate Hua Hin as a weekend and summer residence, and the former fishing village has evolved into a meeting place for Thailand's high society. Polo, no need to say, has also become a part of the town's social life. The Thai Polo & Equestrian Polo Club has been organizing the Asian Beach Polo Championship – Asia's only Beach Polo Competition – since 2010. In 2002, the Hyatt Regency Hua Hin first opened its doors to its exclusive guests. The resort hotel is right next to the beach, with its immaculate fine white sand, and is only five minutes away from the town center. It has a total of 205 beautifully bright rooms with refreshing sea breezes. A five acre tropical landscape, including swimming pools, some with slides, and an excellently equipped fitness center accommodate every imaginable wish its visitors have. The Barai Spa, located directly on the beach, which was opened in March 2007, offers over 18,500 square meters of relaxation and well-being in 18 exclusive treatment rooms and eight spa suites. Thailand's capital city Bangkok





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"I will use all the experience and knowledge my family has imparted to me since I was very young, to ensure La Providencia has the best polo facilities the country has ever seen."

Facundo Pieres
Facundo Pieres
Polo Advisor, currently ranked
no. 2 in the world



LA PROVIDENCIA

La Providencia is an exclusive Resort & Country Club located in the town of Canning, southwest of Buenos Aires. The resort offers the most comprehensive and highest quality development in the market. Its 264 hectares are ideal for outdoor activities, recreation and sport. 10 Goaler Facundo Pieres is Label Ambassador for the unique estate.

PHOTOGRAPHY LA PROVIDENCIA

With exclusive plots located around the four polo fields, this sector offers three neighbourhoods with breathtaking views and a unique style: Polo I, Polo II and Polo Village. There is a choice of 81 plots situated front line to the polo fields enjoying exceptional views and direct access, 50 plots in the second line and 57 plots located in the Polo Village, a typical picturesque Argentinean country style neighbourhood. The sector boasts international level polo fields, a practice field, an exercise track and spacious stables. The first class infrastructure and polo school run by professional instructors make this sector the perfect place to learn, play with friends and compete at a high level. La Providencia offers polo for players of all ages, male and female, allowing you to indulge your passion and immerse yourself in this delightful sport. Facundo Pieres is widely recognised as a leading player in the world of Polo and is currently ranked no. 2 in the world.

Facundo Pieres – Polo Advisor

Born in the province of Buenos Aires, Facundo grew up surrounded by the best horses, playing Polo from a very young age and developing a professional approach to the sport. In his first professional year, 1997, he won the Potrillos Cup with Polo Team Ellersterina Jr. He holds the record for being the youngest polo player ever to achieve a 10 goal handicap, a feat he accomplished at only 19 years old. Today, Facundo

is known to bring a unique set of virtues, ambitions and strengths to the game, and despite his young years, he is considered one of the best polo players in the world. Throughout his career, he has taken part in more than 50 tournaments around the world, winning the Triple Crown 2010 title, the highest accolade a polo player can be awarded, after winning the Hurlingham Open, the Tortugas Open and the Argentinean Polo Championship in Palermo.

Polo Field No. I Launch Event, April 28th 2013

On Sunday April 28 the launch of Polo Field 1 will be held at La Providencia Resort & Country Club on the campus, Route 52 km. 9, Canning, Ezeiza. The event will be attended by 400 VIP clients, polo players and celebrities who will arrive on site from 11 am. The event will begin with an exhibition with the best female players in the country, such as Maru Gimenez, Mumi Bellande and Paola Martinez .

More information at www.laprovidenciacountryclub.com

For your chance to win a complimentary day out at Guards Polo Club email James Evans at

je@laprovidenciacountryclub.com with your name, address and contact number.

Winners will be notified by phone.





By dealing with spaces, materials and trends in the craft operating in Salzburg Stuhlfelden, this results in special work that you simply have to touch: refined, natural textiles, expressive furniture and walls that look of elegance and unparalleled characteristics.

ART AND SKILL

“Because beautiful things are better” is the philosophy of Bernd Gruber, lived in his interior design business for many decades. With great success: Bernd Gruber GmbH is one of the most exclusive interior designers in Austria.

Their concepts offer customized answers to the personal living situation of demanding clients. The provider from Kitzbühel draws on 50 years of practical experience in the joinery trade and 20 years of expertise in interior design. Bernd Gruber: “With empathy and skill, the atmosphere of a room can be interpreted to mean that something unique is created. The basis of our work is an unconditional commitment to value and quality.” For a perfect result, Bernd Gruber sets standards in the tension between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary design. He took over his father’s carpenter business in 1992 and began to restructure it according to his own ideas.

The recipe for success: from planning and monitoring to implementation, Bernd Gruber pursues a holistic strategy. These living spaces are as individual as the people who live in them. To achieve this individuality, a holistic approach plus a high level of design expertise meet on the feel for the personality of the client. The company

Bernd Gruber designs and implements private and public projects, the penchant for perfection and attention to detail give every single production its own character. Who wants to see how individually somebodys interior could look with Bernd Gruber finds exactly the right place in the quality workshops in Stuhlfelden. An exhibition in Aurach on 550 square meters with own designs and international brands also, leads through the ornate interior world by Bernd Gruber.

At the 11th Valartis Bank Snow Polo World Cup 2013 in Kitzbuehel in January, Bernd Gruber started with an own polo team for the first time. The entrepreneur was – by winning the small final after a very good performance of his team – highly satisfied. In all cases, Bernd Gruber and his team attended with heart and soul, as well as they always do in all their interior design.

More information on www.bernd-gruber.at



The 1930s neo-classical facade hides the small and very personal Miravida Soho boutique hotel. Its five deluxe rooms and one suite offer all the comforts of a modern first-class hotel. Picture right: Co-owner Cornel Faltin.



IN THE HEART OF PALERMO SOHO

Relaxed elegance, personal service and a “home-away-from-home” feel – the charming Miravida Soho boutique hotel in the city’s most sought-after quarter of Palermo Soho is the perfect place to stay in Buenos Aires.

The Miravida Soho is the perfect hotel when travel takes you to Buenos Aires. It is elegant, exclusive and fun. This six-room oasis is housed in a former Beaux-Arts mansion tucked into a vibrant neighborhood where bars, café’s, and small shops abound. The hotel has all the modern amenities, but it is the unhurried personal attention lavished on patrons that makes Miravida unique. The young and enthusiastic staff makes sure that each guest gets the most out of a visit to this city. Linger over morning breakfast and plan your day. The staff will direct you to the hippest bookstores and galleries and trendy boutiques. Want to experience tango or take in a polo match? Need tickets to the opera?

They are eager to make reservations and plan transportation to make your visit unforgettable and effortless. After you experience all that Buenos Aires has to offer, make sure you don’t overlook the many charms of Miravida’s own backyard. Soho and close-by

areas are being developed by the city’s creative elite. Designers, photographers and filmmakers have renovated this corner of Buenos Aires known for elegant buildings that line tree-covered cobblestone streets. Join the rhythm and visit the open-air markets, linger in bars alive with music, brose charming antique stores, and delight yourself in restaurants of all descriptions. Join locals sipping café outside and watching the city unfold around you. Afterwards, don’t forget to visit Miravida’s cozy wine bar and experience Argentina’s finest vintages. Experience for yourself why Argentina has such a growing reputation in the world of fine vintage wines.

Small and personal, full of old world charm and modern conveniences, Miravida makes a trip to Buenos Aires a vacation just for you.

Contact: info@miravidasoho.com, www.miravidasoho.com

INVESTING IN THE SENSATIONAL SEYCHELLES

The idyllic Seychelles Islands set in the midst of the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean conjure up delightful images of a tropical island paradise that aspirations and desires are made of.

PHOTOGRAPHY EDEN ISLAND



On arrival at the international airport on the main island of Mahé, it's not difficult to see why: from the moment you arrive, you are swept away into a dreamlike setting of pure rapture. Making the return journey home from this surreal setting is rather difficult.

It's purely for this reason that many investors have taken notice of one of the country's top property developments, Eden Island, a luxury marina development that graces the east coast shoreline with an enticing array of upmarket residences and amenities. A unique island, being that it is reclaimed, Eden Island offers investors from around the world the opportunity of owning a piece of paradise, whether it be for a permanent stay, an island holiday getaway or a simple investment choice. An exclusive private island lifestyle that appeals to the sophisticated buyer looking for excellent investment value, Eden Island has three product offerings available. Spacious Apartments which offer exquisite panoramas of the main island Mahé and surrounding islands, deluxe Maisons that take the form of private duplexes situated on water-front plots, and top of the range Villas which are the epitome of opulence and sophistication – all oceanfront, spilling over into the inviting ocean just a few steps away. With prices starting at \$465 000 for an apartment, \$925 000 for a Maison and \$2mio for a villa.



Construction of this magnificent development is currently over 50% complete. Three of the islands four beaches are currently enjoyed by the islands inhabitants, while the fully equipped clubhouse and fitness centre, are a popular choice for others. The recently completed championship tennis court and two resident swimming pools are widely utilised, however for the ocean adventurers, there is fantastic snorkelling, fishing and sailing nearby. This becomes a convenient hobby as all units come standard with a mooring for your own boat which gives you the opportunity to explore the many neighbouring islands. For the investment savvy individuals, Eden Island offers great returns on investment from the Eden Island Rental Pool. Homeowners have the option of placing their units in the fully managed rental pool on a short and long term basis.

With purchasers having the option of Seychelles residency, a life on Eden Island and Seychelles not only becomes an ideal but also a reality.

For contact details of the various sales agents around the world, please visit www.edenisland.sc

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Sören Hullberg, Chairman of the
Stockholm Polo Club and owner of
the Story Hotel in Stockholm.



Image: Love Strandell

THE TEAM PLAYER

In the sport of polo it's just like in real life – being in the right place at the right time. Sören Hullberg, Chairman of the Stockholm Polo Club, showed perfect timing with his Story Hotel. A success story.

BY KATRIN LANGEMANN

The magic word is team playing. “In the hotel business it’s just like in polo – nothing works without team playing. Team playing is what makes you successful.” And Sören Hullberg knows what he’s talking about. Hullberg worked in the hotel business for many years before starting to play polo when he was fifty. “You’re nothing without the team”, he says. “As a loner you won’t get very far, neither in polo nor in the hotel business. You have to trust your colleagues and harmonise well with them – on the polo field just like in business.”

Four years ago the passionate polo player and Chairman of the Stockholm Polo Club (see p. 64-67) fulfilled his biggest dream and opened a hotel in the centre of Stockholm together with five other owners. The Story Hotel is a small but excellent four-star hotel in the lively Östermalm district. Stylish, service-oriented and of a high standard, but affordable – that’s its motto. The hotel’s 82 rooms are comfortable and furnished with great attention to detail. And the highlight is that the guests actually book online

and everything is paid in advance. So guests can leave the hotel at any time without leaving unpaid bills. Hullberg says, “Look 10 years ago how the reservation and booking systems were like: so you can call it a revolution!” Feedback from guests is immensely important to Sören Hullberg. In every room there is a feedback sheet on which guests are invited to write down any comments. If comments are negative, it may happen, Sören Hullberg contacts the guests in person by phone or email to find out what could have been done better. As Hullberg says, “If a guest is happy he will tell maybe five to ten people, if he’s not satisfied, he will destroy a lot more.” And the concept works. Guest numbers and positive feedback speak for themselves. According to Hullberg, “To design things is easy but the design only sells the hotel in the first moment of impression, then the service and excellent hospitality comes. The Story Hotel is not a design hotel. It’s a lifestyle hotel and definitely a story to be told around the world.”

For more information or to book, please visit www.storyhotels.com

POLO+10 WORLD



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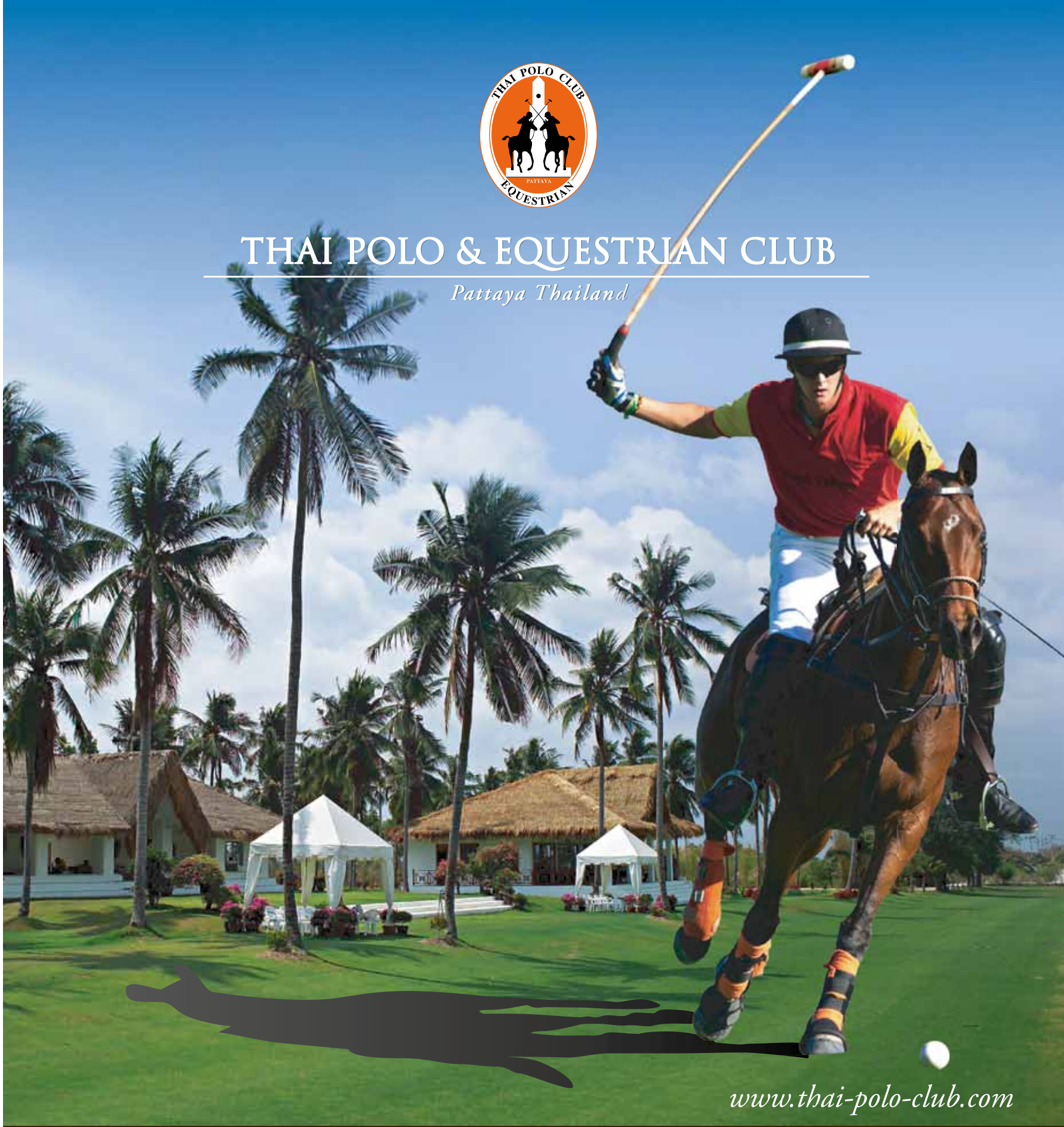


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