



FIP
MAGAZINE
by ClickPolo

THE MAN OF A NEW ERA

The story of
Nicholas Colquhoun Denvers:
even though he doesn't hail
from a family involved in the sport,
he was an important man as
seventh president of the Federation



Editor's notes
FIP: a step ahead



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August 2020

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FIP: a step ahead

by Carlos Beer ”

We are very proud to publish our seventh magazine. And, in this case, an interview with the seventh president of the Federation: Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers. Ever since he first got involved in polo when he was 18 years old, Nicholas has been very active in the sport. He has travelled around the world, and, wherever he went, polo was his travelling partner.

In our previous issue we interviewed Richard Caleel, and highlighted his work to extend the frontiers of polo. Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers walked on the same path, but he was the man who extended into a new era of the world, and made the Federation more professional.

We all know that polo is a sport where pros are more often than not found playing with amateurs. There is still a long way to go in that regard, but Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers took the few steps in that direction.

"Richard Caleel and I worked closely together firstly to strengthen communications between FIP and its members the governing bodies of polo around the world promoting the idea of international rules and international liaison," said Nicholas during the interview. A good example of the FIP's work in recent past.



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NICHOLAS COLQUHOUN-DENVERS, a life dedicated to polo

Like most people that don't belong to a polo related family, the game of kings came across Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers life by pure coincidence. "At 18 I went to work for the Australian Government in Canberra and by sheer chance my girlfriend's father, who was a Commander in the Royal Australian Navy, played polo and so I got my first taste of actually stick & balling and schooling ponies and playing a few chukkers for a few years under the watchful eye of the legendary John Gorman".

Although work took Nicholas around the world, it seemed as polo was part of his destiny: "In the early 70's my father, who at the time was the Australian Consul in Moscow, decided that the Australian Civil Service was not to be the future for my adventurous spirit and a few phone calls

later I found myself bound to the UK at the British Army's Regular Commissions Board and subsequently an officer in the Royal Regiment of Artillery! I believe I was possibly the only Officer in the British Army to be recruited directly from Moscow! Luckily my first posting was to a polo-playing regiment", Nicholas recalls with joy.

During Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers term as the Federation of International Polo presidency, the organization took a step forward towards its development after selecting a CEO and his team. The other major achievements was the induction of new members such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Nation, Ukraine and Japan. This is the story of Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers, FIP's 7th President.



How's your story with polo?

My lifelong passion for the sport started at an early age at home in Australia when I used to visit the Perth Royal Show to watch matches with my sister each year. At 18 I went to work for the Australian Government in Canberra and by sheer chance my girlfriend's Father, who was a Commander in the Royal Australian Navy, played polo and so I got my first taste of actually stick & balling and schooling ponies and playing a few chukkers for a few years under the watchful eye of the legendary John Gorman.

In the early 70's my Father who at the time was the Australian Consul in Moscow decided that the Australian Civil Service was not to be the future for my adventurous spirit and a few phone calls later I found myself bound to the UK at the British Army's Regular Commissions Board and subsequently an officer in the Royal Regiment of Artillery! I believe I was possibly the only Officer in the British Army to be recruited directly from Moscow! Luckily my first posting was to a polo-playing regiment ; 'Jasper's Heavy Horse' the 42nd Regiment RA and my mentor was one Colonel Jasper Browell so for three years I was able to play on Regimental Ponies all over Germany and the UK.

After that I was posted to Hong Kong to 20 Regiment RA who also played polo on the small Brunei/Timor ponies and where I ran the Army polo for three years. When I left the British Army after a knee injury, I worked for a well-known Saudi Arabian



family in London and my polo resumed at Ham Polo Club which was my home Club for almost five decades.

In 1995 I was asked to take over as Chairman at the Club and served in that post for 24 years only retiring in 2017. During that period I also served as a Steward of the HPA for 16 years and the HPA Chairman from 2009-2012. I had learned at an early stage that I had neither the time, the money or sadly the talent to be much more than an amateur player but I loved playing low goal polo so HPC suited me well.





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How did you become FIP`s President?

After I completed my 4 years in the role as Chairman of the HPA in 2012, Luis Lalor, who was then President of the AAP and with whom I had worked closely during my role in the HPA, approached me to see if I might be interested in becoming more involved in FIP. I knew many of the FIP devotees and had thoroughly enjoyed several of their overseas Ambassador Cups playing in Argentina, India, Brazil & Iran. There was a consensus amongst the AAP, HPA & USPA that that possibly a past Chairman of one of the major National Associations might bring more gravitas to what was regarded by many in the polo world as just an `old boys club` and of little relevance to the rest of the polo world.

Since the creation of FIP our Founder President, Marcos Uranga and subsequent Presidents; Ambassador Glen Holden, Patrick Guerrand-Hermes and Eduardo Huergo had devoted an unbelievable amount of time, dedication and financial support to the Federation but there was a growing feeling that to progress the Federation it needed to lessen its reliance and workload on the elected Presidents. Times were changing, the sport as a whole was becoming more professional and there were less and less potential candidates that may be willing to devote the required time and financial resources which the Past-Presidents had generously contributed.

Fortunately due to the income generated in China, FIP was now in a position to consider taking on a full time CEO and a permanent FIP Office to run the Federation professionally and transparently under the direction of the President, the Executive Committee and the Council of Administration. The AAP, HPA & the USPA all endorsed this approach as a way to unite all the National Governing bodies to the benefit of the sport. The AAP nominated me for the post with the backing of the HPA but the USPA proposed Dr Richard Caleel who had been a FIP member for many years but who only intended to serve in post for two years. We agreed mutually to work together during Richard's two years as President which allowed me more time to study and understand the FIP organization and its ethos and to familiarize myself with more of the members. The alliance worked well for both of us and for FIP.



What do you think was your legacy as FIP President?

Richard Caleel and I worked closely together firstly to strengthen communications between FIP and its members the governing bodies of polo around the world promoting the idea of international rules and international liaison. During my term we interviewed and selected the current CEO and now looking back it is my firm belief that there were few, if any, who could have performed the task of CEO as well as Alejandro Taylor due to his understanding of polo, his knowledge of finances as a past Treasurer of the AAP, his business acumen and most importantly the fact that he was bi-lingual to an excellent standard which was vital when communicating in a sporting world which was divided between Spanish & English. Aply backed up by Felipe del Sel the FIP office functioned both progressively and efficiently to the benefit of the Federation and its membership.

I consider the establishment of a professional FIP office to be one of the main legacies of my time in office making the Federation more professional and thus making FIP more relevant to all its members. I was also pleased to initiate several new members of FIP from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine and the new Japan Polo Association . Our Executive Committee which consisted of the three Chairmen of the AAP, HPA & USPA along with Francoise Berger and Piero Dillier who were elected by the General Assembly to represent the B & C Countries worked well together and accomplished a lot. I was delighted to propose and have accepted that the B & C Country representatives should also be Vice-Presidents of FIP putting them on a similar footing to the three A Country Representatives.





Can you tell us a moment/moments that brought you happiness or joy thanks to polo?

Every moment in polo, either in the saddle or just being privileged enough to be with my ponies brought me happiness, it is a sport of all-consuming passion no matter at which level you play or who you play with. Most fondly I recall the birth of Santos, the only foal I ever managed to breed out of one of my mares Soraya, which brought me great joy and although never the best pony I ever played Santos only retired at the age of 22.

I recall my surprise and embarrassment when the Club clandestinely arranged a polo match with both Adolfo Cambiaso and Lolo Castagnola playing for my own team Stagshead as a surprise thank you at our Club to celebrate my first 10 years as Chairman of HPC. Polo has some wonderful characters that I have been privileged to meet in the 17 countries I have played in over the years, most of whom I remain in touch with and on the whole they are all true gentlemen of the sport, generous in their hospitality and giving no quarter on the field.



How do you see polo and FIP today?

Sadly I believe polo has been setback for many years by the worldwide effect of the COVID-19 virus. It will take a lot of serious work to recover on both sides of the Atlantic but our sport has always proven itself to be incredibly resilient and I am sure it will bounce back. If polo can survive two World Wars which caused an incredible loss of players and ponies and the numerous financial crises over the years then I am positive it will only be a matter of time before it bounces back. My only sadness has been the march of commercialism into the sport, it was once a pastime, it is now regrettably a commercial enterprise for many players. Amateur polo needs to be protected and encouraged, it is the grass roots of our sport and without it much of the joy and fun of playing will disappear, FIP has a role to play to nurture both amateur and professional polo wherever it can.

What does polo mean in your life?

For most of my adult life polo meant just about everything and was second only to my wife and whilst our recent experience in Australia has certainly dented my enthusiasm for administration I will always be passionate about the sport I love, my friends who are associated with it, its history, its art and of course the most wonderful and noble creatures that we are so privileged to partner when playing the most exciting sport in the world. ■





POLO IN ITALY STARTS AGAIN

THE FEDERAL BOARD OF THE ITALIAN EQUESTRIAN SPORT FEDERATION, IN AGREEMENT WITH THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, HAS APPROVED A PROTOCOL, DRAWN UP BY ITS POLO DEPARTMENT, WITH THE GUIDELINES CONTAINING THE RULES FOR THE RESUMPTION OF THE POLO'S COMPETITIVE ACTIVITY, DURING THE COVID 19 EMERGENCY PERIOD.



In addition to the general rules relating to the management of polo clubs, special rules have been provided for the game, which substantially includes the replacement of the throw-in with the shot from the bottom of the field and the elimination of the ride-off. The players on the field must keep the distance established between them by the length of their arm in addition to the polo stick.

Furthermore, paths are set up for the handling and stopping of the horses, so

that the safety distance between the grooms is maintained, who must always wear gloves and mask. No spectators are admitted to the matches.

With these safety rules, polo tournaments can start again on June 25th, but for the Italian Championship we will have to wait for September or October.

Luca D'Orazio, from La Ginevra Polo Club, opened the club to host the first polo event in Italy since the COVID-19 pandemic







began and polo was played under the following rules: only practice chukkers. Game was resumed from the end line instead of a throw-in from the middle so as to avoid contact. Players were had their temperature taken before entering the club.

Between July 11th and 12th the first polo tournament took place with 4 teams. It was the Roma Caput Mundi-La Ginevra Polo Club FIP July 2020. This was the first official event in Italy and it took place in Rome nonetheless.

The winner was La Patrona Polo Team, which had Praxilla Trabattoni, Pulli Grillini, Gini D'Orazio and Pedro Soria. Gini is well known at FIP as she participated representing Italy in several tournaments and events.

Although the tournament had a winner the main goal was to celebrate friendships and get polo going on again on these difficult times. We would like to extend our gratitude to all that participated and helped to organize the tournament, specially Therence Cusmano and Luca D'Orazio. ■





New FIP Members



Chinese Equestrian Association

We have been working with the Chinese Equestrian Association to include them as Full Members. Their application was received earlier this year and approved by FIP's Executive Committee.

The Chinese Equestrian Association registers 4 clubs, 4 fields and 60 players and their contact information is the following:

Address: Room 508, No. 74, Tiantan Donglu, Dongcheng District, Beijing
Phone: +86 010 8718183
Email: cea@sports.cn
Website: equestrian.sport.org.cn
Delegate: Hou Tianbo

The Hungarian Polo Association and the Hungary and Russian Federation of Polo Players are returning to full member status after a brief time being corresponding members.

Their contact information is the following:

Hungarian Polo Association

3 clubs, 4 fields and 40 players

Address: 1016 Budapest, Krisztina krt. 79 fe/2, Hungary

Phone: +36 209 995 045

Email: ivanics@plasztika.com

Delegate: Dr. Ivanics György

Russian Federation of Polo Players

2 clubs, 3 fields and 30 players

Address: 20 Bolshaya Pionerskaya ul. Apt 17, 115054 Moscow, Russia

Phone: +7 916 811 0055

Email: innalex51@hotmail.com

sixpence@mail.ru

Rodzianko.m@gmail.com

Delegate: Michael Rodzianko



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POLO IN MALAYSIA, PLANNING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

By Peter Abisheganaden”

As I write this, Malaysia is still restricted by a Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO). We have been in various stages of lockdown since 18th March, some that stopped us from even visiting our horses. When Covid-19 hit Malaysia, all polo, horse-racing and equestrian events were suspended. Covid-19, coupled with the emergence of African Horse Sickness (AHS) in Thailand, meant that the Royal Malaysian Polo Association had no real choice but to suspend the 14-goal RMPA International League.

Malaysia was not alone. Polo was stopped in Florida and California in America. Argentina, New Zealand and Australia had the tail end of their seasons docked.

Closer to home, Thailand shut down their medium and low goal tournaments. Singapore was also hit, as their Circuit Breaker meant their players have not been able to work their horses at all in May. They will probably get back to polo only in August.

Professional players have been stuck at home. Argentina has closed its borders to tourists till at least 1st September. Players wanting to leave Argentina have to apply for a special permit to be allowed to travel. In Malaysia, we are able to ride, and stick and ball. Sooner or later, we will be playing polo again. What polo will we have? And how can we play polo? Is there socially distanced polo?





Here's what is being planned

SOCIALLY DISTANCED POLO

The government has already allowed individual exercise and some sports to return. Polo, being a contact sport, is not one of them. But if we take away the contact, we are a small sided sport, with only eight players on a very large field at any one time. We are already socially distanced in the clubhouse, so that isn't an issue. It is how we stay distanced on the polo field.

Looking at the game, what contact we have in polo is in riding- off and hooking. It is possible to play polo with no riding off or hooking. The only problem then is

that once a good player gets the ball, no one can get it off him till it goes out of play. By instituting a 2-hit rule, similar to the walk and dribble rule, we can get players to release the ball.

2-HIT RULE

What this means is that once a player has possession of the ball, he is allowed only 2 hits. After that, he has to give up possession. If he takes a third hit, it would constitute a foul, and a penalty is awarded to the opposing team.

CONTACTLESS POLO

If the 2-Hit Rule is applied, there is no need for contact to force a player to release the ball. Players can concentrate



on where they think the next play is. It will be a good exercise in anticipation, and in making intelligent runs into space to receive the ball.

RESTRICTIONS OF MOVEMENT OF HORSES

One of the Covid-19 and AHS problems is the restriction of movement of horses. No horses may be moved from club to club without permission from the Department of Veterinary Services. We don't know when this restriction will be lifted. There may be exemptions to this rule, and restrictions will only last while there is a ban on interstate travel (Covid-19 related) and AHS, which still remains only in Thailand and not in Malaysia. It is therefore not possible for teams from other clubs to come to RSPC to play polo.

PLAYING WITH OURSELVES

There is a name for that, but we shall not go there! With one hand tied behind our backs, we have to make it easier to use the other hand. Looking at the players and horses that we have at RSPC, we looked at what would fit best. We studied the handicap levels, and players and their horses. The polo sub-committee came to the conclusion that the fewer horses a team needed, the more teams we could have.

THE NEW NORMAL

Socially Distanced Polo is not the new normal. It is only the new normal for now. Once restrictions are lifted, I am sure we will return to full contact polo. But there will still be changes.

THE CASE FOR 4-MINUTE CHUKKAS AND 6-CHUKKA MATCHES

There are already many instances of tournament polo being played at less

than the traditional 7 1/2 minute chukkas. FIP, the AAP, and the all professional XPL in Argentina already use shorter length chukkas.

As the FIP Tournament Director, I introduced our Malaysian half chukka free change system to FIP at the 2012 FIP Super Nations Cup. It was subsequently adopted by FIP, and is now mandatory for all FIP events and sanctioned tournaments, such as the SEA Games and World Championships. It is often viewed as 8 x 4-minute chukkas.

In 2019, the AAP played 4-minute chukkas in their Argentine Women's Open. FIP has already stated it will use this format for the FIP Women's World Championships, and is talking to all stakeholders about using this format in all FIP tournaments in the future.

4-MINUTE CHUKKAS

With the half chukka changes, 8 x 4-minute chukkas are already what is actually being played now in the RMPA Leagues. The way the half chukkas are done now, the horn is sounded at the 3:30 mark, and play is stopped then somewhere soon after. Sometimes it goes over four minutes, but often we are around the 4-minute mark or over, by the time play is stopped.

All rules of how the bell works remains the same as it does now. The only thing that is changed is that the first bell rings at 3:30 and not 7:00 minutes. The only thing different would be that there is no half-chukka for a free horse change.

6-CHUKKA MATCHES

The proposal, however, is to play 6 chukka matches, and not 4 full chukkas.



What this means is that we would play games of 6 chukkas x 4 minutes = 24 minutes, as opposed to the current 4 x 7.5 = 30 minutes.

HORSES

Because they are only 4-minute chukkas, a 6-chukka match could easily be played with just 3 horses per player. It means teams could play with just 12 horses, and would be considered to have more than sufficient horse power with 3+1 per player or just 16 horses per team. This is significantly better than to 20 to 24 horse average we have now for full 4-chukka matches.

HANDICAPS

Because the games are considered to be 6-chukka games, handicaps are calculated as such. If a 2-goal team was playing against a 5-goal team, it would receive 3 full goals on handicap, as opposed to 2 goals, if it were a 4-chukka match. The team giving away goals not only has to give more goals away, but they also have less time to make up to deficit.

ADVANTAGES

- Games would be slightly shorter in total time.
- 3 matches could be scheduled in an afternoon, instead of only 2.

- Less horses required per player and per team.
- Easier for players to pair up and form teams.
- Lower handicapped teams have a better chance.

THE OPPORTUNITY

I am excited to try the new format. It is more of a level playing field. Under the old conditions, a 2-goal team taking on a 5-goal team had little chance, not just on handicaps, but also on horse-power.

Playing competitive polo means we will be able to form new teams and easily join up with other members. The advantage or perhaps reliance on professionals to play the game for us is reduced. Lower goal polo means more members will have a chance to form teams. With the changes to the handicap structure, there will be more of a fighting chance.

I personally think it will get more interesting. I want to form a team at the low end of the scale. If a tournament is in the 2 to 5 goal handicap range, I think I'd like to be in a 2-goal team. I'm looking forward to a new challenge. Polo in the time of the Coronavirus means we have to think outside the box. Perhaps even try a change of the box.





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HUNGARY, WERE POLO NEVER STOPPED

Polo in Hungary seems rather small compared to other sports such as water polo, where people still remember with pride the "blood in the swimming pool" match where they defeated the Soviet Union in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. Nevertheless, the Hungarian Polo Association was founded in 1927 and the sport in the magyar country traces many years before. The best example of the bond with polo could be the fourth place in the 1936 Olympics where Hungary finished fourth after defeating the local German team.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a huge setback with most of the tournaments suspended or delayed. However, Hungary was in a very good position with COVID-19 virus, as they kept training and playing all the time.





But not all the news were positive as Argentine players and grooms can't travel to Europe and that was a problem for the general organization. Fortunately, the Government has awarded a special permit and polo tournaments can now be officially organized.

The 4-6 and 6-8 goal tournaments are organized every year and in 2020 the

highest level tournament is the Count Andrassy International Polo Cup 4-6 goal which is scheduled for October 2020. The Andrassy family is probably the best example of the legacy of polo in Hungary as they were the ones who organized the first polo in the Hungary Kingdom in 1880.







International youth exchange

By Ava Rose Hinkson

As I walked off the plane into the hot Jamaica airport, my first thought was, "I'm finally here!" And as I watched my dad gather the luggage and mallet bags it occurred to me how blessed I am to have a dad with such great friends in the polo world. Those great friends were so accommodating and I learned so much from them these past few months. I was ecstatic when I reached out to Lesley-Ann Masterson Fong-Yee and she introduced me to Shane Chin. Shane is a great guy with a big personality, huge smile and a passion for polo. They trusted me to take on this huge responsibility to plan a junior trip abroad. When I was first invited to bring a team to Jamaica, I started thinking of players I loved to play with. I then went to a lineup that could possibly sweep the score board with unrivaled talent. In the end my thoughts cleared, and I settled with my fellow newly elected PTF Junior National Board members and a couple of non-member backups. I'm glad to say it worked out perfectly.



We spent the first night in Jamaica handing out jerseys, playing with foot mallets, and organizing strategies. We met with the Jamaican host players and families at dinner and had some strong laughs over some delicious jerk chicken and a very heated game of pool. Sleeping that first night was not an issue for anyone of us. On the morning of second day, the gang gathered together, and we took a scenic walk to Doctors Cove Beach. Seeing the dense mountains



cascade into the turquoise water was breathtaking. After we all had snorkeled at the beach and drank way too many strawberry smoothies, we trudged back to the hotel to get ready for the clinic with Lesley-Ann Masterson Fong-Yee at Chinook farms.

The trip through the Jamaican mountains was unbelievable, nothing anyone of us had expected. The lush beautiful jungle with friendly smiling faces of the locals



and scattering of Jamaican reindeer, aka, the grazing goats made our already loud van rock with excitement. You could feel the need to soak in all the diversity. As we drew closer to the club, there was an enthusiasm among our team to get mounted and put a mallet in hand. I could not wait to see the horses, the field, and meet the grooms. The clinic was incredibly informative. It really taught us how to travel as team and individuals within the polo world. She showed us the etiquette to use around the horses, grooms, and the owners who have offered us their most prized possessions. We now know how to do tack checks correctly before mounting, what to ask the grooms and owners, and the circuital first few steps to do after mounting before the game begins. I am looking forward to using these etiquette pointers in my future traveling for polo.

It was great to apply the skills Lesley-Ann had taught us the next day at





the practice match. The Jamaican players were an absolute blast to play both with and against. They brought an aspect to the game that most juniors and adults lose when they begin playing competitive polo. They laugh when they play, even in the competitive matches, you could hear them yelling and joking with each other. It's something that you don't see all the time. Many players lose their ability to have fun on the field once they get in "game mode." One of the highlights of the trip was at the main tournament, seeing players from different countries and different teams, talking to one another and giving each other tips and discussing strategies between chukkers. I can say that at that moment it became clear to me that this sport isn't about who holds up the trophy, or what player scored more goals, or even who has



nicer horses. It's about the people and bonds that are forged on and off the field.

The last day was spent at a beach that one of the hosting families owned. The day was filled with tubing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and snorkeling. Finally, the day came for us to depart and we spent the morning trying not to make it so obvious that we were all dreading to board the airport shuttle and for us to spilt up. It was astounding how in just one week we all had grown so close. The entire group is still in contact with one another. We often log on to facetime for our much-needed laughs and antics of recent happenings, some of us are in Jamaica, some away at school some sitting in bedrooms waiting and planning for the next trip we can all play passionate polo together. Simply said we all agreed we had the time of our lives. Onward to more adventures and bigger laughs with this worlds polo playing youth!

POLO 101 AUSTRALIA

Western Australia secured a grant from FIP/IOC to help develop their POLO 101 concept. Last year, the Western Australia Polo and Development committee started the new concept of POLO 101. This was formulated by a W.A polo player, Matt Welsh, who is passionate about getting more people into the sport in a more affordable and accessible way.

Matt has played polo and polocrosse at a top level and wanted to see more people come try polo. He wanted to allow people to try the sport at a beginner level and only need one horse. Last year Western Australia held a beginner days, junior coaching clinics and POLO 101 "come and try" days to showcase the concept of POLO 101. They also ran POLO 101 as part of their scheduled tournaments and a lot of juniors took part of these competitions.

The Game

The goal of POLO 101 is to progress each player to the full version of the sport in a fun and safe environment. Polo 101 is a modified version of the traditional game and rules of polo to allow as an entry level into the sport with cheaper fees and a minimum of one horse required per player. The game will utilise an arena style or soft ball and will be played on a field that is 130m x 60m in size (about half of a full size field).

Heading into 2020/2021, with the help of FIP/IOC, Western Australia is going to take the POLO 101 concept out and about as they are going to put together a POLO 101 beginner kit bag that can be taken to Pony clubs and Adult riders clubs. The bag will have 15 light polo mallets, 15 foot mallets, 10 soft arena balls, 10 polo balls, bibs to wear to play game s in two teams, witches hats and poles for games and drills. To accompany this the goal is to have a special POLO 101 wooden horse pony that can be transported to these events and help the participants try their polo hitting on a stationary horse. The POLO 101 beginner kit will allow any coach to go to different locations to showcase and coach the concept of POLO 101.

"We hope to get to as many pony and adult riders club during the off season. Here we will do a coaching session for the clubs and give them a basic understanding of Polo and the Polo 101 concept. Pony and adult riders clubs are always looking for new equestrian sports to try as this is a prerequisite. We hope to then invite all interested participants to our annual Junior Polo and Adult clinics in January. We hope to put together a schedule for those interested to join our polo season and enter in as a POLO 101 participant. We hope the Polo 101 concept gains more interest, excitement and ultimately more people into the wonderful sport of POLO. We cannot wait to share our sport with the rest of Western Australian horse lovers".

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Great news for South America as polo is allowed in Paraguay

In times of world-wide pandemic, South America recently became the epicenter of the problem. That is why every small step towards the return of normality should be celebrated. And the return to normality goes hand in hand with the return of polo. In that regard, Paraguay was one of the first countries where the Government allowed them to play. With protocols, of course, but it was allowed.

Juan Jose Arnold, president of the Federation of Paraguayan Polo, talked with FIP Magazine: "We are putting in a lot of effort. Every organization is taking extreme care of details for the protocol to be followed. Every member of staff, grooms, field keepers... everyone is following the protocol the Government gave us to return to action."

They came back with a practice match on Saturday, July 18th, at the La Gloria Polo Club. "This is all new. The most important thing, though, is that the ball is rolling again! Paraguay knows how dangerous the virus is, and thus are doing our best to fight it with conscience and hard work," he explained.

Finally, he noted that "It is worth noting that the Government is supporting us greatly, via the Republic's Presidency, and the Ministry of Health and Sport. Their top priority is the wellbeing of all athletes."

The authorization came from the Paraguayan Government via Resolution 557/2020, which states that "We are allowing practice matches, high-performance sportsmen lists, National teams and teams federated to the Paraguayan Federation, along the sanity protocols approved by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Wellbeing."

Polo has returned to Paraguay. Slowly, sure, but it is great news.



THE BRITISH SEASON, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Polo in the UK has been a struggle as it has been around most of the world. The Victor Ludorum tournaments, which include the key tournaments, are taking place but only those of 8 goals or above. Any team sport is limited to elite players which are those who earn a living from polo. Below 8 goals too many amateurs are involved and thus at the lower level clubs and players are having to play 3 on 3 training with a Covid Marshal to oversee social distancing.

Clubs are working hard to make this fun and beneficial to the players. Even an improvement could be seen in many of the more recent newcomers to polo as they are now able to benefit from the experience of the pros than in a normal year were they are usually rushing all round the country to play in tournaments.

Sadly, polo has to be played behind closed doors so those whose summer is normally spent on the side of a ground watching either the high goal or their offspring are stuck at home. However, both the Gold Cup and Queen's Cup are being filmed and live-streamed so everyone does have the possibility to watch it whilst sat at home or in the office without collecting a speeding ticket on the dreaded A272.

To meet the social distancing requirements there have been some rule changes. The

The main one being that nearly all line ups have been replaced with hits and teams only change ends after each chukka. After a goal, the game is restarted with a hit from the 60 by the team that has just had a goal scored against it. With the umpire dropping the ball after 20 seconds and it having to be hit after 5 seconds, the restart is pretty clean and swift and provide an opportunity to change ponies. Teams are also limited to playing a total of 40 ponies per team with 2 ponies allowed to go to the game in case of injury.

Of course the weather was great until polo started but the Prince of Wales Trophy was played in sunshine which has been a rarity in the last 20 years. Polo in Germany, France and Spain has started in some places but clubs here are planning to provide polo throughout August and September when the weather can be glorious.

With the uncertainties surrounding travel and a possible second spike, polo and most activities involving other people are having to be very reactive and there is certainly a lot of frustration that some things are allowed which involve large gatherings and few checks whilst others such as polo with players spread over some 15 acres with strict checks is still on hold for 80% of our members, many of whom rely on polo to earn a living.

FIP TOURNAMENTS 2021

XIII European Championship

ARAF and FIP have confirmed that the XIII European Championship will be taking place on September 1st to 12th 2021 featuring Azerbaijan and 7 other European teams.

III Ladies European Championship

FISE is working towards confirming a final date either in June or September 2021 for the III Ladies European Championship. This tournament will also be serving as Zone C Playoffs for the I Women's World Polo Championship taking place in 2022.

XII World Polo Championship

USPA has proposed to postpone the XII World Polo Championship until fall 2022 based on the ongoing worldwide uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Partners USPA Global Licensing, J5 and the Empire Polo Club all support the postponing of the event as well.

Current travel restriction as well as uncertainty on when they will be lifted were the main deciding factors for the postponement, this way avoiding any travel issues that may arise, specially for the 5 Zone playoffs that have to be held before the final round.

This was proposed by the USPA Board of Governors and approved by FIP's Executive Committee.

Women's Nations Cup

FIP will start working with the AAP, HPA and USPA once the travel restrictions are lifted to organize this event during 2021.



**See you
on the next issue**

photo by @uspoloassn

