



PRESS RELEASE

A Flying Start For Oxford and Cambridge at the Metropolitan Intersvarsity Polo 2015 – The London Challenge

Tianjin, China, 21 July 2015 – Polo clubs represented by the UK's two oldest and most prestigious universities, Oxford and Cambridge, recorded strong wins today in the opening contests of the Metropolitan Intersvarsity Polo 2015 at the Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club. Oxford University Polo Club defeated Yale University Polo Club by ten goals to three, while Cambridge University Polo Club bested Stanford Polo Club by eleven goals to four and a half.

The tournament, dubbed 'The London Challenge', promises to bring extra spark and sizzle to an already scorching summer season at the Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club. This year marks the third annual intersvarsity challenge at the club, starring six teams from six distinguished universities. Travelling from the UK: Oxford University Polo Club, Cambridge University Polo Club and reigning champions The University of London Polo Club which represents a number of institutions in the British capital including University College London (UCL), King's College London (KCL) and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). From the USA: Yale University Polo Club, Stanford Polo Club and Harvard Polo Club.

An exciting first for this 2015 tournament is the setting. It's the first major polo event to be staged at the Metropolitan Polo Club's splendid South Field, a sweep of exquisite green turf framed by a double-tiered grandstand mansion and the regal skyline of apartments and villas that comprise Fortune Heights, Tianjin's most prestigious real estate development. Crowning it all, the soaring Goldin Finance 117 skyscraper stands proud at almost 600 metres from the ground; set to take its place as one of the five tallest buildings in the world when it opens its doors in 2017.

Oxford University Polo Club took on Yale University Polo Club in the first match of the preliminary draw. Both clubs were founded over a century ago, and this would be their third year running competing at the Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club. In last year's tournament, the two sides met at the preliminary stages with Oxford recording a thumping 10 – 1 victory.

Due to the differences in handicap, Yale started the match boosted by a two goal cushion, but it didn't last. The first penalty of the day was awarded to Oxford, Kasey Morris striking it straight and true to score at the halfway stage of the chukka. Oxford kept up the pressure, Luis Maddison pulling his shot just wide after a strong run at goal. Teammate Amy Nizolek made no mistake at the close of the chukka, running it between the posts to level the scores at two goals each.

TIANJIN GOLDIN METROPOLITAN POLO CLUB
天津环亚国际马球会

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Oxford exerted a level of dominance as the second chukka progressed, Luis Maddison, the game's highest ranking player playing off zero goals, full of running but once again pulling his shot just wide. He made amends soon after, however, capping off a glorious run that took his pony the length of the field to nudge Oxford into the lead by three goals to two. With Yale struggling to build possession, Oxford's Lawrence Wang latched on to the ball to thump it between the posts to make it four. A late surge by Yale won the US university side a penalty, Aurora Edington scoring confidently to position her team just one goal shy of Oxford at the halfway stage of the match.

After the traditional treading in of the divots, play resumed with Oxford fastest out of the blocks, the foursome in navy blue striking the post before Luis Maddison finished with a technically brilliant neck shot close to the boards to make it 5 – 3. Oxford's Lawrence Wang came close at the three minute mark, but a scrappy half clearance by Yale was punished by Oxford's Kasey Morris, scoring her second goal of the match to make it 6 – 3. With a minute left on the clock, Luis Maddison proved his versatility and talent yet again, this time firing in a fine penalty from range. The irrepressible Oxford number four scored another with the last strike of the chukka, finishing off teammate Lawrence Wang's thunderous charge at goal with aplomb.

Trailing by three goals to eight, Yale had it all to do in the final chukka. It was Oxford, however, who scored first, Luis Maddison making no mistake with his penalty two. Lawrence Wang made it double figures with a trademark downfield gallop, and Yale, comprehensively outmatched, could offer no answer to the pace and power of the Oxford side. At the final bell, Oxford trotted off the field the victors, winning by ten goals to three.

In the second of the opening day's contests, Cambridge University Polo Club took on Stanford Polo Club. Champions in 2013 and losing finalists in 2014, Cambridge were the hot favourites against a Stanford side looking to improve on their sixth place finish last year. For Cambridge: Clifton Yeo, Meike Van Vlaanderen, Lucy Jacobson and Samuel Browne. For Stanford, an all-female line-up of Laura Kurt, Olivia Cords, Shivani Torres and Elizabeth Lake.

Stanford started the game with a 2.5 goal cushion reflecting the difference in player ratings, but this was eroded after just a minute of play, number four Samuel Browne scoring the first goal of the game for Cambridge. Stanford opened their account just past the halfway stage of the chukka, Shivani Torres making it count from the penalty spot. Browne answered emphatically for Cambridge a moment later, charging away from the hotel end to smash it high and true. The Cambridge number four got his hat trick seconds later to close out the first chukka, Cambridge three, Stanford three and a half.

Two more goals for the prolific Samuel Browne after the restart made it 5 – 3.5, Stanford simply unable to contain the rampaging Cambridge player. Despite plenty of Stanford hustle, it was Cambridge's Meike Van Vlaanderen who scored again just before the bell, a sixth for Cambridge to push them well ahead of their opponents at the halfway stage of the match.

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The light was beginning to dim on a gloomy evening in Tianjin as the players took to the field for the third chukka. But the play was anything but dull, Stanford closing the gap on Cambridge with a penalty goal off the accomplished stick of Shivani Torres. Cambridge's Browne replied emphatically with his sixth of the match with two and a half minutes left on the clock, and then turned provider, thwacking the ball sweetly from the halfway line for Genevieve Hampson to latch on to and score. Stanford's Shivani Torres notched the last goal of the chukka – unfortunately for her, it was in the Cambridge goal, therefore an own goal, the score going into the final period of play, 9 – 4.5 to the British university side.

Alas, no comeback was forthcoming from Stanford, and the final chukka belonged deservedly to the match's best player, Samuel Browne, who added another two to his impressive tally to make it Cambridge 11, Stanford 4.5 at the final bell.

In tomorrow's matches, Cambridge play again, taking on the University of London Polo Club in a thrilling repeat of last year's final, while Harvard Polo Club come up against Oxford.

Metropolitan Intersarsity Polo 2015 – The London Challenge

Result

Day 1 July 21, 2015

Yale vs Oxford	3-10
Cambridge vs Stanford	11-4.5

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Partners of Metropolitan Intersivity Polo 2015 - The London Challenge

Organisers:	Tianjin Polo Association Hong Kong Polo Development and Promotion Federation Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club
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About Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club

Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club currently features three standard-sized polo fields, stables for over 260 horses, all-weather training facilities, a riding school and a luxurious Club House and 167-room resort-style hotel. The state-of-the-art equestrian facilities are used and maintained by professionals from all over the world.

Apart from being the host venue of the FIP Snow Polo World Cup, major international fixtures on the Club's annual calendar include various spring and autumn tournaments and matches for different levels of play from youth to professional.

Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club was opened in November 2010 as the sporting and social flagship of "Goldin Metropolitan", a mega-development by Hong Kong-listed developer Goldin Properties Holdings Limited, which will comprise three zones: a Central Business District, home to the 117-storey Goldin Finance Tower; the 898,000 square metres (222-acre) Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club and a low-density luxury residential belt to be launched in the near future.

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