



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Reigning Champions University of London Thrash Cambridge at the Metropolitan Intersarsity Polo 2015 – The London Challenge**

*Tianjin, China, 22 July 2015* –The University of London Polo Club overcame rivals Cambridge University Polo Club in their first round clash at the Metropolitan Intersarsity Polo 2015 - The London Challenge today, in what was a repeat of last year’s final match-up. The London side, formed in 1988 and made up of players from several prestigious London institutions, smashed ten goals past Cambridge, officially the oldest university polo club in the UK, founded in 1873. Cambridge could only manage a single field goal in reply. In the day’s other contest, Oxford University Polo Club overcame Harvard Polo Club by eight goals to three.

A little rain overnight made for perfect conditions on the glorious new South Field of the Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club. Taking the reins for the London side were Kristina Karailieva, Arthur Cole-Fontayn, James Cooper and Harold Hodges. Meeting the challenge for Cambridge were Clifton Yeo, Meike van Vlaanderen, Lucy Jacobsen and Samuel Browne.

Cambridge began the game buoyed a 2.5 goal cushion to reflect the difference in team handicaps, but that didn’t worry London’s number four Harold Hodges, who raced away from the start in a blur of hooves for the game’s first score. Hodges then narrowly missed with a pair of sixty-yard penalties after a minute and a half of play, but made it third time lucky with a tap-in from the spot. Moments later he showed great composure and outstanding stick work to score again, wiping out Cambridge’s cushion before they had even mustered an effective attack. Cambridge’s number four Samuel Browne, the star of yesterday’s victory over Stanford, worked hard to get his team into the game, but couldn’t match the brilliance of his opposite number Hodges, who galloped in his fourth at the bell to make it Cambridge 2.5, London 4.

Play settled down somewhat after an explosive first chukka, with neither side able to find much rhythm in attack. But just as the spectators were readying themselves to take the field for the traditional half-time treading in of the divots, London’s Harold Hodges snuck in his fifth following some patient approach play, the score at half time 2.5 – 5 to University of London Polo Club; Cambridge yet to score.

London’s number two Arthur Cole-Fontayn was fastest onto the ball after the restart, galloping decisively toward goal but just kissing the top of the ball with his stick. Who should arrive on to the scene but Hodges, stick twirling ferociously to send the ball screaming between the posts. Goal number seven was served up by Hodges soon after, the star number four rolling it over the

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line after a well-worked team move. And then it was eight – Hodges with a smartly taken neck shot, showing just why he is the highest goal player in the competition on two goals.

The players of Cambridge faced a Hodges-shaped mountain to climb in the fourth and final chukka, but it wasn't the London number four but the number two, Arthur Cole-Fontayn, who scored the ninth for London after a clever team move. Then, sighs of relief for the Cambridge contingent, as Samuel Browne made the most of his lightning-fast mare to gallop half the length of the field and score his side's first of the game. It wasn't to be the last word, however; Cole-Fontayn made it double figures for London, running it through the posts just before the bell. The final score, 10 – 3.5 to University of London Polo Club.

Harvard Polo Club played their opening game of the tournament in the second of the day's matches. Their opponents Oxford, victorious against Yale yesterday, were given a two goal head start to reflect the handicap disparity. In the saddle for Harvard were Aemilia Phillips, Thomas Waite, J. Paul Meyer and Marion Dierickx. The Oxford line-up comprised Kasey Morris, Amy Nizolek, Lawrence Wang and Luis Maddison.

Oxford had the first chance of the game with a penalty four, Luis Maddison dribbling the ball around the pack to post the game's opening score. Harvard put themselves on the scoreboard just past the halfway stage of the chukka, J. Paul Meyer striking his penalty hard and true, but the white jerseys of Oxford struck again before the bell courtesy of Luis Maddison, the scores 4 – 1 in favour of Oxford after the first chukka.

It was end-to-end polo in the second, with goalmouth battles aplenty and decent chances for both teams. Harvard's J. Paul Meyer eventually burst through the Oxford ranks to set up a fine second goal for his side which proved to be the only score of an evenly matched and exciting chukka. The scores at half time: Oxford four, Harvard two.

An important component of the Metropolitan Intersarsity Tournament is its ability to inspire the next generation of polo players. This was exemplified at half time with the many young fans who raced on to the field to tread in the divots, marvel at umpire John Fisher's pony from a safe distance, and hope to find a lucky cork and bag themselves a prize. Throughout the tournament a range of activities have been assembled to help young people in China learn more about the sport of polo, and to one day hopefully contribute to China's own home grown polo team competing on the world stage.

William Hsu and Chris de Koning subbed in for the Oxford side in the third chukka, and it was the white shirts who scored first, Luis Maddison galloping the ball over the line after a minute of frantic play. Maddison scored again close to the halfway stage of the chukka, as Oxford stretched their lead to four goals. Showing grit and determination, Harvard rallied, pulling a goal back courtesy of a smartly taken J. Paul Meyer penalty, and the scores stayed at 6 – 3 going into the deciding chukka.

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It needed a big effort from Harvard to turn things around in the final period, but it was Oxford's Lawrence Wang who seized the initiative, breaking away from a melee at the boards and tucking the ball just inside the post. The last word of the day, appropriately, went to Luis Maddison, who popped in his 4th goal of the game to make it 8 – 3 to Oxford at the final bell.

In tomorrow's final round of preliminary matches, Harvard Polo Club take on Yale University Polo Club in an all-American match-up, while Stanford Polo Club face a foreboding contest against University of London Polo Club.

### **Metropolitan Intersivity Polo 2015 – The London Challenge**

#### Result

##### *Day 1 July 21, 2015*

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

##### *Day 2 July 22, 2015*

London vs Cambridge	10-3.5
Harvard vs Oxford	3-8

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## **Partners of Metropolitan Intersarsity Polo 2015 - The London Challenge**

<b>Organisers:</b>	Tianjin Polo Association Hong Kong Polo Development and Promotion Federation Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club
<b>Official Jersey Supplier:</b>	La Martina
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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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