

Beat: Sports

GSTAAD HOSTS THE SPORT OF KINGS IN STYLE

TWO WINNERS OF 20th HUBLOT POLO GOLD CUP

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USPA NEWS - Four top polo teams competed in the charming village of Gstaad, Switzerland under rainy and stormy skies, for the Hublot Polo Gold Cup. Novice Teams E.I. Sturdza Investment Funds, Team SIR, tied for first place, while Team Banque Baring Brothers Sturdza and Team Gstaad secured places three and four.

The weekend affair was kicked off in an extravagant style by Gstaad Polo President Pierre Genecand who flew in a Swift Copters helicopter to present the match ball in the first scrimmage game. Due to the waterlogged, dangerous terrain and taking into consideration the safety of the players and ponies, a truly competitive match was not possible. Instead, the four team-patrons and the four best players of the tournament were split into two teams to play in a non-competitive manner, “replacing the final with a 4-chukka exhibition match. A very close game throughout each chukka, the teams finished with an even score of 7:7.

Veteran Argentinian favorite Eduardo Menendez and Swiss home turf jock Michael Brüggler, paired up for a beautifully, precisely executed goal by Michael who picked up swiftly on Eduardo's opening shot. American player Chris Falk, riding for Banque Baring Brothers Sturdza, missed an opportunity to take the lead for his team due to a short shot despite an accurate placement. Still Team Banque Baring Brothers Sturdza managed to finish in third place, 5:4, before Team Gstaad Palace who finished in fourth place.

The two stylish, elegant lunches accompanying the games hosted by patron Gstaad Palace Hotel, were definitely second to none. No doubt, the hotel proved once again that its long standing gastronomical knowhow and Swiss hospitality, presented itself from its best side.

Off the fields, the 20th anniversary of the Hublot Polo Gold Cup celebrations peaked, as guests were entertained by thrilling fly-bys of Fly 7 Executive Aviation squad. It featured the Buecker Jungmann 131, designed and built in Germany in 1936, especially important to Switzerland as it was the first one to join the Swiss Army's Air Force. For many, this event has become a permanent fixture in the summer social and sporting diary with spectators turning out on finals day for the showcase event. Hublot was the official timekeepers for the polo grounds of course.

Same day but under the French blue skies, Ferne Park defeated La Concepcion 10-6 to win the Richard Mille Trophy the first 18-goal tournament held at St. Tropez Polo Club. Led by top scorer Joaquin Pittaluga, Ferne Park dominated La Concepcion, which featured famed 10-goaler Gonzalito Pieres. Ferne Park took control of the match and managed to take the title home. Gonzalito Pieres was named MVP, while Joaquin Pittaluga's Carpeta, took BPP honors.

The US East Coast season continues at the notable Greenwich Polo Club which enjoys a 20 handicap.

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