

Cornwall

Faster than ever as beach polo enters fourth year

AROUND 3,500 SPECTATORS last month witnessed some of the fastest beach polo ever played, according to Andy Burgess, organiser of Veuve Clicquot Polo on the Beach. The fourth year of the event, featuring some top UK names, was held on the evening of Thursday 16 September at Watergate Bay in Cornwall.

Locals and tourists watched Midas Construction convincingly defeat Joules 9-5½. The score, however, did not reflect what was a fiercely-fought contest. Starting with a half-goal advantage, the Joules team of five-goaler Jamie Le Hardy, Richard Blake Thomas (3)

and Andy Burgess (0) made an early run towards the goal-mouth and gave themselves a slender lead at the beginning. However, the lead changed half a dozen times before Midas Construction – Andrew Blake Thomas (4), Ed Olof (3) and Tim Vaux (2) – blitzed their opponents in the final chukka. The winners scored four goals in quick succession to give them an unassailable 4½-goal lead.

“You’ve got two exceedingly well balanced sides out there,” commentator Peter West said. “It’s been fast and furious and a real treat for spectators. It’s a

great privilege to be able to commentate on something I would happily pay my own money to watch.” The hard-packed sand of the two-mile-long beach made for an ideal playing surface, allowing the game to proceed at a fast pace from the onset.

“This was beach polo at its best – some of the finest beach polo I’ve ever seen and a much faster game than last year,” West concluded.

Andrew Blake Thomas picked up the awards for most valuable player and best playing pony (for his horse Tibu) at the post-match presentations.



Jamie Le Hardy transfixes the seaside audience behind, but his side couldn't avoid defeat

Tidworth

Servicemen square up as they show their support for SSAFA

THE THIRD ANNUAL AGC Polo Cup was held at the end of August, on Bank Holiday Monday, in its usual setting at Tidworth Polo Club. Hosting a full day of matches, featuring players from all divisions of the armed forces, the event was held in aid of SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association), which has been unfailing in its commitment to the men and women of Britain's Armed Forces for 125 years.

In Division II, AGC White, the Royal Logistics Corps and two Royal Artillery teams fought closely to win a place in the final. It was the Royal Logistics Corp who met AGC White in the final, with the latter winning comfortably, 5-0½. Organisers were delighted to welcome the RLC back into the fold, particularly with so many new players on display.

In Division I, the Royal Navy, Infantry, AGC Black and the Honorable Artillery Company played hard in their two games, with AGC Black beating HAC and the Royal Navy triumphing over the Infantry. Major General Andrew Cumming CBE kindly presented the RN with the AGC Polo Cup for the second year running.



The Infantry's Air Commodore Tim Brown (on loan from the RAF, in red) gives chase alongside Lieutenant Nick Phillips of the Royal Navy. Commodore Richard Mason is providing support from behind

Generous thanks were poured on Brigadier John Wright CBE and his team at Tidworth Polo Club during the presentations, and Lt Col Simon

Ledger LD was also praised for his great tournament commentary on the day and for his strong support and encouragement.