

POLO NEWS



Visiting players Malcolm Kidd and Eduardo Albarracin fight for the ball during last Monday's polo game at the Phoenix Park.

NEW polo players are joining in the action at the Phoenix Park this summer. Paying a flying visit to the All-Ireland Polo Club recently was Marcello Garahan, a professional polo player from Argentina.

By Geraldine Comiskey

Garahan, who carries a four-goal handicap, played at tournaments in Britain last month and stopped off in Dublin to compete in the Polo Monthly cup tournament on May 21. He returned to Buenos Aires the following day.

During his stay in Britain he competed in matches in Cheshire. This is the first year Argentinian players have been accepted in Britain since the Falklands War.

Marcello is now bracing himself for a round of major tournaments in Argentina. The open events, which are televised and attract a massive audience start in September. While Argentina is the world

New players at the Park

leader in polo, the US ranks second best, with Britain coming third, according to Marcello.

"Ireland is about 15th. In England and Ireland, polo is played only a few months a year." Yet polo in Ireland has improved since he visited the All-Ireland Polo Club last year, he adds. Marcello has also played in Brazil, Uruguay and Germany.

The life of a professional polo player is as tough as the old-fashioned cowboys', with long hours in the saddle. Marcello rises at around 7 a.m., and schools the horses for between eight and 15 hours a day. "It is hard, but I like it", he admits.

He keeps 40 horses, including 22 polo ponies. The others are mostly polo broodmares and foals. He has been playing polo for 11 years, having started at the age of eighteen.

Another new player who came to the Phoenix Park this year is Malcolm Kidd, who has been playing at the famous Cowdray Park in Sussex for the last four years.

Cowdray is the club which boasts Prince Charles, Genesis guitarist Mike Rutherford and the drummers with present and past pop groups, including The Police.

"Drummers seem to go for polo", Malcolm laughs. "Maybe it's something to do with holding drumsticks."

While he has played with Mike Rutherford — "he got a kick from a horse recently, and he still has a hoofprint in his forehead" — Malcolm has only caught a glimpse of Prince Charles.

"He just comes in to play in the high-goal matches — the cream of the game. I don't play high-goal polo."

Cowdray has nine pitches and is very competitive, with lots of professionals playing, he says. "It's all geared towards the high-goal tournament in June."

The All-Ireland Polo Club has one definite advantage over Cowdray. "Because it's smaller than Cowdray, everyone gets a chance to play. Polo in Ireland is 'lots of fun', he adds. "There's a very friendly, warm atmosphere in this club."

Malcolm has a zero handicap, "but I'm hoping to go to one soon".

He believes the standard of play in Ireland is the same as it is in similar clubs in Britain. "This is as good low-goal polo as I've played. If you want to play high-goal, you go to England or Argentina."

He believes the opportunity

to play with professionals such as Eduardo Albarracin and Marcello Garahan has lifted the game in Ireland.

He is also a member of Windsor Guards Club and has been playing at Epsom, but has now come to live in Ireland and recently bought a house in Cavan. Malcolm brought three horses over from England, and says he might buy a couple more here. "There was a time when I had 11, but I sold most of them off because they didn't suit."

He compares polo to freefall parachuting or driving a car very fast. "You couldn't do any of these very exhilarating things while you think about balancing your account. Everything is erased."

"You could have suffered a major disaster before a polo game — and by the end of the game, you would have forgotten about it."

"If you like horses and you like ball games, it's the only game to play."

Home side win tough game over Meath

THE All-Ireland Polo Club team beat Meath by five goals to four at the Phoenix Park's equestrian day on Whit Monday. Wet ground heightened the risk, but there were no casualties in what was a tough match.

A visitor to Ireland, Marcello Berreso from Argentina, played on the winning team, with the All-Ireland Polo Club's polo manager, Lar Sheeran, Oliver Caffrey and Malcolm Kidd, who has come over from England to join the club.

The Meath team was made up of the six-goal Argentinian player Eduardo Albarracin, Larry O'Mahoney, David McGivern and John Mulholland, the former Antrim hurler.

Crowds turned up, despite the rain, to watch the polo and other equestrian day activities — including displays on the polo grounds by the Irish Dressage Society, an exhibition of a handy hunter display by the Oakleaf, Calliaghstown and Old Mill Riding Clubs.

On Sunday last two major polo tournaments were held — the finals of the Wemy Cup tournament and the Stanley Corcoran Cup tournament.

Competing for the Wemy Cup were members of the Pony Polo Club. Pegasus beat the Others team by three goals to nil.

On the Pegasus team were David McGivern, David Stone and Brendan O'Mahoney. Graham Beare, Matt Lyons, Aaron Caffrey and Willie Clarke formed the Others team.

In the Stanley Corcoran Cup tournament Meath won by half a goal, beating both the Enterprise and O'Mahoney teams. This was a "round-robin" style tournament, which attracted a large crowd of spectators.

The winning team were Lar Sheeran, Bernard Llewellyn, Major Hugh Dawnay and Michael Meenanahan.

Major Dawnay is a top international polo player, who is on a worldwide tour of polo clubs. He has been invited to teach polo at so many clubs this summer that he has had to close his famous Whitfield Court Polo School, in Waterford, for the season.

He stopped off in Dublin last Sunday to play in the match, before rushing off to England to teach his "Polo Vision" method at the Colchester and Tidworth clubs.

The Enterprise and O'Mahoney teams put up a splendid fight for the trophy. Alex Mackay, president of the All-Ireland Polo Club, played on the Enterprise team with Marcello Berreso, Oliver Caffrey and David Dawnay.

Joining Larry O'Mahoney on his O'Mahoney team were Anthony Rhatigan, John Mulholland and Eduardo Albarracin.

More spectacular polo is promised at the President's Cup tournament, which will be played at the Phoenix Park tomorrow (Sunday).

The game starts at 3.30 p.m. and coincides with the 116th birthday of the All-Ireland Polo Club.

Powerscourt, May 13-14

Horses, RDS Gascoigne qualifier — 1, J. Chawke's Golden George (Michael Chawke); 2, N. Earls' Rialto Boy (Taylor Vard); 3, S. Hughes' Llacannor (Taylor Vard); 4, W. O'Connor's Blackwood Boy (B. O'Connor).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade E qualifier — A. Monaghan's Paverotti (Philip Dagg); 2, Anne Claire Colan's St Finnian (Philip Dagg); 3, J. Chawke's Golden Oddy (Sandra Chawke); 4, J. Duff's Distant Rose (Paul Duff); 5, P. Coleman's Trojan Prince (Taylor Vard). Double clear — Minister for Defence's Broadford (Lieutenant Ger. O'Grady) and David Carrigan's Jojo (Owner).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade D qualifier — 1, Minister for Defence's Rossakiel (Lieutenant Will Hayes); 2, Anne Claire Nolan's Paddy Princess Zara (Philip Dagg); 3, Michael Stone's Glascarr Brigadoon (Owner); 4, J. Chawke's Salon (David Chawke); 5, Minister for Defence's Meenus (Lieutenant Will Hayes). Double clear — Waterside Stud's Fleirpath (Paul Darragh).

Horses, Grades ABC (B/C qualifier) — 1, Michael Murphy's Temptress (owner); 2, Mrs A. Darragh's Equinox (Paul Darragh); 3, K. Carew's Park Diamond (Philip Dagg); 4, Dermot Forde's Ballingrane (Paul Darragh); 5, Minister for Defence's Carlingford Lough (Lieutenant Derek McConnell); 6, Barbara Schubert's Parkmore Maxi (Taylor Vard). RDS points — Park Diamond, 10; Carlingford Lough, 9; Vertigo, 8; Galou, 7; Sundev

RESULTS ROUND-UP

Horses, Grade E — Divided between Inchanappa; Kings Canyon; Kicullen Star; Bay Francer; Red Devil; Gemini Lad; Celtic Sun; Lodge Lady; Glenwood Natasha; Ballywilliam; Mona's Choice and Patrick Herriott.

Horses, Grades D and E — Divided between Red Mindy; Glenbrook Prince; Kicullen Star; Sengel; Kings Castle; The Badger; Mona's Choice and The Midlander.

Horses, Grades ABC — 1, Michael Murphy's Temptress (Owner); 2, G. O'Driscoll's Vertigo (Philip Dagg); 3, J. Vard's Galou (Taylor Vard); 4, C. Stokes' Ziree (Taylor Vard); 5, W. Ross's Bowette's Last (Claire O'Beare); 6, Douglas Smith's Drifter (Owner).

Adare triathlon, Sunday, May 14th

A triathlon competition formed part of the Adare Game and Country Fair on Sunday, May 14th. This was organised by Sir George Earle, and although he will be unable to act in this capacity next year, he has already nominated Robert Williams to run it in his place.

The shooting phase, which took place on the evening of the 13th was won very easily by the Harty Hopfuls. William Harty and his sister Eleanor both scored maximums in this phase.

The fishing took place as usual on the Maigue river and

trout were rising everywhere. Only the riding phase caused problems, the time was tight here and the course itself although well within the 3ft 6ins limit was very twisty. One horse didn't even wait for its rider to open the hunting gate but jumped it, all five bars.

Result — 1, Harty Hopfuls — Eleanor Foley, William Harty and Gerard Foley, 386 points; 2, Wise Boys — I. Gilmour, L. Corbett and J. Harty, 304; 3, McBethwe Richard McDowell, Sara McDonnell and Bryan Ballow, 282; 4, Incredible Claire E. Murphy, A. Henrick and D. Cusack, 274.

Best man — William Harty, 149 points.

Best woman — Loraine Corbett, 127.

Best novice — Andrew Henrick, 110.

Streamstown, Wednesday, May 17

Horses, RDS Gascoigne qualifier — 1, Short Stuff (Simon Trent); 2, Shelon Alert (Julie Greenwood); 3, Mohill Sophie (J. Mulligan); 4, Strongbow (Ian Fearon); 5, Carnival Doll (Simon Trent).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade E qualifier — 1, The Wise Guy (M. Robinson); 2, Ard Allez Cat (Heather Dean); 3, Rowley (Louise Daly); 4, Knockbrack (Linda Courtney); 5, Lucky Flight (Thomas Moloney); 6, Power Loom (Ian Fearon); 7, Shelon Shaker

(Julie Greenwood); 8, Midnight Surprise (J. Lenehan).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade D qualifier — 1, Haynestown Lass (Linda Courtney); 2, Lindberg (Simon Trent); 3, Magic Melody (Simon Trent); 4, The Playboy (Linda Courtney); 5, Kilglass Penny Boy (John Clancy).

Horses, RDS Volkswagen Grades B/C qualifier — 1, Big Tom (Linda Courtney); 2, Gold Spring (Simon Trent); 3, Warrington Flight (Thomas Moloney).

Mossvale, Wednesday, May 17

Horses, RDS Gascoigne qualifier — 1, R. Stewart's Hills of Dromera (Liam McKee); 2, Frank Kernan's Crafty Shot (Harry Marshall); 3, Frank Kernan's Fraisee Chat (James Kernan); 4, S. Jordan's Lightning Strikes (Richard McDermott); 5, T. Carvill's Cloughmore (L. Young).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade E qualifier — 1, B. and G. Campbell's Liana Vella (George Campbell); 2, D. Hanna's Counsellor (L. Young); 3, J. Russell's Atara (Owner); 4, F. McLaugh's Shannon Maid (Mary McLaugh); 5, W. Livingstone's Bellinderry Lad (S. Livingstone).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade D qualifier — 1, Frazer Homes Roddy's Revenge (James Kernan); 2, M. McKey's Rathlin Dandy (Harry Marshall); 3, Leonard Cave's Anne's Comet (Leonard Cave); 4, Harry Marshall's Tyrone (Owner).

Horses, RDS Volkswagen Grades B/C qualifier — 1, Leonard Cave's Omaya (Julie Henderson); 2, K. Bacon's Slip Stream (L. Buchanan).

Ciaremorris, Thursday, May 18th

Horses, RDS Gascoigne qualifier — 1, CSOE's New Greenwich (Charles Hanley); 2, J. Brennan's Corbella (Michael Walsh); 3, E. Cawley's Windgate Rocket (Gabriel Slattery); 4, N. Dunne Elk Sky (Michael Walsh); 5, J. Perry's Kingway Delight (Susan Mallee).

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade E qualifier — 1, Viola Lowry's Bonnie Fox (Austin Melia); 2, J. Connell's Belta Goya (Michael Walsh); 3, J. Horgan's Lady Butler (Marie White); 4, Austin Melia's Birmingham Lady (Owner); 5, P. Horan's North West (Padraig Gersaghty). Double clear — Gray Macken; Windgate Prince; Drewboro Country Girl; Barstown Boy; Nathan Jones; Celtic Original; Rathlee Prince; Snowbird; Whiteface; Tingo Bay; Night Line and Bishops Land.

Horses, RDS Superphone Grade D qualifier — 1, J. Fearick's Globetrotter (Gabriel Slattery); 2, P. Nolan's Beasamer Steel (Marie White). Double clear — S. Duffy's Cool Choice (Vinnie Duffy).

Horses, Grades ABC (B/C qualifier) — 1, Brian Gormley's Beltane (Paul Duffy); 2, Rose Kelly's Teach Ceoil (Austin Melia); 3, CSOE's Top Trendy (Charles Hanley); RDS points — Beltane, 10; Teach Ceoil, 9; Carrowcrin, 8.

MIDLAND CUB HUNTERS
At Boherquill, Granard
Sunday 11th June,
12 noon
 Gascoigne/E Qualifier,
 D. Qualifier. A/B/C
 (Qualifier), Amateur.
 Enquiries:
Anne Gormley, 043-86599