

# Polo – BEDS University Polo Tournament, 5-6 November 2011



Edinburgh Polo Club hosted the annual BEDS University Polo Tournament over the weekend with teams from Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Newcastle and Exeter. The universities all fielded two or three teams, apart from Exeter, at various levels of skill from beginners to reasonably experienced players. The tournament took place in Edinburgh's polo arena, which is 300 feet by 100 feet (full pitch is around 300 yards by 160 yards) and is enclosed by retaining walls. The ball is also larger, being about 4-5 inches in diameter, and is inflatable, not solid like the 'outdoor' ball. Teams consist of three players and each period of play, or chukka, is seven and a half minutes.

The weather for the tournament was sunny, but cold, and the weekend was an ideal opportunity for people to catch up with friends they may not have seen for the best part of a year. The Edinburgh Club had also organised a social evening for the players on the Saturday and a few sore heads were expected on the Sunday. They were not disappointed!

Match-up of the weekend was Saturday's 'Open' match between Edinburgh and Exeter (with a 1/2 goal handicap advantage), both teams fielding players of a fairly high standard. This match was, as anticipated, fast and played with a high degree of skill and, it should be noted, the Exeter players hadn't even seen the ponies they were to ride until that weekend! The score stayed fairly even throughout, but Exeter eventually stretched away to a 10 1/2 goal to 7 victory.

At the end of the tournament, no teams left empty-handed, whether it was with a bottle of wine or a trophy or even a

giant (and GIANT is the word) tube of Jaffa Cakes! To round off the event, Edinburgh's Polo Director Jamie Douglas was presented with a bottle of whisky in appreciation of his efforts in getting the ponies and pitch prepared for a successful and enjoyable weekend.

Report and Photo – John Preece

Web – <http://www.photoboxgallery.com/jlp-photographytoo>