

Edinburgh University Polo Club Inter-University Tournament



Tournament report by Vicky Stockings, photos by John Preece.

At the end of November, Edinburgh University Polo Club (EUPC) held their annual Inter-university tournament at Dalmahoy. The matches were played on Edinburgh Polo Club's arena, with 3-a-side teams instead of the four associated with the outfield game. Teams invited were from Stirling, St. Andrews, Newcastle and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). There was a variety of skill levels on show, from beginners up to more experienced 2-3 goal handicappers. Apart from a slight delay on the first couple of days due to the cold weather, everything ran off smoothly and finished on time with an awards ceremony on the Sunday. Here's what the EUPC's Publicity Officer, Vicky Stockings had to say about the event (match report delayed a bit, apparently due to essays and course work needing to be prioritised. Students, eh...!) –

✘ “This year our annual tournament was held over three days from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th November. We had a record number of entries with teams playing across four divisions; Beginner, Novice, Intermediate and Open.

The action kicked off on Friday afternoon, after an hour delay due to a harsh frost the night before, with our Edinburgh A Beginner team playing St Andrews; Edinburgh got off to a great start with a 4 – 2 win in their first ever competitive chukka. Our Edinburgh B Beginner team also started their tournament well with a 3 – 1 victory against Newcastle. Some Novice chukkas were also played on Friday with Edinburgh A drawing


against Edinburgh B in a close 1 – 1 chukka; Edinburgh B scoring a late goal on the bell. This all Edinburgh chukka rounded off Friday's play at 3pm, with the decision already made to push Saturday's play back an hour in case of another frost.

Later on Friday evening Edinburgh and Newcastle players and supporters met up for drinks in Vodka Revolution following on to a rather late night in regular polo venue Garibaldi's. ❌

Feeling less than fresh on Saturday morning play kicked off at 12pm with an all Edinburgh Novice chukka; Edinburgh A coming out on top with a 3 – 2 win. The arrival of RCSI Dublin early on Saturday morning saw their Novice team defeat Edinburgh B 5 goals to 1. At 1pm, with the clubhouse at capacity thanks to the arrival of some spectators from Edinburgh on our hired coach, the Open exhibition match got under way. Edinburgh A team was made up of Adam Dove, committee member Vicky Stockings and Shehan Samaranayake from Edinburgh Polo Club. It was a very closely fought 4-chukka match with Edinburgh B team (Matt Dove, Gabriel Gray and Livvy Woodhead) making an excellent comeback to win the final chukka 7 – 2, although despite the same number of goals being scored, handicap difference meant that Edinburgh A clinched the victory by 14 goals to 13. The rest of the afternoon continued without a glitch with six more Novice and Beginner chukkas to keep the spectators entertained. A brilliant performance from our overseas visitors RCSI saw their Novice team take an impressive 7 – 0 victory against Edinburgh C despite a ❌ sterling effort from Edinburgh in defence!

Saturday night was the social highlight of the weekend with players and spectators descending upon the Royal Overseas League Club on Princes Street for a 2-course dinner. This was a great opportunity for the different university clubs to meet off the polo field. The debauchery then continued into the night when the party moved to Opal Lounge on George Street

where VIP entry saw us rubbing shoulders with Made in Chelsea star Andy Jordan and, much more excitingly, the Australian rugby team* who were celebrating their 21 – 15 win against Scotland earlier that evening. With some polo players escaping to the comfort of Garibaldi's to finish off the night.

Aiming for a rather optimistic 11am start to play on Sunday, with several players arriving just minutes before their chukkas; the final day of the tournament eventually got underway at 11.30am with an all Edinburgh Beginner chukka. The polo highlight of Sunday was the 4-chukka Intermediate  match, which saw Edinburgh take on RCSI. Hugh Carnegie (Edinburgh) was awarded Most Valuable Player of the tournament for his excellent play in this Intermediate match, helping Edinburgh to win 11 – 3. A fabulous weekend of polo was rounded off with an excellent Novice chukka featuring Edinburgh B against Stirling, this was a closely fought affair with Stirling coming out on top with a 4 – 2 victory, particular note to Katerina Kay's (Stirling) brilliant performance!

This year's Edinburgh Annual Tournament was the most successful and biggest tournament in its history; a special thanks goes to the Douglas family without whom the tournament would simply not be possible. Thanks also to our pony hirers Thom Bell and James Douglas, their grooms Gilly, Sarah and Paige, and the umpires Jamie Douglas, James Douglas and John Corbett. Prizes this year were very kindly donated by Pampeano Polo, Val and Ray Clothing, A. Hume Country Clothing and thanks to LovSushi for providing us with yummy food all weekend. The continuing support of our sponsors GAM (Global Asset Management) enabled us to host such a successful tournament and see record number of entries from Edinburgh teams as well as from visiting Universities."

**On Sunday morning it was pointed out to one player by his 'friends' that he had some 'issues' with one of the Australians, which provoked the question 'Any trouble here,*

mates?' by the biggest individual any of them had stood close to. The player in question has no recollection of this, or of being ejected from the Club. Oh, what a memory to not have to not be able tell the grandchildren about....

Results

<i>BEGINNER</i>	<i>NOVICE</i>	<i>INTERMEDIATE</i>	<i>OPEN</i>
<i>1st Edinburgh A</i>	<i>1st Stirling</i>	<i>1st Edinburgh</i>	<i>1st Edinburgh A</i>
<i>2nd St Andrews</i>	<i>2nd St Andrews</i>	<i>2nd RCSI</i>	<i>2nd Edinburgh B</i>
<i>3rd Edinburgh B</i>	<i>3rd RCSI</i>		
<i>4th Newcastle</i>	<i>=4th Edinburgh A</i>		
<i>5th RCSI</i>	<i>=4th Edinburgh B</i>		
	<i>6th Edinburgh C</i>		
<i>MOST VALUABLE PLAYER: Hugh Carnegie (Edinburgh)</i>			
<i>MOST IMPROVED PLAYER: Cameron Ridley (Edinburgh)</i>			

