

Reports Around the clubs

Sussex

Recession rebuffed by swelling entries



Bank Holiday Challenge joint-winners, Aquilas and Team Polo Incs

Bucking the trend of economic gloom, Sussex Polo Club has been welcoming large numbers of new members for this summer. In the season's inaugural matches over the first May bank holiday weekend seven teams participated in the now-annual Bank Holiday Challenge.

Blessed by fine weather, the final brought together two evenly matched sides that still couldn't be separated at full-time, drawing 6-6. Rather than play an extra chukka, organisers were so encouraged by the participation of all the members of both sides – notably newcomers Stephen Burley and Jamie Murray and 11-year-old Terence Lent – that they declared the contest a draw, dividing the honours between Team Aquilas and Team Polo Incs.

Teams

Aquilas (-1): Duane Lent 0; Kwan Lo -1; Jimmy Mulligan 2; Terence Lent -2
 Polo Incs (-1): Nick Clague 2; Jamie Murray -2; Stephen Burley -2; Stuart Frift 1

Tidworth

Returning travellers back in action

One of the earliest venues to get going each year, Tidworth Polo Club had staged their first club chukkas on 8 April and, with 208 members at the last count, filled their early coaching courses in record time. "To hell with the doom and gloom," said the club's polo manager, John Wright. "It all goes to show that, if polo is your drug of choice, it could be the last thing you give up!"

Many Tidworth members travelled to Argentina over the winter, so organisers are expecting some pleasant surprises from newly dynamic players who will prove themselves to be under-handicapped in the full range of low-goal tournaments over the coming weekends. Tidworth welcomes Jessica Andrews this season, from Taunton and New Zealand, who will be replacing the departing Cameron Ellis, who is off to play for Maggie White's Coombe Place polo team.



Members enjoy instruction from Sean Dayus, club coach and assistant polo manager

West Wycombe Park

Musical background in store this June



Club umpire JJ Spark has been hard at work early this season, trying to prepare as many players as possible for a role in adjudicating matches in what looks set to be a busy few months. With his help, nine new members have passed up to the CP level and two have been upgraded to C.

The club's first tournament, the Welcome Cup, welcomed seven sides in two sections on the first bank holiday weekend in May. Four teams entered the -6 to -4 goal trophy, won by Green Point Polo, while three sides fought for the two spaces in the final of the -4 to 0 goal section. Funkhogs were the eventual champions, beating Sexy Kaftans in the decider by a single goal.

The highlight of the forthcoming month will be the Chairman's Cup during the weekend of 27 and 28 June, part of the West Wycombe Park Festival, which incorporates two evenings of live music in a spectacular setting around the lake.

Funkhogs in action against Kennel Farm on their way to victory in the Welcome Cup