

Time Off!

The UKPA Newsletter



Welcome

July 2010

Hello and welcome back to the UKPA newsletter. The UK season is now well underway and going well and we have some even bigger and more exciting events in front of us, the demos at Blenheim Horse trials, the Inter Regionals and, of course, the Nationals. Then it is almost time for the biggest event of them all, the World Cup in 2011 at Bishop Burton College, North Yorkshire

In this issue we will catch up on all the latest news from the UKPA and in particular on the areas Sport Development, Coaching, Umpiring.

The best way to find out the latest news from the UKPA is to go to the news page on the UKPA website, www.polocrosse.org.uk.

If you have any feedback for us then you can contact any of the executive by email and by phone, go to www.polocrosse.org.uk/exec to see their contact details.

If you have anything to include in future newsletters please send it to:

sportsdevelopment@ukpolocrosse.co.uk

Festival of the Horse demonstrations a great success

The UK open polocrosse squad recently performed two demos at the new Festival of the Horse in Warwickshire on the 10th of July and received a great response from the watching crowd. The open squad members, who also spent the weekend training for their upcoming tests against Ireland, performed twice in the main arena, which had a capacity for 5000 spectators. The Festival organiser Alice Bell said "The polocrosse went down really well with the crowd and I hope that the squad would like to perform again next year".

Demonstrations of polocrosse are very much part of the UKPA's plan to increase awareness of the sport, later this year the UK Under 21 and Under 16 squads will once again perform on all four days of Blenheim Palace Horse trials, while a number of clubs are planning demonstrations at events local to them, such as Arden performing at the CLA game Fair.

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Polocrosse returns to Sky Sports

Polocrosse is set to have its second outing on Sky Sports this summer as the UK Polocrosse Association (UKPA) have agreed a deal with the Country Channel and Sky Sports to film and then screen the test match series against Ireland on the 24th and 25th of July.

Last summer the test matches against South Africa were filmed and shown a number of times across all the Sky Sports channels and the Country Channel itself and the same will now be done with this summer's matches, but this time with extra cameras being used and even more production value being dedicated to the programmes.

It is brilliant to have been able to get polocrosse back on television this year. Getting last year's matches shown was a real high point for us and made a lot more people aware of the sport. We hope that the same will happen again this year and we can use these programmes as a tool to continue growing the sport of polocrosse, and equestrian sports in general in the UK.

Claire Barry of the Country Channel said "Polocrosse is such an exciting sport to watch and that comes across really well on TV. We are delighted to be working with the UKPA again and are looking at ways to carry on doing so in the future."

Sport Development Update

Iain Heaton, UKPA Sports Development Officer

Sport Development continues to progress and now that the season has started the focus is on running good events and making use of these events. When I first came into this role I said we wouldn't do things like demos etc unless we could do them well and we have stood by that and have put on some brilliant demos and will continue to do so at Festival of the Horse and Blenheim Horse trials this year.

Now my new thing is that if we are doing something we should tell people about it and make use of it. We aim to promote events such as the tests against Ireland and the Nationals as much as possible around the local areas and on a national level we are getting much better at sending out press releases about what we are doing and about important polocrosse news (whether the press picks them up is a different matter but we are sending them out!). I would like to see the same done with local tournaments and demos and any other events or initiatives.

As with all sport development work this sadly comes back to people and time and as I have mentioned before I would like to see all regions (and maybe even each club) put someone in charge of sport development for them so that they can push polocrosse forwards

Sport Development Update (continued)

in their area. It does not mean a huge amount of work, it just means I have a contact point to feed ideas through and hear about what each region is doing. I know there are a lot of people out there doing a great deal and I am very grateful to them but it would be good to have regional sport development officers in place so that ideas can be shared more easily. This will be even more important when the season ends and we don't see each other as much.

I would also like to say early on this year that we must not just stop doing everything when the season ends, the winter is the time we work with new players and grow the sport (because let's face it in the season we are too busy playing most weekends!). Within the UKPA we will look to provide ways to encourage clubs and individuals to keep going in the winter and put on more events around their area.

In other SD news the second starter kit offer has gone very well and all the kits are sold now, the majority again went to pony clubs with a few going to riding centres. This is great news for polocrosse within the Pony club and also another few steps forwards in our desire to have more and more riding centres offering polocrosse.

As always all ideas and offers of help gratefully received so if you would like to be involved please get in touch with me and even more importantly keep working on developing polocrosse around where you live!

Thank you for all your work and please keep it up!

Coaching

We have now qualified our first UKCC coaches!. Penny Webb and Laura Scott both passed their UKCC Level 2 and in the next couple of months we will see our first level 1 candidates undergo their assessments. The candidates currently preparing for their qualification are Anna Kimber, Sara Flemming, James Stansfield, Simon Amor, Colin Williams, Rebecca Stansfield and Annie Mitchell So congratulations to the first successful candidates and good luck to the next lot!

The UKCC is a nationally, cross discipline coaching qualification which is becoming the standard qualification for all coaching of sport . The UKPA, as a member of the BEF, recognizes this qualification as the best one for its coaches to hold and over the next few years will fund more and more people through their qualification, in order to allow them to go out and coach polocrosse to the best of their ability.

The UKPA will also look to provide additional incentives going forwards for people to become qualified and then go out and coach with their qualification and we plan to announce these at this years AGM.





Umpiring Update

The first grading meeting was held on 5th June at the Pennine Tournament. Around half of the clubs representatives attended, making around 100 grade changes. The next grading meeting is on Saturday 7th August at the Midland Tournament. There will be a final grading meeting on Saturday 18th September.

Clubs now grade all of their own players on 8 points or below, with suggested grade changes of players on 9 points or higher decided at the grading meeting.

At all of the tournaments I will try to hold umpire refresher courses for clubs (please contact me on 07912 042010 to arrange dates/times) and umpire exams (please go to the UKPA website for the umpire course.) All current umpires must complete a refresher course this year to play at Nationals. All players 16+ y.o. and on 4+ points must have passed their umpire exam to play at Nationals.

A few new rulings and interpretations for this year are:

- The no.1 must be 10 metres directly behind the no.3 when they are taking a clearing throw after a missed shot at goal.
- If a saddle pad is lost during play a penalty throw must be given to the opposition. If the same over-reach boot is continually (at least 2-3 times) being lost a penalty throw may be given to the opposition.
- All umpires must umpire in white tops, white jeans and riding boots. (I have a number of UKPA umpire polo shirts available for purchase.)
- Penalise sandwiching. The 3rd player making contact is the player who creates sandwich and must be penalised.
- If you don't see a foul, you must not blow or penalise for it.

If anyone has any questions or queries please phone me on 07912 042010 or come to see me at a tournament.

Upcoming Events

| Date | Description |
|---------------------------|---|
| 6th/ 7th of August | Midland Tournament, Henley in Arden, Warwickshire |
| 13th/14th of August | Pony Club Championships, Draycott House, Derbyshire |
| 21st/ 22nd August | Highlanders Tournament, Doxford, Northumberland |
| 27th/28th/ 29th of August | UKPA National Championships, Rugby Polo Club, Rugby |