

Quarterfinals set for 2016 Ylvisaker Cup

By Alex Webbe

Heavy rains and wet fields caused for the rescheduling of six games on Thursday in the 2016 Ylvisaker Cup at the International Polo Club as the field was narrowed down from twelve to eight teams who will fill out the tournament quarterfinal brackets.

Two 10am openers got things rolling with Palm Beach Illustrated (Nacho Badiola, Jared Zenni, Facundo Obregon and Jesse Bray) bouncing back from a loss last week to score a 17-5 beat down of Horseware/5 Star Builders (Stevie Orthwein, Hugo Lloret, Mike Azzaro and Brad Mallett). The second 10am game of the day saw Coca-Cola (Gillian Johnston, Sugar Erskine, Julio Arellano and Steve Krueger) ride past Villa del Lago, 13-6.

In 1pm competition, Orchard Hill (Steve Van Andel, Facundo Pieres, Peke Gonzalez and Lucas Criado) beat La Indiana (Michael Bickford, Joao Paulo Ganon, Ruki Baillieu and Tommy Collingwood), 10-6, while Valiente (Raif Richardson, Tommy Beresford, Felipe Viana and Adolfo Cambiaso) slipped past Audi/Millarville (Grant Ganzi, Nic Roldan, Julian Mannix and Freddie Mannix), 12-10.

Two 4pm games had White Birch (Tomas Alberdi, Ezequiel Ferrario, Mariano Aguerre and Peter Brant) getting the best of Enigma (Jerome Wirth, Jeff Hall, Matias MacDonough and Carlucho Arellano), 10-6 while Dubai (Rashid Albwardy, Carlos Gracida, Diego Cavanagh and Alejo Taranco) powered past Tonkawa (Jeff Hildebrand, Gonzalo Deltour, Sebastian Merlos and Mason Wroe), 11-6.

Coca-Cola 13, Villa del Lago 5

Coca-Cola (2-1) recorded their second win of the tournament at the expense of Villa del Lago (1-2) with a strong second half that resulted in a net six goals in the 13-5 victory. Gillian Johnston scored the opening goal of the match to give her Coca-Cola team the early 1-0 lead. Villa del Lago responded with a pair of goals from Hilario Ulloa that gave them a 2-1 edge after the first seven minutes of play.

Coca-Cola continued to have trouble with their offense in the second period. Shots went wide, passes were intercepted and players were ridden-off. Ulloa converted a 40-yard penalty shot in the opening seconds of the second chukker followed by a goal from the field at the 5:52 mark. Coca-Cola missed penalty shots from the 30-yard mark and the 60-yard line, and fell behind by three goals, 4-1.

A refocused Coca-Cola team took the field in the third chukker and went right to work. Sugar Erskine converted a 30-yard penalty shot after two minutes of play that cut the Villa del Lago lead down to two goals, 4-2. Julio Arellano added two goals from the field

that tied it at 4-4 with 2:22 remaining to be played in the first half. Johnston scored the go-ahead goal for Coca-Cola with just 55 seconds showing for the 5-4 lead after the first three periods of the game.

Erskine reached out on the n to score the opening goal of the second half, 6-4 followed by a 60-yard shot through the Villa del Lago goalposts by Arellano for a three goal, 7-4 led. Ulloa and Erskine exchanged penalty shots to end the chukker with Coca-Cola on top, 8-5.

Ulloa cut the Coca-Cola lead down to two goals, 8-6, with a goal in the opening minute of the fifth. Arellano's fourth goal of the game made it 9-3 with Erskine scoring the final two goals of the period that had Coca-Cola riding an 11-6 lead with one chukker left to play.

Villa del Lago fought to make it competitive but the Coca-Cola defense wasn't having any of it. Johnston's third goal of the match came on a well-executed nearside neck shot, 12-6, followed by a goal from Steve Krueger that gave the game to Coca-Cola, 13-6.

Although Villa del Lago's Ulloa led all scoring with six goals it was a balanced Coca-Cola attack and solid defense that gave them the game. Erskine led the Coca-Cola offense with five goals (two on penalty shots). Arellano scored for times from the field; Johnston added three goals and Krueger scored once for the win.

PB Illustrated/TechnoGym 17, Horseware/5Star/Tackeria 5

In the second morning game Palm Beach Illustrated swarmed over a mistake prone Horseware/5Star/Tackeria team as they ran up a 12-2 halftime lead before galloping off with the 17-5 win.

Jared Zenni scored the first goal of the game followed by a 60-yard penalty conversion from Facundo Obregon, 2-0. Mike Azzaro responded with a goal from the field, 2-1. Nacho Badiola scored the final two goals of the first period for a 4-1 advantage.

Fouls in the second period proved costly for Horseware/5Star/Tackeria, with Obregon scoring four times. The Palm Beach Illustrated defense held Horseware/5Star/Tackeria scoreless moving ahead by seven goals, 8-1.

Obregon added four more goals on penalty conversions in the third, allowing a single goal to Azzaro. At the end of the first half Palm Beach Illustrated were running away from Horseware/5Star/Tackeria, 12-2.

Two more fourth chukker penalty goals from Obregon were answered by a single goal from Hugo Lloret. The Palm Beach Illustrated lead had grown to eleven goals, 14-3.

Palm Beach Illustrated continued to dominate in the fifth. Goals from Jesse Bray and Zenni accompanied a penalty conversion from Obregon and shutout defense. Palm Beach Illustrated ended the fifth chukker with a fourteen goal, 17-3 lead.

Azzaro scored the final two goals of the match on penalty shots with Palm Beach Illustrated content to ride out the final seven minutes of the game. At the sound of the final horn Palm Beach Illustrated celebrated the 17-5 win.

Obregon led all scoring with twelve goals on the day (eleven on penalty conversions). Zenni and Badiola scored two goals apiece and Bray added a goal in the victory. Azzaro's four goals (two on penalty shots) set the pace for Horseware/5Star/Tackeria. Lloret scored the only other goal in the loss.

Valiente 12, Audi/Millarville 10

The Valiente and Audi/Millarville match was one of two scheduled for 1pm and featured the game's Number 1 rated player in Argentine 10-goaler Adolfo Cambiaso. It seemed only fitting then, that Cambiaso would score the first goal of the contest (on a 30-goal penalty shot) to give Valiente the first lead, 1-0. Three minutes later Julian Mannix tied it at 1-1 on a cut shot to goal on a well-placed ass from Grant Ganzi, 1-1. English 3-goaler Tommy Beresford scored the final goal of the chukker with just 37 seconds on the clock for a 2-1 Valiente lead.

The Valiente defense held Audi/Millarville scoreless in the second period with Cambiaso doing all of the work for them on offense. Cambiaso took advantage of a pair of Audi/Millarville fouls and converted both shots for goals. Audi/Millarville was unable to score and fell behind, 4-1.

Audi/Millarville finally found their offensive voice in the third. Roldan scored twice from the field and once on a 30-yard penalty shot that tied the game at 4-4. This time it was Valiente who was unable to get on the scoreboard and the first half ended with the score knotted at 4-4.

Roldan scored on a 60-yard penalty shot just a minute into the fifth chukker, 5-4, and added another on a 40-yard penalty shot just a minute later to make it 6-4. Another Valiente foul resulted in a Penalty 1. Audi/Millarville was awarded a goal on the foul, 7-4 and Freddie Mannix made it 8-4 on a goal from the field. Raif Richardson scored the final goal of the chukker but it was Audi/Millarville with the 8-5 lead and just two chukkers left to play.

With the crucial fifth chukker beginning all eyes were on Valiente 10-goaler Adolfo Cambiaso, and he didn't disappoint. He ended up scoring four of the six goals scored in the period with teammate Felipe Viana scoring his first goal of the match to take the lead back, 10-9. Roldan managed the only goal of the chukker for Audi/Millarville.

Ganzi scored his first match of the day in sixth chukker action, leveling the score at 10-10, and it appeared that Audi/Millarville would threaten again. Beresford scored on an

extreme angle on a neck-shot that gave the lead to Valiente, 11-10. A costly foul send Cambiaso to the penalty line where he converted a 30-yard penalty shot with :52 on the clock for the 12-10 victory.

Cambiaso led the field with eight goals (all on penalty conversions). Beresford accounted for two goals with Richardson and Viana adding single goals for the win. Roldan scored four of his team-high six goals on penalty shots. Single goals were added by Grant Ganzi, Julian Mannix and Fred Mannix and the team was awarded one goal on a Penalty 1.

Orchard Hill 10, La Indiana 6

Orchard Hill (3-0) scored their third consecutive win over underdog La Indiana (0-3) but Michael Bickford's entry didn't make it easy for them in the opening chukkers.

Opening goals from Brazilian 7-goaler Joao Ganon and Australian 7-goaler Ruki Baillieu had La Indiana in front, 2-0. Orchard Hill rallied for three goals with Lucas Criado scoring twice and Peke Gonzalez adding a goal for a 3-2 lead.

The two teams battled through a scoreless second period as neither was able to mount an effective attack. The score remained 3-2 with the powerful Orchard Hill team hanging on to the 3-2, one goal advantage.

The La Indiana defense held Orchard Hill scoreless for a second consecutive chukker while picking up a goal of their own on a 60-ayrd penalty conversion from Ganon. At the end of the first half it was all even at 3-3.

Orchard Hill finally got some traction in the fourth period. Two 60-yard penalty goals from Argentine 10-goaler Facundo Pieres and a goal from the field from Gonzalez were answered with a 30-yard penalty goal from Ganon. Orchard Hill was back in the lead with a two goal advantage, 6-4.

The Orchard Hill momentum continued to build with Criado adding two more goals in the fifth and Pieres scoring is third of the game. La Indiana settled for a single goal from Ganon as they fell behind by four goals, 9-5.

La Indiana team captain Michael Bickford scored his first goal of the game in the sixth chukker, cutting the Orchard Hill lead to three goals, 9-6, but time was on the side of the talented Orchard Hill foursome. Pieres put the icing on the cake for Orchard Hill with the final goal of the game for the 10-6 victory.

Pieres and Criado each scored four times in the win. Gonzalez was credited with two goals. Ganon scored two of his team-high four goals from the penalty line. Bickford and Baillieu added single goals in the loss.

White Birch 10, Enigma 6

In the most penalized game of the day (38 fouls), White Birch (2-1) emerged with a 10-6 win over Enigma (1-2), allowing them to advance in the competition and making their return to the International Polo Club after a seven-year absence an early initial success.

In a lackluster opening chukker the two teams battled to a 0-0 deadlock with neither being able to settle into any rhythm or coordinate a successful attack, 0-0.

Matias MacDonough scored the first goal of the game at the 6:44 mark of the second chukker, putting Enigma in front, 1-0. Ezequiel Ferrario tied the game with a 40-yard penalty conversion three minutes later and Tommy Alberdi gave Peter Brant's team the lead with a goal from the field a minute later. After two chukkers and seven penalties, White Birch was in front, 2-1.

Carlucho Arellano tied the game at 2-2 with the opening goal of the third chukker (a 40-yard penalty shot). Ferrario and Mariano Gonzalez answered back with single goals to give White Birch a 4-2 halftime lead. The penalty count had grown to sixteen at this point.

The match continued to take on a physical tone in the fourth period with Alberdi converting a penalty shot from 30-yards out, 5-2. White Birch fouls sent Arellano to the penalty line where he scored on two 30-yarders, cutting the White Birch lead to a single goal, 5-4. A goal from the field from Aguerre was countered by another penalty conversion from Arellano (60-yards). White Birch continued to lead, 6-5, and the penalty count reached 23.

Goals from the field were nonexistent in the fifth chukker and the penalties continued to mount. Arellano tied the game at 6-6 with a 60-yard conversion with 3:01 left in the period. Alberdi converted a penalty shot from 30-yards with 1:34 on the clock to restore the White Birch lead at the end of the chukker, 7-6. The penalty count had grown to 30!

Enigma fought to get back into the game in the sixth and final chukker but the momentum was clearly with White Birch. A 30-yard penalty conversion from Alberdi came in the opening 30-seconds of play followed by a pair of penalty goals from Ferrario that brought the game to a close with White Birch on top, 10-6. The final penalty tally came to 38!

Alberdi and Ferrario led the White Birch assault with four goals each. Aguerre added two goals to the mix with six of the White Birch goals coming on penalty conversions. All five of Arellano's team-leading goals came on penalty shots. MacDonough scored once from the field in the loss.

Dubai 11, Tonkawa 6

Rashid Alwardy's Dubai (2-1) team continued to make inroads in their first US season, scoring with an 11-6 win over Tonkawa (1-2) in one of the final two games of the day.

Argentine eight-goaler Diego Cavanagh scored the first two goals of the game with a goal from the field and a 40-yard penalty conversion, 2-0. Sebastian Merlos showed his old 10-goal form with a goal for Tonkawa, who trailed after the opening chukker, 2-1.

Tonkawa team captain Jeff Hildebrand tied the game in the second period with a goal from the field, 2-2. Alejo Taranco fired back with a goal from the field and a 40-yard penalty goal that ended the chukker with Dubai on top, 4-2. The two teams traded

goals in the third, with Tonkawa scoring on a 40-yard penalty shot by Gonzalo Deltour. Taranco countered with a goal from the field for Dubai for a 5-3 halftime lead.

Dubai returned to the field in the fourth chukker with guns blazing. Taranco scored his fourth goal of the day to make it 6-3. Deltour responded with a goal for Tonkawa, 6-4. Rashid Albwardy gave his team some separation with a pair of goals from the field as Dubai extended their lead to four goals, 8-4.

The Tonkawa defense buckled down in the fifth chukker, holding Dubai to a single goal from Albwardy. Unable to mount a successful attack of their own, however, they fell behind by five goals, 9-4, with one chukker left to play.

Albwardy's fourth goal of the game opened the sixth and final period of play with Dubai on top, 10-4. A pair of penalty conversions from Deltour (60-yard and 40-yard) cut the lead to four goals, but time was running out. Carlos Gracida scored the final goal of the game as Dubai qualified for quarterfinal play with the 11-6 victory.

Albwardy and Taranco led the Dubai attack with four goals apiece for Dubai. Cavanagh scored twice and Gracida added a goal for the win. Deltour's four goals (three on penalty conversions) set the pace for Tonkawa. Hildebrand and Merlos each added a goal in a losing effort.

Thursday's marathon of matches set the stage for the quarterfinals of the 20-goal Ylvisaker Cup with two 10am games that will feature Orchard Hill facing Enigma and Palm Beach Illustrated taking on White Birch. At noon, Dubai will battle Coca-Cola followed by a 3pm showdown between Valiente and Tonkawa.

Sunday's winners will meet in the Ylvisaker Cup semifinals on Wednesday at 1:30 and 4pm, with the tournament final set for Sunday, February 24th at 3pm.