

'Gonzalo Pieres to play for the first time in Thailand at Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha's VR Sports Club, Bangkok in the highest handicapped tournament ever played in Asia'

Thailand Polo Association presents the

Thailand Polo King's Cup Tournament

Tuesday 20th – Saturday 24th January 2015

15 -18 goal tournament played under HPA rules

On the VR Field & SPP Field at VR Sports Club, Bangkok, Thailand

A new level of polo is coming to the polo pitches of the VR Sports Club in Bangkok this week with the start of the biannual Thailand Polo King's Cup Tournament. This year the tournament will not only be played off an increased team handicap, it will also include ten goaler Gonzalo Pieres (who is currently ranked 6th in the world on the World Polo Tour rankings) playing in Thailand for the first time ever alongside brothers Apichet (0) and Aiyawatt 'Top' Srivaddhanaprabha (1) and Marcos Di Paola (8) in team King Power.

On Tuesday 20th January 2015 the inaugural match of the highest handicapped polo tournament in Asia, featuring the most number of teams (six in total: **King Power, Tang Polo Club, Brunei Polo Team, BP Healthcare, Global Port and Ahmibah Brunei**) will begin at Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha's VR Sports Club, Bangkok, Thailand. Played as a biannual tournament, the Thailand Polo King's Cup, which has been organised by the Thailand Polo Association (TPA) since 2003, alternates every two years with the All Asia Cup and has a special significance in the Thai Polo fixtures list as one of the most prestigious annual polo tournaments in the region. With a royal representative in attendance at the opening and closing ceremonies, spectator numbers will be high in anticipation of some highly competitive on-pitch action with the six teams competing for a trophy bestowed to the tournament by His Royal Highness King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

Play will take place at the VR Sports Club (the only polo club in Bangkok) on its two pitches - the fully flood lit VR Ground (the main ground) and SPP Field. Owned by Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha (also owner of King Power Duty Free and Leicester City Football Club) the VR Sports Club has previously held matches featuring Adolfo Cambiaso, Lolo Castagnola and Marcos Di Paola, now in 2015 other top players who will be seen on the pitches include: Nachi Heguy (9), Ignacio Novillo Astrada (9), Joaquim Pittaluga (7), Temi Wellington (7) and Manuel Crespo (7).

Thailand Polo King's Cup tournament is hosted by the Thailand Polo Association with King Power Duty Free as the official sponsors, who having just celebrated their 25th anniversary intend the tournament to celebrate polo in Asia and the Middle East, bringing the highest quality of polo to the

pitches of Bangkok reflecting the style of other high profile tournaments held in Europe and North America. Popularizing polo within Thailand is something Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha has been passionate about since founding the Thailand Polo Association in August 1998 (it was officially recognised by the Sports Authority of Thailand in 2004, with its 10th anniversary year in 2014) with the intention 'to develop the skills of players in the country in order to compete successfully internationally with the leading polo playing nations.'

The on-pitch action will certainly have an international feel with HRH Prince Jefri Bolkiah returning for a second year with his 'Ahmibah Brunei' team to play against another team from his country, HRH Princess Azemah's 'Brunei Polo', who will play for the first time in this tournament. Alongside the teams from Brunei will be Shailai Liu's 'Tang Polo' team from China, Michael Romero's 'Global Port' from the Philippines and Malaysian Joevy Beh's 'BP Healthcare'. The home team from Thailand, 'King Power' will be headed up by Aiyawatt 'Top' Srivaddhanaprabha, playing once again alongside teammates from Argentina, Gonzalo Pieres and Marcos Di Paola, who in their inaugural English high goal season dominated all but one of their games in the 2014 Verve Clicquot Gold Cup season on the Lawns at Cowdray, only narrowly missing out in the Final to Dubai Polo Team.

The Thailand Polo King's Cup Trophy Final will be played on Saturday 24th January at 17:30 (local time) on the VR Field, with VIP guests invited to a Vintage Victorian themed party featuring performances from French Equestrian Stunt Master Mario Luraschi & his stunt riders, with a Grand Opening Ceremony by The Royal Thai Navy accompanied by the celebrity Ladies Troop in the presence of His Excellency Air Chief Marshal Kamthorn Sindhvananda, Privy Councillor and Thai Polo Association President Kanoksakdi Bhinsaeng.

Matches will start daily at 16:00 and 17:30 (local time) - see below for full details of play.

Notes:

For tournament info via social media please follow The Thai Polo Association – hashtag for the event is #kingscup2015:

Twitter: @tpa_polo

Facebook Page: Thailand Polo Association

Instagram: Thailand Polo Association

Website: www.thailandpolo.or.th

All information is for immediate publication. Please link any articles published online/social media to the Thai Polo Association.

Photos attached are from the first day of play. See below for a full list of teams and players.

For further Press information please email Victoria Elsbury-Legg: hello@victoriaelsbury-legg.com

King's Cup Tournament Schedule of Play 2015

Day 1 - Tuesday 20th January

16:00 King Power v Tang Polo (VR Field)

17:30 BP Healthcare v Ahmibah Brunei (VR Field)

Day 2 – Wednesday 21st January

1600 BP Healthcare v Global Port (SSP Field)

17:30 King Power v Brunei Polo (VR Field)

Day 3 – Thursday 22nd January

16:00 Tang Polo v Brunei Polo (SPP Field)

17:30 Global Port v Ahmibah Brunei (VR Field)

Day 4 – Friday 23rd January

16:00 5th v 6th (SPP Field)

17:30 3rd v 4th (VR Field)

Day 5 – Saturday 24th January

17:30 Final (VR Field)

King's Cup Tournament 2015 Teams*

**Please note: The King's Cup is a 15-18 goal tournament, King Power's team was entered in December when Aiyawatt 'Top' Srivaddhanaprabha's handicap was 0, subsequently, on the 1st January 2015 his handicap was raised to 1, so King Power will play as a 19 goal team. All handicaps will be introduced with goal advantage for less handicapped teams.*

Group 1

King Power (19 goals)

1. Apichet Srivaddhanaprabha (0)
2. Aiyawatt (Top) Srivaddhanaprabha (1)
3. Gonzalo Pieres (10)
4. Marcos Di Paola (8)

Tang Polo Club (17 goals)

1. Shilai Liu (1)
2. Miguel Diaz (5)
3. Temi Wellington (7)
4. Antonino Menard (4)

Brunei Polo Team (18 goals)

1. HRH Princess Azamah (0)
2. HH Prince Bahar (1)
3. Pablo Mac Donough (10) **
4. Joaquim Pittaluga (7)

****Please note:** In matches being played on Wednesday 21st January Pablo Mac Donough (10) will be substituting for previously listed player Ignacio Novillo Astrada (9), meaning the Brunei Polo Team will now be an 18 goal team.

Group 2

BP Healthcare (18 goals)

1. James Beh (1)
2. Joevy Beh (4)
3. Garvy Beh (4)
4. Nachi Heguy (9)

Global Port (17 goals)

1. Michael Romero (0)
2. Benjamin Urquiza (5)
3. Manuel Crespo (7)
4. Anthony Garcia (5)

Ahmibah Brunei (15 goals)

1. HH Prince Qawi (-1)
2. HRH Prince Jefri Bolkiah (0)
3. Francesco Bensadon (8)
4. Ale Agote (8)