

Media Release

13th August 2010
For immediate release.



Best ever line-up for beach polo event

Organisers of the award-winning beach polo event held at Watergate Bay have added a star name to this year's line-up of players.

Jamie Le Hardy is widely considered to be one of the best British players the game has seen over the last decade and has been decorated with a host of prestigious awards.

The news of the England international's appearance comes as organisers behind *Veuve Clicquot Polo on the Beach* announce the highest profile line-up in its four year history.

In anticipation of the free event taking place on the evening of Thursday, September 16, Jamie said: "I'm really looking forward to coming down and playing in this match. This is a brilliant way of showing the sport of polo to the public. From a spectator's point of view, it's great to see polo right in front of you and will be very exciting to watch."

The teams, sponsored by clothing brand Joules and Midas Construction, will feature players drawn from the ranks of top professionals and international teams.

Last year more than 3,000 spectators enjoyed thrilling displays from former England internationals Richard Blake Thomas and his brother Andrew, who will return to the Cornish surfing beach to compete for the Watergate Bay Trophy.

Richard said: "This will be the first time at this event that I've competed against my brother, so expect sibling rivalry at its greatest. My mother hates watching us play on the field against each other as we go for it hammer and tongs. It's a fantastic event to play in and it's always fun to get a bit of surfing in in the morning."

Andy Burgess of South West Polo will join up with Jamie Le Hardy and Richard Blake Thomas to make up the Joules team. Andy, who teaches polo and promotes the sport in Cornwall, has been instrumental in organising the match and recruiting the players.

Facing the Joules team will be Midas Construction, featuring former England squad player Ed Olof, expert arena player Tim Vaux and former England international Andrew Blake Thomas, who was voted most valuable player at last year's contest.

All three members of the Midas team are professional polo players who have taken part in contests around the world.

The two teams will play a form of arena polo - a fast-paced and exciting sport - involving four 'chukkas', periods of play each lasting seven and a half minutes.

The playing area is much smaller than grass polo - approximately 100 by 50 metres - requiring speed and agility from the players while making the game easy to follow for spectators.

Each player is given a handicap rated in "goals" according to their ability. Jamie Le Hardy has the highest handicap of five goals.

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Media Release



On paper the match looks destined to be a tight affair given that Midas Construction have a team handicap of nine goals while their opponents Joules have a handicap of eight.

The contest will be umpired by Barbara Zingg who teaches polo to officer cadets at the prestigious Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Expert commentators will be on hand to explain the rules and strategy of the game before the match, while also summarising the action during play.

Two special prizes will be awarded after the match, with the Extreme Academy presenting a custom made horse blanket to the Best Playing Pony, and the Most Valuable Player receiving vouchers to spend in the Shop on the Beach at Watergate Bay.

For spectators on the beach, a public champagne bar and beach barbeque will be open from 5.00pm, with the teams riding out to start the first chukka at 6.30pm.

A limited number of hospitality packages, costing £50 are still available. These allow entry to a champagne and canapé reception taking place at The Hotel, Watergate Bay from 5.30pm, and include a live band, followed by private access to viewing terraces. Tickets are available from Claire Davies (claire@watergatebay.co.uk or 01637 861239).

More information about the event can be found at watergatebay.co.uk/polo or by following the official Twitter feed at @PoloOnTheBeach.

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Images

High resolution print-ready images can be downloaded from our online [Media Centre](#) (click for direct link).

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Notes to Editors

Founded in 1772, **Veuve Clicquot** has an established history of innovation and creativity. Madame Clicquot was the first woman to run her own champagne house when she took over the business in 1805. She revolutionised the way champagne was made by putting holes in her kitchen table and “riddling” the bottles to clarify the wines. Similarly, Veuve Clicquot’s innovative, daring approach is evident when in 1877 they became the first company to register their unique iconic yellow which is still apparent with Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label today. www.clicquot-season.com

Born in the British countryside and crafted with true British style and eccentricity – **Joules** designs upbeat, colourful clothing for women, men and children who love the outdoors and live life to the full. With a rich heritage in the equestrian arena, Joules are known for their quality and attention to detail. From bright bold polos to vintage inspired dresses and quirky tweeds, the collection is bursting with character and charm and is sure to delight all who wear it. To find your nearest Joules shop or stockist and to see the full collection, visit www.joulesclothing.com

With over £70m of construction work on site in Cornwall, **Midas Construction** is industry leading within the county and contributes greatly to the community through its involvement in business and social initiative.



Media Release



Set on its own spectacular surfing beach on the north Cornwall coast, **The Hotel & Extreme Academy, Watergate Bay** has earned a reputation as one of the 'must visit' coastal destinations in the UK. Experience laid-back living, beautifully designed bedrooms and beach-chic décor. Overseen by new executive chef Neil Haydock, you can enjoy superb locally sourced and seasonal food in The Hotel's Brasserie or the Living Space Bar with its relaxed ambiance and sun drenched decking. Combine all this with amazing views over the north Atlantic and exhilarating beach sports and you simply won't want to leave. No wonder it was voted as one of the '30 new trips for 2010' by The Observer's, Escape Guide. www.watergatebay.co.uk

The **Extreme Academy, Watergate Bay** is one of Britain's leading venues for beach sports and events. Founded in 1999, the Extreme Academy comprises specialist schools for surfing, kitesurfing, waveski and stand-up paddlesurf (SUP); technical equipment hire; and the Shop on the Beach, stocking a wide range of clothing and technical equipment. www.watergatebay.co.uk/extremeacademy

Located right next to the sand, **The Beach Hut** has stunning views across Watergate Bay from both the indoor tables and from the decked balcony that runs around the restaurant. From breakfast to dinner – it's one of Cornwall's best beachside hangouts. Recommended by Time Out Devon and Cornwall Guide 2010, and in 2009, The Guardian voted The Beach Hut's Extreme Hot Chocolate as 'a must-try experience'. www.watergatebay.co.uk/thebeachhut