

Polo, Pimm's and Pachyderms Kick off the 15th Annual King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament



Bangkok, March 9th: The 2017 King's Cup Elephant Polo tournament kicked off today on the banks of Bangkok's mighty Chaophraya River. The opening day offered a spectacle of seasoned elephant polo players, a traditional Thai parade, Thailand's last elephant spirit men and the stars of the event - 25 rescued street elephants.

The proceedings began with a traditional ceremony blessed by monks who placed sacred garlands over the necks of the elephants. Thailand's last elephant spirit men (Kru Ba Yai), who possess spiritual control over all of Thailand's elephants, also presided over the early morning rituals. The opening match saw 2016 champions, King Power, represented by Nattapong Pratumlee, Satid Wongkraso and Tom Claytor continue their winning style, easily beating newcomers BENIHANA by double scores.

The match of the day was between teams PWC All Blacks which includes international rugby players, Olo Brown, Stu Wilson and Charlie Richelman and Casiliero Del Diablo represented by Argentina's finest polo players, Agustin Kronhaus, Manuel Albizu and Franck Constant with the first half closing in a nail biting tie.

The tested All Blacks came into the second half all set to fight for a win against the newest editions to the Elephant Polo Cup line up, but the team from Buenos Aires easily progressed into the next round with a 6-4 win.

The annual event is an opportunity for Anantara Hotels and Resorts to take 25 unemployed, rescued street elephants, provide them with full veterinary checks by royally appointed veterinarians and supply them with essential vitamin and dietary supplements. To date the tournament has raised over US\$1.3 million which has been donated to various projects throughout Thailand.

Day 1 - Scores

King Power vs BENIHANA 13-6

Mekhong vs Anantara 14-7

CDD vs PWC All Blacks 6-4

JW Blue Label vs IBM (playing)

Arabian Knights vs CITI (playing)

For more information on the 15th Annual King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament, please visit www.anantaraelephantpolo.com.