



PRESS RELEASE

II FIP Arena Polo European Championship Baku: Austria & Spain secure Final places

Baku, 17 September 2022. Yesterday, Saturday 17 September saw the last day of qualification for The II FIP Arena Polo European Championship at The Elite Horse & Polo Club Baku, Azerbaijan. An afternoon of hotly contested action saw Azerbaijan defeating Switzerland in the first match of the day, much to the delight of the local crowds gathered in the packed grandstands. A second match between Austria and Spain was a closely fought battle, but Spain's undefeated streak was thwarted by Austria who defeated Spain 6-4. With two wins each for Spain, Austria and Azerbaijan in the tournament qualifiers, the Final's spots went to point difference, with Austria and Spain just managing to edge ahead.



In the run up to the first match, local supporters, both young and old took advantage of the weekend break and packed the grandstands, waving flags and enjoying a day out of sport supporting their national team. The crowds were clearly full of anticipation and carried along by the effervescent enthusiasm of 'The Voice of Polo' Jan-Erik Franck with his sparkling commentary.

Azerbaijan beats Switzerland 5:1.5

Switzerland began with a half goal on the scoreboard, but this did not phase the well-drilled Azerbaijan team, who swiftly found their rhythm with goal after goal flying through the posts. The Swiss tried their best to defend, but Team Azerbaijan under the assured and strong Captaincy of Elcin Jamalli confidently brought home a 5-1½ win, much to the delight of the crowd who enthusiastically and vocally cheered them out in a lap of honour of the arena.

Spain wins 6:4 against Austria

The hotly anticipated second match of the day between Austria and Spain was next up. Spain were the favoured team on paper, having been twice undefeated so far in the tournament and looking strong throughout. The match was evenly matched for the first half, with the scores too close to call at half-time with 4 goals to 3 in Austria's favour. In the second half, Spain found the goalposts, but



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Austria added to their tally to maintain their advantage, with the additional wind proving challenging for both sides to contend with, and Austria ran out the winners 6-4.

So, tomorrow action will continue to decide the placings for this important FIP event, with Switzerland and Azerbaijan lining up at 12 noon in the Subsidiary Final, with the Final for first and second place due between Spain and Austria at 1.30pm.

The II FIP Arena Polo European Championship Teams:

Team Azerbaijan (12): Elcin Jamalli (3), Andres Fernandez Llorente (4) & Fabian Bolanteiro (5)

Reserve: Agustin Kronhaus (5) & Ali Rzayev (2) & Tarlan Gurbanaliyev (1)

Team Switzerland (11): Fabio Meier (2), Tomas Ruiz Guinazu (6) & Tito Gaudenzi (3)

Reserve: Stefan Roth (1) & Katja Grauwiler (0)

Team Spain (10): Jamie Visser (1), Mario Gomez (4) & Nicolas Ruiz Guinazu (5)

Team Austria (10): Walter Scherb (2), Diego Braun (4) & Martin Bleier (4)

Photographs: By Kathrin Gralla/www.derrotedrache.com

The photos of the tournament will be filed daily under the following link:

<https://www.derrotedrache.de/kunden-login/>

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About polo in Azerbaijan

2013 the unique sport of polo was brought back to Azerbaijan, as one of its origin countries, where the traditional polo version Shovgan was played over the centuries. Thanks to General Elcin Gulijev, President of ARAF, and his visionaries of a new polo era in his country, the modern sport of polo was raised from zero to a remarkable international level in Azerbaijan during the last years. Information about the tournament: <https://www.worldpolo.com/event/>

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