

# POLO

PLAYERS' EDITION

JULY 2020

Polo emerging  
in Indonesia



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PLAYERS' EDITION

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### OUR COVER

*Ponies play in the ocean at Nihl Sumba, a luxury resort on Indonesia's Sumba Island. The resort hosts a polo event each year.*

*Photo by Tania Araujo*



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# Indonesia

Polo grows in the land where mallets grow

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world, consisting of over 17,000 islands. Located in Southeast Asia and Oceania, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, it also boasts the most volcanoes of any other country in the world.

With its volcanoes, tropical rainforests, jungles, beaches and swamps, Indonesia doesn't seem like a place where polo would be played. In fact, it is associated more with polo mallets than with the sport itself. After all, its tropical rainforests are where *manau*, the type of rattan used to make polo mallet canes, is grown. But that may soon change.

Not long ago, the Indonesian Polo Association was established to facilitate and foster the growth of the sport in the country. It is a corresponding member of the Federation of International Polo (it doesn't partic-

*The Indonesian team played in Bangkok in 2016. With them, center, is coach Argentine Nico Curto, who also manages the Nusantara club.*

KATERINA MORGAN



*An Indonesian player competes in the All Asia Cup final in Bangkok.*



KATERINA MORGAN



TANIA ARAUJO



*Guest can swim the ponies in the ocean or take a sunset ride along the beach.*

ipate in FIP events) as well as the South East Asian Polo Confederation (SEAPC). According to the association's website, it has over 40 members, with the average player rated minus-2. The Indonesian Polo Team includes four players: Novel Alfa Momongan (0), Harrifar Syafar (0), Billy Barsel Lumintang (1) and Acep Krisnander (1).

A team consisting of Lumintang and Krisnander, along with 0-goalers Glendy Martinus Bujung, Dwira Harlie Roring, Fahmi Akmal and Rico Llanto participated in the B Division (0- to 2-goals) of the 30th SEA Games played in the Phillipines last November. Competing against teams from Philippines, Brunei and Malaysia, the team took the Bronze medal.

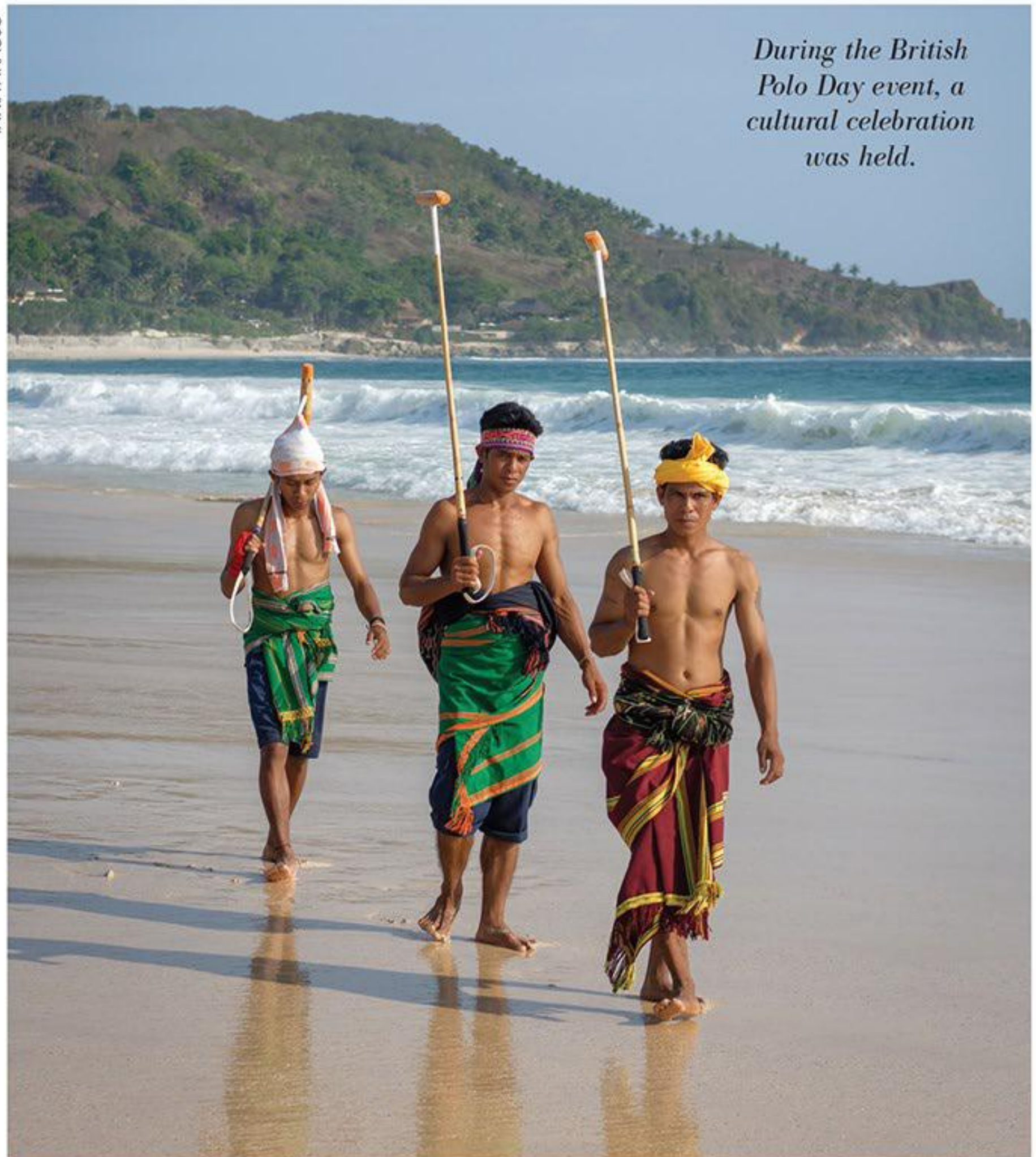
The Nusantara Polo Club opened in 2010 in Jagorawi Golf & Country Club located in Cibinong, Indonesia, just 30 mintes from the capital city, Jakarta's Central business district. The club has its own outdoor field, track, stabling and polo school with a 'string' of wooden horses in addition to a dozen or so club polo ponies imported from Argentina. Its club manager, 3-goal Argentine Gabriel Nicolas "Nico" Curto, coaches and teaches riding and polo lessons. Taking advantage of the access to Indonesian-grown manue, a few years ago Curto started his own polo mallet making business there.

The club hosts several tournaments throughout the year, including the Challenge Cup, James Riady Cup and the All Asia Cup.

Beach polo emerged at another facility a few years ago. In 2015, British Polo Day held its first event at

Nihi Sumba, a luxurious island retreat on Nihiwatu beach owned by American businessman Chris Burch,

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*During the British Polo Day event, a cultural celebration was held.*



*A resort pony cools off in the Indian Ocean.*



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*The ponies enjoy frolicking along the beach in front of the resort.*



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*British Polo Day holds an annual match on the resort's beach.*



on Indonesia's Sumba Island. Burch's partner and CEO is South African-born hotelier James McBride, who had played in British Polo Day Australia in 2014. It was a natural fit to hold an event at Burch and McBride's stunning resort.

Though its not a polo facility per se, the resort's state-of-the-art equestrian facility made it possible to host the event. Rather than your typical polo pony, the island is known for its hardy Sandalwood Ponies, introduced in the 8th century, and normally used for trail rides, swimming and equine meditation.

The ponies are also used for a colorful traditional ritual known as *Pasola*, held to bring a good harvest. Villagers, mounted on horseback, engage one another armed with spears. The *Pasola* is successful when blood is shed to make the spirits happy. Today, it is more of a display so spears are blunt, without the sharp metal points typically used.

The polo match was held on the resort's one-and-a-half-mile private beach. In addition to the polo action, guests enjoyed the many breath-taking experiences the resort offers: everything from yoga and meditation to kite surfing, paddle boarding, scuba-diving, fishing and hiking to the majestic Blue Waterfall, cascading from over 700-feet high.

A cultural celebration was also held, featuring the

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*An island pony takes part in an equine meditation session with a guest.*

*Pasola*, horseracing, buffalo washing, music and dance, along with delicious culinary delights. After a fireworks display, festivities lasted late into the night.

Indonesia is an amazing place to get away from the hustle and bustle to enjoy the island's magnificent beauty and natural surroundings. Playing with the island's horses is just the icing on the cake!

For more information, go to [NIHI.com](http://NIHI.com).

