

The ACC Riding and Polo Contingency Claim
By Alex Savell – Polo Secretary, ACC Riding and Polo

Riding and Polo is requesting **£280** from the CSB contingency budget to recoup the cost of pony hire for four chukkas (matches) at the SUPA University Polo Nationals, which took place on the 2nd through 5th of June, at a price of £70 each. Ordinarily such a claim would be asked for from the ACC contingency budget, however, due to the event's lateness in the year this is not possible as this money has already been utilised. There is an additional tournament entry fee of £60 per player which was also covered by the club despite one player being ruled out of the tournament, but since the club had budgeted for this entry fee we took no additional financial loss from this and therefore do not include it on the contingency claim.

On the evening preceding our Lower Intermediate team's first match in the tournament Jon Matthews sustained a serious leg injury; tearing a ligament. The full extent of this injury was not realised until the morning and despite the player's protestations that he would be able to ride the team captain (also the responsible club officer present) in conjunction with the tournament committee felt that they had to rule him out of the tournament on safety grounds. With one player missing with only a short time before the team's match it was necessary to find a substitute; withdrawing the team from the tournament would not have resulted in a refund of the entry fee or pony hire and could have induced sanctions up to and including long term bans from any other tournaments run under polo's governing body the HPA. It also would have excluded 3 other Imperial players from the tournament potentially incurring yet more losses to the club. Although we sought a substitute that would pay for the chukkas this was not possible as the player had to fit a number of criteria: they could not already play in this division, they must not have an official polo handicap above the level allowed by Lower Intermediate and must be a strong enough player to be safe at this level of play. It was also important to find someone who our pony provider knew well enough to mount safely. As such none of the other Imperial players were eligible to act as a substitute and in the short time frame and with players already spending a large amount of money on chukkas for their own teams it was impossible to find a substitute willing or able to contribute to the cost.

Our members are aware that polo is a dangerous hobby and any injuries that might be sustained as part of that resulting in reduction of their ability to conclude a match or lesson are a financial risk that they take. However, since this injury was not directly related to playing and since Jon was refused eligibility to play in the entire tournament by the club we feel that we have no right to charge him for the missed chukkas. We feel this makes a valid contingency claim since it is a cost that the club has incurred as a result of unforeseeable circumstance that we could not budget for.

We hope you will consider this request favourably.

Many thanks,

Alex Savell – Polo Secretary
On behalf of ACC Riding and Polo