

POLO

EIGHTY-THIRD FIELD ARTILLERY POLO TEAMS

DURING the past intra-mural Polo season at Fort Benning the 1st Battalion, 83rd Field Artillery, by hard work, efficient cooperation and exceptional team play established on the polo field, a record that may well be the ambition of any separate battalion.

At the beginning of the season, August, 1929, this battalion faced the following obstacles:—

First: The Artillery had never won a Senior Tournament at Fort Benning.

Second: The Battalion could boast of but one Government pony good enough to substitute on the Post team last summer. A total of eight Government ponies plus some private mounts formed the nucleus around which to build. The organization was unable to requisition remounts.

Third: No Artillery players were chosen for the Post team last summer and the Post team members were to play on the opposing teams, two of them with the last year's champions, the Freebooters. The Post team won the Southern Circuit and competed in Chicago last summer in inter-circuit and twelve goal championships.

Fourth: Every other team could count on a nucleus of really top ponies.

To offset the above disadvantages the Battalion had gained two players of experience and six private mounts; however during the season they lost four private ponies and two players were unable to participate in the tournament, which partially neutralized the advantages gained.

Realizing at once the advantages of our opponents and knowing the keen competition that could be expected, The Artillerymen decided to start early and work hard.

Accordingly in August a new polo Constitution was drawn up to govern polo within the organization. Major F. K. Ross, the Battalion Commander, was made polo representative with power to appoint a polo manager, the polo representative and

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polo manager to be the polo committee with power to act on all matters pertaining to play and selection of players for teams and assignment of ponies. Lt. H. D. Baker was appointed manager, his main duties being coaching of players and advising them on development of ponies.

The entirely successful season was due to the leadership, loyalty and zeal of this committee.

Work was immediately started on every horse in the battalion that even slightly resembled a polo pony. August being an extremely hot month at Fort Benning, the training period was set at 5:00 A. M. to 6:45 A. M. Twelve officers out of our total personnel of seventeen turned out regularly for the training and schooling of these ponies. Including private mounts this original string consisted of fifty-five horses. A practice field was built using the log slabbing from the saw mill for side boards. This schooling lasted until about September 15th, at which time the string was cut to thirty-eight ponies and the training period changed to 3:30 P. M. This reduction left each player with three ponies.

From September until January polo meetings were held each Thursday evening by the polo manager. During these meetings team and position play were discussed from all angles and concrete examples used to make the points clear. These meetings constituted a real factor in cooperation and soon all officers of the battalion attended regularly.

The intra-mural season started early in October. By this time the Eighty-Third had two equal teams fairly well mounted (but most ponies were still green) consisting of eight players, all of whom had previous polo experience and a third team composed of new players, who were doing their part. The Artillerymen had at this stage of the game a jump on all opponents who had started their practice late in September. During October, November, December and January all players were tried out at different positions on the team. Even through this interchange of players, positions and teams the Artillerymen succeeded in winning all games played throughout the season at this station by from one to twenty goals.

The battalion's first team was selected about February first.

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From then until the last Senior Tournament game, all ponies were turned over to the first team. All private ponies in the battalion were turned over to the first team, a condition that shows clearly the spirit of cooperation existing within the battalion. For the Junior Tournament, which occurred just after the Senior Tournament, the same ponies were available for the second team.

The green ponies that came through the long season were by this time in fine condition and played the game with the experience and handiness of our old ponies. The battalion only used three ponies of the original nucleus, not counting private mounts, in the final game.

The Junior team which the battalion had counted all year on being composed of four experienced players received several severe shakeups. At the approach of the tournament Lt. Shirley Hurt was ordered to V. M. I. and the next most experienced player Lt. Foster received a severe injury during a practice game. These unforeseen events placed Lt. Dawson, a player developed this year, on the Junior team; how well he did his part can be seen from the results of the games.

The tournaments games lineup and scores were as follows:—

SENIOR TOURNAMENT

(1)	29th Infantry	vs.	Students	
	HCP			HCP
	Capt. Halloran		Lt. Hill	0
	Lt. Skelton		Lt. Caranouche	0
	Lt. Jacobs		Capt. Tuttle	0
	Lt. Strickler		Lt. Van Houten	1
	Final Score	to		2 (1 by Hcp)
(2)	83rd F. A.	vs.	Freebooters	
	HCP			HCP
	Lt. Baker		Lt. McFayden	0
	Lt. Murphy		Capt. Toole	0
	Lt. Baker		Maj. Thompson	2
	Lt. Bartlett		Capt. McClure	2
	Final Score	to		2 (by Hep)
(3)	83rd F. A.	vs.	29th Infantry	
	HCP			HCP
	Lt. Baker		Capt. Halloran	0
	Lt. Murphy		Lt. Skelton	0
	Lt. Baker		Lt. Jacobs	3
	Lt. Bartlett		Lt. Strickler	0
	Final Score	to		6 (3 by Hep)

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SENIOR TEAM, 1ST BN., 83D F.A.

LEFT TO RIGHT: 1ST, LT. H. E. BAKER; 1ST LT. J. B. MURPHY; 1ST LT. H. D. BAKER; CAPT. H. J. GUERNSEY



JUNIOR TEAM, 1st BN., 83d F. A.

LEFT TO RIGHT: 2D LT. J. T. DAWSON; CAPT. H. J. GUERNSEY; 2D LT. H. Y. GRUBBS; 1ST LT. M. BUCKLEY

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JUNIOR TOURNAMENT

(1) 29th Infantry		vs.	Freebooters
	HCP		HCP
Maj. Taylor	1		Lt. Royce
Lt. Trent	0		Capt. Mallan
Lt. Hedekin	0		Maj. Lyman
Lt. Wharton	0		Capt. Sweet
Final Score		to	5
(2) 83rd F. A.		vs.	24th Infantry
	HCP		HCP
Lt. Dawson	0		Lt. Mood
Capt. Guernsey	2		Lt. McKnight
Lt. Grubbs	1		Capt. Brian
Lt. Buckley	1		Capt. Curtis
Final Score		to	5 (3 by Hep)
(3) 83rd F. A.		vs.	29th Infantry
	HCP		HCP
Lt. Dawson	0		Maj. Taylor
Capt. Guernsey	2		Lt. Trent
Lt. Grubbs	1		Lt. Hedekin
Lt. Buckley	1		Lt. Wharton
Final Score		to	6 (2 by Hep)

The Freebooter team was unfortunate in having two players, Major Lyman and Captain Gee, injured just prior to the tournament which kept them out of the play and greatly reduced the strength of their team.

It is obvious from the above scores that both Red Leg teams were outstanding in their respective tournaments. The Artillery Battalion scored from scrimmage in these two tournaments fifty-three goals to their opponents nine. These decisive victories far exceeded the happiest dreams of the Artillerymen at the start of the season and are a just reward for the hours spent in making it possible.

The results of this successful Post polo season, so far as the Artillery is concerned, is due to two main factors, both of which are necessary in any line of endeavor, namely: hard work and intelligent cooperation.

Although the intra-mural polo season is the main topic of this article it may be of interest to the reader to know that Fort Benning, the home of the Infantry School near Columbus, Georgia, is famous, and justly so, for all forms of athletics and outdoor sports such as hunting (both with gun and pack), fishing, riding, horseshows, etc.

General Campbell King, the Commandant of the Infantry School, is an enthusiastic supporter and spectator of the sports which help to make service at this station pleasant for the officers and enlisted men and their families.