

Cartier

MAYBACH



Brioni

Julius Bär

31 January 2009 – Third qualifying round for the 25th Cartier Polo World Cup on Snow in St. Moritz

The fine line between success and failure

None of the four sides was immune from the drama yesterday, as Saturday's action on the lake produced what must surely be amongst the most exciting in the 25-year history of the event.

Julius Baer - Maybach, 3-2

All four sides awoke on Saturday conscious of the fact that, mathematically, they could all still win or lose a place in today's Cartier Trophy final. In the day's opening encounter, Maybach would need to inflict defeat on Julius Baer by at least two goals, and then hope that Brioni beat Cartier; while Julius Baer knew that any victory for their side would guarantee them a place in the final. As it turned out, Julius Baer twice came from behind to take this all-important victory in a dramatic game which also saw an injury to Federico Bachmann for the second day in succession. This time he was hurt too badly to be able to continue, and his place for the last four minutes of the final chukka was taken by the team's three-goal groom, Agustin Martinez.

For the two teams that were to follow in the second match, the upshot of Julius Baer's victory was as follows: if Brioni won, they would finish above Julius Baer on their number of wins (three), but would condemn Cartier to the subsidiary final; while, if Cartier won, they would need to do so by at least two clear scores in order to leap-frog Brioni on goal difference.

Cartier - Brioni, 3-2½

Cartier's task was a simple one. Score at least two more goals than Brioni and they would snatch their place in the final away from them. The game started brightly and Cartier and their numerous fans got the early boost they needed, scoring after two minutes through Glen Gilmore in the first chukka. However, Brioni fought back to take a 2½-2 lead early in the fourth chukka before the game's dramatic conclusion: with less than 45 seconds left to play, J P Clarkin took what would normally have seemed a sensible decision, moving the ball away from traffic to the other side of the ground to run down the clock. But he was caught out horribly by a deep divot in the increasingly roughed-up ground. The ball jumped back behind him to the chasing Piki Diaz Alberdi. His first-time shot was blocked on its way to goal, but rebounded into the path of an imperious Glen Gilmore, who was never likely to miss. Cartier were back in it! Or where they? The clock showed 25 seconds left, so as well as giving Cartier the lead, Gilmore's score also brought the game to an end. They were still a goal short of their target so it would be Brioni that would advance to the final.

Saturday, 31 January 2009: 3rd Qualifying Round

ZwyerCaviar Trophy

Julius Baer - Maybach, 3:2 (0:0, 1:1, 0:1, 2:0)

Julius Baer: Richard Le Poer, UK; José Donoso, CL (2 Goals); Pablo MacDonough, AR (1 Goal); George Milford Haven, UK

Maybach: Philipp Maeder, CH; Federico Bachmann*, AR (1 Goal); Pablo Jauretche, AR Ignacio Tillous, AR (1 Goal)

*in the 4th Chukka substituted by Augustin Martinez

Nespresso Trophy

Cartier - Brioni 3: 2½ (1:½, 0:0, 1:1, 1:1)

Cartier: Adriano Agosti, CH; Gaston Laulhé, AR; Alejandro Diaz Alberdi, AR; Glen Gilmore, AU (3 Goals)

Brioni: Guy Schwarzenbach, AU/CH; Nacho Gonzalez, UK; John Paul Clarkin, NZ (2 Goals); Johnny Good, UK