

Trunks to the chukka

SIXTEEN TEAMS
FROM ALL OVER THE
WORLD TAKE PART IN
A PACHYDERM POLO
CHARITY TOURNAMENT

THE NATION

THE 2013 EDITION of the much-loved King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament hosted by the Somdet Phra Suriyothai military camp in Hua Hin came to an end recently with the winning Bangkok Bank team proudly taking home the King's Cup trophy. The team from Mercedes-Benz came in second and King Power finished in third place.

This year's tournament drew 16 teams from Mexico, China, USA, Sweden, the UK, Germany, India, Singapore and Thailand. They included teams from



The pachyderms tuck into a special buffet of fruits and veg.

Audemars Piguet, Anantara Team, Citibank, Pricewaterhouse Cooper, PTT, Johnnie Walker Blue

Label, Mekhong and Sara Story Design as well as The Devil (CDD) team, the Rueang Chang team, the Anantara Arabian Knights team, the Tiffany's Show Pattaya Team, and the Whisgars Team featuring former model Methinee Kingpayome.

Top polo players Uday Kalaan from India and Satinder Garcha from Singapore also turned out for the event.

The first match was particularly exciting as the Mekhong team, led by Cindy Sirinya Bishop and her husband Byron Bishop played against the Miss Tiffany Thailand team. Cindy's team

finally finished in 12th place.

"Although it's the second time I've taken part in this tournament, I'm still thrilled to ride an elephant. I'm also very happy to be part of this charity event because it gives me an opportunity to help the Thai elephant. We will also be donating all the money from the sale of Mekhong Thai-Sabai to the Thai elephant," Cindy said.

Proceeds from sponsors and auction at the gala night dinner - Bt4.3 million - went to Elephant's World at Baan Nong Hoi in Kanchanaburi province.

Elephant's World was founded in 2008, as a sanctuary for sick, old, disabled,



Dancers perform during the opening ceremony of the 2013 King's Cup Elephant Polo 2013 Tournament.

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The winning Bangkok Bank team.

abused, illegal and street elephants.

Today about 2,000 elephants live in the wild and about 3,000 in captivity. The main reason for the drop in number is reduction of living space and recently, as a result of illegal logging. A smaller living area means less food for elephants. Wild elephants are still taken

from the forest for trading, tusks or breeding. Most elephants in captivity work so hard that they do not come into heat. There are also fewer male elephants than females, which often results in inbreeding. If nothing happens, inbreeding in the existing elephant populations will lead to a further weakening of the species.



The Mekhong Team.