



A dark polo helmet and a wooden mallet leaning against a green wooden door. The helmet has a logo that says "TUSHI" and "POLO". The mallet has a blue label that says "TUSHI". The door is green and has a white horizontal band near the bottom. The background is dark and textured.

HENRY BRETT

A FORCE HARD TO BEAT

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

DATE OF BIRTH: OCTOBER 20 1974

STAR SIGN: LIBRA

PROFESSION: PROFESSIONAL POLO PLAYER

FOUNDER OF BRETT POLO ACADEMY

CO-FOUNDER OF THE POLO AGENCY

A PHENOMENAL POLO PLAYER, FORMER CAPTAIN OF THE ENGLAND POLO TEAM, AND ONE OF A SMALL HANDFUL OF ENGLISH PLAYERS TO ACHIEVE AN 8-GOAL HANDICAP, THROUGHOUT HIS PROFESSIONAL CAREER HENRY BRETT HAS BEEN A FORCE HARD TO BEAT. HENRY FIRST PLAYED IN HIGH-GOAL TOURNAMENTS WHEN HE WAS ONLY 17, WINNING BOTH THE QUEEN'S CUP AND THE PRINCE OF WALES TROPHY. HE THEN WENT ON TO WIN THE VEUVE CLICQUOT GOLD CUP IN 1999. IN 2002, LED BY HENRY, ENGLAND WON A HISTORIC ARGENTINE CUP VICTORY OVER ARGENTINA AND IN 2006 HE RECEIVED THE ULTIMATE ACCOLADE - THE CARTIER PEGASUS TROPHY FOR THE MOST VALUABLE PLAYER FROM HM THE QUEEN. AND NOW, WHILE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL PLAY, HE TRAINS PONIES AND, RIDERS AND RUNS THE POLO EVENT COMPANY, 'THE POLO AGENCY'. AS HE TELLS US BELOW, POLO IS HIS PASSION, HIS PLAY, AND HIS WORK.



▲ 2006, Henry & HM the Queen at the Cartier International at Guards Polo Club in Windsor Great Park, England

When did you start to ride?

I started riding when I was eight and started polo when I was 13.

As a champion polo rider, and as the former Captain of the England Polo Team, who has had the most influence on you?

Probably Jim Gilmore, Kerry Packer's Manager, who taught me a lot about horses.

Who have you trained with?

I have played and trained with and against all the best players. Most of my training I do by myself nowadays although in the earlier years I used to spend a lot of time in Argentina in different estancias, although not with one particular person.

And, who has shared in your total experience as a polo rider?

My parents; they have lived through all my experiences playing polo...all the ups and the downs!

Your plans for the next four years?

I am developing a young horse programme which I have already started and has produced some pretty good horses. I want to keep playing at the highest level I can in England, and during the winter play in places that I enjoy.

Besides playing polo, do you have a side job?

I play professionally but I also have



▲ Henry competing with Mrs. Brown at the Cartier International

a polo school at the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club where we teach beginners and host corporate days.

Your best wins and how it feels to be one of only four English players to have reached an 8-goal handicap?

Best win would have to be the Gold Cup against Ellerston in 1999; a long time ago! Getting to 8 goals was great, but unfortunately I had tennis elbow and have only just recovered. It's taken me six years, and that was tough to deal with and affected my play massively.

Your horses?

All my horses are English or Irish thoroughbreds that I have bought as young horses from the racetrack and retrained for polo. It's really finding the horses with the talent and potential that's the key, and then nurturing and developing them to a point where they can be their best.

Routine training programme?

During the UK season, I ride every day and try to get to the gym twice a week. Over the winter months, I go to

the gym more often as I am playing less.

The biggest challenges you face as a renowned polo rider?

Biggest challenge would be winning...if you can win everything is easy!

Which of the polo tournaments do you most enjoy playing and what is it about them that you most like?

The Gold Cup has to be the best tournament in Europe to play, and abroad I love the Barbados Open; sun, sea, polo and a lot of fun!

Which tournaments do you have coming up?

I will be playing in Klosters at the end of January on the snow.

What do you think of 'non-traditional' matches, such as 'Polo in the Park' and snow polo cups?

I think they are great at bringing polo to a wider audience.

Do you think lady players match

up to male players? Who would you consider the best lady player?

They can't because of the physical aspect but they can still play well. The highest rated woman player reached 5 goals. I would say Nina Clarkin is the best lady player at the moment, rated 4 goals.

Do you practice any other horse sports beside polo?

I went hunting the other week in Ireland which was fun but other than that not really.

The Polo Agency?

The Polo Agency was something I started with Alan O'Sullivan five years ago. It looks after sponsors and polo events mainly in the UK, but we are now involved with polo world series which is just starting up.

Your family?

My parents know nothing about horses. In fact, we lived in Oxford as my dad was a lawyer. They moved to a farm ten years ago and luckily for me, I can now keep my 30 horses there! 🐾



2011, with Ivan at the Brett farmhouse, Holbrook Stud

Photos courtesy of Craig Payne. Queen/action photo courtesy of Henry Brett