

## New Zealand Exchange 2013

The Polo Training Foundation partially sponsored an American team of five high school players to compete in Christchurch, New Zealand November 23 – December 2, 2013. Players were selected from a list of sportsmanship and most improved player award winners at tournaments throughout the United States. Colton Bancroft - Rancho Santa Fe, CA, Matias Gonzalez -Wellington, FL, Ian Mactaggart - Millbrook,NY, Jack McLean - Sewickly, PA, and Hank Uretz - La Quinta, CA were the five players. Danny and Janet Scheraga and Hank's mother Claudia Uretz accompanied them.



Arriving in Christchurch, we were greeted at the airport by Monique Ellis-Martin, the organizer of the trip and the Christ College polo advisor, Willie Davidson ,the representative of the New Zealand Schools & Universities Polo Association (SUPA) and Henry Wood, a student at Christ's College who would play against us in two of our games.

Four games were scheduled. Horses were supplied by the families of players from teams we were not playing that day. The entire week our hosts went out of their way to supply our boys with horses that suited them well.

Monday night was a meet and greet for the boys to get to know the players from the teams they would be playing, Christ's College, Rangi Ruru Girls School and St. Andrew's College. It was a wonderful evening .



Each day the School we played hosted us for the day. On Wednesday we played Christ's College and in the morning they took us on a jet boat ride, followed by a bar-b-que at the home of the Wilding family. In the afternoon, we played Christ College to a draw around a herd of sheep . In the evening Christ College team player's families, the Macfarlanes and Camerons took us to a lovely Thai restaurant.



Thursday was against Rangī Ruru Girls' School, who we defeated in the morning and then Pippa Young, the advisor to the girls' team, took us north to Hamner Springs an area of natural hot springs. That evening, the Bryan Burrows family hosted us to a dinner on their dairy farm.



Friday morning, Jo Ashton-Martyn the St. Andrews advisor took us for a tour of St. Andrew's College and then to a family crop farm for lunch and a farm tour. We played the St Andrews team to a draw and finished the day with a great dinner at the farm home of the Martin family.

Sunday December 1 was the test match of U.S.A. vs New Zealand. The kiwi's had assembled the strongest team they could muster bringing in players from all over the country. Guy Martin was in charge of assembling mounts from many donors for our team and he made a great effort analyzing our players and mounting them on horses suitable for each individual's style of riding. The match began with a tribe of Maori's performing the Haka, a traditional dance used to intimidate the opposition. In spite of that the match started well and our boys scored first. Although the boys played well and put up a valiant effort, it was team New Zealand's day. After the game, as during all the games, trophies were presented and gifts exchanged. Our New Zealand hosts put out a tremendous effort in entertaining us and fulfilling all our needs. Monday Monique Ellis-Martin who had done the yeoman's share of watching over our group saw us off at the Christchurch airport, and we headed home having met many new friends from both countries.

