

Saudi Polo Federation

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Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Adolfo Cambiaso



الاتحاد السعودي للبولو
SAUDI POLO FEDERATION

Q. Early morning I hear.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: A little bit.

Q. Can I get your name, please?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Adolfo Cambiaso.

Q. I know you've been here before.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, once.

Q. How do you feel when you're here?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: You always get impressed anyway. It's like, you already see it, but when you come, you're still kind of get impressed. I never wake up at this time, and to see this place is amazing. All the time there is something new to find out, to know, so I'm really happy to be here. Glad that we came back after all this COVID. Really happy to be back here.

I mean, there's always something amazing to see.

Q. Obviously incredible backdrop.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Not only that, everything is kind of getting built. It's slowly, slowly, even the highways, everything is kind of new. Every year it's something new. The hotel we are now, it's beautiful.

Q. Bringing polo into this place, is that --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Even better. Even better, because it's something that you can say, I played in AIUla, and I played when it was sand. Probably someday you never know if we play in grass. You never know. This can grow.

Q. About the match, obviously it's different for the horses on sand.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, it's like three against three in the arena. Obviously it's completely different than what we play on grass and we play four against four, and it's a much bigger field. But still, it's polo, and we enjoyed it. We enjoyed it, the way it's organized. It's really well organized.

The people are great, and I enjoyed it. Fantastic people around, and they make sure that you're in good shape, and that's fun.

Q. I guess with the teams that are being put together, that's part of polo, as well, I guess, where you play with different people all the time?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, we get used to that, and we get used to play against each other with my own teammates, so yeah, it's nice to meet new people, and to find out more the culture of the country and really fun to be here.

Q. Do you learn anything -- I know obviously you're a very seasoned professional, played for a very long time. Do you learn anything else when you're playing on different surfaces with the sport, with the way the ball moves, the way you have to play?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, you adjust in the moment. I did already play in the arena, but if there is something you can adjust, you adjust in the moment and you just try to do it as quick as we can so you don't lose the game.

Q. Everybody will want to win.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: For sure. That's for sure.

Q. How was the match?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: It was fun. It was fun, yeah. It was good fun. Actually the polo field, the arena field, it was better. Compared to when we came in 2020, it's better.

Q. Good to get the win, I guess?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah. Good fun, more than anything. We enjoyed it.

Q. I know we've spoken about it, but we're obviously doing this for someone else who's going to ask --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: You're going to use what I --

Q. Some of it. It would be good to get your thoughts on AIUla again, the beautiful landscape here.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: It's always a new surprise when you come here. I came in 2020, and there is always something that is kind of impressed. We're coming out to a different hotel, which is fun, but there is always something nice that you're always impressed. That's what AIUla probably has. There is always something -- like the other day we did pictures at 6:00, 7:00 in the morning, and I never thought that --

Q. The building?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, the building, at that time of the -- because I saw it at night. But at 6:00 in the morning or 6:30 when the sun comes up, it is always something that amaze.

Q. With all this beautiful scenery, do you get distracted when you're playing?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: No, not really. Not really, because you can concentrate on what you're doing. But at the end of the day they are kind of exhibition games, just people knowing what is about polo, what is about horses, and why not in the future to play in green, and this all leads to somewhere. That would be fun.

Q. What's been your favorite place to play polo, different surfaces? This is maybe a very different experience --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Different, different, but is fun, too. It's arena polo, which is three against three, and it's fun. But all the places that you go, you're always -- it's something that I enjoy. I enjoyed Argentina. I enjoyed England, Palm Beach. I went to Spain. I went to California. So I went to many places that to be honest with you, it doesn't matter which one. Different times of the year it's fun to go.

I enjoy every part that I go.

Q. You don't really play polo in bad places, though; only seems to be nice places.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Not really. I'm lucky enough that polo -- when we land here and we were coming from America and I was talking to my friends, and I said, look what polo did for us, bring us to places that probably you'd never come, never. Polo gives you that possibility.

I know many countries through the game, through sports, through polo. That's what I like. It's kind of -- happy to be

part of many places that I went in my life through my game.

Q. What does it take to become the No. 1 polo player?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: A lot of work. A lot of work. You know, you've got to wake up in the morning and you've got to be really professional, try to eat healthy, do gym. It's something that you have to do to do any sport, I believe. If you see tennis players, soccer players, and polo players are exactly the same. You've got to be really professional, wake up in the morning and do your job, which is eat healthy, do gym and practice pretty much every day.

Q. What do you think if you hadn't gone into polo and been able to make polo a career, what would you have done instead?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Well, I like any other sports, but I like the sports. But probably tennis I would say or something about wind surfing, surfing or something like that, too, I like. My family, father's side is surfing, my mother's side was polo, and when I was very young I liked tennis. Probably was around sports.

Q. And always around family, as well, I guess?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, I had my family always going around with me, and now I'm really -- they couldn't come here because we are in America, but we go all together everywhere.

Q. And obviously polo a very dangerous sport and very physical. What's your injury list like?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Riding muscle, this one in the back. My back is kind of -- because the horses, you all the time hitting your back. That's the two probably things that are the worst.

Q. Have you ever done anything more serious? Have you ever broken anything?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Those two. Those two that I did have some problems in my career, sciatic, and my back, my riding muscle I have many times. Yes, you do. But at the end of the day, yeah, it's like any other sport. You do have lessons and you have to go through them.

Q. You've achieved everything in the sport that there is to achieve; how do you keep going? What's your drive? Where do you get your drive from?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Well, now I have my son playing with me, so I think that's why extends my career. I started to -- 10 years ago, let's say 12, I started cloning horses, so

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

I'm playing with clones. So I did many things in my career that extend my career a little bit, and now I never thought that I was going to play with my son, that he was too young, because my daughter has the age to be able to reach me and play together. We did play together, but as a professional, and I never thought my son was going to do it, and he did it. He played the U.S. Open, the British Open together, and we're lucky to win it, and this year we will play the Argentine Open, which is like the World Cup for us, for polo players.

So probably the answer is my son.

Q. That's special. What's been your finest moment? What's been the best moment in your polo career and why?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Probably playing with my son. Playing with my son, winning the British Gold Cup, which was my first big tournament winning together with Jean Francois Decaux of the next generation. That was one of my key moments in my career.

Q. I guess special because of that family connection and because it was one of the biggest events?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, the British Open, Queen's Cup, U.S. Open and Argentine Open probably are the four biggest tournaments in the world.

Q. Now that cloning has become a much bigger thing, what's the ratio of clones to non-cloned horses that are used in these big high-level events? Would there be more cloned horses or more non-cloned horses?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: What I think? No, will be -- nobody believe in clones until I did clone. Probably the polo world was against me thinking that I was crazy. I showed that I was not crazy, and I won many Opens playing in clones.

Now most of the -- 70 percent, 80 percent of polo world is cloning, so I would say cloning is going to grow a lot.

Q. Do you think we'll get to a stage where it's 100 percent?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Not 100 percent, but it will be more than 50, yes.

Q. Horses and their owners have a unique bond. Were you ever uncomfortable with the idea of cloning Aiken Cura? Were you okay to do it? Were you happy to do it?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah.

Q. I guess it's a positive.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: I started with him. I don't understand the question anyway.

Q. Was he a favorite of yours?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: One of my favorites was Aiken Cura and he broke the leg, and that's why -- because I have to put him down, that's why I take the cells before he died and I started cloning because of him.

Q. So the question has maybe not quite understood that. I think exactly as you say, it's actually a positive.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, it's really positive.

Q. Did you think about cloning when you did that?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: I think about cloning in 2006 actually when he died. I kept the cells because he died in 2006, so I kept the cells before he died, and I started cloning when I find out a bit more about cloning in 2010. So I keep the cells for four years.

Q. Frozen?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Frozen.

Q. What was it about him as a horse?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: He was a machine. He was a really good horse. He did fantastic in my career, was one of my favorite horses.

Q. How did you feel then when you saw the clone?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Amazing. Amazing more than anything because I did believe in clones. I was amazed more than anything when they were playing and showing that they were good. That part was more amazing when I saw the clone.

Q. You obviously rode the clone.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah.

Q. Did it bring back any memories or was it still a different horse?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: No, it was a clone. It was not exactly the same, but it was him at the end of the day. The DNA was him 100 percent. Something that when you dream about and you complete your dreams, everything --

you feel fantastic, and that's one of my things in my career that I did that it was a crazy thing because nobody believed it. I did believe it. Even in my own family they were telling me that I was crazy, and I proved that I was not crazy, and those things when they happen, you like it.

Q. Does cloning always bring the same abilities, the same power of a horse into the clone? Does it always work?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Not always. There is some clones that can be bad. But at the end of the day if you clone a bad horse, you create a bad horse. If you clone a fantastic machine horse, then you've got to do the process well to get a good horse.

But for sure the percentages of breeding or cloning, if you have a good horse, when you clone the horse, you have better percentage.

Q. So nature and nurture, it's like the genes, the genetics, but then it still has to be taught.

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: You have to teach him, exactly like the original did.

Q. Back to your career, how long do you think you will continue to play for?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Good question. I thought I was not going to be playing right now, so who knows.

Q. Could be one year, could be ten years?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: I don't know. I never go in the future, I go in the present, so I don't know. It's all here. It's all in your head, in your -- I think my body and everything says that's it, but my head says that you can keep going, so head sometimes wins.

Q. What's the best advice that anyone has ever given you, and who was it do you think?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: I mean, advice, not really. I've just been told when I was young, I was lucky enough to play with many good players like Carlos Gracida, Memo Gracida, Gonzalo Bieres. I played with many good players, that you always catch different things from them, try to learn. When you are a fanatic and you are really into what you like in life, I believe that you get there. That's basically what I did.

Q. Do you apply those same principles even if it's not polo in life in general?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: The principles in life your family gives you, my mother and my father. That's the principle things. I think life, the education that they give you, the way you manage life, that's the most important thing in life.

Q. Was there ever any specific advice from your mom or your dad that you remember --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, my dad always told me that you have to try to be the best, but don't think you are the best.

Q. You mentioned earlier healthy eating, gym. Is that a real focus for you?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, when you get to Christmas and new year I break all the rules, but then when I start -- I play professional, important tournaments, I do my system.

Q. What would that look like?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: I try not to eat junky food, which we all know. I try to be -- but the good thing, I eat at home every time, so it's pretty much easy to eat well.

Q. Do you exercise frequently?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, pretty much every day. When I'm in the routine, yes.

Q. Is that weights or is that --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: No, that's cardio more than anything. Media, legs, a bit of everything. I have a trainer and I have a physio living with me.

Q. As a player, it doesn't help to put on too much weight, a bit like a jockey --

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, you got to take care of a bit of everything, yeah.

Q. Who tells you when you're wrong?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: My wife probably. My wife.

Q. Do your kids?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: My kids sometimes. My oldest daughter. But the most wrong parts, I talk to my wife.

Q. I know you're friendly with a lot of the guys; you guys have played together for such a long time. Do you have a similar relationship, or are you a leader of the group?

ADOLFO CAMBIASO: Yeah, I do. I've been a leader, but that doesn't mean nothing. You can be wrong anyway. You think and you talk; when you have a good relation you're better team sometimes. A team, it's about relationships, and I think that's important.

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