

tourism

nto a tourism hub

Open are held in Argentina. In Kenya, although still very much a rich-man's sport, polo is gaining popularity and spreading to middle and lower middle classes.

Casal brought the Schweitzer brothers, Santiago (6) and Fernando (4) and Francisco Ortiz Massey (5) to take part in the recent Kenya Open, alongside professionals from South Africa, Brad McGibbon (5) and the sensational Sbu Duma (3).

"A good way of creating awareness on the possibilities in Kenya is through tourism and sports. When I mentioned to the three polo players about the chances to come to play in Kenya, they were not totally convinced that Kenya has the security and infrastructure to host such a tournament. All they were worried about was diseases such as malaria and yellow fever and if they would scorch under the African sun," Casal told *The Financial Journal*.

"The Kenya Polo Association paid for their international tickets, accommodation and a luxury safari at Governors Camp as part of the tour. Two of the players came with their wives after I convinced them to come and making sure they would just leave Kenya with a different perception and the possibilities of investing in the region," he said.

"Besides, Messi and Maradona, Argentina is well known for her excellent meat, wines, but there are other areas and sports where we can fit the Kenyan market," he said.



Argentina Brothers Fernando and Santiago Schweitzer in action at a recent Kenya Open International at Nairobi Polo club. [PHOTOS: MARTIN MUKANGU /STANDARD]

"Since the minute they (polo players) arrived at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and were welcomed in style by Kenyans,

they have been enjoying every second of their stay in Nairobi. The local people have been extremely kind and helpful to all of

us. "One of the activities I am doing now in Argentina is to go to different institutions to give talks about the opportunities that Kenya and the region have and the similarities of the markets. On September 14, I was invited, with two other persons, by the Standard Bank Foundation in Buenos Aires to share with about 120 entrepreneurs my experience in East Africa, particularly the opportunities in the market and cultural aspects when negotiating with Africans," said Casal.

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{JUSTO CASAL,
TRAINED JOURNALIST}

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

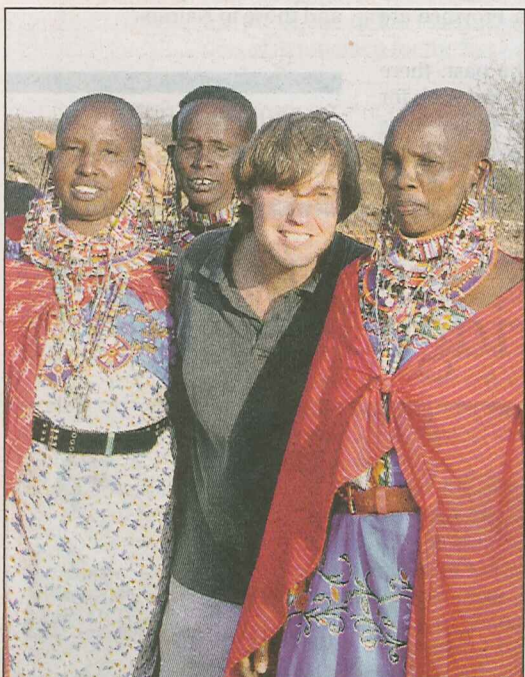
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In November the Argentina Embassy will organise a closed wine tasting of Argentina wines and wine-related products to show the confidence in the market.

Casal will be involved in it bringing best products for distributors and possible partners to represent these products.



Journalist with a passion for human rights



Justo Casal has different projects with the Masai people as well as the Pokot of Barpello. [PHOTOS: COURTESY]

By STANDARD REPORTER

Justo Casal, 33, lived in Kenya from 2000 to 2005 due to his father's career. He graduated from USIU in 2003 with a degree in Journalism and a minor in International Relations.

He had the opportunity to work for different UN agencies such as UNESCO, UNEP and UN Habitat.

However, his passion and vocation is the refugee work he did for UNHCR that took him to the refugee camps in Dadaab and Kakuma, where he was exposed to all kinds of human suffering and needs for protection.

He has different projects in Lenkiseem, near Amboseli, with the Maasai people as well as the Pokot of Barpello.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Casal has worked as a freelance photojournalist for the Standard Newspaper covering an array of events in the country.

He left his marks in the local media while working for *Pulse Magazine*.

"Visiting upcoming artists and celebrities such as Kalamashaka in Dandora or the studio where prominent singers such as Jua Cali and Nonini record their hits has given me an exposure of the difficulties talented people have to pass through to succeed and how much you have to struggle in order to lead a descent life."

"I have learnt from 'wananchi' the importance of respect and the strength you need not to lose faith in what you have always dreamt doing. Sometimes, it may take longer than you expect, but I learnt that you never give up in this race called life."

"Since I left Kenya to the UK for my masters in Human Rights in 2005, my dream has been always to come back and be involved in different type of works, from humanitarian challenges to business opportunities," he says.

Casal did a educative documentary on female genital mutilation for a Norwegian Production House.

"When I returned to my home country, Argentina in October 2009, I realised how little people knew about Africa as a whole; forget countries like Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania," he said

BIG MARKET

"After living in East Africa for five years and being able to know most of the countries, I saw the potential in the region for Argentine products in the food and beverage industries as well as in the agribusiness sector.

"Since January this year, I have come three times with Argentine entrepreneurs, the first two with a leading company in agribusiness specialised in inoculants for legume and in September with United Trade SA, a company which deals with food and beverages. The industry is growing enor-

mously and the conditions to bring products in the EAC region and COMESA region are improving.

Since Argentine products are of very high quality and prices are also very competitive, my goal is to open the East Africa market for those companies interested in expanding their horizons into non traditional markets such as the African one.

Casal has lived in Latin America, Europe and Africa and through his new company STARTUP, is determined to open the East African market for Latin American companies, especially Argentines, to provide the region with products needed at affordable prices for all.

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