

DUBAI POLO

GOLD CUP

"Dubai Open"

SERIES



2024 EDITION

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CONTENTS

SPOTLIGHT

- 06 GOLD LOUNGE
- 10 POLO AROUND THE WORLD
- 12 NAIL YOUR POLO OUTFIT
- 36 SOCIALITES
- 47 SATURDAY POLO PICNIC

FEATURES

- 24 NINA CLARKIN
- 26 BEYOND THE PITCH
- 27 RAJA KARIM
- 28 POLO'S CHARISMATIC TOUCH
- 45 HAMISH MACKIE

34

THE MATCH



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

MOHAMMED AL HABTOOR

VICE CHAIRMAN & CEO, AL HABTOOR GROUP
CHAIRMAN, UAE POLO FEDERATION

Dear Esteemed Readers, Polo Enthusiasts, and Players,

As we proudly raise our mallets and set the stage for the 15th Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series (DPGCS), it is my distinct honor to extend a warm welcome to all participants, enthusiasts, and supporters.

Throughout its history, the DPGCS has come to represent a standard of excellence, a sense of camaraderie, and a relentless pursuit of success in the world of polo. We embark on this season with renewed enthusiasm and a deep appreciation for the sport's rich legacy. The Silver Cup and Gold Cup will unfold with a 20-goal handicap, elevating the level of competition to new heights.

The Dubai Polo Gold Cup have consistently presented top-tier polo events annually. And my gratitude is extended to the Dubai Sports Council, our esteemed patrons, sponsors, regional polo teams, and the vibrant city of Dubai for unwavering support. I am thrilled to embark on yet

another season of excitement alongside our devoted fans, friends, neighbors, and global guests.

As the Chairman of the UAE Polo Federation, our commitment to fostering the growth of polo goes beyond tradition; it's about pioneering a new era for the sport. This year marks an amazing milestone for our organization and for the sport of Polo in the United Arab Emirates as we will proudly host the XIII FIP World Championship in 2026. This momentous achievement is a testament to the collaborative efforts of the polo community and the dedicated work of the federation's board.

To the remarkable teams from across the globe, your skill, dedication, and sportsmanship elevate this competition to extraordinary heights. I extend my heartfelt best wishes to each team, player, and supporter vying for victory in the Silver Cup and the Gold Cup. Here's to a season filled with thrilling matches and triumphant moments. Best of luck!



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Grace Carter



POLO AROUND THE WORLD

CELEBRITY

SPOTTING

Polo attracts many A-listers around the world. Here's a look at some of the stars spotted at the polo...



L to R - Emma Stones, Jeremy Pope, Roze Traore & Lameka Fox

Keke Lingard



Karen Gillan



Nicky Hilton



Simone Ashley



Tilly Keeper



Charithra Chandan



Isabel Getty



Kimberley Garner



Al Roker & Deborah Roberts



Caiya Griffith & Bugzy Malone



Nacho Figueras & Delfina Blaquier

NAIL YOUR

Polo Outfit

Polo has long been associated with the fashion elite. The game attracts everything from stars, sports personalities to style icons. So, it is important to look your ultimate best.

DRESS & ETIQUETTE

ATTIRE

Part of the fun of Polo is the sophisticated yet celebratory dress code. Typically, people opt for separates and sun dresses, or wear chinos or dress pants with a dress shirt. The Polo spirit is bold – dare to add a splash of color. If you're feeling particularly adventurous, a blazer or sport coat is a useful "layer" and very occasionally a guest might want to wear a tie or a panama hat. Brogues, loafers, driving shoes, wedges, or flats are excellent footwear choices, as sharper heels risk sinking into the freshly-mown grass, even on the driest of days. For the signature Polo touch, sunglasses and binoculars are an excellent addition.

DIVOT STOMPING

Divot stomping is a long-standing Polo tradition. Spectators converge on the field to stomp down the turf that has been torn up by the ponies' hooves. It becomes, without fail, a quite festive few minutes.

VIEWING

Binoculars can come in handy at a Polo match. Opinions vary regarding the best way to watch the match, but most prefer to watch the ponies & players as that is where most of the action occurs.

Chanel
square sunglasses



1



1 Carolina Herrera
Floral print satin scala clutch

2



2 Prada
Galleria Saffiano leather mini bag
reversible Gancini Belt

1



1 CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN
Monica du Desert
120 silk-tie wedge sandals

2



2 Jimmy Choo
Embroidered Raffia Sandals



Loro Piana
Suede loafers with embossed logo and TPU outsole



Ferragamo
Reversible Gancini Belt



GOLD CUP 2024

24th FEBRUARY

Hospitality Packages

GOLD LOUNGE

AED5,000/table minimum spend on drinks
including 10 Entry tickets &
4 VIP parking passes



VIP GARDEN

AED1,500/person
1 General admission pass
1 VIP parking pass
Access to Gold Lounge

FABULOUS POLO BRUNCH

AED465/Soft beverages package
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AED695/Bubbly package

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*T&C: Booking deadline: 3 days before the event,
50% advance payment required*

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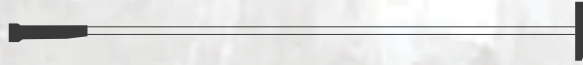
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UAE



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BANGASH POLO TEAM



Bangash Polo team is led by its patron, Haider Bangash, since 2017. Haider has been playing polo for many years in London and has decided to elevate his game after spending more time in Dubai by participating in high-goal tournaments. The team has made a remarkable performance at the Silver Cup 2021 by reaching the semi-finals and won the Bentley Cup at the IFZA Gold Cup final 2021.



Haider Bangash

PATRON
HANDICAP 0



Facundo Kelly

HANDICAP 3



Tomasito F. Llorente

HANDICAP 8



Alfredo Capella

HANDICAP 8



DUBAI WOLVES POLO TEAM

by CAFU

The Al Habtoor's passion for polo continues to drive through to the next generation. The Dubai Wolves Polo Team has been participating in the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series with Habtoor Al Habtoor leading the pack. They are definitely a team that steadily makes its presence known in Polo scene in the UAE.

The Dubai Wolves won the Subsidiary Final at the Dubai Challenge Cup in 2016, Bentley Cup 2018, and Dubai Challenge Cup 2019. In 2023, Dubai Wolves secured the runner-up position in the Subsidiary Final at IFZA Silver Cup and emerged victorious in the Subsidiary Final at the Bentley Cup.



Habtoor Al Habtoor

PATRON
HANDICAP 1



Felix Esain

HANDICAP 6



Benjamin Panelo

HANDICAP 7

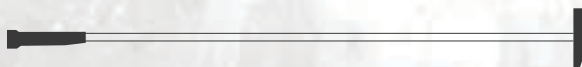


Santiago Laborde

HANDICAP 6



GHANTOOT POLO TEAM



The Ghantoot Polo Team was established in 1995 by the late ruler of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The patron of the team is Sheikh Zayed's son, HH Sheikh Falah bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The team showcases its skills by developing Emirati players alongside accomplished high goal Argentine professionals and has won the 2013 and 2014 Dubai Polo Gold Cup, 2014 and 2015 McLaren Silver Cup. In 2019, Ghantoot Polo clinched the runner-up spot in the Silver Cup. Subsequently, in 2021, the team celebrated a triumph by winning the Gold Cup, and in 2023, they attained the runner-up position in the subsidiary final of the IFZA Gold Cup.



Nasser Al Shamsi

PATRON
HANDICAP 1



Cesar Crespo

HANDICAP 6



Pablo Llorente

HANDICAP 6

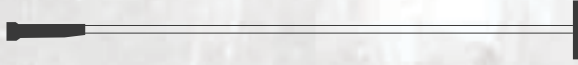


Marcos Araya

HANDICAP 7



HABTOOR POLO TEAM



The Habtoor Polo legacy was established in 2000 by a man with a passion for polo – Mohammed Al Habtoor. Since then, the sport of polo has been driven to new heights with Habtoor Polo by its side. He established the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series which have become one of the highlights of Dubai's Sports Calendar.

The team has participated in numerous polo tournaments and has won its first Dubai Polo Gold Cup title in 2012. They grabbed the Silver Cup title in 2013 and the Hildon Cup in 2014-2016, and in 2023. Habtoor Polo were the runners-up of the Julius Baer Gold Cup 2017 and the Bentley Cup in 2020. The team clinched victory in the IFZA Silver Cup 2021 and successfully defended the trophy in 2022. Most recently, they achieved the runner-up position in the IFZA Gold Cup 2023.



Mohammed Al Habtoor

PATRON
HANDICAP 0



Jose Araya

HANDICAP 5



Bautista Bayugar

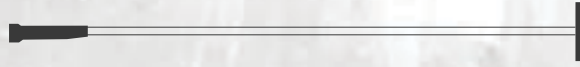
HANDICAP 8



Juan Jaureche

HANDICAP 7

UAE POLO TEAM



Her Highness Sheikha Maitha bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, patron of the UAE team, is the daughter of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and ruler of Dubai. She has a successful career in martial arts, representing the UAE in Taekwondo at the Beijing Olympics, winning a silver medal in karate at the 2006 Asian Games. In a sport typically dominated by men, Sheikha Maitha claimed that “not only women can play polo, but they can play it well.” She started a couple of years ago when she joined Ali Al Bawardi’s Desert Palm Polo Club, and soon after she was taking part in the Queens Cup and Gold Cup with her team. The team won the 2016 Julius Baer Gold Cup and the 2017 McLaren Cup.

The team had progressed in to taking home three of the coveted trophies of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series in 2019 – the Silver Cup, Polo Masters Cup and Julius Baer Gold Cup and continued to keep the coveted trophy of Standard Chartered Gold Cup in 2020. In 2021, the team was the runner up for both the IFZA Silver and Gold Cup tournaments and had championed the Dubai Challenge Cup. In 2022, the team reclaimed the Gold Cup trophy. Subsequently in 2023, they secured victories in both the IFZA Silver Cup and IFZA Gold Cup.



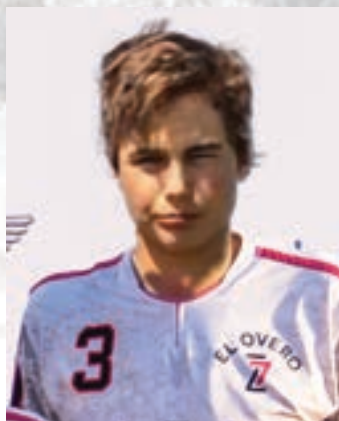
**Her Highness
Sheikha Maitha bint
Mohammed bin
Rashid Al Maktoum**

PATRON
HANDICAP 0



Federico Von Potobsky

HANDICAP 5



Lucas Monteverde Jr.

HANDICAP 7



Tommy Beresford

HANDICAP 8

TOURNAMENT WINNERS

IFZA SILVER CUP - 20 GOAL HANDICAP

RUNNER - UP

AM POLO



MVP

ISIDRO STRADA



BEST PONY

SENSATA



WINNER

UAE POLO



RUNNER - UP DUBAI WOLVES by CAFU



THE UMPIRES



HILDON CUP WINNER

IFZA-HABTOOR POLO

IFZA GOLD CUP - 20 GOAL HANDICAP



WINNER
UAE POLO



RUNNER - UP
HABTOOR POLO



MVP
TOMMY BERESFORD



BEST PONY
NOVA



BENTLEY CUP
DUBAI WOLVES by CAFU



RUNNER - UP GHANTOOT POLO



THE UMPIRES

TOURNAMENT WINNERS

POLO MASTERS CUP - 6-8 GOAL HANDICAP

RUNNER - UP

HABTOOR-AM POLO



MVP

RASHID BIN DRAI



BEST PONY

FREAK



WINNER

BIN DRAI-LAMAR POLO



RUNNER - UP MT LOFTUS-HESKETH POLO



WINNER

DUBAI WOLVES-MAHRA POLO

THE UMPIRES



HAIDER BANGASH

Patron of Bangash Polo Team

the field, not to mention the incident a few years ago when my face was injured during a match.

What do you enjoy most about playing polo, both on and off the field?

I enjoy the team aspect of the game and the fact that it's a small community where people always come together. Whatever happens on the field is left there (mostly), and we can all have a laugh afterward. I always savor a Heineken after a match or practice. Maybe that's why my game is improving only slowly.

Are there any specific rituals or routines you follow before a match?

I am always rushing to be on time because of work and other commitments. I do plan to warmup and stretch before a game but that rarely happens because I arrive last minute. To do that is my goal for 2024.

Are there any particular tournaments or venues that hold special significance for you, and why?

In terms of tournaments, the Gold Cup series at Habtoor is significant every year. We organize and prepare for it throughout the year. Hats off to Mohammed Al Habtoor for supporting the series, promoting polo in the UAE, and his continued strive to improve. Regarding venues, I played at Desert Palm in the Cartier tournament a few times. The setting of the grounds and the club is amazing. It's a shame that the tournament has been scrapped.

How did you first get introduced to polo, and what drew you to the sport?

In 2002, while working at JPMorgan in London, we had a polo day at Ascot Park Polo Club in Surrey. We hit balls, stood on haystacks, and took a leisurely horse ride. After moving to Dubai in 2010, I took lessons with Steve Thompson at Dubai Polo Club to learn riding. I still strive to improve daily. I appreciate polo's team spirit, giving amateurs the chance to play alongside

professionals.

Can you share some memorable moments from your polo career so far?

There have been many good moments over the years—joyful victories in matches and tournaments. Winning our first game in the Gold Cup series after two years of trying was certainly a highlight. Of course, some challenging moments are also memorable, such as losing my temper with a friend on

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NINA CLARKIN

Worlds number one female polo player

“I stay motivated because I truly love this sport and I love that I get to do something that I am passionate about for my career. I never tire of finding that 1% improvement and working on improving myself and my game.”



Can you share a bit about your journey into polo and how it all began for you?

I started playing polo when I was 6 years old in the Pony Club in England. I progressed on to club polo when I was about 14 and I turned professional when I left university at 21.

What motivated you to pursue a career in polo, and who were your early influences in the sport?

I was a little undecided as to whether I should pursue a career in polo as there were not many women who were playing professionally and so I was not sure that it was even an option for me. I remember clearly really thinking it over and finally deciding that it was so intrinsic to my life and such a passion of mine that I had to, at least, give it a go because if I didn't then it may be something that I would regret for the rest of my life. Sunny Hale was definitely a big influence on me and was an example of a woman who had made it and she was someone who I greatly admired. Claire Tomlinson did a lot for women in England and was very inspiring and she personally helped me a lot which I am forever grateful for.

Can you walk us through some of your most significant victories and accomplishments in the polo world?

I am very proud of my achievements in the women's side of the sport, winning the Argentine Women's Open, the British Women's Open and the US Women's Open. However, I am probably most proud of winning the British Gold Cup in 2003 and being the first woman to win it. It is something that I will always remember and

always talk about! Also, winning two national 8 goal tournaments in England with an all female team and making history in the process. Anytime, I represent England (FIP World Cup, FIP European championships, and International's) is always an honour and a very proud moment and something that I will always cherish.

Polo is known for its challenges. What obstacles have you faced in your career, and how have they contributed to your growth as a player?

Polo is a very challenging sport but I would say that the biggest push in my career was when we formed an all female team to play in the mixed 8 goal in England. This was the first time that I had ever helmed a team at this level. Taking the penalties, the knock-ins etc. meant that I had to really change, develop and evolve my game and I credit this with my going to 4 goals.

Can you describe your training regimen and how it has evolved over the years?

I train harder now than I probably did earlier on in my career. The older I get the harder I work as I want to remain as fit as I possibly can and reduce my chance of injury whilst also improving as much as I can. I change up my training schedule depending if I am mid-season, pre-season, and what I feel my body needs but also what I can fit into my day. Juggling this sport and 3 children is a constant challenge and so my routine is never constant, but I like that!

What aspects of your game do you specifically focus on during training?

That changes depending on what I feel I need to focus on at the time.

As one of the highest-ranked female polo players worldwide, what message or advice do you have for aspiring female polo players?

My advice would be to work hard, push yourself, and believe that you can achieve what you want to achieve.

Have you faced any gender-related challenges in the polo community, and how have you navigated them?

I don't really feel that I have. The joy of polo is that if you are the best player on your handicap then you will, most likely, get the job. So I have always worked on trying to be the best player that I can be on my handicap and going from there.



Can you share a bit about your journey into polo and how it all began for you?

I've been riding since age 4, and my introduction to polo happened at Culver Academies, where I attended boarding school. With an outstanding Equestrian program that included polo, I was fortunate to learn under coaches Tom Goodspeed and Amy Wisehart, both exceptional horsemen and polo players.

What motivated you to pursue a career in polo, and who were your early influences in the sport?

Professionally, I work as a Commercial Property Tax mitigation attorney. My involvement in polo is a unique blend of work and hobby. While not a professional polo player, I invest considerable time and effort beyond typical hobby engagement. Annually, I secure sponsorship for my Women's US Open team, taking on responsibilities akin to a part-time job, including budgeting and fiduciary duties to sponsors. This structure allows me to compete at the highest level financially. Tom Goodspeed, my coach, has been a significant influence since high school, emphasizing horsemanship, which remains a priority for me. His mentorship has extended from high school through college and law school, continuing to shape my approach to polo today.

What do you consider to be the highlight of your polo career so far?

The pinnacle of my polo career was winning the U.S. Women's Open on Stella, one of my rescue horses. It showcased the potential of a rescue horse with dedication. In the broader polo context, meeting my husband Louis Devaleix stands out as a highlight. Our shared love for horses and this sport brought us together, and for that, I am forever grateful.

Polo is known for its challenges. What obstacles have you faced in your career, and how have they contributed to your growth as a player?

I have faced the challenge of competing in a sport that requires a lot of capital to be competitive. I always say polo is a small pond full of big fish. There is always someone with more funding and more horses than what you have, but you need to be able to overcome that by working hard and getting creative. I have found ways to incorporate corporate sponsors and I have learned how to organize competitive teams. It is definitely a time commitment, but for me it is what I enjoy and it brings me a lot of fulfillment. Organizing a competitive team, working together with old friends and new, and cultivating talented horses brings me a lot of joy. Winning in the end is just the cherry on top.

How do you stay motivated and continue to push your boundaries in such a demanding sport?

The bar keeps moving in my polo journey. Initially, winning the U.S. Women's Open was my goal, and we achieved it. Then, aiming for back-to-back titles, we succeeded. Currently, my focus has shifted to getting my rescue horse, Sunny, to play in the U.S.

Opportunities arise when you dedicate your time and effort, so be grateful and pay it forward to help others when you can.

Victories and accomplishments

- 2019 Winning the Equine Welfare Award in for the efforts with horse rescue, and rehabilitation.
- 2020 Helping to secure the U.S Women's Open Final on NPC Field #1 (Saturday game)
- 2021 Helping to secure prize money for the U.S. Women's Open final. (\$30,000)
- 2022 Helping to move the U.S. Open Women's Final to the main Sunday game on IPC Field #1
- 2019 U.S Women's Open Championship - 1st place
- 2020 U.S Women's Open Championship - 1st place
- 2021 U.S Women's Open Championship - 2nd place
- 2022 U.S Women's Open Championship - 1st place
- 2023 U.S Women's Open Championship - 1st place

PAMELA FLANAGAN DEVALEIX
Polo Player and Attorney

Women's Open. Despite her injury last year, she'll return to the high-goal field in 2025. Advocating for rescue horses and advancing women's polo drives me, constantly pushing boundaries. My husband, Louis, is a key motivator, always supporting and encouraging me even when I feel uninspired. Initially planning to skip the 2023 U.S Open, Louis convinced me to play one more year, resulting in a win and lasting friendships.

Can you describe your training regimen and how it has evolved over the years?

I have always been a runner, I use to love doing 5ks, 10ks, half marathons and sprint triathlons. Riding and cardio always seemed like a good mix for me. As time goes on I realize running in the long term is not great for your joints, so I have shifted to more walking, stairmaster, and strength training when I'm not in the saddle. At the end of the day, the best thing you can do is ride and practice. Being a strong, stable rider is the best thing you can do for yourself and for your horses. India from Chukka Wellness, has helped me and my team immensely over the years. We use her as our team trainer for tournament season, and her value to the team is undeniable.

What aspects of your game do you specifically focus on during training?

When working with India we work a lot on reaction training. This is something I find difficult to replicate alone in the gym, so we use our time together to practice. I have found it really helps prepare your reaction

time for game days.

As one of the highest-ranked female polo players worldwide, what message or advice do you have for aspiring female polo players?

Creatively pursue your passion, and opportunities will follow. Many young players hope for opportunities, but it's crucial to get involved, work hard, and find creative ways to fund your passion if needed. Make connections, form friendships, offer to groom or intern, learn from others, and be proactive in getting involved, even by being a spare holder for a team. Take chances, be a good person, work hard, and be honest. Opportunities arise when you dedicate your time and effort, so be grateful and pay it forward to help others when you can.

Have you faced any gender-related challenges in the polo community, and how have you navigated them?

Honestly, I haven't faced gender biases on the field. Polo doesn't impose gender boundaries, allowing men and women to play together. If girls choose to play alongside boys, they understand the physicality involved. Gender-related issues surface off the field, especially in promoting women's polo. While 99% are supportive, there's a persistent 1% resistant to change, preferring polo to remain a "good old boys club." It can be frustrating, but I choose to ignore it and forge ahead.



Tommy
Polo Manager



Grant
Landscape Manager



Cristina
General Manager

Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series is the fourth largest tournament of its kind after Argentina, the US and the UK. Founded by Mohammed Al Habtoor in 2009, the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series has grown from strength to strength. Today, it is ranked among the best polo tournaments in the world with two tournaments being played at an 20-goal handicap which is also the highest handicapped tournament in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

As we explore DPGCS, the focus extends beyond the thrilling on-field matches. It encompasses the visionary intellect and unwavering commitment of individuals who have elevated this tournament to extraordinary levels. Join us on a journey as we reveal the driving forces behind the success of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series. Step into the world where visionary minds and dedicated individuals converge to shape the legacy of the Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series, transcending the realms of sport and embodying the spirit of triumph that has evolved and strengthened over the years.



Santiago
Tournament Director



Leny
Office/Event Administrator



Uly
Graphic Designer



Adam
Polo Commentator



Suleiman
Landscape Supervisor



Emi
Social Media



Jude
Technical Coordinator

BEYOND the PITCH



Landscape Team

**Unveiling the People
behind the Success of
Dubai Polo Gold Cup Series**

The journey to success in polo is multifaceted, challenging even the stoutest of hearts. Yet, within the arena of discipline and professionalism, lies the key to unlocking opportunities. Embrace these virtues, and you'll find that, in the world of polo, there's always a chance for those who persist with unwavering commitment and a professional mindset.

How did you first get involved in polo, and what drew you to the sport?

My father's deep passion for horse racing forged an early connection with these magnificent animals. One day, I casually wandered into the local polo club in Yorkshire, and from that moment, my fate was sealed. The rest, as they say, is history. Since then, I've been immersed in the world of polo, cherishing every aspect of the sport. The thrill of both playing in and spectating the grand games has become an integral and exhilarating part of my life.

What challenges have you faced in your polo career, and how have you overcome them?

The endeavor of establishing a high-goal polo organization comes with its unique set of challenges, particularly when pitted against institutions with decades-long legacies, others endowed with limitless budgets, and some fortunate enough to possess both. Despite these formidable odds, I hold a steadfast belief that, in time, my organization will stand among the best globally. Every strategic move and decision made in the upcoming years is not merely a challenge but an invaluable learning process, steering us toward the realization of this ambitious goal.

Are there specific polo players consider as inspirations?

Its a difficult question, its hard to pinpoint one player, but I do like Facundo Liorente tenacity, the way Polito carries the ball in attack, Bayugar under the neck shot, Ale Muzzio ability to turn on a six pence and find a pass or goal shot, Isidro power especially when he has his back towards the goal, Hillario Ulloa unorthodox riding style, Capella long range missile, Cacu Araya ability to travel with the ball end to end with those ponies twice his size, I love when Lukine Monteverde places the ball behind a defending players pony and then has this ability to turn either side and get away with his Ferrari like ponies, Sapo Cassette ability to leave booby traps on the pitch, I like Felix Essain ability to play simple, clean and open polo, TFL scrappiness and

combat nature especially when making those forward runs and he normally ends up scoring, Jeta's ability to score from anywhere and everywhere, T Beresford defence and his 5B shots, Mackenzie Weiz movement on the pitch without the ball and Adolfo Cambiaso mindset to win at all cost.

How does polo impact your lifestyle off the field, and how do you find balance between the sport and personal life?

Polo's impact extends far beyond the field, permeating every facet of my life with a continual pursuit of improvement. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is paramount, and my approach mirrors a caveman diet, emphasizing clean and natural food choices. The integration of our brand, O.R.S Hydration Tablets (where 2 tablets equal 5 glasses of water), ensures consistent hydration, a crucial element for both polo performance and daily life. Mornings kick off with a ride after indulging in Weetabix with honey, setting the stage for focused work. Our AI search engine, healthwords.ai, demands attention by 0800 London time, marking a dedicated zone for professional endeavors. In the intricate dance between polo and personal life, I adhere to the OMAD+B eating pattern, symbolizing One Meal a Day plus breakfast. This intentional balance allows me to sustain the high energy demands of polo while navigating the demands of a fulfilling personal and professional life.

What advice would you give to aspiring polo players, especially those looking to pursue a professional career?

For those aspiring to carve a path in the dynamic realm of polo, my advice echoes a resounding theme: Discipline. Discipline. Discipline. This sport demands unwavering dedication and resilience. The journey to success in polo is multifaceted, challenging even the stoutest of hearts. Yet, within the arena of discipline and professionalism, lies the key to unlocking opportunities. Embrace these virtues, and you'll find that, in the world of polo, there's always a chance for those who persist with unwavering commitment and a professional mindset.



RAJA KARIM

Patron of Clinova Noa Capital Polo Team

POLO'S CHARISMATIC TOUCH: UNRAVELING ITS GLAMOROUS IMPACT ON POP CULTURE

by Emilyn Tarriela

Polo is more than just a sport for the elite; it's a symbol of sophistication and luxury that has left its mark in movies, TV shows, and literature. In this article, we'll explore how polo has become a reference point in popular culture, influencing and captivating audiences in various ways. Let's take a closer look at some examples that showcase polo's widespread appeal.

MOVIES

Pretty Woman (1990)

In the iconic scene featuring Julia Roberts' character, Vivian, attending a polo match with Richard Gere's character, Edward, the film highlights the glamorous and sophisticated aura linked to polo. Additionally, the scene depicts the traditional practice of divot stomping, where spectators join in stomping on the grass during the halftime break.



Who's Your Caddy (2007)

The narrative of this comedy movie centers around an enterprising hip-hop musician endeavoring to navigate the exclusive corridors of Carolina Pines Country Club with the aim of seeking membership. However, his journey is hindered by societal biases that impede his acceptance. The protagonist aspires to attain the glamorous lifestyle associated with club membership.



TV SHOWS

Gossip Girl (2007–2012)

This teen drama regularly weaves polo matches into its narrative, depicting them as upscale affairs attended by the show's affluent and glamorous characters. In Season 3, the characters find themselves navigating the high-stakes social scene revolving around the iconic Vanderbilt charity polo match.



The Crown (2016-present)

Polo matches are part of the recreation enjoyed by the royal family, and they are depicted in several episodes of The Crown. Josh O'Connor's meticulous recreation of Prince Charles's iconic 1983 Australia polo match in the show's fourth season, highlights the evolving perception of the sport and the monarchy.



Monte Carlo (2011)

Monte Carlo is a film that follows three friends pretending to be affluent socialites in Monaco. Starring Selena Gomez as a high school student mistaken for the spoiled British heiress, her character infiltrates the elevated world of the European elite—a realm adorned with polo matches, charity auctions, and charming French companions.

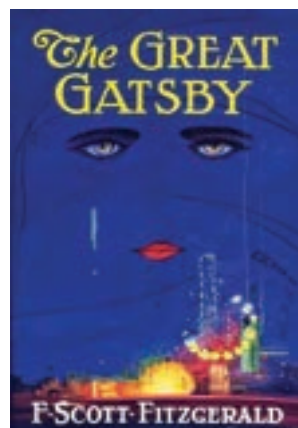


LITERATURE

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925)

The classic novel features Gatsby throwing extravagant weekly parties attended by celebrities, politicians, polo players, and other socialites.

His estate also hosts polo matches, emphasizing the opulence of the Jazz Age. One of the characters, Tom Buchanan, hails from a wealthy family and referred as a polo player. He even purchases polo ponies from Lake Forest, evoking the narrator's awe, as the remark emphasizes his ability to afford such purchases in his generation.



Polo by Jilly Cooper (1985)

Published in 1985, "Polo" is the third book in Cooper's beloved Rutshire Chronicles. It's a sizzling summer tale set against the backdrop of England's top polo season, where wealthy players compete on lush fields while secrets smolder and desires ignite. Beyond the thrill of the game, scandals whisper in grand houses, and forbidden passions lurk behind elegant facades.



Photo sources/references: 1. Pretty woman:<https://graziamagazine.com> 2. Who's your caddy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlg2ln3fU8> 3. Gossip Girl: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrAdCKyYuaM&list=PLELubx5Yw7Dq1xZ7MZeTAcEgTuk8qjx&index=16> <https://www.zanzibaroccean.top/ProductDetail.aspx?iid=170798438&pr=30.88> 4. The Crown: Netlix 5. The Great Gatsby: <https://i0.wp.com/americanwritersmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CK-3.jpg?resize=267%2C400&ssl=1> 6. Monte Carlo <https://fi.pinterest.com/pin/movies--1759287345645339/> 7. Polo by Jill Cooper:<https://www.amazon.com.au/Polo-Jilly-Cooper/dp/0552156167>

While “man’s best friend” often refers to our canine companions, equestrians would argue that horses offer a profounder bond – one that crosses into the arena of therapy. Enter Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) and Polo Therapy, unique modalities that harness the connection between humans and horses to support individuals navigating physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges, regardless of ability.

Equine therapy, sometimes known as “horse therapy,” is a method of treatment in which patients engage with horses for therapeutic reasons. It is frequently used to assist people with physical, emotional, or cognitive challenges, as well as those with mental health difficulties like anxiety, depression, and trauma. Equine therapy can take numerous forms, including riding, grooming, and caring for horses, as well as simply spending time with them. – *Dr. John Crimmins*

BRIEF HISTORY

Equine therapy has a long history, going back to ancient Greek times when horses were used for therapeutic riding. In 600 B.C., Orbasis of ancient Lydia documented the therapeutic value of riding. In 1946, Equine Therapy was introduced in Scandinavia after a polio outbreak. Therapeutic Riding reached the United States and Canada in 1960 through the Community Association of Riding of the Disabled (CARD). In the U.S., riding for people with disabilities developed for recreation, education motivation, and therapeutic benefits.

BENEFITS OF POLO AND EQUINE THERAPY

1. Mental Stimulation

Horseback riding keeps your mind sharp and engaged, offering a unique form of mental exercise. The rhythmic movement of the horse and the focus required for riding can be incredibly calming and therapeutic, promoting mental well-being.



2. Emotional Empowerment

Building a connection with and controlling an animal as powerful as a horse can significantly boost your confidence and self-esteem. Mastering the skills of riding and polo provides a rewarding sense of achievement and personal growth.



MORE THAN MUSCLES, MORE THAN GOALS: POLO AND EQUINE THERAPY’S HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WELLBEING

by Emilyn Tarruela

3. Physical Fitness

Both horseback riding and polo enhance your balance, coordination, and motor skills, leading to improved overall physicality. Polo is a fantastic full-body workout that strengthens muscles, improves cardiovascular health, and increases endurance.



4. Stress Tolerance

Equine-assisted therapy requires calmness and focus, promoting mindfulness and reducing stress levels. Building a bond with horses can provide emotional support and alleviate anxiety and depression.



5. Enhanced Communication

Working with horses demands clear and effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Polo therapy capitalizes on this, helping individuals refine their communication skills for better understanding and expression, both with horses and in their wider lives.

Hoofin’ Fun Fact!

In 1998, HH Sheikha Hassa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum donated three horses to be used for therapeutic riding to then Riding for Disabled Dubai, now Equestrian Association for People of Determination (EAPD).

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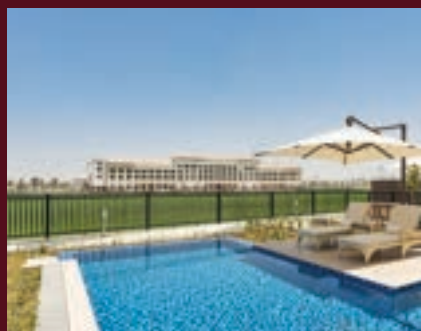
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Tommy Beresford & Segundo Amadori



AM Polo Team vs Bangash Polo Team



AM Polo Team vs Dubai Wolves Polo Team



Clinova Noa Capital Polo Team vs Ghantoot Polo Team

THE MATCH

Here are some of the highlights of last year's action-packed event...



Felix Esain



Jacinto Crotto &
Tomas Iriarte



Bangash Polo vs AM Polo



Habtoor Polo Team vs Bangash Polo Team



Mohammed Al Habtoor & Lucas Monteverde jr.



Clinova Noa Capital Polo Team vs
Dubai Wolves Polo Team





Socialites

Polo attracts the fashion conscious. Here are some of the trend-setters from last year...



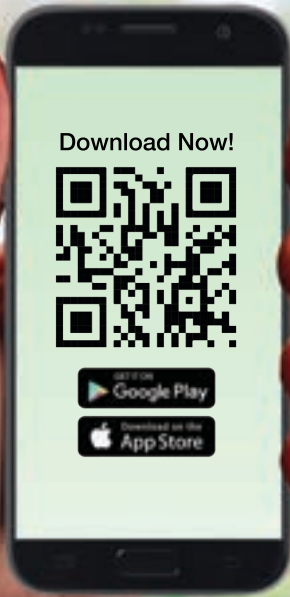








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Kenna Al Sayed

Master of Colored Pencil and the minimal loose sketches in Mixed Media

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you became interested in equestrian art?

My interest in equestrian art came from my love of horses. Ever since I can remember I've been enthralled with all things horses, and drawing them became a way to pay tribute to them and share my perspective of their beauty and grace. I am happiest when I am either in my studio creating or around horses.

What sparked your passion for both art and equestrianism?

When I was young I couldn't own a horse and there were none near me to even visit; so I began dreaming of all the horses I would love to own and drawing them was a way to envision that fantasy. Once I was able to start taking lessons and eventually own my first horse, I absolutely devoured any and all information and lessons I could. Becoming proficient in riding and being able to correctly communicate with my horse are goals I am still chasing. Art and riding have a similarity which is the longer you practice it the better you become.

Could you walk us through your typical artistic process when creating equestrian artwork?

If I am creating a realistic artwork I will first spend time deciding which medium would best represent the horse (be it graphite, watercolor, colored pencil, etc). If it is a commission I go off of what the client wants, but if it's a piece I'm creating; I try to first envision what my goal with the artwork is. What am I trying to emphasize, what do I want the viewer to experience when they see the artwork. When creating an expressive mixed media work I rarely use a reference, instead I tend to work more intuitively. These pieces are meant to capture the energy of the horse's movement. Even if I draw a horse that is standing still, I utilize my lines to create a sense of movement or the potential for movement from the points of the horse that are catalysts of motion. My line work is always the emphasis and my watercolor washes and layer work are meant to help round out the piece so it is not to stark or harsh, that there is feeling completeness

amongst usually sparse details.

Do you have a preferred medium for your equestrian art, and if so, why?

The foundation for all of my art are drawing mediums (graphite, colored pencil, ink, or charcoal), since those are what I am most comfortable with, I will build any artwork based off of those mediums. I think better in terms of drawing vs. painting; but now feel more confident in my ability and knowledge to be able to use watercolor and other painting mediums. Fluidity of movement or the ability to capture details (for realistic works) means you as an artist have to be confident with your mediums you work in, you can tell if an artist has hesitation in their lines and if they do not fully communicate that the artwork is an extension of them.

How do you approach capturing the essence and movement of horses in your artwork?

I think that the equine form is the literal embodiment of art in motion, they have a mesmerizing fluidity to them; capturing not only the movement but the potential of movement is what drives my expressive sketch artworks. If it's a horse in extreme motion, I will emphasize the legs of that horse

not in a literal sense but establishing not only the occurring movement but the follow through as well (a theme that is noticeable in my works are lines that continue past the anatomy of the horse). It's the potential motion I like to highlight, even in works where I portray a horse standing; the piece still will have motion to it with my line work either within the horse's frame or as the defining outlines. Or in a more subdued work where the horse is partially masked in washes of watercolor, I will highlight the enough to convey that a horse is there without having to reveal too many details. I've often had people comment how I create a lot of horses with only three or less legs, to which I respond that's all I need to get the point across.

What inspires you to create equestrian art? Are there specific themes or moments that particularly captivate you?

Truthfully, just being around a horse inspires me. Especially if I am fortunate to see breeds or riding styles I am not familiar with- that will absolutely light my creative fire. I also think that I find a challenge in portraying horses so that their power and elegance show with equal attentiveness. I also will cycle through certain breeds or riding disciplines based on if I have events I'm showing my artwork at. I know I also have a habit of defaulting to certain breeds, and that comes with growing up around them.

Are there any artists or styles that influence your equestrian artwork?

I think most people are surprised when I tell them that Salvador Dali is my favorite artist. For me he was one of the most well-rounded artists when it came to technique and also his unparalleled ability to summon narratives from the subconscious continues to enthrall me to this day. I also have a love for the hyper realistic equine works of Richard McLean and his ability to capture the behind the scenes life of horse shows. Other artists that I'm drawn to include: Jean Léon Gérôme, George Stubbs, Rosa Bonheur, Jean Michelle Basquiat, and George Ford Morris to name a few.



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il Pastaio's journey began in the glamorous streets of Beverly Hills, California, when the visionary Sicilian Drago brothers - Giacomino, Celestino, and Calogero - embarked on a mission to share their passion for authentic Italian cuisine. With their flagship restaurant attracting the A-list crowd, il Pastaio soon became synonymous with luxury dining and unparalleled flavors. Now, after three decades of culinary excellence, il Pastaio Dubai continues to uphold its heritage and honor its Sicilian origins. The legacy of quality ingredients, traditional recipes, and impeccable service lives on, as we invite you to be part of our storied history and experience the true taste of Italy in the heart of Dubai.

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Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you became interested in equestrian art?

I am British sculptor working in bronze and silver, occasionally gold. I grew up on a livestock farm in Cornwall. I have been surrounded by animals from an early age. I've always had a passion for wildlife and the outdoors - wild places. Often when sculpting, it's bit like putting together a jigsaw, gathering snippets of information. Its quite hard to get close enough to wild lion to measure it. But when sculpting horses I work from life usually in a stable which allows me the advantage of being able to take measurements and get close enough to all the anatomic details, a bit like working from a life model I can study them in the round.

What sparked your passion for both art and equestrianism?

I have been very lucky to make a living out of my passion. We had an ex-race horse on the farm and a pony who was fairly unridable. One of my first proper experiences of riding was taking 400 Hereford cattle up to the summer pasture in the Rockies mountains in Colorado. I think the cowboys though my style of riding very amusing, especially when riding down 45 degree slopes! I loved it! I find horses relatively easy to read and get inside their heads as to whom they are.

Do you have a personal connection to the equestrian world, such as owning horses or participating in equestrian activities?

I live in Oxfordshire which has a strong number of racehorse stables.

How has your experience with horses influenced your artistic perspective?

Sculpting horses has been one the best source of learning about animal anatomy. Being able to get close to a fit horse really gives me an understand as to how and why they are put together like they are. A lot of this knowledge can then be taken through to other animals such as leopard which are harder to get as close to!

Do you have a favorite equestrian artwork that you've created, and if so, what makes it special to you?

Last year I sculpted from life an Arab stallion called Tuwaisan Tha'atha'a. This horse was a gift to HM Queen Elizabeth II by HM King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, from the Royal stud of Bahrain. Since 1783, this line of horses has passed from father to son preserving the purity of the breed. I sculpted him as I saw him proud and majestic.

Can you share the story or inspiration behind one of your favorite equestrian pieces?

I sculpted six life and quarter size horses for the Goodmans Fields development in London. The idea was Mr Goodman who owned a livery in the late 19th century would have had various working horses. The idea was they had escaped form their stables and now running loose through the urban landscape. I sculpted a Thoroughbred, Shire, Arab, Andalusian, Warmblood and an Irish cob! It was an amazing commission incorporating fountains mimicking horse feet hitting the water at full speed. It later went on the win the Public Monuments and Sculpture Award in 2015 which I was very proud of.

HAMISH MACKIE



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POLO MASTERS CUP

6th April



DUBAI CUP 2024

6-8 GOAL HANDICAP
20TH APRIL



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