

HISTORY OF POLO

"Polo, one of the oldest equestrian sports in the world – also referred to as “The Game of Kings” – is full of thrills, teamwork, technique and true sportsmanship. The game is played at intense high speed, requiring peak athletic conditioning of both horse and rider. Today, the level of play and the amount of polo being played is the highest in the game’s history, generating rapid global expansion in participation and spectatorship."

600 B.C

First recorded history of polo in China and Persia

1800-1859

British officers stationed in India set up the first polo club of modern times, the Silchar Polo Club.

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. **1862**

Oldest existing polo club in the world is founded, the Calcutta Polo Club.

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. **1876**

James Gordon Bennett, Jr., wealthy New York Herald newspaper publisher, brings polo to New York from England and helps establish the Westchester Polo Club, the first polo club in America.

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. **1886**

Great Britain beats the U.S. team in the first Westchester Cup match at Newport, Rhode Island.

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. **1888**

A system of player handicaps is introduced by the USA.

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. **1890**

The United States Polo Association (USPA) is created.

. **1895**

The height limit for polo ponies is raised from 14.0 hands to 14.2 hands. (A hand is the equestrian term for a horse's height and equals 4 inches.)

. **1900-1939**

Polo is played in the Olympics (1900, 1908, 1920, 1924, 1936).

. **1904**

In New York City, the USA team defeats the British team at the first U.S. Open Polo Championship.

. 1910

Polo Player handicaps are introduced in England and India.

. 1915

The Indoor Polo Association is formed for arena polo and later becomes part of the U.S. Polo Association. The polo ball used for arena polo is not less than 12.5 inches and not more than 15 inches in circumference.

. 1919

Height restriction on polo "ponies" is abolished.

. 1930s

Crowds in excess of 30,000 regularly attend matches at the Meadowbrook Polo Club on Long Island in New York.

. 1940s

The 40s see a resurgence in polo, especially in Texas, where cowboys have taken readily to the sport.

. 1973

Elizabeth Daily, Sue Sally Hale, Virginia Merchant and Jorie Butler Richardson are among the first women assigned USPA handicaps.

. 1975

Ami Shinitzky publishes the precursor to today's Polo Player's Edition magazine, official publication of the USPA.

. 1981

The licensing program for the United States Polo Association is formed to manage its trademarks and promote the sport of polo.

. **1982**

The Federation of International Polo (FIP) is created to promote the return of polo to the Olympics.

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. **1989**

The USA polo team wins the FIP World Cup in Berlin. The team: Julio Arellano, John Wigdahl, Horton Schwartz, Charlie Bostwick.

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. **1990**

The U.S. Polo Association celebrates its 100th birthday.

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. **1994**

Certified professional umpires are developed to deal with the increase in professional players.

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. **1997**

The Polo Museum and Hall of Fame opens its doors in Lake Worth, Florida.

2000-2004

The International Polo Club at Palm Beach opens, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Open Polo Championship.

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. **2008**

The USPA officially challenges the Hurlingham Polo Association of England to the Westchester Cup, making the historic duel the first time it is played in America for 70 years.

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. **2009**

After a hiatus of 13 years, England defeats the USA in the international Westchester Cup, winning by one goal and taking the historic trophy home once again.

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. 2010

The official Team USPA training and mentoring program kicks off with auditions in Florida for young American men and women polo players.

. 2014

The USPA introduces the addition of women's handicaps for female members to enhance the level of women's polo competition by converting standard handicaps.

. 2015

The 125th anniversary of the USPA is commemorated with nationally-televised and live streamed major tournaments throughout the United States, a national competition for creation of the 125th logo and USPA heritage inspired product around the world recognizing the milestone.

. 2016

The USPA in conjunction with the Argentine Polo Association, Hurlingham Polo Association and Federation of International Polo creates a set of International Rules, specifically for high-goal polo.