

Robert A. Uihlein, Jr.

# MEMORIAL FINALS

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Sarasota  
Polo Club 6

Learn to  
Play Polo 8

Gear of  
the Game 12



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## Contents

The Lakewood Ranch Herald is pleased to join Schroeder-Manatee Lakewood Ranch as the newspaper media sponsor for the Robert A. Uihlein Jr., Memorial Finals event on March 28, 2010 at the Sarasota Polo Club.

Inside these pages, you will find explanations of polo terminology, history of the Sarasota Polo Club and a look at the fun surrounding a polo occasion.

We are proud to share this publication as a valuable information resource and a treasured memento of this spectacular sporting event.

We welcome polo players and attendees from around the globe to enjoy one of the world's finest — The Sarasota Polo Club at Lakewood Ranch. While visiting, we hope you will take the time to enjoy our fine community outside the polo field, from our notable dining establishments to our beautiful world class white-sand beaches. Enjoy this publication and I look forward to seeing you at the Polo club.

Regards,  
Robert Turner  
President and Publisher  
Lakewood Ranch Herald

Sarasota Polo Club	6
Robert A. Uihlein, Jr. Memorial Cup	7
Learn to Play Polo	8
History of Polo	10
Gear of the Game	13
Polo Lingo . . . know the talk	14

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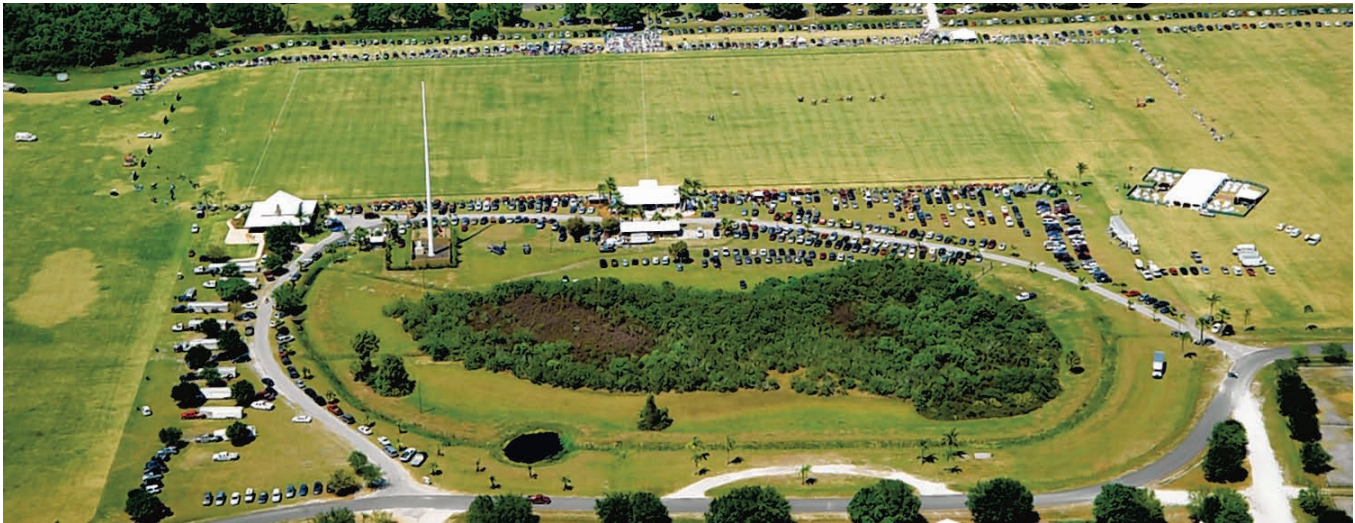


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## Sarasota Polo Club

Sarasota Polo hosts players from around the world on the finest fields, bar none.

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It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to Sarasota Polo's 19th season. Polo captures the imagination, and we are sure it will capture yours too. It is a game of speed, finesse and great courage for both horse and rider. Up close, it is a game of physical contact and incredible stamina. Above all, harmony between horse and rider is the foundation of the oldest organized sport in the world.

The Sarasota Polo Club, established in 1991, is located in the award winning master-planned community of Lakewood Ranch, Florida. With 130 acres of perfectly manicured Bermuda grass, paired with a unique underground irrigation system, the Sarasota Polo Club has nine of the best polo fields in the world.

Polo tournaments and leagues are played throughout the winter months. The public is invited to come out every Sunday afternoon during season to tailgate and watch the matches. The sidelines are filled with families, friends and fans. Throughout the year, the Sarasota Polo Clubhouse and open-air Pavilion are also available to rent for any occasion.

Everyone is invited to come out and watch the fun. Bring your picnic lunches and tailgate next to the action on the best polo fields in the country.

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## Robert A. Uihlein, Jr. Memorial Cup

This memorial cup is intended to further the tradition of good sportsmanship that Uihlein, a premiere polo player, embodied. The 14-goal final will be played on March 28.

Uihlein was part of the Milwaukee, Wisc. brewing family that took control of the Schroeder-Manatee Ranch in the 1920s. A hunter of big game and patron of the arts, Uihlein established the city of Milwaukee as a summer capital of high-goal polo in the U.S.

As an athlete, Uihlein won the National Open in 1951, 1961 and 1972. As an active community member, he served on the board of governors for the USPA from 1949 to 1974. When he died in 1976, Uihlein was the chairman and chief executive officer of the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company in Milwaukee.

In 2001, he was inducted into the Polo Hall of Fame.

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## Learn to play polo

by scott lancaster | photography by eric nalpas

Imagine being mounted on a Thoroughbred race horse, fully trained to play polo. Imagine charging down an open field towards your goal as your opponent follows you in hot pursuit – riding neck and neck – trying to ride you off the ball as you swing your mallet and take a shot on goal...the shot that makes the winning goal and takes your team to victory.

Ok so maybe that's not exactly where your first lesson takes you. But if you are looking for a new passion and seeking a rush of adrenaline, polo may be the sport for you. And no matter what your level of horsemanship or game knowledge, in a very short time you can be playing arena polo with other aspiring polo players, club pros and amateur veterans. Be forewarned, the fast-paced sport of polo has a built-in thrill – an almost addictive quality – that will change your life, as it has for so many, in an amazing way.

The Sarasota Polo Club Polo School and Arena Program is fully equipped to supply horses—and every level of schooling—to get just about anyone up on a horse with mallet in hand. From the very first lesson, after a briefing on rules, safety and strategy of the game,

The Sarasota Polo Club Polo School and Arena Program is fully equipped to supply horses — and every level of schooling — to get just about anyone up on a horse with mallet in hand.

you will mount up and play in a controlled walk/trot scrimmage with other novices like yourself. Your experienced polo pony will guide you and help you get where you need to go, in spite of your greenhorn polo player status.

The instructor will set the initial pace of the game and help keep opponents equally matched. Often an experienced rider will need to slow his pace to ensure the rules of play are followed and guarantee a greater success at hitting the ball. The beginning rider may initially be consumed with the mere task of riding the horse, but soon the thrill of hitting the ball and making the next play will become the dominant thought process. It is different for everyone, but the equine part of the team knows what to do. The sooner the horse is

allowed to do his thing, the sooner the rider can expand his comfort zone and soon will be playing polo. The scrimmages start slow, as safety and flow of the game are important; but before you know it, the pace picks up, the game is on, and you are in it.

For years, the arena polo program at the Sarasota Polo Club has provided opportunities for young and old, from an 8-year-old girl to a 70-year-old grandmother, and everyone in between. In fact, polo can easily become a family affair. Take, for example, the Becks, a family that hails from Tallahassee but makes Sarasota their winter home. The family was initially involved with hunter-jumpers, but son Daniel sought something more. He began taking lessons from Sarasota polo pro Stuart Campbell, and it wasn't long after that the Sarasota Polo Club started a polo school. Mom Kelly and four of the children began having their own lesson scrimmages in the arena... and the addiction was on. As the Beck family's polo interests evolved, they purchased several polo ponies, a truck and trailer, and several acres in the Sarasota Polo Club ranches. They plan to open their new barn for the 2010



season, which is considered to be amongst the finest on the grounds.

On the field, the Beck family has already had success in Sarasota. They still play arena polo but have also crossed over to the grass, where Daniel was on the winning 2008 USPA Presidents Cup team. Mom Kelly enjoyed great success in the 2009 pro pool, and a narrow loss in the finals of the very competitive Ringling Cup, after defeating the tournament favorite to get there. John Luke, a 12-year-old, played his first arena tournament and sent his team to the finals after scoring the winning goal in a shoot out, holding his own against players many years his senior. It was inevitable that dad Mike would finally take up the game, and for youngest daughter Julianne, it's just a matter of time before she makes her debut, as she is spending much time in the saddle.

The Becks may have led the charge into family involvement in the arena program, but they were soon followed by Mike Ferro, whose son Austin dabbled in the arena before becoming fully immersed and joining his dad's Mustang Ranch team. Raymond Guest moved his outdoor string to the arena; he can play with his daughter Kelsea, and since the demand on the horses is not as great, horses that once just worked for Guest are now enough for the two of them. Polo pro Stuart Campbell's wife Victoria has become a fixture on the arena scene,

as have the Alexanders – Barb plays arena exclusively, and George joins in when he can.

Polo is a sport that can require a lot of resources: those who have these resources can control their own destinies. For many others, the Sarasota arena program has offered an opportunity to play polo, many times without even owning a horse.

Raphael Alland saw polo at a young age and has passionately pursued it ever since. Alland gets some financial help from his family, but also works on the set-up crew at the club and exercises horses for members, in order to make his dream of playing polo come true. Alland, and many of the arena players, have had the great opportunity to play with club pros like Juan Martinez Baez, Stuart Campbell, Jamie Mirikitani and countless others. Before turning 16, Alland got the chance to cross over to the grass at the Sarasota Polo Club, playing in the 2008 Sportsmanship Cup. He scored a difference-making goal in the first match and multiple goals in the next match, but none more important than the game winner, sending his team to the finals where they finished a close second. Alland has experienced all of this without owning a pony.

Arena polo clubs and schools have surfaced around the country and have helped to develop players. Many get their start in some sort of arena program: the United States Polo

Association figures approximately 30 percent of its membership started in the interscholastic or high school program and the college programs. Arena programs also continue to keep polo affordable.

The arena playing area is much smaller and does not require the expensive and time-intensive maintenance of a grass field. The horses are often not the caliber of ponies you see in the outdoor game, or are past their primes: some participants have a backyard pony or two, or an older polo pony, and some don't even have their own pony and yet play twice weekly.

Arena polo is a fast-paced game that anyone who loves horses or sports can fall in love with. You've worn the shirt, now it's time to play the game. The arena polo program puts it within reach for you.

### Learn to Play Polo:

Lessons are available during season. Lessons can be scheduled any day of the week and times are very flexible. Lessons cost \$85 or first time students can purchase a package of 10 for \$750.

The school provides horses and all of the equipment for the horses as well as helmet and mallet for the students.

To learn more or to schedule your first lesson contact:

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## History of Polo

### Possibly the oldest team sport, polo's genesis is lost to the eye of history.

An Asiatic game, polo was probably first played on a barren camp ground by nomadic warriors over two thousand years ago.

Valuable for training Calvary, the game was played from Constantinople to Japan by the middle ages. Known in the East as the Game of Kings, Tamer Lane's polo grounds can still be seen in Samarkand.

British tea planters in India witnessed the game in the early 1800's but it was not until the 1850's that the British Calvary drew up the earliest rules and by the 1869's the game was well established in England.

James Gordon Bennett, a noted American publisher; balloonist, and adventurer, was captivated by the sport and brought it to New York in 1876 where it caught on immediately. Within ten years, there were major clubs all over the east, including Newport and Long Island.

Over the next 50 years polo achieved extraordinary popularity in the United States. By the 1930's polo was in the midst of a Golden Age — it was an Olympic sport and crowds in excess of 30,000 regularly attended international matches at Meadow Brook Polo Club on Long Island. The galloping game produced athletes who would doubtless have achieved greatness in any sport: Cecil Smith, the Texas cowboy, who held a perfect 10-goal rating for a still-record 25 years; Devereux Melbourne, instrumental in formulating modern styles of play; and Tommy Hitchcock, war hero, and the best of the best in international competition for two decades.

In the past 20 years, polo in the United States has undergone an unprecedented and remarkable expansion. At present, there are more 300 USPA® member clubs with over 4,500 active players and 91 High School and College teams.

Polo is an international sport. During the summer season at Hurlingham, England, the fall season at Palermo in Buenos Aires,

and the winter season at Palm Beach or Palm Desert 30 to 40 teams will be manned by players from the United States, Argentina, Zimbabwe, Canada, New Zealand, Pakistan, Mexico, France, Australia, South Africa, Great Britain, and a dozen other polo playing countries. For over 30 years, the Argentines have been preeminent in the sport but growth in players and the availability of good horses is honing the competitive abilities of challengers from many countries, including the United States.





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# Gear of the Game

**Helmet.** The polo helmet is required equipment. The most common helmets are made of reinforced, padded plastic with a cloth covering.

**Team jersey.** The team jersey sports the color of the player's team and the number of the position that he plays. (From 1 to 4)

**Glove.** Most players wear gloves to protect their hands. Some wear just one glove, either on their mallet (right) hand or their rein (left) hand. The best gloves are manufactured by Franklin Sports.

**Knee pads.** Knee pads, usually made of leather with felt padding, protect kneecaps from flying balls or rough ride-offs.

The **mallet cane** is made of bamboo. It is generally quite flexible, or "whippy" in polo player parlance.

The **mallet head** is made of wood. Mallet heads come in different weights and are attached to the cane at an angle to make it easier to hit the ball.

The **ball** is made of hard plastic that dents a bit each time it is hit.



The **bit** controls the horse. Polo players use many different kind of bit . This one is called a "gag."

The **breast plate** fastens to the girth and keeps the saddle from slipping in the heat of the game.

The **martingale** is a leather strap that runs from the noseband to the girth. It keeps the horse from raising his head too high.

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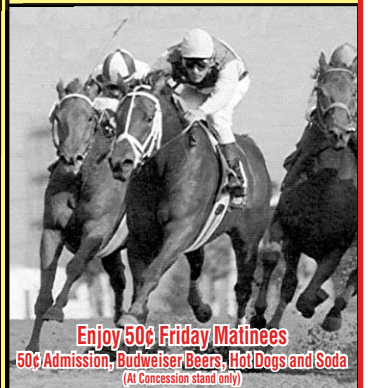


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# polo lingo . . . know the talk

## Playing Field

Polo is most often played outdoors. The outdoor polo field is 300 yards long and 160 yards wide, the largest field in organized sport. The goal posts at each end are 24 feet apart and a minimum of 10 feet high. Penalty lines are marked at 30 yards from the goal, 40 yards, 60 yards, and at midfield.

## Divot Stomping

An activity that involves spectators in the game. During halftime, spectators are invited to go onto the playing field to replace pieces of turf that have been dug-up by the horses.

## Polo Mallets

Players hit the ball with the mallet using one of four basic shots:

- Forehand to hit the ball forward or laterally to a teammate
- Backhand changing the flow of play by sending the ball in the opposite direction
- Neckshot hitting the ball under the horse's neck
- Tailshot hitting the ball behind and under the horse's rump

## Pony Goal

A pony goal occurs when a pony, usually by kicking the ball, causes the ball to go through the goal posts. This is natural for equine athletes who love the game as much as their riders. This type of goal counts and is a real crowd pleaser.

## Chukker

There are six chukkers in a polo match. Each chukker is seven minutes long. Breaks between chukkers are three minutes long, with a five minute halftime. The ball is rolled in by an official to start the polo match or resume play after a time out. Each team lines up in numerical order, directly behind the other. The opposing team lines up the same way. The umpire rolls the ball between the two teams, and play begins.

## Players

There are four players on a team. The forwards are numbered one and two, and are mainly concerned with scoring. Number three is the center half, who assists the scorers and aids in defense. The number three is often the most experienced member of the team. Defense and fast breaks are the responsibilities of the back, number four.

## Ponies

Today, most polo ponies are thoroughbreds. Horses account for 80 percent of the game. There are no height restrictions, but most horses are between 15 and 16 hands. Possibly the most athletic of all equestrian breeds, polo ponies are changed after each chukker. The demands of the sport require horses to run like a race-horse as well as stop and change direction like a cow pony. Each player brings six to eight horses to a game. Players are allowed to change horses at any time but can't call time out to do so.

## Umpires

Two mounted umpires do most of the officiating, with a referee at midfield having the final say in any dispute between the umpires. With such a large field and the speed of the polo match, the referee is usually busy.

## Penalties

Penalty shots are given from any position the umpires choose from the goal line to midfield, with or without a defender allowed in the goal, depending on the severity of the foul. After each goal, the teams change goals. For complete details please refer to the penalty rules.

## Sideboards

A 9- to 11-inch vertical board, running the length of the field on both sides. The sideboards help to keep the ball in play. When the ball rolls too close to the boards, a player may elect to ride on the other side to get a better shot at it. For this reason, spectators should stay back at least 10 yards from the sideboards.

## Handicap

Polo players are ranked yearly by their peers and the USPA on a scale of -2 to 10 goals. Team play is handicapped on the basis of ability. A team's handicap is the total of its players' goal ratings. Tournaments are held in handicap categories. High goal polo is considered to be for teams rated nineteen goals or over, and medium goal play is fifteen to eighteen goals. There are many ways to build a team that meets the tournament's goal limit. Quite often a strong team will want a ringer, a new or under rated player, to balance the team's higher ranked players.

## Double-Chukkered

Means that the same horse may be played again in a later chukker.

## Rules

This brief overview of the rules of polo is for the spectator only. Most of the rules of polo are for the safety of the players and their ponies. If you want to play, learn them thoroughly. For complete details please refer to the USPA Outdoor Rules. The umpires' primary concerns are right of way and the line of the ball. The line of the ball is an imaginary line that is formed each time the ball is struck. This line traces the ball's path and extends past the ball along that trajectory. The player who last struck the ball is considered to have right of way, and no other player may cross the line of the ball in front of that player, or push that player off the line. Riding alongside to block or hook is allowed, as long as the player with right of way is not impeded. Bumping or riding off is allowed as long as the angle of attack is less than forty five degrees, and any contact must be made between the pony's hip and shoulder. A player may hook or block another player's mallet with his mallet, but no deliberate contact between players is allowed. A player may not purposely touch another player, his tack or pony with his mallet. The mallet may only be held in the right hand. Left handed players are often thought to hit with less accuracy, but guide their ponies better than their right handed peers. Ponies play for a maximum of two chukkers per match.





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