

SINGAPORE

POLO CLUB

October - December 2020
ISSUE 04

The ATOMS Polo Academy

Singapore Polo Club Welcomes
Its Newest Offering

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Experiencing Life
Beyond Books

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Pursuing Their
Equestrian Dream

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LIFESTYLE
Mongolia - The
Luxury of Space
And Time

ATOMS

POLO LOFT



Your gateway to the Equestrian world....

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Closed on Mondays and Public Holidays

Tuesdays to Fridays – 10am to 6pm

Saturdays and Sundays – 9am to 6pm



SINGAPORE POLO CLUB



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Riding School Manager

OPERATING HOURS

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7.30am – 9.30pm (Sunday to Thursday)
7.30am – 10.00pm (Friday & Saturday)

F&B OUTLETS

The Paddock
8.00am – 10.30pm (daily)
(Last food order at 10.00pm)

UNDER RENOVATION

The Polo Bar
8.00am – 11.00pm (daily)

The Mountbatten Room
8.00am – 11.00pm (daily)

The Verandah
8.00am – 11.00pm (daily)
(Last food order at 9.30pm)

FACILITIES

Gym
7.00am – 9.00pm (weekdays)
8.00am – 8.00pm (weekends)

Swimming Pool
7.00am – 9.00pm (daily)

Tennis Courts
7.00am – 10.00pm (daily)

Gaming
11.00am – 11.00pm (daily)

ATOMS Polo Loft
10.00am – 6.00pm (Tues – Fri)
9.00am – 6.00pm (weekends)
(Closed on Mondays and Public Holidays)

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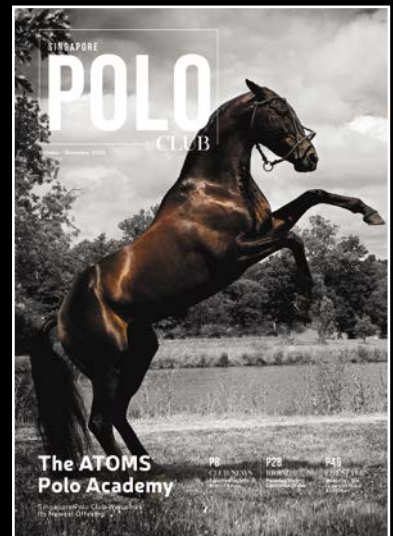
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New Members

JULY 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 2020

A warm welcome to the new members who have recently joined the Singapore Polo Club family. We look forward to seeing you at the club!

CHARTER

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Vanmolkot Tom Elisabeth G
Proteasa Delia
Saw Mi Mi Kyaw
Mathew Alexander Ward
Gur-Praveen Kaur Randhawa
Twine Iain Stuart
Lee Chong Min
Forbes Bronte Stuart
Anandajothi S/O Ramasamy
Chng Yi Ta
John Anthony Fearon
Surinder Singh Dhillon
Mahajan Sachin
Ridland Robert James

HONORARY

Plinkert Geb. Bruckmoser
Barbara



Dear Members,

Time has certainly flown in 2020 and I can't believe the year is almost at a close. Once again, I wish to thank you for your continued compliance and understanding due to the Covid-19 restrictions, and also your patience whilst we complete the final part of Phase 1 of the redevelopment.

We are confident we can open the main verandah with some elegant banquet seating by February. The bar lounge and main kitchen will open with a fine dining restaurant by Coriander Leaf at the Mountbatten Room. The Club certainly has a lot to look forward to and I am sure all members are eagerly anticipating the completion of Phase 1.

Following the Government Covid-19 regulations has necessitated the Club reducing teams to 3 aside polo and smaller group riding lessons, with safe distancing measures in place. The gym and swimming pool are always popular, as are tennis lessons and aqua spin classes. Please continue to make bookings to use these facilities so we can manage numbers according to the current restrictions.

The Atoms Polo Academy has been launched and was very well received by many new players, both young and old. This exciting new initiative, driven by our Polo Captain Satinder Garcha, aims to make our Club one of the best polo clubs in the world. I have no doubt we can succeed. Our Academy will be one of the only polo clubs outside of the UK that will be accredited with the Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA). Keep an eye out for many new up and coming youth players and don't hesitate to contact Cess at our Atoms polo loft to have a go yourself at atoms@singaporepoloclub.org. The Atoms Polo Loft will be the booking centre for the Atoms Polo Academy lessons, but it will also carry a selection of polo and riding merchandise, along with popular items such as sunscreen, goggles, etc.

With the various initiatives taking place in and around the Club as we approach the year's end, and the uncertainty due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I am confident that with the assistance of management and our sub committees and most importantly, you the Members, we will come out of this well. I am also glad to report that despite these unsettling times the financial strength of the Club remains sound.

I look forward to seeing all members around the Club enjoying the beauty of our lovely green open spaces and our newly opened facilities. I wish everyone the best for the last few months of 2020 and here's looking forward to a much more optimistic 2021. ■

All the best,

Stephanie Masfield
President

RECIPROCAL LISTING

COUNTRY	CITY	CLUB	CONTACT (WEBSITE)
AFRICA	South Africa	Inanda Polo Club	www.inandaclub.co.za
ARGENTINA	Pilar	Pilara	www.pilara.com.ar
AUSTRALIA	Canberra New South Wales Perth	Canberra Club Sydney Polo Club The Western Australian Club	www.canberraclub.com.au www.sydneypolo.com www.waclub.com.au
CANADA	Calgary Vancouver Toronto	The Ranchmen's Club Terminal City Club The Boulevard Club	www.ranchmensclub.com www.tcclub.com www.boulevardclub.com
CHINA	Beijing Beijing Shanghai Tianjin	Beijing Riviera Country Club The Tang Polo Club Nine Dragons Hill Polo Club Tianjin Goldin Metropolitan Polo Club	www.bjriviera.com www.tangpolo.com www.ndhpolo.com www.goldinmetropolitanhotel.com
FRANCE	Paris France	Saint James Paris Polo Club du Domaine de Chantilly	www.saint-james-paris.com www.poloclubchantilly.com
HONG KONG	Kowloon Lung Ha Wan Road	Kowloon Cricket Club Clearwater Bay Equestrian & Education Centre	www.kcc.org.hk www.ceec.hk
INDIA	Jaipur Kolkata Mumbai Mumbai	Jaipur Riding & Polo Club Calcutta Polo Club Golden Swan Country Club Mumbai Cricket Association Recreation Centre	www.jaipurpolo.com www.calcuttapolo.com www.goldenswan.com/countryclub www.mcarecreationcentre.com
INDONESIA	Jakarta	Mercantile Athletic Club	www.macjakarta.com
JAPAN	Yokohama	Yokohama Country & Athletic Club	ycac.or.jp/wp
KOREA	Seoul	Seoul Club	www.seoulclub.org
LUXEMBOURG	Luxembourg	Cercle Munster	www.munster.lu
MALAYSIA	Ipoh Kuala Lumpur Kuala Lumpur Kuala Lumpur	Iskandar Polo Club Sunway Lagoon Club Royal Lake Club Bukit Kiara Equestrian & Country Resort	Nil www.sunway.com.my/club www.royallakeclub.org.my www.berjayaclubs.com
PHILIPPINES	Cebu Makati	Cebu Polo Club Manila Polo Club	www.cebupoloclub.com www.manilapolo.com.ph
SRI LANKA	Colombo	Colombo Swimming Club	www.colomboswimmingclub.org
THAILAND	Pattaya	Thai Polo Equestrian Club	www.thai-polo-club.com
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Connecticut Denver Honolulu, Hawaii Houston Iowa New York San Francisco Washington Washington	The Hartford Club The Denver Athletic Club The Plaza Club Honolulu The Houston Club Des Moines Embassy Club The Explorers Club The University Club of San Francisco Capitol Hill Club Bellevue Club	www.hartfordclub.com www.denverathleticclub.org www.theplazaclub.com www.clubcorp.com/Clubs/The-Houston-Club www.embassyclub.com www.explorers.org www.uclubsf.org www.capitolhillclub.org www.bellevueclub.com
UNITED KINGDOM	London London London London Egham, Surrey Midhurst	St James's Hotel & Club Royal Over-Seas League Cavalry & Guards Club The Eccentric Club Guards Polo Club Cowdray Park Polo Club	www.stjameshotelandclub.com www.rosl.org.uk www.cavgdsclub.co.uk www.eccentricclub.co.uk www.guardspoloclub.com www.cowdraypolo.co.uk



Dear Members,

As we head towards year end, we are positive about the new year as we will probably move into Phase 3 of our Covid-19 recovery by then. This has been a challenging year for one and all, the Club had to be closed during the Circuit Breaker period, while we worked closely with the Multi-Ministry Task Force to minimize the spread of Covid-19. My team and I would like to thank members and their guests for their continued co-operation and patience as we enforce Covid-19 measures to protect our loved ones and the nation. I would like to express our thanks to the Club's Covid-19 Task Force chaired by our President Mrs. Stephanie Masefield.

Apart from the pandemic, the Club has also worked closely with the relevant government authorities in preparedness for a potential outbreak of African Horse Sickness (AHS). Our Horse Care team has conducted training sessions for all our grooms to take the necessary precautions against AHS. We have already worked with the Animal & Veterinary Service to identify isolation stables just in case the disease crossed our border, which I hope is unlikely.

Our ATOMS Polo Academy has been launched and aims to be the best polo academy in the world. Judging by the overwhelming response from our soft launch, we already have more than a hundred people registered with our ATOMS Program. The introduction of the Atoms Elite chukkas has also brought a different level of excitement, exhilaration and fun to our chukkas with more players signing up for such sessions. My sincere thanks to all the parents who have been there to support their children and the program. Your dedication has paid off as I have seen the level of chukkas improve by leaps and bounds! As our numbers increase along with

the skills of our up and coming young players, we hope to start our arena polo league in a year or two! Follow the Academy on social media for updates @atomspoloacademy. At ATOMS, we will make a polo player of you!

We have six new polo horses that will be arriving in the first half of November that will need to spend some time getting acclimatized to our weather and their new surroundings. If you are interested to have a quarter lease for a polo horse, please register your interest early as our lease program has been exceedingly popular. Over at the ATOMS Polo Loft, our Casa Zappala polo mallets have been flying off the racks literally. These mallets are hand crafted in Argentina by the maestro mallet maker, the one and only Hector Zappala. We stock traditional Zappala mallets as well as ones which you can have customized to your own specifications. Due to popular demand, we have ordered a second batch, so do not miss out, before we run out again!

The Riding Academy has also performed well during this pandemic, because of restricted travel we have seen a spike in our enrolment. Riding lessons have been almost fully booked throughout and we are working closely with both academies to ensure we meet your demands wherever possible.

Our sincere appreciation to our polo & riding professionals and stable staff who have worked relentlessly to ensure that your horses and the stable yards have been well maintained all this time. Special thanks to our members who had generously donated to our foreign staff, who sacrificed by staying in Singapore to care for our horses.

The Lifestyle Sub-committee has worked extremely hard behind the scenes to support the redevelopment, ATOMS Polo Academy and programs despite the Covid-19 restrictions. They are in the midst of planning the Club's 135th Anniversary celebrations for next year (depending on the pandemic's situation).

My team and I would like to thank the Committee and Sub-committees for their valuable guidance and support given to us during the past year.

I am optimistic about the new year and would like to wish everyone good festive cheers as we move into Phase 3 with a further lifting of restrictions as we work towards the new normal. ■

Yours sincerely,

Sylvan Braberry
General Manager

Experiencing Life Beyond Books...

We speak to the Chaw brothers (Chaw Liang, Chaw Zheng and Chaw Sheng) about their Outreach experiences at the Club, what triggered their interest and their future plans in giving back to the local community.

1 Could you tell us about yourself and how did you get involved with our outreach program?

CL: I'm Chaw Liang, most people at the club know me simply as CL. I am 15 years old and am a student of Hwa Chong Institution. I started to develop an interest not only in riding, but also the grooming of horses through the pony club. At that time, the friendly groomers at the stable allowed me to assist them to clean the stables, prepare the hay, groom and prepare the horses for riding lessons. It was through such regular attendance at the club that I got in touch with a couple of members who introduced me to the Outreach program. The outreach programme allowed me to explore my interests, whilst having an impact on someone else's life and bringing on a smile to their faces.

CZ: I'm Chaw Zheng, also known as CZ. I am 13 years old. I started riding in 2016 and learnt more about horses and stable management through the pony club too. I love spending time at the stables and being close to horses when cleaning their stables and grooming them (though it could be smelly and sweaty). I enjoyed every moment of it! I got involved with the Outreach program through other members of the club, and by understudying my elder brother.

CS: I am Chaw Sheng and also known as CS. I am 11 years old. Being the youngest of the Chaw brothers, I remember I often tagged along my brothers as they moved around the stables to clean and groom the horses. Naturally I grew to love horses, and being around them. Whenever I'm at the stables, I take some time to shower and feed the horses. I'm game to volunteer for any activity as long as I can be with and around horses.

2 Could you share your volunteering experience with us?

CL: I had an opportunity to volunteer at the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) to help the disabled ride horses as a form of rehabilitation. The SPC Outreach program is very meaningful as I have come to realise that some of the less privileged do not have any chance to see or be physically close to a horse or even touch it, something which I have taken for granted. Like anyone else, they are also curious and some of them actually like to share (when given the opportunity). Patience, being understanding and having empathy are necessary values to be a volunteer. I wish I could have more time to participate in such Outreach programs. I also had fun meeting and knowing fellow club members through this program.

CZ: I have volunteered in various community work organised by my school, such as visiting old folks' homes and performing song and dance items for the seniors. I had also joined a fund raising run by the RDA years back and volunteered in the Club's dressage or jumping competitions, open house and the Outreach programs along with my brothers.

CS: Apart from volunteering at the Club's Outreach program, dressage and show jumping competitions, I also deliver food rations and daily necessities to the under-privileged households. My parents tag along and it's a fun family affair as we spend some time together to do these meaningful deeds.



The Chaw Brothers

3 Was there an Outreach program/activity that was memorable?

CL: Every single program was memorable! I enjoyed the session when we showed a group of less-privileged attendees some grooming tools and taught them how to groom the horses. I observed their initial hesitation and probably fear to go close up to the horse, but after a few gentle touches' along with some coaxing, they managed to overcome the fear and was at ease with touching the horses.

CZ: One of the most memorable experiences was helping a disabled person to balance on a horse. It was a challenging task and required a lot of care and patience. However, the attendees and the volunteers felt a sense of achievement when we did it together.

CS: One of the most memorable experiences was when we participated in the run around polo club to raise funds for RDA. I felt good in being able to do my part for the less privileged in Singapore.

4 How is volunteering with horses different from other programs you've volunteered with?

CL: Well, horses! No other outreach program is as fun or as engaging as getting to work with horses and bringing these under-privileged some fun and joy. I've seen attendees arriving at the stables and getting all jittery, but after a few rounds of feeding the horses and patting them, they got so comfortable in their presence. Some of them even went up close to have photos taken.



A memorable outreach session

CZ: Volunteering with horses are more fun and enjoyable. Different horses have different temperaments and working alongside those cheeky ones makes the session more interesting. Besides, there are not many places in Singapore that does voluntary work revolving around horses. This is a unique identity of the Singapore Polo Club.

5 Is there anyone that has inspired you to volunteer?

CL: No, but seeing the Outreach team coming together and helping out has definitely inspired me to also volunteer and help out in any way possible.

CZ: No, no one in particular but it is indeed very inspiring for the Outreach team to come together to reach out to the under-privileged with a common purpose.

6 How has volunteering changed your perspective?

CL: I've gotten to realise how blessed I am to be given everything I have and I know that there aren't many people out there who are equally as fortunate as I am so I'll try my very best to help them the best I can.

CZ: I used to think volunteering is a waste of time but now I realise it is about changing or impacting someone's life. At the end of the session, a thank you and that sparkle in their eye tells me just how fruitful the experience was. A sense of satisfaction overcomes me, and I know this is truly what I desire.

7 What do you hope to achieve from your volunteer work?

CL: I don't have any specific goal in mind at this moment, but I would like to bring about a smile on everyone who joins us at this Outreach program.

CZ: I am happy that the club has allowed juniors like my brothers and I to participate as a family in the Club's volunteer work. It means a lot to me as I learn to take and follow instructions from the organisers. I get better in recognising the routine as I participate in more volunteer programs.

CS: My school has always encouraged us to be servant leaders. By taking part in volunteer work I hope to gain more exposure in meeting people from different walks of life and further contribute to the society.

8 As a student, was it easy for you to juggle time between school and volunteer work?

CL: It was definitely very tough, especially when the Outreach program could only be scheduled on a weekday afternoon. Packed with a busy school curriculum and as a student from an elite school, there is a very strong emphasis on academic grades, and at one point, my grades were falling below average that I had to stop actively volunteering to manage my academics. I really miss heading out for the Outreach sessions during that interim period.

CZ: Our school activities are packed with supplementary lessons and CCA. It has been challenging to join some of the volunteer programs which are usually scheduled on weekday afternoons.

CS: I remember there were a few afternoons when I had to rush to join the Outreach program as my school ends late on Fridays. However, I know it is up to me to make the extra effort if I want to participate in volunteer work.

9 Is there any specific outreach program you hope to see in the club in the future?

CL: I suppose the Outreach program can be extended to other under-privileged groups, such as young school-going children or people with other physical disabilities. This will allow people from various walks of life to know more about the club and the horses. I'm just really blessed to be given this opportunity to volunteer and help others, and along with my two younger brothers I look forward to giving back to the society in any way that I can.

CZ and CS: Any Outreach program will be for a good cause as it will bring about fun and joy to the underprivileged groups. Attendees will also be able to have a preview of the Club and our unique equestrian lifestyle.



Riding lessons at the Club



CS learning to groom a horse during Pony Club



CL with his favourite pony, Bandit



Teaching an attendee to groom Bandit



Professional HPA Umpire and Qualified Instructor, Tristan Pemble

Tips From The Umpire...

Polo is a game of extremes. One minute you are calmly moving the ball towards the goal and the next you are charging the other way at high speed to chase the person that has “stolen” the ball. The back and forth, and frantic pace can take its toll. It can be very hard to stay calm under these circumstances but the key is to try and remain calm both emotionally and physically. This will improve your game and concentration. One technique that may help you is to take some time before a game to concentrate on your breathing. Meditation can help you achieve to reach a calm and centred

place. Just close your eyes and take three or four slow deep breaths and try to concentrate on tension leaving your body and feel the calmness washing over you. Continue to sit quietly for a few minutes and concentrate on your breath and recognise this stillness. This feeling you have created is the well that you want to draw from during a game; staying calm in the midst of chaos. For want of a better analogy it is like being the proverbial eye of the storm. If you find yourself getting overwhelmed during a game, remember that calm feeling from your pre-game breathing routine, take a few deep breaths and then continue.

The Mental Game

To a lot of people galloping round on a horse with a mallet and hitting a ball, riding into each other at speed, to get the ball, is mental, they may be right! However, as polo players we all know there is a lot more to the game and mental attitude is a big part of it.

Mental health in sport is becoming more and more recognised as a performance issue and is increasingly supported across all sports. A positive and healthy mind is a big influence in your success as a sports person.

I thought we could look at four mental strategies to help your game.

1. Own your thoughts

You make yourself nervous not any external influence. It is often just anticipation and expectation. Instead, try and take ownership of your thoughts and feelings and realise that what you think is what makes you feel a certain way. Try to think happy, positive and winning thoughts and this will help your game.

2. Keep calm and play polo

Breathing is very important; this may seem like an obvious statement but many players when tense can forget to breath properly. Just remember focused breathing will help your performance.

3. Have confidence in your self-worth

Some polo player think they don't really match up to their other competitors. They may be a younger player from the Atoms Polo Academy or a less experienced or lower handicapped player, playing with a seasoned professional or a much stronger player. If you lack confidence and feel you may not be able to contribute towards the game, your game will suffer. So, here is a mental strategy you can use. Remind yourself that the expectations for success is actually on the professional or stronger player, not you. If you make a mistake everyone thinks “of course they made a mistake, they are not that experienced yet or it is one of the lower handicapped players”, and if you make a great play, they will think “wow, they are really good – I didn't expect that!”. Either way no one is looking at you to dominate, or to win. So, enjoy your game, with the pressure reduced and let the professional or stronger player guide you.

4. Be in the moment

It is very easy to become distracted (i.e.) a goal you missed, not winning a ride off, creating a big foul etc. If you focus on this and not the game at present, you will not be in the zone. You need to move past these distractions quickly and be in the moment. ■

Quote of the Month:



“There is no such thing as failure. Either you win or you learn.”

Illustrations compliments of Eddie Kennedy

The Atoms Polo Academy

Singapore Polo Club welcomes its newest offering



What is an Atom? According to the Oxford English dictionary, Atoms are basic units of matter and the **defining** structure of elements. The term **“atom”** comes from the Greek word for indivisible, because it was once thought that **atoms** were the smallest things in the universe and could not be divided.

Some might say Why Atoms? It might seem abstract, but the above definition probably goes some way to explaining the name and the concept. The Academy has an innovative programme which will take things back to the absolute basics, to be used as the building blocks to create outstanding, well rounded players. Added to that it is open to the smallest of the small, starting with kids from the tender age of 5 years old and up.

Conceived in pre-pandemic times, Atoms is a pioneering new chapter of polo for anyone wanting to learn this exhilarating game, paving the way for novice players and polo pros in the making to not only fine tune their skills but realise their full polo potential. For beginners, the programme follows a 12 week cycle beginning with an introduction to polo and going through 3 levels of a similar length, to prepare players to eventually take the polo test and gain a handicap. For more experienced players, there is a fast track to the Atoms Elite programme, where advanced players will jump forward to competitive chukkers and matches on the outdoor grass field.. The great thing about the programme is that you don't have to be a member of the polo club to take that first step, therefore for the beginner player it enables you to “try before you buy”, so you can undertake

the 12 week introduction as a trial with no obligation to go forward further, unless you absolutely enjoyed the experience and want to seriously commit to the game.





Whether you have never sat on a horse before or are an experienced rider, ATOMS is the place for you, catering for everyone from ages of 5 – 50 to teach you the ropes of the galloping game. Our team of certified international instructors will be there to guide you through your paces, starting off with the basics of learning to ride for polo, and progressing to hitting a ball before you know it.



The ATOMS Polo Academy has the first and only programme of its kind in Singapore, and will be a Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA) accredited course. Established in 1876, the HPA is the governing body for polo in the UK, Ireland and many other affiliated countries around the globe. The most prestigious polo association in the world, it was responsible for the creation of the original regulations and rules under which the game is now played.



As an added bonus, students of the ATOMS Polo Academy will also have the opportunity to take their passion for the game beyond Singapore and experience what it's like to play in the UK, the United States, Jamaica and many other exciting destinations around the world through our network of affiliated clubs and polo academies.

Aside from lessons, the younger kids will also have exclusive access to the ATOMS Club Room. The Graffiti "Kid Zone" will include a 55 inch TV, PS4, Foosball table, board games and a novel library

where students can borrow and exchange real books as well as snacks and drinks for purchase. Students can relax in here as they wait for their lesson to begin or whilst waiting to be picked up after. A great space to be social with other students and make new friends off the field. For the artists in our midst, the graffiti wall next to the Club Room is there for everyone to make their mark with a can of spray paint if they so desire... Students will also have access to the rest of the Singapore Polo Club facilities.

Another innovative feature of this programme, which is open to Polo Club Members, is the horse Quarter Lease option; a cost effective way to participate in the programme, whilst "owning" a horse without the financial implications. Some might call this an equestrian "time-share", this gives students the opportunity to bond with a particular horse, thus giving them confidence as they ride the same horse each time they come to the club for a lesson.

To celebrate this new chapter in polo, ATOMS Polo Academy is offering 50% off your first lesson, available to both members and non-members. To book your first lesson, email atoms@singaporepoloclub.org or call +65 6854 3955. For further information check us out online at www.atomspoloacademy.com

"Come join us and we will make a polo player of you"..... ■

What our members have to say.....



Zara Taylor

Q. What was your inspiration to start to learn to play polo?

Zara Taylor: My dad started taking polo lessons and was hooked right from the beginning and, as soon as he passed his polo test, we bought a polo pony, Macarena. After that I started having polo lessons and like my dad, I developed an immediate love for the game. Having Macarena made all the difference as we formed a strong bond very quickly - she had been playing for many years and often knew instinctively what to do without me telling her! I have been learning from the start as well with one of the club pros who has also been an inspiration, he is patient but pushes me all the time to do my best.



Natasha Garcha

Q. What do you like about the programme at Singapore Polo Club?

Natasha Garcha: I like that "what we play on the field stays on the field" and after games I get to hang out with my friends either in the clubhouse or at our fun-filled Atoms club room. I am excited for more people to join the Atoms Polo Academy and to get to know them.



Marie Christine-Fuchs

Q. What makes the game more exciting than other sports?

Marie Christine-Fuchs: It is really fast and that is something really special because hardly in any other sport do you get that kind of speed. When you are playing, it feels like you are taking off and flying away from everything; its wonderful and very exciting.

Q. Why did you take up the Quarter Lease?

Doreen Koe: Polo is such a multi-faceted sport. At my current level, I feel that I need some consistency in terms of the pony I am riding to boost my confidence so that I can focus on improving the other aspects of the game. Also, I think it is important to build the trust and rapport with your pony. After all, you have to work in sync with your pony to be a valuable team player in a chukka. My quarter lease is with Isabella, I hope she can help me get to another level in my game. Thus far she has taught me so much and given me so much joy on the field. She understands the game and will change her angle when the line of the ball changes. I am working on finding all her different gears to be able to work in greater unison with her in the game.



Doreen Koe



James and Ollie Clark

Daniel and Sarah-Jane Clark: We have 2 children riding regularly and learning to play polo; we wanted some consistency with a horse so they can become confident riders. Also, it is more cost efficient to lease a horse as we spend a lot of time at the club riding. It is nice to see my children developing a bond with our lease horse, and becoming more interested in how to care for a horse. It has also been nice to see them making some great friendships with the other children who are there at the same time, and they really look forward to going to the club for lessons. ■



Hip to be Street

What is unique about the Atoms Polo Academy Club Room? It is literally a work of art; a container covered in graffiti by a well-known Singapore artist. Here we meet the passionate hands behind the conceptualisation of our very colourful and attention grabbing ATOMS Club Room. Slac Satu shares with us the evolution of graffiti art in Singapore and this first-ever collaboration with the Singapore Polo Club.

Tell us about yourself and the scope of a graffiti artist in Singapore?

I have been painting graffiti since 1998. Back then, there were no legal graffiti walls, so I got into trouble with the law and served 1 year probation for it in the year 2001. Eventually the National Youth Council organised the 1st graffiti competition in 2002 and I won 1st Place. That is how I got my first commissioned graffiti job with Wild Rice theatre. In 2011 we opened our studio on Arab Street called "The Blackbook" to help the scene grow to the next level. This is my full time job and it is something that I really love doing.

Share with us about the design that you've created for Singapore Polo Club?

For the container design, it is a very basic graffiti style which involves a lot of the fundamentals like the tags, stencil effects and throw ups (bubble letters) vibrant colours to make it stand out from afar is also a graffiti thing too. We used all of these elements on the container within a polo theme.

How long did the entire process take you, from conceptualisation to execution?

It took about a week to get everything together with also some inputs from Singapore Polo Club side. It is always a pleasure to interpret what clients want on their walls and to finally see the completed work up is a good collaboration too.

How well received is graffiti in Singapore and what are some popular styles that are well-adopted?

Graffiti art in South East Asia more or less starts in Singapore. The scene here is not that big due to the limitation of available walls. That is where our studio plays a part to keep it alive. We interact



with lots of overseas artists and tourists as well. Other forms of graffiti styles are stencils and canvas painting which are more mixed media.

Words of advice for aspiring artist?

Keep on learning and do not give up. It is recommended to attend graffiti workshops, which are available nowadays, where you can learn from the experts. It is also good to know a little of street art history as well. I was self-taught back then so it took quite a while to learn. This knowledge, gives us more passion I guess.

About the artist:

Slac Satu is a self-taught artist and is one of the pioneers in the local graffiti scene. He has been doing graffiti since 1998, fans and clients alike appeal to his signature realism style of spray painting, which blends the technical aspects of spray painting with a traditional painterly approach.

A revered graffiti practitioner in Singapore, Slacsatu's achievements are recognized through his works and awards in local and international graffiti competitions. He has collaborated with Batik Master, Sarkasi Said, in the Bimbing Event in 2009, and has participated at the Lasalle College of the Arts exhibition 'Berita Harian 2' and 'Is This Home Truly?' in 2010, the Singapore Street Festival in 2018, and Aliwal Urban Arts Festival in 2019. He and his founding collective ZNC (Zincite Crew) which are an international graffiti team were also involved in the 2013 Singapore Biennale and Chingay 2015. ■

Blame it on RIO

The British Polo Academy takes flight in the Dominican Republic



At a time when the world was treading very carefully and businesses were forced to 'baton down the hatches' to cope with extraordinary commercial uncertainty and in some cases survival, the boys and a bird from the Dubai Polo Academy had completely different plans! Not content with sitting tight as the pandemic reality started to take hold Steve Thompson and his crew, including "Rio" made the questionable decision to keep forging ahead with their plans for a big relocation.

Their pre-pandemic plans to set up a brand new polo training facility on the other side of the world were already highly ambitious to say the least. To do it away from any real polo community or to have the luxury of being enveloped within an active club and support network was a daunting prospect already without Covid-19 and the restrictions on travel as the world went into lockdown! Fast forward 9 months, seemingly defiant against the forces of nature, the newly founded British Polo Academy is enjoying unrivaled success from its new home in Cap Cana in the Dominican Republic.

According to Steve Thompson the architect behind this project, "following 15 years of success in Dubai we felt our mission was complete.



Due to Dubai's natural transient expats, corporate and tourist markets we taught literally thousands of aspiring players during our time there. Many are still active players and some have even become friends for life. We founded the Academy, established a playing infrastructure and were instrumental in the growth and development of the sport across the region. Not forgetting perhaps the most significant achievement of all; the training of 20 camels for the purpose of playing polo! A concept now regarded as one of the top 10 things to do in the Emirates !...job done" !!! So with itchy feet for new challenges, what would their next steps be?

At this stage one would question why not just rest and bask in the success of what had been achieved. Steve Thompson is definitely not the type of character to let the grass grow or maybe in this case one should say the sand settle under his feet. He also really found his calling in teaching polo, a some-what unconventional character, with a Macaw named Rio as a teacher's aid !!! "I have always been super motivated and hugely driven to teach. I know it was perhaps an unconventional path to follow but as a pro on the circuit I found myself gravitating much more towards developing new methods of instruction, developing training aids and studying a players form and technique with the help of graphics rather than opting to stick & ball and training for hours to raise my handicap and follow the obvious pro path".

So what sets the newly established British Polo Academy apart from its counterparts around the world, as the go to place to learn to play polo. Well Thompson and his teaching philosophy is a big part of that story. Several years ago he recorded a short You Tube training video - 'The Essential Guide to Polo', within a couple of months the video had gone viral and his methods where being adopted around the globe. So popular was the video, that when a new script began to emerge for Part 2, it became so extensive that plans for the video where shelved as it became apparent that a book was evolving instead.

Steve says "It has always been my dream to have a standardised code of instruction across the world for polo. There would be nothing I would like more than to meet a new client here for lessons and to be told that they where up to for example , page 68 of the training manual. We could then easily turn the page and continue with the same method, not unlike how PADI has developed a guide for Scuba Divers around the world with strictly enforced requirements for certification and progression from one level to the next. Training manuals are notoriously dull so it was always the intention to break it up where possible with humor which meant it suddenly had a unique appeal as a coffee table book as well" !

The book was so well received that it now features proudly as one of the recommended top 10 books of Hatchards of Piccadilly London and is stocked in all of the major polo retailers around the world.





So what is the big mystery or the secret of Steve Thompson's training? "Like every player I was also once a beginner and my memory still allows me to recall every frustration and struggle to further my ability. I was not born a talented player by any means, and any form of instruction in those days was more of a pros opinion as to how they execute a shot rather than how I teach now which is in essence to analyze an individual's specific body type, apply the golden rules of the physics and then build in isolation on the strengths. Nearly all of the problems I encounter with students varying abilities stem from the fact that the essential foundational skills required to play were either rushed through or missed out completely. As a result it's hardly surprising that the majority of amateur players worldwide become frustrated with their game and struggle to go up in handicap".

Coupled with this Thompson lives by several virtues:

- 1- ***No animal especially a horse should suffer because a human wants to hit a ball or play a sport .***
- 2- ***All polo pros have 2 arms 2 legs and a body , so why is it that they can do what they do and climb up the handicap system and yet amateur players around the world struggle to get better when they all have the same "machinery".....?***
- 3- ***Why is it that there not more lady players when it's fair to say that the equestrian world is dominated by some hugely talented and magnificent horsewoman?***

Thompson's passion for client development has indeed been rewarded by a following from around the world . With a "Virtual Academy" and regular courses hosted at the Zürich Polo Park in Switzerland his teaching ethos and applied method has created a global client base.

Many established clubs would have welcomed a self sufficient training facility with open arms, so why the Dominican Republic?

For those who have ever visited the island, the choice is an obvious one. Many polo clubs around the world use the term "polo in paradise".... but only when you arrive here does that sentence truly come to life. Recent improvements in its infrastructure and luxury developments emerging island wide has meant that the Dominican Republic is fast becoming one of the world's most exclusive , sophisticated and aspirational destinations.

Therefore, it was the perfect location for the British Polo Academy, within an existing world class equestrian facility. A quality polo school was a fitting and natural evolution to compliment its existing offerings. The facilities at The Los Establos Equestrian Center in CapCana are second to none, and were clearly built to eventually be the envy of other polo and equestrian facilities across the Caribbean and the region. Boasting 2 full size international standard pitches with a multitude of riding and show jumping arenas. It is hardly surprising that it is home to several Olympic equestrian stars and their trainers. Despite its grand appearance there is something beautifully charming about the place, the developers have carefully crafted a unique facility which has still been able to retain its rustic charm. Thompson said "On our very first site visit we were unashamedly seduced by the tropical but super professional 'secret of the Caribbean' and it was clear that we had found our new home".

Commercially, the relocation made complete business sense as well, In Dubai, almost 60% of their inbound clientele were from Europe, so a move to the other side of the world meant they could retain the majority of their existing client base but more importantly tap into the lucrative US market. The Covid-19 virus of course has forced them to rethink the original operational and expansion plans for the moment, however they are still able to stick to their true roots of training. "The lockdown meant we were able to focus 100% on the local community and almost begin a revival of the essence of the game and capture the elegance that polo presents as spectator sport. As the old saying goes, "kids and dogs rule the weekends"! So addressing that issue first and removing all of the intimidation aspects of a polo club environment whilst really embracing the community was one of their first tasks.

In short order they were able to garner a very receptive and captive local audience, which of course also lends itself ideally to corporate initiatives. The British Polo Academy as they have settled into their new human community have also taken on board charitable work with the animal community, working in partnership with a local non-profit organisation who work tirelessly in helping the local street and beach dogs who have gravely suffered since the lockdown and in the absence of tourists. "We are very proud even in our infancy to have raised much needed funds and found several homes for some of the needy pups! A percentage of every lesson goes to the charity and it is so refreshing to have the opportunity to help an animal charity when we of course ourselves work in an animal industry".

Moving forward it is clear to see that this area is fast becoming a 'Polo Town'. The inception of this new unique polo training facility has meant resort home owners are now immediately feeling the benefit. New offerings and a take up in Airbnb and month long rentals in beach front villas and apartments for the purpose of polo courses has created welcome relief to an island that was beginning to suffer without the mass inbound of tourists it so heavily relied upon . "In such a strange way the virus is almost working in our favor! It would appear as we are geographically only 1.5 hours from Miami many people from the US are opting to make a move here to live cheaper and work remotely. The lockdown has also made people re-prioritize and get balance back in their lives, and this is the perfect place for quality of life. The Caribbean is certainly not a difficult sell to a spouse and a family when only one of the members play polo" !

Look out for updates on Instagram and Facebook @Britishpoloacademy, Rio and the boys look forward to seeing you soon on the pitch in true Polo Paradise ! ■



TALKING TENDONS

With Alexander Mitchell MRCVS; Blackdown Equine Clinic, Midhurst, UK.

Injury to a tendon can spell the end of the season for a polo pony or even the end of a career. Here is a brief run-down on the why's and wherefores' of these dreaded but sometimes innocuous-looking conditions of our equine athletes.

“So what d’you reckon Doc? 6 days, 6 weeks or 6 months?”

A frequently asked question, as I gaze somewhat despondently at the familiar banana-shaped swelling at the back of another polo pony’s lower leg. I raise the horse’s foot and, resting it on my knee, I palpate the tissues, feeling for the flinch as I pass over the tender spot. “Well,” I say,.... and so starts the part where I try my best to let them down, gently.

Some Anatomy

The horse has several tendons/tendinous structures running downwards from the knee (the hock in the back leg), to the fetlock, and on to the foot. The muscles attached to these tendons are located primarily in the forearm, above the knee, although other attachments do extend further up the limb. Why are they designed with such delicate features? Well, the evolutionary argument is that by moving the muscles away from the lower to the upper leg the weight is shifted upwards (proximally), giving a lighter lower limb that’s more adapted for speed- the horse is fundamentally a prey species, adapted more for flight than fight.

The two major tendons down the back of the leg (fore and hind) are the Superficial and Deep Digital Flexor Tendons (SDFT and DDFT)- in other words, these tendons flex the digit (pastern and hoof). Both tendons appear almost as one bundle at the back of the cannon bone region of the leg. A strain to the SDFT is the classic “bowed tendon/ done a leg/ cuerdeado”. The DDFT is further attached to the back of the knee by an accessory ligament- the Check Ligament, also an important site of lameness in horses of all disciplines. Between the flexor tendon bundle and the cannon bone lies the Suspensory Ligament. This can also frequently cause lameness when injured in its upper, middle or lower (branch) portions.

Note: Sprain or Strain? A strain refers to a tendon injury, whereas a sprain refers to injury of a ligament- and the difference between tendon and ligament? A tendon classically joins a muscle to a bone to facilitate a limb movement, whereas a ligament runs bone-to-bone, for example to support and stabilise a joint. The Suspensory Ligament is something of an anomaly as, although it runs from the back of the cannon bone onto the sesamoid bones (at the back of the fetlock), its upper part contains some muscular fibres; and its structure could be considered more similar to a tendon than a typical ligament.

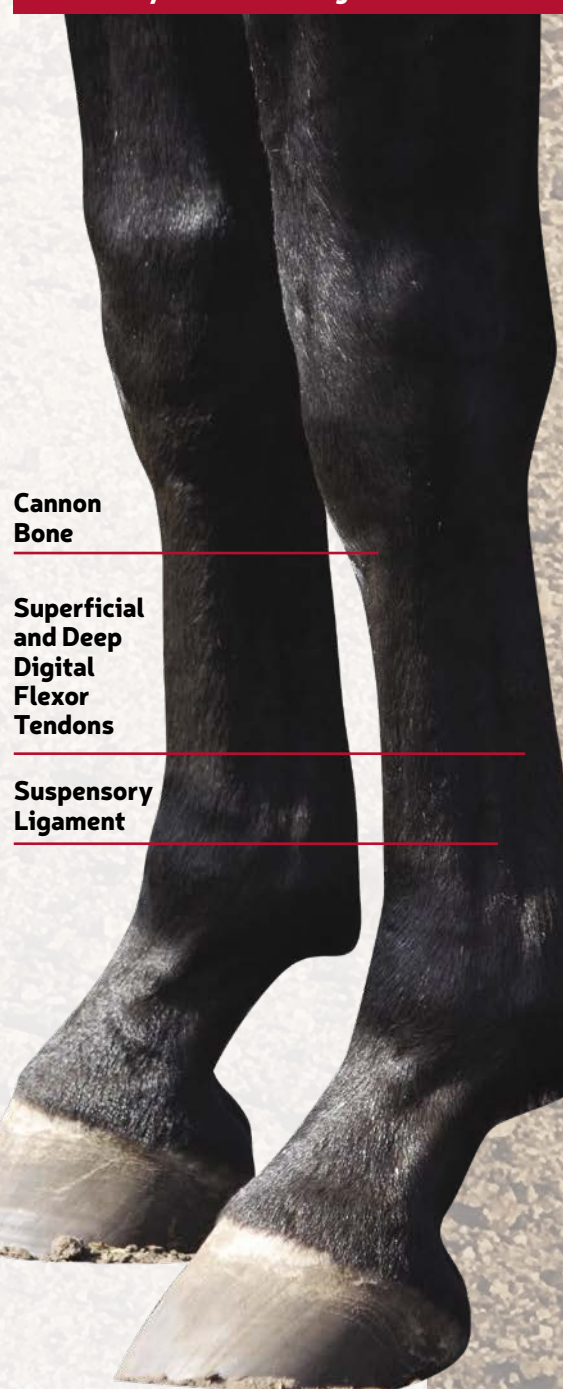
Some Physics

I’m not much of a physicist- but I know that if you pull an elastic band too hard it will snap. Likewise a balloon will burst, if filled with too much air, and it’s much the same with a tendon- yes the tendon has great elastic properties (that’s how kangaroos jump), but they also have their limits, and if pushed (or rather, pulled) too far they too will be strained.

So a “true” strain basically causes a tearing of the tendon fibres, and that causes bruising within the tendon essentially; a loss of the normally highly-organised tough tendon fibres and replacement with loose, fluid-filled gelatinous matter. This will often result in a typical ‘core lesion’ when seen on an ultrasound scan, and from the outside, a bowed tendon. This is more commonly seen in the forelimb. The other common type of injury is through external trauma (often the major cause in the hindleg, as well as a frequent cause in the front leg)- potentially from many things in polo, a ball, a hoof (another horse’s, or its own back foot) or indeed the stick- commonly known as, yup, ‘malletitis’.... There is an element of bad luck to this type of injury- a slack, non-weight-bearing tendon can take up a whole lot of external impact without injury, whereas a tendon under pressure, i.e. at the weight-bearing phase of the stride can suffer significant trauma from the mildest of impacts; it’s a bit like breaking a guitar string. Unfortunately, that’s the nature of the game.

In any sport, human, equestrian or otherwise injuries will happen; but it behoves us as responsible players/ owners/keepers to do what we can to minimise such risks.

Anatomy of the front leg



Cannon Bone

Superficial and Deep Digital Flexor Tendons

Suspensory Ligament



This picture shows just about the full range of movement a leg goes through at full gallop!

Diagnosis- what, where and how bad...

The key to tendon injury assessment is manual palpation and ultrasound examination; although there are cases where other imaging modalities such as MRI are required to reach a diagnosis. The vet will assess the location, severity and extent of the lesion, with the aim of reaching a treatment plan and a prognosis. Additionally, the vet will undoubtedly ask questions to ascertain how the injury may have been caused? Did the pony come off the pitch lame? Or did it develop later? Was anything noticed during the game/practice/ on sets? How long has any filling been present for? Were there any old injuries etc. anything to help paint a picture of what may have happened.

So...treatments?

Well, where to begin.... an encyclopaedia could be written about the various treatments given to our horses over the years, and indeed centuries. There's the old school- blisters and firing, and the ultra-modern- stem cells, prosthetic inserts, and a whole range of acronyms- BAPN, BMAC, PRP, IGG, BBC to name but a few (ok, I made up the last one...)- and there is plenty in between. Tendon-splitting is a favourite of mine, poking a fine needle into the lesion to relieve pressure from fluid build-up, thereby allowing the tendon fibres to re-align. But also physical therapies such as therapeutic shockwave and lasers. The first-aid management of tendon injuries can be fairly simple- STOP WORK, cold (ice wraps/hose) and pressure/support to the limb. Your vet will likely also administer some form of anti-inflammatories and painkillers.

The majority of these treatments have their place, and that depends on many factors, such as nature and severity of the injury, personal preference, past experience and many more; but there's an old veterinary adage, the more treatments there are for a condition, the less effective any one of them are. If there was one treatment that would fix all tendons then we would all use it, right? However, maybe there is one treatment that has stood the test of time; and that is, um, time....

But please don't get me wrong- I'm not saying modern treatments don't help. Scientific advances have been huge in recent years, and this may even be one area where the veterinary world leads the medical; but for many of these therapies the focus is on providing an improved quality of healing - one that is likely to give a better fibre pattern; more tensile strength and ultimately lessen the risk of re-injury, which is the fundamental problem with tendon injuries. As such, they will not necessarily reduce the time taken to get a pony back on the pitch.

But surely prevention is the best cure?

Indeed it is. So we have to explore the underlying causes to assess how best to prevent injury. As alluded to, tendon injuries often arise as a result of being pulled too hard, or being hit. To take the first, a tendon's elastic limit is, to a degree, pre-determined; but there are risk factors, more racehorses will pull tendons in heavy ground than hard, but heavy ground is rarely the problem in polo. Another huge risk factor is fitness and this is important because the muscular unit to which the tendon is attached is the major protective mechanism for that tendon; and once the muscle tires/fatigues, the tendon is at the mercy of the forces applied to it. Therefore a pony must be suitably fit for the level to which it's playing, which means putting in the hours on sets and the days and the weeks; both before the season, and when rehab-ing from another injury. Also, reducing the fatigue during a match can be crucial, if this means mid-chukka changes, even in a "lowly" 2-goal, then so much the better. Some people may ridicule a low-goal player for changing; but if it helps prevent serious injury then it has got to be worth it.

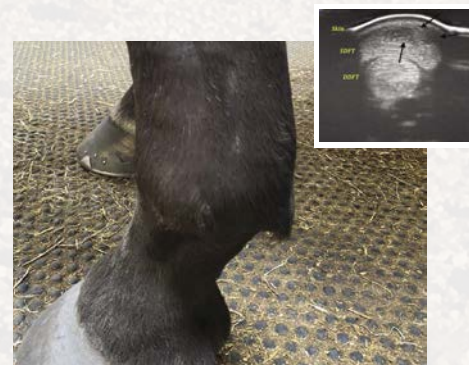
This might not be popular amongst some grooms, but good grooms know that it is better to spend the season changing saddles than changing dressings.

Reducing the risk of impact injury? Theoretically that's more straight-forward, high-quality leg protection; and not exposing your ponies' legs to undue risk, they are called 'millionaire shots' because millionaires can afford to buy new horses.

Some tendon injuries will happen whatever you do; that's the nature of the beast. But good horsemanship, daily observation, both visual and hands-on feeling the legs, is crucial to picking up injuries early. The sooner the diagnosis, the better the prognosis.

So back to the original question...

Well, by now I've most likely put down the affected limb and picked up the scanner; hopefully I've got an idea of the nature and severity of the injury, and I can attempt to come up with a treatment plan and give a prognosis. If there is nothing bad to see it may be ok to carry on, or proceed with caution; otherwise it will be one/some of the options previously mentioned. But, guaranteed, it will involve time. If it is a flexor tendon it won't be 6 months, It will be a year and that means if the injury happened in May, I won't expect the pony to be coming back into work the following March; that's not a year in any calendar, not even a polo calendar. At risk of exposing my stud vet credentials, I may say "Have you considered having a foal from this one?" The fact is, there are plenty of injuries for which even a year off isn't enough. That's when I might need to let them down. Gently. ■



A 'low bow'. It may not look much, but this definitely warrants a scan

Alex Mitchell graduated from Cambridge University Vet School and has been a partner at Blackdown Equine Clinic near Midhurst since 2010, where there is a varied caseload, but lots of polo ponies! When being a horse vet doesn't seem challenging enough!!!! Alex enjoys running in races that involve lots of mud and obstacles. He is also a O handicapped polo player as well.

A Passion For Polo

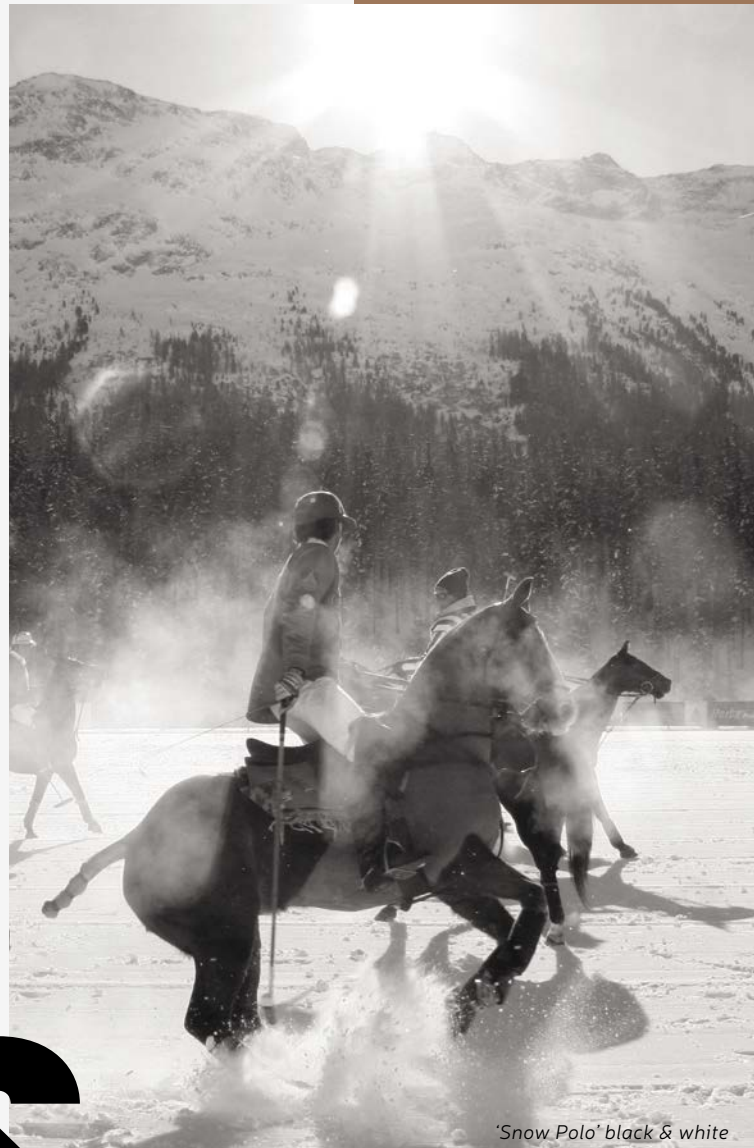
The energy behind the lens; Alice Gipps, polo and fine art equestrian photographer.



'Bauti vs. Adolfo'



'Cambiaso II'



'Snow Polo' black & white

& Photography



'The Polo String'



'Los Overos' - SPECIAL EDITION of 25



'Movement & Motion' - taken in Dubai of a beautiful Arab stallion showing off for the camera



'Nicotina' - Triptych of a polo pony with a rawhide halter. She came from New Mexico, USA and was part of my string for many years



'El Chifle' - Argentine recardo tack detail from the San Antonio de Areco traditional gaucho festival



'Tropillas in Colour' by Alice Gipps



Alice Gipps on Alice Gipps.....

Growing up in rural Wales, learning to ride on a naughty Shetland pony, my life has always revolved around horses. I was 18 when I discovered polo; my father bought me a lesson for my birthday and from that day forward, polo has had a huge influence on my life.

My photography career started while I was at university studying Equine Science. I would spend the weekends and summer holidays drawing horse portrait commissions, producing freelance articles and polo photographs while continuing to learn more about everything to do with polo by helping at the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club in exchange for lessons.

My very first polo commissions were the 'Pony Power' photographs and interviews for the Polo Times. Soon after, the magazine started using my action images to accompany editorial pieces and from there it snowballed. What had started out as a hobby was gathering momentum, so I taught myself more about the process and eventually my images were sourced for cover shots and published in international polo publications, books, websites and national newspapers around the world, this subsequently manifested into invites to cover high profile polo events including Royal days.

I found talking to top high goal players and learning all about their favourite ponies and what made them the best fascinating. Before long this fascination had developed into a full blown passion. I was now totally bitten by the polo bug and started to acquire my own polo string. This translated into no days off; early mornings and long days to look after my own ponies balanced

with managing a fledgling photography career. The sacrifices have well been worth it though, over the years, I have been very fortunate to have been invited to play in some fantastic teams, experience practices with the world's best players, own some superb ex-high goal ponies such as Eduardo Heguy's famous Vasco Piskui and win and organise several of the most prestigious ladies tournaments in the UK and in Argentina. The next step in the odyssey was to mount myself on a good string of my own home-breds by learning as much as I could about polo training techniques to produce them myself.

When I started out as a photographer, all my energy was focused towards perfecting my skills taking polo action images. No two polo games are ever the same. It's a challenge to portray the most dramatic and impressive moments and capture the atmosphere.

If you want to achieve an action shot with impact, the key is timing; the right moment to catch the agility and skill combined with some luck that the play will be spectacular and coming in your direction (e.g my image of Bautista Heguy and Adolfo Cambiaso with the mallets entwined both touching the ball at exactly the same moment is a very unique image, especially as it was two of the most famous polo players in history at that moment. These are split seconds of play so it helps if you can predict what the player is about to do and having knowledge of the game certainly helps.

There are many aspects of photography I enjoy, from the travelling to interesting locations around the world, to meeting like-minded people with a love of horses, but my favorite part of the job is actually still taking the photos. Although somewhat risky at times, there is always a riveting close-up view of the action right beside the field and always the opportunity to get new, powerful images.

I still love the action photography and it's still a big part of my work. My aim here is always to give an insight into polo. This requires adding my artistic side to portray the beauty and power of the game, so I regard my photography as a form of artistic expression by combining all my passions; the in-depth knowledge of horses from child hood, the Equine Science degree, art and the unique experience of playing polo for many years have definitely helped fuel ideas for creative work.

It was later in my photography career that I sought an even deeper connection with my artistic routes and started creating Fine Art photographs. The intent was to produce equine images full of visual pleasure.

My own ponies have been a huge influence. The image of 'Nicotina', the polo pony mare with a rawhide halter, was my first image to be sold as a Fine Art print in 2005. It has since featured in top London galleries, Ralph Lauren Home and is the centre piece in polo clubs both in California and Thailand. "Nicotina" helped me win the Cowdray British Ladies Open one year which was quite a feat. It was not easy finding a sponsor who would believe in us first time out but Cadenza took the gamble and we beat Clare Milford-Haven & Nina Clarkin's mighty Audi team. When "Nicotina" was retired from polo due to an injury she produced three lovely foals which I have since trained and are now part of my own homebred string. So this image is not only one of my favourite pieces, it holds many personal memories.

My most famous piece to date is the 'Tropillas'. Often mistaken for a painting, this image was taken at a traditional Argentine Gaucho festival, which was full of wonderful authentic scenes. It was a proud moment when the Singapore Polo Club presented this image as a gift to HRH Prince Harry on his visit there in 2017. The array of coloured Criollo ponies, all galloping through the dust is such an exciting, arty composition that produced a special image that captivates the viewer. It is also an image that holds many special personal memories as I have been returning to Argentina almost every year since 2003 to photograph the Argentine Open. A truly unique experience not only for a photographer but for spectators; as the crowds go wild and Cambiaso on home turf is always a showstopper. It has the excitement of a football game with fans cheering, waving flags, setting off smoke flares, hooters and everyone on the edge of their seats, especially when the final has often gone into overtime for the golden goal.

The most essential requirement for a photographer is creative energy behind the lens. The Fine Art photography really challenges this and I am always scouting for scenes that capture movement, character or feelings that will evoke emotion. Unlike the polo images that are often very personal to the player, the Fine Art images allow me to share my love of the horse with a far wider audience. I've recently set up my own online gallery with 'virtual exhibitions' at www.alicegippsgallery.com to share more of my fine art images.

Life as a polo photographer hasn't always been easy but it has enabled me to pursue a career alongside my passion. ■

www.alicegipps.com

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

President of the Asociación Argentina de Polo (AAP) Eduardo Novillo-Astrada (Jnr) weighs in on Covid-19 and the shifting polo landscape.

By Karen Kranenburg

Polo for Eduardo Novillo-Astrada Jr. is a way of life, imbued with tradition and legacy, to call him polo royalty would not be remiss, the name has resonated on polo fields around the world for more than 70 years, from his grandfather Don Julio Novillo-Astrada (laio) to his father Eduardo Sr. (Taio), to himself and his brothers and now a fourth generation with his son making waves.

The Novillo-Astrada moniker is also synonymous with La Aguada, the name of an Estancia founded by Don Julio in the province of Córdoba in 1959, which in the early 70's he subsequently set up in its current location in Open Door, around 70 km from the capital Buenos Aires. Now a fully fledged polo club, that annually hosts numerous tournaments for all ages and levels of players as well as the famous La Aguada horse sale, it is also home to successive triumphant Novillo-Astrada led polo teams, who first brought high-goal victory to Open Door in 1986 with a win at the Hurlingham Open.

Ranked as one of the best players in the world, he even held the elusive 10 goal handicap (absolute perfection) at one point, so it may come as a surprise to many that initially Eduardo Novillo-Astrada Jr. did not want to play polo professionally..... "It was in some crisis that one of my younger brothers

called me to play for Argentina in England. That is how it started. It was a good decision. Since then, it has been a great ride". In the intervening years he has won every major tournament to be won around the world, including in 2003 winning the Triple Crown in Argentina (Hurlingham, Tortugas and the Argentine Open) with his brothers Miguel, Ignacio and the late Javier; to this date, they still remain the only team comprised of 4 brothers to claim this prestigious title. His legacy of distinction parlays beyond the polo field as well; he is only one of three distinguished polo Ambassadors for the luxury watch super brand Jaeger-Le Coultre and the only one from Argentina.

Despite his evident Argentine heritage, an accident of birth made him a British citizen, his father Eduardo Sr. was playing polo in England, when he was born putting him in the enviable position of being eligible to play for both England and Argentina. He has always maintained that England is his favourite place to play polo outside of Argentina: "The summer is the best time to be in London, where I have lots of friends. Also nowhere else can match the variety of culture". During his esteemed playing career, he has had some incredible summer seasons in England playing the high-goal, not to mention on a personal note he also met his wife, Puerto-Rican super-model turned photographer Astrid Muñoz in London.



It is very easy to be disarmed by Eduardo Novillo-Astrada Jr. when you first meet him, he is soft spoken, articulate and engaging. The glamorous lifestyle and supermodel wife belies his decidedly down to earth nature, it is this disposition, and his vision for change that saw him as the resounding favourite with members of the Asociación Argentina de Polo (AAP) when they voted in May 2017 for a new President. Novillo- Astrada has taken the reigns with aplomb and purpose, for the moment he has put aside his playing ambitions to focus on the task in hand. His vision for the future is inclusive and cutting edge, he is here to shake things up a bit, which may set him on a collision path with some of the traditionalists, but according to him "it is time to start changing the rules, to make the sport more dynamic and edgy". He is faced with one of the most trying times in modern day polo, more so than any of his post-war predecessors. He also just happens to be one of the youngest President's of the illustrious Association...





As one of the best players in the world, how has the change been taking on an administrative role, particularly one as demanding and prestigious as the President of the AAP?

EN-A: The change was not easy. Polo is a very traditional sport with some difficulties in changing certain structures. But little by little we are achieving what we proposed from the beginning. Polo needs to modernize and evolve, we are on that path.

What have been some of the high points and the low points of this position?

EN-A: I think we were able to introduce some changes to the regulations to make polo easier to understand for the general public. Also to give a more leading role to women in a sport dominated by men. Polo needs to modernize organizational structures; it needs to expand its audience.

The lowest perhaps is that the changes are taking longer to implement than we thought they would.

How difficult has it been to continue playing polo at the top level, whilst holding this position? Some might say it is a conflict of interest, what is your view?

EN-A: It is impossible to fulfill both roles well and I don't like things done halfway. But that is the reason why today I am almost 100% a leader. You cannot have your head on both sides when you need so much dedication.

I don't think there is a conflict of interest as long as things are done honestly and for the common good of all.

What do you feel you bring to this position, as a relatively young man and an active player?

EN-A: It was something that happened naturally. I felt like it was time to get involved if I wanted things to change. I discussed it with my family and my friends and I decided to give way to this stage. But complaining is useless, you have to take action if you really want things to change or improve.

Polo has been predominantly very much a male dominated game, particularly in Latin America, in the last 15 years women professional players from Argentina have been on the rise. How do you feel about the rise of the women's game and the rise of female professional players? Since your tenure, how has the AAP advocated for female players?

EN-A: Today women play a very important role in the world, not only in polo but in all areas. They have earned their place and we fully embrace that development. We encourage women to take a key role; we cannot be left out of this global change. The numbers confirm it: nowadays polo for women and for children is the one that has grown the most in Argentina.

What have been some of the challenges you have faced as the President of the AAP in these times of Covid-19?

EN-A: It is a very delicate moment with constant changes. The main challenge is that it is possible to continue playing and that the sport is not so affected by this pandemic.

How has Covid-19 affected the business of polo in Argentina?

EN-A: COVID-19 affected a lot and in the AAP we are working so that this negative effect of the pandemic is felt as little as possible in the entire polo industry. It is very difficult and we are learning day by day.

Covid-19 has brought new perspective to our lives, how do you see this affecting the game of polo going forwards, for professionals and for amateurs?

EN-A: The truth is that I don't know and I don't think anyone knows for sure. The only concrete thing today is to continue working so that the safety and hygiene regulations are respected to the maximum and to be able to work so that the sport continues to function. We must be very responsible.

What is the Argentine season looking like this year, with Covid-19 still very much present in Argentina?

EN-A: At the AAP we are very optimistic about the future of the high handicap season. We believe that if we do things well, we will be able to play. We do not know when it could start, that is something that does not depend on us but we are working together with all health and sports authorities so that when we can return to competition we do so in an orderly manner and with clear rules.

Like the HPA, has the AAP made any amendments to the rules?

EN-A: There are special protocols that have already been approved by the authorities and, like all sporting activities in the world, we must adapt to reality. That is the reason why I insist on the great work of the entire AAP team so that polo can be played in a safe way.

If you have made changes, do you think these will be permanent or will you revert to the old rules once Covid-19 has left us?

EN-A: I don't know, surely the vast majority are temporary. But we will have to evaluate it when this is over and not now. It is too early to do it.

Right now it is hard to visual a post COVID-19 life, what is one of the first things you intend to do?

EN-A: The great challenge for humanity is going to be to have a life as similar as possible to the one we had before COVID-19. I hope that all this leaves us good lessons as a society and that the pandemic has served a purpose. I think I will hug many of my loved ones again when all this happens. ■



Notes On Polo & Riding

Available November 2020

From his passion for the sport of polo and collecting first editions, Tim Zee shares how he came across Captain Lavergne's proof nearly a century later in a rare bookstore in New York City, and has now translated it into English and published it in honor and memory of the author.

QN: What's the story of the book, why is it so important and what does it mean to you?

TIM ZEE: I came across these unpublished manuscripts on the sport of polo and riding written originally in French in 1938 and 1923, respectively by Captain H. Lavergne, an instructor in the elite Cadre Noir de Saumur in France and an avid polo player. The manuscripts included amazing illustrations and original artwork including gouaches painted by the Captain along with principles of polo from the legendary American 10-goaler Tommy Hitchcock and handwritten notes from Lord Louis Mountbatten on riding. It was an author's proof in near fine condition, but it was never published due to the outbreak of the Second World War. Sadly, the Captain was injured during a calvary charge and died in a prisoner-of-war camp in 1943. It was through my passion for the sport of polo and collecting first edition books on polo that I found this book at James Cummins Bookseller on Madison Avenue in New York City in 2018.

The book captured my attention immediately and intrigued me as I went through the book. It sat on my bookshelf prominently with my other polo books, which I love learning about the sport itself to see if there are any holy grails of polo that can improve my game and give me an edge.

It was during this pandemic that I was grounded from any travel that provided to me with time to go through the book in detail and started to translate it to English with my rudimentary French and decided to publish the book in honor and memory of Captain Lavergne as a steward of this fine book. Although some of the rules of

the game have evolved over time, it is remarkable how Captain Lavergne's instructions on polo and riding are still current despite having been written over almost a century ago.

This is all for the Captain and purely a labor of love with all proceeds to be donated to the sport of polo and riding. I hope the Captain is pleased to have his unpublished manuscript finally see the light of day, especially in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Notes on Polo & Riding is dedicated to Captain Lavergne and all the Second World War veterans, who sacrificed so much, including their lives, fighting for the freedom and polo we enjoy today.

“Although some of the rules of the game have evolved over time, it is remarkable how Captain Lavergne's instructions on polo and riding are still current.”



Notes on Polo & Riding is available for pre-orders from James Cummins Bookseller and printed in a limited edition of 500 hardcover copies.

Scan the QR code below to purchase the book:



About the contributor

Tim Zee is a private equity investor and polo player. Originally from Dallas, Texas, Tim started playing polo there in his teens. He continued playing polo in Argentina and England in his early twenties. After hanging up his mallet for nearly twenty years to focus on career and family, he picked it up again in 2018 and now plays at the Singapore Polo Club. Tim currently resides in Singapore with his wife, their son and daughter. His elder twin daughters are completing their undergraduate studies abroad.



New LIVERIES



Ita

Ita, a Holsteiner has been Showjumping and is currently taking up Dressage as a discipline. "She's a queen and when she sees a jump, she gets all hot and happy. She is very attached to Rexie (another of my horse) and my children. I'm told that she is big, but then again she feels perfect when I'm riding her" says her owner.



Clara Kong with Neque

5 year old Neque owned by Clara Kong is a Pura Raza Espanola, hailing from Spain. Currently disciplined for Dressage, Clara mentions that Neque is a very calm and brave gelding who loves human attention (including grooming sessions and plenty of scratches). She aims to ride to the highest levels of Dressage together along with plenty of hacking!

Roshni Selvam with Dream a little Dream

5 year old German blood Westfalen, Dream a little Dream belongs to Roshni, and has been trained under the Dressage discipline. She's a towering 17.3 hands, very feminine and sweet mare who is always eager to learn new things. She has shown a lot of potential as a young dressage horse and Roshni is looking forward to the journey with a young horse. "I don't want to set any expectations and deadlines so as to give her time to fully mature and blossom" says Roshni.



Rexie

9 year old Rexie hails from Germany and is a Zangersheide. He has been practising jumps all along and recently moved to Dressage. He was purchase just two months ago by owner Amelie and she thinks of him to be the sweetest and most loving horse from the ground. "He's always wanting a cuddle." Rexie has wonderful paces and scope and loves to jump, though he can be quite spooky to ride!

SPC YOUNG RIDERS

We speak to 13 year-old Ruby Tear, who shares her experience riding overseas and participating in Club competitions. She also reveals some of her riding idols at the Club and shares some advice for future riders.



Ruby and her brother Finlay, taken in Rawa

Ruby joined SPC in 2017 and has been taking weekly riding lessons for the past four years. At the mere tender age of four, Ruby started riding ponies in Scotland every summer. "I have always loved horses" she exclaimed.

She usually rides thrice a week, but will take up more lessons when she's training for a competition or when there are exciting club events like jungle trails or night jumps. Ruby mentioned that she has ridden several different horses and ponies when she first joined the Academy but Mimo, a Riding Academy horse was the first horse that she leased and remains as one of her all-time favourite. "I lease TipToe currently, and he has a very big personality for such a little pony. He is strong, talented and has helped me improve my riding. I have to share this funny incident that happened during a dressage competition. TipToe let out one of his famous squeals of excitement when I was greeting the judges. It was as if he was saying hello to them too! As the judge burst out laughing, I felt a little less nervous!" she quipped.

She further shared that joining SPC was a great move as she has made many friends and

is also part of an active riding community at the Club. Ruby believes that the welcoming, positive and encouraging instructors have made her learning journey much smoother and interesting. When she's not having lessons, she heads over to the arenas to pick up some riding techniques by watching her friends and the older, more experienced riders during their lessons.

"There are many riders I look up to at the Club. I enjoy watching Zoe Masefield on Maverick, Katie Marley on Rambo, Caedan Paul on Red and Lucas May on Marilyn. Whenever I see Edric Lee competing on Sugar, I see how much more I have to improve".

When asked what she liked most about SPC, she said "I like the fact that at the Riding Academy, you're always welcome to tack up and shower your horse before and after lessons. Spending time with the horses helps you to know them better, resulting in better performance during lessons and at competitions."

To ensure that she juggles well between studies, riding and chilling out with friends, she tries to practice strict time management and had to give up contemporary dance to focus solely on riding, a decision that she never regretted.

During Club competitions and training shows. Ruby had to compete against bigger horses and experienced riders. Despite that, she clinched second spot with TipToe in last year's SPC Exchange Programme. She



Ruby and TipToe during a training show



Ruby and a wild horse in Harris, Scotland

recently participated in the 5 Bar showcase during the Club's Lo Hei Celebration and riding showcase and had the chance to jump four different horses. She hopes to compete in the Nationals in the near future.

Other than in Singapore, Ruby had also ridden in Scotland. "I had gone on a week-long residential camp in Scotland during the last two summers. We got to 'own' a horse for the week and we did lots of riding lessons, long hacks out in the woods and cross-country jumping. I also had lessons at Gleneagles Equestrian Centre in Scotland and my instructor commented on how well I have been taught. Thanks to my instructors, Edric, Daniel, Laurent and Yien Yien!"

A word of advice for all riders is to never give up. When one falls off (which definitely happens), simply get up, brush off and get back on. That's how one learns best. Every horse has its own personality and strengths so it will be good to know your horse such that you can complement each other. Ruby also shared that when she was riding Mimo, she had to sometimes control her by holding her back as she could gallop very fast while jumping, however with TipToe, she would often have to encourage him to ride forward so he has the confidence and speed to jump well.

Way to go Ruby! ■

Meet the Kers who ride together at the Academy. The family of four shares more about their fun equestrian journey together as one and their thoughts about our new Polo Academy and redevelopment.



A happy equestrian family

Pursuing Their Equestrian Dream....



Shannon Ker at a polo match in the UK.

About The Family And SPC

Q. How did you and your family get involved with SPC and the Riding Academy?

Our love for horses and the convenience of the club being located right in the heart of Singapore paved the way for us to join the happy community here.

Q. Was it a challenge to fit riding with you and your family's schedule for work, school etc?

Not at all, the Riding Academy offers a wide range of timings and flexibility in booking classes which allows us to work around our busy schedules.

Q. Tell us about yourself and your family.

I'm in the Bottled Water Industry and my wife runs a Real Estate Agency. We have two daughters who are a lawyer and a doctor. We enjoy riding together, and traveling the world as a family.

About Their Equestrian Journey

Q. How did you start with riding and when did it become a family affair?

We've been members of the Club since the 1990s but only started riding in 2012. My daughters started riding first, and just shortly after in 2013, my wife and I decided to join in the fun!

Q. Did you have any riding experience overseas? What's the difference in riding here compared to overseas?

No, I've yet to try riding overseas, but I'll definitely like to give it a go along with my family should I have the chance to.

Q. Tell us about your favourite horse at the academy.

Falco is my favourite horse because he was such a challenge to handle! But after being assigned Falco week after week, we developed a bond and I miss him now that he's no more in the club!

Q. Do you have any equestrian goals for yourself and your family?

I enjoy riding together as a family, and hope to do so when we go on our family trips once COVID-19 is over. The family has not set any goals as yet as we are enjoying the leisure moments with one another.

Their Thoughts On The Redevlopments

Q. Having been a member here, what's your thoughts or impression about the renovated pool, newly opened pool bistro and other upcoming redevelopment works?

The renovated pool and bistro is great for alfresco dining and is a good space to gather with friends for meals or some drinks. Can't wait for the redevelopment work to be completed.

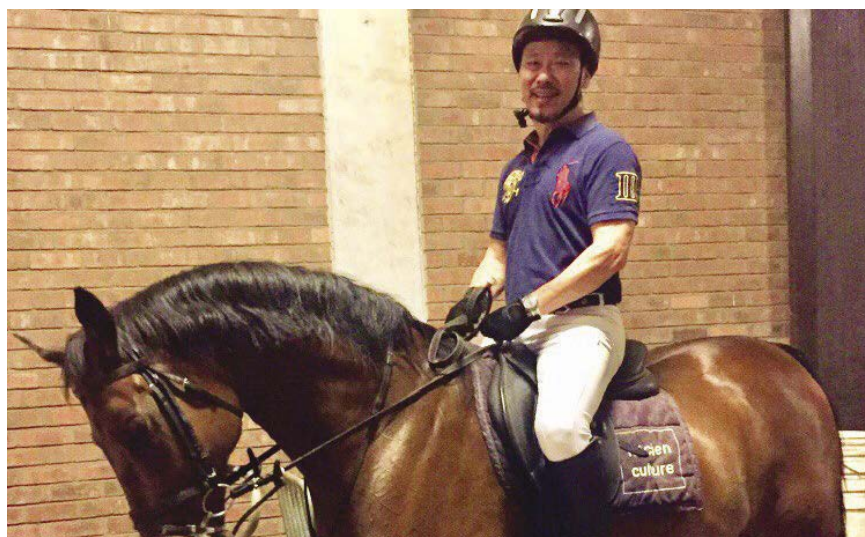
Q. Is there a favourite dish or drink you would recommend?

The Spaghetti in Crab Sauce is a definite must try!

About ATOMS Polo Academy

Q. We launched our ATOMS polo academy on 17 October 2020. What are your thoughts about the Academy?

I have been considering to try Polo for the last few years, and perhaps now with the Academy I'll actually give it a go! It's never too late to start a new hobby.



Raymond during a riding lesson

Q. Have you watched or played polo and how supportive are you with enrolling your children for polo lessons?

My daughter played polo for her University in UK. Now that she's back in Singapore, she may start playing Polo again with the ATOMS Polo Academy.

About The Riding Academy

Q. What is the main difference between riding indoors and outdoors?

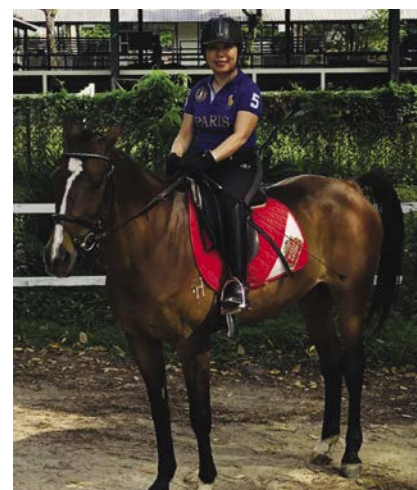
Riding outdoors has a more natural and open feel. The birds and wildlife in the vicinity really adds to the experience. My fondest memory of outdoor riding was when we did laps around the polo sand track. As for indoors, it is always great if the weather is bad or on a hot sunny day – the covered arena is a great choice for this.

Q. Your kids have joined the Riding Academy, how are they enjoying it so far?

They've enjoyed it so much that they now both hold their own single memberships at the Club, so that they can further their equestrian love.

Q. Who are your kids training under and what's the riding instructor's coaching style like?

They have been trained by all our various instructors. They each have their own style of teaching and there's always something new to learn from each one of them! We love them all!



Khim Ker at SPC



Shanice Ker and her favourite pony

Q. Could you share with readers your thoughts about riding on the jungle trail and how unique the experience is?

I love the jungle trail. The walk is so peaceful which really gives you respite from the busy city life. Prior to this, we never knew that the space behind the club was available for riding. It is always such a pleasant experience.

Q. Any words to members of the public who wish to take on riding?

Just do it! It's such a unique experience that is so hard to come by. The trainers are very experienced and patient - always ready to help improve your technique and teach you new things. Each horse has its own personality but with the help of our wonderful instructors, there is no doubt you will grow to become confident in handling our furry friends. If you're competitive, there are exams and competitions to look forward to. Otherwise, riding for leisure is what many of us do too. ■

Meet Our *New* Additions

We welcomed two gorgeous new additions to our happy family on 17 September 2020!

Say hello to SPC's adoption of two ex-race horses, Teremana and Archie. We're sure they be warming your hearts in no time.

Here are some facts about them:

- **Teremana**
 - Age: 6 years
 - Colour: Bay
 - Breed: Thoroughbred
- **Archie**
 - Age: 5 years
 - Colour: Chestnut
 - Breed: Thoroughbred



Check out their first moments here:



A little bit of stretching does wonders for Teremana



Bonding moments with our instructors, Laurent and Edric



Shower time for Archie

Soaring High...

Horseback riding can indeed be a rewarding and enjoyable experience with the right instructor and proper guidance, whilst discovering the love for this magnificent animal in you. We spoke to five of our young riders at our Academy and have them reveal little moments of their riding journey with us along with their future aspirations. ■



From left to right: Gwenn Koh, Zoe Tok, Chloe Iliffe, Annika Guptan, Yasmine Bonehill

“

My introduction to riding was a little peculiar. I first started swimming lessons at the Club at the age of six and got to see the horses at the stables. I tried riding for the fun of it and little did I know I grew so fond of it. My last six years of riding journey has seen many ups and downs and I almost quit in the first year, but I'm glad that I managed to persevere thanks to the encouraging instructors. I'm currently riding Sonny, he's not an easy pony but has challenged me to greater heights and got me this far into my riding journey. I hope to do more dressage with him.”

Gwenn Koh

“

I have been with the Riding Academy for almost two years now since I turned six. I am in the pony club and I have frequent riding lessons. I've also been able to do some of the Pony Camps during school holidays which had been lots of fun too. I always look forward to my lessons and am starting to learn to canter and ride on my own. My favourite ponies are Delmonte and Cupcake but I mostly ride Shadow. All the teachers make riding fun!”

Zoe Tok

“

I currently jump in the 75 to 85cm category and am aiming to jump the 1 metre soon. My upcoming goal is to enter more competitions, not just in Singapore but around the region. Presently I have a long term lease on Lisco and ride three times a week. I like that the instructors at the Riding Academy are very encouraging and push me to excel in the sport.”

Chloe Iliffe

“

My riding journey with the Academy started five years ago when I was just six years old. I started on a lead rope with Bandit, being jogged around by my mum and dad and now I'm jumping! I love big horses like CJ and in the near future I hope to ride and own a horse as large as him (or even bigger). My current favourite horse is Toby and I always look forward to every riding lesson.”

Annika Guptan

“

I have enjoyed every second of riding at SPC over the last 2 years. I don't just enjoy riding but I also enjoy hanging out at the stables and watching other people ride. The Riding Academy has really helped me improve as a rider as well as a person. My riding journey has brought me from competing at the 45cm level to the 80 – 85cm level now. What I love about the Academy are the friendly instructors and fellow riders (I have even gained really good friends here).”

Yasmine Bonehill

A Walk Down Memory Lane

We will soon cross the final lap of the year and there is no better way to reminisce the year than to have a multi-years throwback of the Riding Academy. Have a look at these photos, which sure will bring a smile to many.

Have a unique memory of the Riding Academy that you would like to share? Email them to marketing@singaporepoloclub.org and we will feature them on our social media handles! ■

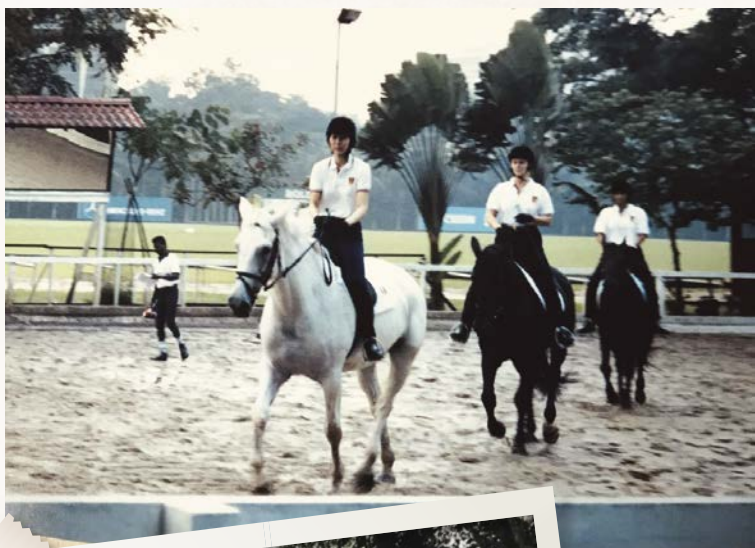


Photo Credits: Christine Foong and Chui Wai Cheng

Do's & Dont's at Our Stable

A hearty warm welcome to our new members and riders. For some of our new joiners, this would be a first-time experience of getting up close and personal with horses, in a stable setting. In this informative feature, we highlight the dos and don'ts around horses and in the stable vicinity. While in the club, please do adhere to them as they help to ensure your safety.

1

Safety Around the Stable

While at the stables, please be mindful of your surroundings. Refrain from running around the compound, speaking loudly or screaming around the horses as that may startle the horses. No flash photography as well, and one is to open umbrellas cautiously and away from horses.



Feeding Our Horses

Our horses have their own specialised feeds and are fed at regular intervals. Please do not feed them.

2

3

Approaching Horses

Do not walk, touch or approach the horses from the back. You are more than welcome to pat or stroke them from the front. Horses with ears flipped all the way to the back are angry or anxious and it might not be ideal to pat them. Our friendly grooms can guide you on this.



Personal Hygiene and Wellness

Personal hygiene is as important to us as our horses' health. Please be sure to sanitise or wash your hands before and after touching them. Should you feel unwell, please rest at home.

4

5

Restricted Access

Entry to our stables are for riders and livery owners only. Please refrain from bringing along unauthorised guests to the stables. Family members are always welcomed, but they have to be in the presence of the member. However, under current guidelines and legislations due to the Covid-19 situation, guests or non-riding family members are not allowed entry into the stable premises.





Getting The Right Start In Tennis

By Simon Mason

Tennis coach Simon Mason shared a couple of essential tips to help young children get started in this adrenaline pumping sport and some useful skill sets that they would be bringing back with them after the tennis camps.

Passion

Holiday tennis camps provide a great opportunity to draw out your child's passion for the game of tennis. The environment is always engaging with a progression of tennis activities, technical work, drills, games and team competition in a fun environment. Passion can be ignited when players become focused on learning, improving existing skills or just engaging with others who share the same passion. Kids' tennis camps teach skills, passion and life skills. The benefits of kids' summer tennis camp are too positive to be ignored when it comes to a child's overall physical, emotional and social emotional health. Not only does a child build skills but also friendships to carry to create more memories through a lifetime.

Social Skills

Making friends is a skillset which develops as a child engages more with other youths. Many children will arrive at the first day of tennis camp knowing no one which can manifest feelings of anxiety and self-consciousness. Camps tend to remain small so kids feel less overwhelmed, more welcomed by friendly coaches and are thus able to engage in all activities. Recreational activities support kids in meeting new people from all backgrounds, experiences and levels of play. Meaningful, lasting friendships can be formed from attending camps. An immersive experience such as this can provide space for facetime with each other rather than focusing largely on computers or smartphones for virtual interaction.

Life Skills

Holiday tennis camps provide opportunities for children to become independent and instill confidence through the taking on of new challenges as well as learning new skills. Supportive coaches can also assist in boosting the self esteem of the kids and thus can be taken back into other social settings. ■

Contact Simon at Vantage Tennis on Tel +65 91445223 or email simon@vantagesportsgroup.com to sign up for our November and December tennis camps!



Christmas ^{❄️} New Year CAMPS 2021

DECEMBER 2020

30 Nov - 4 Dec
7 Dec - 11 Dec
14 Dec - 18 Dec
21 Dec - 24 Dec
28 Dec - 31 Jan

JANUARY 2021

4 Jan - 8 Jan
11 Jan - 15 Jan
18 Jan - 22 Jan

Limited slots available! Register fast!



VANTAGE
TENNIS

For further information and registration, contact Simon at **Vantage Tennis**
on tel **+65 9144 5223** or email **simon@vantagesportsgroup.com**



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3

TYPES OF STRETCHES THAT MIGHT BE IDEAL FOR YOU

In this issue, Fitness Ironman Louis shares his thoughts on the 3 types of stretching for optimal performance and to reduce the chances of injuries.



1

Dynamic Stretching

This is an active movement where joints and muscles go through a full range of motion. They can be functional and mimic the movement of the activity or sport you're about to perform.

2

Static Stretching

This involves a muscle to near its furthest point and then holding that position for at least 15 or 20 seconds, and focuses on a single muscle group with each stretch.

3

Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation (PNF) Stretching

This has a similar effect to static stretching and involves both the stretching and contracting of the muscle group being targeted.



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Low Carb Staple Delight

Broccoli Rice

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Serves: 1

Ingredients:

340g of broccoli florets
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ small onion, minced
2 large cloves of garlic, minced
¾ teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ lemon, juiced

Directions:

1. Pulse the broccoli florets in a food processor until they resemble grains of rice. This can be done in batches, depending on the size and speed of your food processor.
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
3. Add the onion, stir and cook over a low flame for 3 minutes. Stir in the minced garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.
4. Add the broccoli rice, salt and pepper and mix well.
5. Reduce heat to low, cover the skillet and cook until the broccoli has softened. Pour lemon juice on top and serve.

Broccoli goes well with:

Produce: bell pepper, cauliflower, chilli, leek, lemon, lime, mushroom, olives, onion, orange, potatoes, salads, scallion, shallot, spinach, sprout, squash, tomatoes and watercress

Herbs & Spices: basil, chives, cilantro, coriander, curry, dill, ginger, parsley, sage, salt, tarragon, thyme and turmeric

Other: almonds, butter, cashews, cheese (feta, cheddar, goat, parmesan, etc.), coconut milk, eggs, pesto, soy sauce, tahini, vinaigrette, vinegar, wine and yogurt



About The Contributor:

Louis is a Certified Master Trainer and Founder of Fitness Ironman and ISSA Academy Singapore, an Official Affiliate of International Sports Sciences Association. He specialises in sports and fitness nutrition, exercise therapy, bodybuilding and personal training. He's passionate about guiding people towards a healthier lifestyle and believes that everybody is unique with their own strengths and limitations ahead of their fitness transformation.

7 Tips To Exercise Post-Partum

– Alicia Dedigama

Hello! As we have more and more postpartum clients, I often get asked questions on what is safe and not safe to do after delivery I thought I would share a quick article here!

We get so much information on what to do DURING pregnancy, but it feels like you are a bit on your own once the baby is here! Not to worry, I have listed 7 things you should know before you start working out postpartum. Enjoy!

1 TAKE YOUR TIME

The first question I get from our post-natal clients is WHEN? When can I exercise again? For most of us we should be able to workout again around 6 weeks after delivery but sorry to disappoint you here there is no definite timeline as everybody and every delivery is different. Your return to exercise will depend on 2 factors:

- how you feel (honestly) physically and mentally. Are you ready to exercise again?
- has your doctor given you the green light to exercise again?

Only once these two requirements are met, you should get back to exercise. Do not rush it and give your body the rest time it deserves.



2 TAKE IT SLOW

So the doctor told you “you are all good to go!” and you feel ready to get in the game again so you go straight back to your favorite Zumba class? Not so fast! Delivering is like running a marathon, your body has been through a lot of changes lately and the worst you can do is to push it too hard at first. Once you are back to exercising, make sure you take it down a notch and slowly but surely build up from there. Why not taking your usual class to the water? It will give you a safer, low impact way to get back to your fit-self!

Very important point: Manage your expectations. Do not expect to start where you left otherwise you are up for disappointment. No one ever runs at the same pace, nor push the exact same weights immediately as per pre pregnancy and you know what, that’s ok. Don’t beat yourself up. Muscles have a memory and if you are consistent, you will get back to your pre-baby fitness level soon enough!



3 LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

Finding the time and strength to get out of the house and taking care of your body is already a small victory you should celebrate. Just listen to your body and make sure you are comfortable the whole way through your exercise. Something feels wrong? Just tell your instructor, I am sure he or she will have an alternative exercise for you.

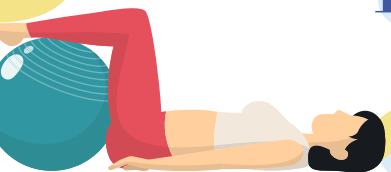
Always remember, pregnant, post-partum or just anyone reading this post, fitness professionals are usually quite good at reading facial expressions but are not mind readers just yet. Only YOU know how you feel inside. Tell your instructor and he/she will gladly help make the class as enjoyable as possible for you. You need a break? JUST TAKE IT!



4 FOCUS ON YOUR ABS AND PELVIC FLOOR

Vaginal delivery requires a lot of work from your pelvic floor muscles and lower abs, and that section of your body would have changed quite a bit after delivery.

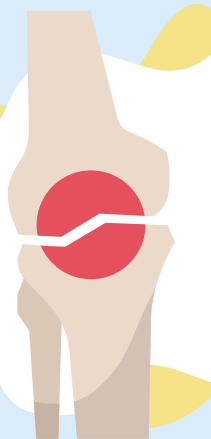
For a lot of our clients, it is even hard to regain feelings in this area in the first few weeks post delivery. There is also diastasis recti (when the right and left abdominal muscles separate). Most of us would have it to a certain degree during pregnancy but for some mamas you will still see some separation up to six months to a year after delivery. Diastasis recti is not dangerous nor painful but it makes your belly look bloated for a while which can cause a bit of discomfort.



5 MIND YOUR WOBBLY JOINTS

Did you know that relaxin, the hormone responsible of loosening tissue, ligaments and joints for labor stays in the body up to 6 months post-delivery? Yep that means you will need to avoid any activity that has sudden change of pace or direction, just to be on the safe side. Try to avoid dancing, Zumba or any fast pace exercises right after delivery as you might not feel as stable as you used to for a little while.

On the same note, try to avoid high impacts workouts as it can get quite uncomfortable to jump with breasts full of milk if you are breastfeeding and you will also be putting extra pressure on soft bones and joints with extra weight. To be on the safe side, choose water based activities, with a low impact and slower pace, you will be enjoying a great workout without worrying of injuries!



6 STAY WELL FED AND HYDRATED

That sounds like an obvious one but guess what? Most of our clients forget about their water bottles during exercise! Especially if you are breastfeeding, always bring a bottle of water with you as soon as you leave the house, and do not forget to drink regularly throughout the day as well as before, during and after your workout.

Same goes with the food! Without even mentioning the effect on losing the baby weight, eating the right foods will ensure your body functions efficiently so you can have the energy needed to take care of your new bundle of joy! Give your body the food it deserves: no packaged food, lots of veggies, grains and lean meats would be ideal.



7 THINK ABOUT YOUR SPINE

As you get into a brand new lifestyle, you will most likely feel some aches and pain. Guess what there is a way to avoid (most of) it! Be mindful of your position at all times. New mums tend to forget about their bodies position after the birth of their baby. Reaching for something at the end of the counter with baby in your hands? Make sure you do not twist too much. Grabbing something from the floor? Always remember to face the object and bend your knees instead of your back.

As we said earlier, your muscles and bone structure can be slightly weaker after giving birth and there is no emergency greater than making sure you do not injure yourself.

Always focus on your alignment in your daily life and during your workouts!



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About the Author:



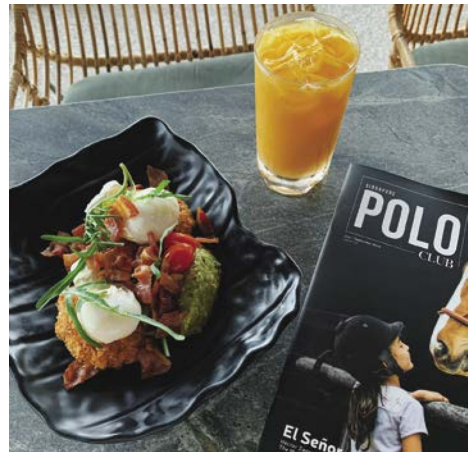
Alicia is a certified Spinning Instructor, Group Exercise Instructor, Pre-post natal and rehab instructor as well as an Aquaspin™ P.R.O. Having done her courses in Europe & Singapore, she has clocked in countless hours running classes for Aquaspin™, and her experience ensures that no two classes are the same! Her clients call her ECP "Evil Chili Padi". This is because even though she is small and super bubbly, she will make sure they feel the burn!

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Vibrant Happenings at Singapore Polo Club...





Mongolia

The Luxury of Space and Time

Article by Sonja Piontek (www.sonnenkind.com), Photos by Carolyn Strover and Sonja Piontek



Mongolia is one of the last hidden gems in Asia and clearly an insider's tip amongst the seasoned travellers' community. Many refer to the country as bucket-list-material and I couldn't agree more. I fell in love with Mongolia and the incredible Nomadic culture a good two years ago and have been back several times since.

With over 1.5 million square kilometres, Mongolia is pretty vast – in fact, it is the 18th largest country in the world and over 2000 times bigger than the state of Singapore. Whilst the Little Red Dot is home to 7800 people per km² the Mongolians have quite a bit more space: only 3.2 million people share the massive land mass which means there are less than two people per square kilometre.

About two thirds of the population still live in the traditional Nomadic style – in simple round gher tents far out in the endless countryside, with no electricity,

no neighbours, and none of our modern amenities. Yet they consider themselves rich – and I won't disagree. It might be a slightly different definition of the word rich – yet luxury has many facets – and aren't freedom, time, space and strong family bonds what really count?

I have personally learned so much in this beautiful country and consider myself lucky to call one of the Nomadic families my close friends. Emme, my local "grandmother" is amongst the most precious and genuine people I have ever met. Whilst I sit next to her on the colourful sofa bed she tightly holds my hand and in the kindest words explains how happy it makes her that three generations live together in one tent in total harmony. How they never have any arguments amongst each other or with any of their far flung neighbours. "Why should we, it simply doesn't make sense!" she laughs. When I ask her how they handle challenging situations like when they all arrive at a well





in the middle of the dry steppe with their herds of thirsty animals she simply says: "We talk and find a solution. All animals need to drink, then the strongest ones will move on". Another thing that startles me is the fact that they eat a lot of mutton, however never seem to serve any lamb: "We respect our animals and want to give them a long happy life." What a beautiful way of looking at it!

In 2019, I organised a trip to Mongolia for a group of Singapore HNWI clients with my agency Sonnenkind. The objective was to create the most unforgettable experience for them – and based on the customer feedback both Mongolia and we delivered at our best.

Amongst the highlights were the two days spent with Emme and her family, getting to know a culture that is so totally different from the one we know. As well as the visit of a Kazakh eagle hunter where all Singaporean

guests had the unique opportunity to hold the mighty eagle with its wings outspread – what an incredible moment to look at this powerful creature against the crystal clear blue sky whilst balancing its weight on your arm that is safely covered in a thick leather glove! Then there was the camel ride into the sunset at the famous Elsen Tasarkhai dunes and the overnight stays in the country's most luxurious gher camps that our esteemed guests truly appreciated after a long day out in the sun.

One of the most unforgettable moment however was the encounter with the incredibly skilled horsemen and a herd of 250 semi-wild horses that we had specially arranged. Never in my life will I forget the moment those 250 horses appeared behind a rolling hill, long before announced by a deep rumbling in the ground. How they raced towards us at full speed, handled by no more than three Mongolian riders with their long wooden poles. The sheer power, the sound of a thousand hoofs, the dust, the energy... that is what unforgettable memories are made of. That is the magic Mongolia conveys.

For 2020, we had planned two private VIP tours to Mongolia and one leadership retreat. Then COVID-19 hit and all customers had to be called with the sad news that their dream trips had to be postponed. The great news is that Mongolia has been extremely safe during all this time – only 42 cases of imported infections, no deaths and no spread into the local Nomadic community. Once the borders open up, Mongolia will soon be a popular hidden gem again. We will certainly continue to take people to this stunning destination and share deep insights into the true Mongolian luxury. ■

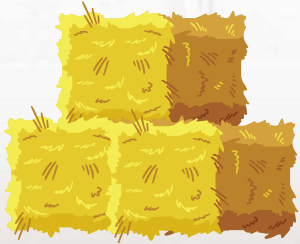
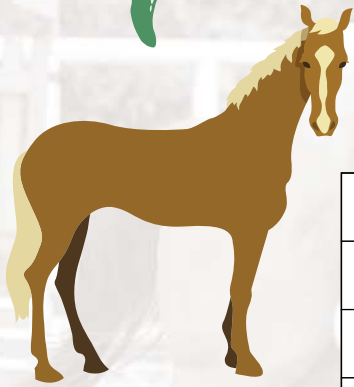
About the contributor:

Sonja Piontek is an award winning marketer, leading brand consultant and founder of SONNENKIND, which was set up early 2018. The visionary German leader has years of international experience in senior management roles at BMW and is well-known for developing international 'best practice' campaigns with impressive KPIs that were adopted internationally. Sonja is passionate about creating experiences, inspiring people, building brands and travelling the world. She has lived in six countries, speaks five languages and can be considered a true citizen of the world.

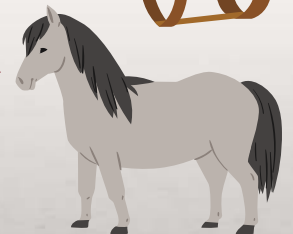
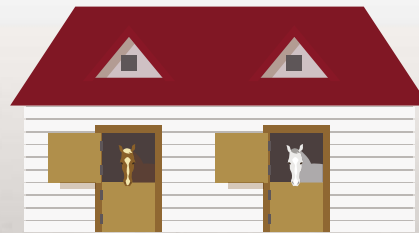


Equestrian

FUN WITH TWINKLE PIE



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Hello everyone,

The festive season is fast approaching and I am just so excited! For this issue, I will be giving away 10 Classic Family Card games and all you have to do is to find the missing words amongst the jumbled crossword puzzle.

Let's double the joy, fun and spread the festive cheer!



Images shown are for illustration purpose only. Prizes will be issued on a random basis.

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- Sir Richard Branson

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