



## TORONTO POLO CLUB 2009 PLAYER HANDBOOK

**Karen Bruce – Manager/ Polo Hotline  
Administrator**

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**Cliff Sifton – Club President**

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### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PRESIDENT: Cliff Sifton (905) 477-8000  
CO-ORDINATOR: Karen White (905) 505-0088  
OUTDOOR CHAIRMAN: Evan White Jr. (416) 798-6232  
INDOOR CHAIRMAN: Scott Weir (416) 930-1389  
SECRETARY: John Emery (905) 841-6161  
TREASURER: King Ward (416) 581-8850  
DIRECTOR: Brian O’Leary (416) 798-7007  
DIRECTOR: Mike Egan (905) 713-2511  
DIRECTOR: Mike Sifton (905) 752-1132  
DIRECTOR: Patrick Hearn (905) 261-0196  
DIRECTOR: Fernando Massalin (416) 253-7200 ext. 226  
DIRECTOR: Annabel Begg (905) 727-3437  
DIRECTOR: Wally Rudensky (90

The following polo committees will advise and assist in polo planning and administration 2007:

- **Disciplinary Committee** – Evan White Jr., Cliff Sifton, Scott Weir
- **Outdoor Committee** – Evan White Jr. (Chairman) , Scott Weir, Annabel Begg, Brian O’Leary, Fernando Massalin
- **Membership Committee** - Brian O’Leary (Chairman), Penny Davey, Cliff Sifton, Karen White, Mike Egan, Scott Weir
- **Handicap Committee** – Cliff Sifton, Evan White Jr., Scott Weir
- **Veterinary Committee** – Dr. Patrick Hearn (Chairman), Annabel Begg, Cliff Sifton, Brian O’Leary

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Toronto Polo Club, hereinafter called the “Club”, is operational during the winter season at the indoor arena at Fox Den Farm, at Bancroft Farm during the spring and fall, and during the summer season at Fox Den Farm and Alliston properties. Membership is subject to the approval of the Membership Committee.
- The Club has established a set of rules and code of ethics which members should acquaint themselves with, as set forth in this manual.
- In order to protect paying members, the Club does require that dues and fees be paid before playing.
- Professionals who are exempt from paying Club dues must have a USPA outdoor handicap rating of 3 goals or higher.
- The Club offers several membership categories to approved members that currently include:
  - Active Adult Member > Bronze Level (Max. 4 chukkers/ night)
  - Active Adult Member > Gold Level (unlimited chukkers/ night)
  - Social Member
  - Junior Member (24 years & under)
- New members are required to pay an initiation fee upon joining the Club. Junior members are not required to pay the initiation fee.
- All members of the Toronto Polo Club must also be members of the United States Polo Association.
- In the event that a sponsored player or professional player in the employ of a member is suspended from play, the Club specifically disavows any responsibility for any cost, direct or otherwise, incurred by the player or the member sponsoring the employing said player.
- The Toronto Polo Club follows the rules and regulations of the United States Polo Association. Any rule variances applied to Toronto Polo Club tournaments must be approved beforehand by the Board of Directors, and must be communicated to the club members before the tournament begins.
- The Club has certain committees that assist the Polo Manager/ Coordinator
- The rulings of the Indoor/ Outdoor Chairman are final on all matters.
- The Indoor and Outdoor Chairman develops a season program of league and tournament games. These schedules are sent to all members and are posted on the Club notice board.
- The Club sets dues for the polo season. These dues are reviewed and adjusted annually. Proceeds are used to operate the club, maintain the fields, and improve the facilities.

- There is a charge for leagues and tournaments which covers costs for Umpires, trophies, goal judges, etc. Players with outstanding tournament fees will not be permitted to enter future tournaments until all fees are paid in full.
- The Club reserves the right, at its discretion, to allow outside teams to enter tournaments and leagues.

## **POLO RULES**

- The Club is a private Club run for the members under the rules and guidelines of the United States Polo Association (U.S.P.A.).
- Any rule variances used during Toronto Polo Club tournaments must be approved by the Board of Directors, and must be communicated to the club members before the tournament begins.
- Any violation of the Club rules and regulations or failure to comply with the decisions of the Polo Manager/ Coordinator or Disciplinary Committee may result in:
  - warning;
  - fine;
  - suspension;
  - expulsion and termination of membership, or any combination thereof. The type of action taken for a general rules and regulation violation is left to the sole discretion of the Polo Manager and/or the Disciplinary Committee

## **PLAYER RULES**

- All players and officials for all tournament games must wear white britches or jeans, a riding or polo helmet, and riding boots.
- Players shall not play for more than one team in any one tournament.
- The aggregate handicap of a team must fall within the limits specified for a tournament. A team whose handicap is higher or lower than the specified limits shall not be permitted to participate.

## **PLAYER CONDUCT**

- The Disciplinary Committee will enforce the rules of sportsmanship and conduct of players on the playing field.
- Captains ONLY are permitted to communicate with the umpires during the matches.
- Any arguing, profanity, disrespectful conduct, rough or dangerous plays, refusing to play, or any other lack of sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Those who violate rules of conduct during a game will be penalized by the Umpires as follows;

1. A warning red flag will be given to the offending player, as well as a verbal warning, from the Umpire
  2. If the offending player continues to violate the rules they will then be dismissed from the game and given a fine of \$500
- Any fines levied by the Disciplinary Committee must be paid in full prior to further play by the violator.
  - Unsportsmanlike conduct and profane language on or off the playing field will not be tolerated. Membership rights may be rescinded for any player in violation of this provision.

\* Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to, conduct including actions or words, directed to any official, player, spectator, or other person or mount on Club grounds that is physically or verbally threatening, assaultive or abusive, demeaning, obscene, profane, belligerent, dangerous, or that violates standards of fair play or common decency generally accepted in the polo community and more particularly the club.\*

## **UMPIRES**

- It is the responsibility of qualified players to umpire games
- It is the player's responsibility to check the board or polo hotline to see if he/she is scheduled to umpire.
- The umpire should not talk with others while the game is in progress
- Umpires have exclusive authority over the entire game and are charged with the responsibility of executing their duties.
- Any horse found to be lame, out of control and/or dangerous may be sent off the field by the umpires.
- It is the Umpire's responsibility to report any unsportsmanlike conduct and the circumstances surrounding it to the Polo Manager and disciplinary committee as soon as possible.
- Should players be unwilling to umpire and cooperate with the Polo Office, they will not be permitted to play.
- Umpires must be present 15 minutes prior to the game time and are responsible for having suitable mounts.
- The final decision of canceling a game in progress, due to weather, shall be determined by the game officials and/or tournament officials. The team captains may be consulted, but the game and tournament officials shall make the official decision.

## **LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT PLAY**

- U.S.P.A. Rules and Regulations will govern all tournaments and leagues, unless otherwise noted. All players are responsible for reading and understanding all U.S.P.A. and Club rules. The TPC Board of Directors has the authority to revise rules and make rule variances/ decisions. These rule changes must be communicated to all members of the Toronto Polo Club before the tournament begins.
- The draw procedure and playing format will be decided by the Outdoor/ Indoor Chairman and not by the captains of the teams entered. Entry forms must be complete and entry fees paid in full prior to the draw. A team that withdraws from an event after the draw shall forfeit all fees and be subject to additional fines and/or suspension from the next tournament.
- Leagues and tournaments must be completed by the scheduled dates, weather permitting.
- Teams must play all of their league and tournament games regardless of their win/loss records so as not to unduly influence the rankings of remaining teams in the same tournament. Any team that withdraws without the approval of the Tournament Committee will be subject to severe fines and suspensions from future events.

## **SUBSTITUTIONS**

- Any time a substitution is to occur, the Outdoor Chairman must be notified in advance and the substituting player must be a current U.S.P.A. member and sign a release.
- Should a full paying member be unable to play a game or practice, he or she may substitute a qualified U.S.P.A. player from outside the Club roster to take his or her place. Guest charges (if applicable) will have to be paid for the substitute player by the member player being substituted.

## **PRACTICE**

- Club polo will be scheduled subject to the availability of players. Practices will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday afternoons during the outdoor season, and on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and Saturday afternoons during indoor season.
- Practices, matches and tournaments shall be subject to weather conditions.
- For each day a practice or match is to be played a schedule will be recorded on the Polo Hotline, (905) 888-POLO.
- The Polo Office will determine the schedule, field allocations, and playing times for all practices and matches.
- To sign up for a practice game players must call the Polo Hotline and leave their name and number of chukkers desired before the sign-up deadline. Sign up deadlines are outlined below.

- Each player is responsible to have his/her white and blue practice shirts at each practice game throughout the outdoor season, and yellow and blue shirts for the Indoor season.
- Players must be on time for all practices and games. Player tardiness at any scheduled event will result in a fine of \$50 for each offence.
- All players must sign a release prior to playing. Any player who is not a paying member must first register at the Polo Office and sign a release before playing or mounting and riding any polo ponies whether for sale or otherwise while on club grounds. All grooms must sign a release before riding any polo ponies on Club grounds.
- Members must notify the Polo Office in advance of any non-member using the facilities and all members are hereby advised and should understand that the use of Club facilities is a privilege that can be revoked, if abused.

## **SIGN-UP DEADLINES FOR CLUB PRACTICE**

### **Indoor Polo (October - April)**

Monday Night practice at 7:00pm.....sign-up by Monday morning at 10:00am  
 Wednesday Night practice at 7:00pm.....sign-up by Wednesday morning at 10:00am  
 Saturday afternoon practice at 12:00pm....sign-up by Friday night at 6:00pm

*\* Early games will be arranged if there are enough players that wish to play early*

### **Outdoor Polo (May – September)**

Tuesday Night practice at 6:00pm.....sign-up by Tuesday morning at 10:00am  
 Thursday Night practice at 6:00pm..... sign-up by Thursday morning at 10:00am  
 Saturday afternoon practice at 12:00pm...sign-up by Friday night at 6:00pm

*\* Early games will be arranged if there are enough players that wish to play early*

## **USE OF THE FACILITY**

- The Clubhouse, fields and practice areas are reserved for the exclusive use of members subject to the following exceptions:
  - Members whose dues are up-to-date shall have the privilege of inviting guests to use their horses and play in practice games. Each full paying member shall be limited to 3 guest passes per season. Guests must be a member of the U.S.P.A. and must sign a release prior to playing or riding on Club grounds.
  - The Club (at its discretion) may invite, under special circumstances, visiting teams or players to participate in any league or tournaments without the membership rules applying. Visiting teams are responsible for paying all tournament fees and may be subject to a team daily rate.

## **THE PAVILION**

- The pavilion on Field #1 (South Field at the Fox Den Farm) is often rented during the season to sponsors and guests. Signs will be posted on the days that the pavilion is being used for private parties. We ask that members use the field side for game viewing on these days, so as not to interfere with our sponsors.

## **THE CLUBHOUSES**

- The Clubhouse at the Fox Den Farm Arena, the Bancroft Farm Clubhouse, and the Clubhouse in Alliston are for the exclusive use of paying members, their families and guests.
- All food and beverages consumed by members, their families and guests, must be signed out in the sign-up book provided at the snack bar. Members are responsible for paying for the food and beverages consumed by their families, guests and employees.
- Dogs are not permitted in the Clubhouses.
- Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian when visiting the Clubhouses, using the pool or the playground facilities in Alliston . These areas are not supervised.

## **TRASH**

- Please pick up bottles, cans, tail tape and trash in your trailer area after each game and instruct your grooms to assist in keeping these areas clean. Please be sure to take your trash with you or put it in the trash cans.

## **DOGS**

- Dogs must be on a leash at all times on Club property. A \$50 fine will be imposed to the owner for the first offence, and any subsequent offences will result in the dog being banned altogether from the Club property.
- Dogs are not allowed in the Clubhouses, Pavilion, children's play area or the pool area.

## **INDOOR POLO RULES**

- Members are responsible for cleaning up any mess made by their ponies while tied in the tie-up area of the arena at Fox Den Farm. If a member, or their groom, leaves a mess behind after practices or matches the member will be charged a fine of \$50 for each offence.

- The Fox Den Farm stable area and tack room are private and are strictly off limits to members and their guests. Please do not walk through the stable area or tack room to get to the Indoor polo facility. Members must use the arena entrance on the East side of the building.
- Players are not permitted to stick & ball in the arena while it is being harrowed between chukkers. Please stay out of the way of the tractor.
- The arena lights are costly to run. They will be turned on 20 minutes before Club practice to allow for warm-up of horses, and they will be turned off 20 minutes after the final chukker of the night to allow for cool-out of horses.
- Lessons are not to be taught in the arena, or on any club fields, unless pre-arranged through the Polo Office.
- Indoor club polo will be cancelled if the temperature falls below –15 degrees.

## **VEHICLES**

- During the winter season trailer parking receives priority. Do not block in trailers or park in the trailer parking lot next to the East entrance of the Indoor facility. Cars can park at the front of the barn, and members and guests should walk around the barn and enter at the East entrance to the Indoor facility.
- The speed limit on all Club grounds is 20km
- Fox Den Farm North field trailer parking is in the center of the exercise track
- Fox Den Farm South field trailer parking is on the South and East sides of the field
- Alliston trailer parking is on the West side of fields #1 & #2 (by the road), or on the East side of Field #3 (behind the drainage ditch). Vehicles must not drive on the grass in front of the barns to reach field #3 parking, they must use the road that goes behind the barns.
- Fox Den Farm, Alliston, and the Club will not be responsible for any damage to vehicles caused by polo, horses, or any other manner whilst on Club grounds.

## **RIDING AREAS & PLAYING FIELDS**

- There will be no exercising, schooling, or general riding on the polo fields or stick and ball areas.
- Stick and ball is permitted around the edges of the polo fields before or after practices or games, or between chukkers.
- All players are required to stomp/ replace the divots on the field after they play. Failure to do so will result in a \$50 fine.

## **HORSE EXERCISING**

Horses may be exercised in specified areas only. The following rules apply:

- Stay within the limits of Club grounds.
- Maximum of four horses to a set
- Ride to side of fields; do not ride on polo fields or farmed fields
- Be courteous to property owners and drivers
- Members shall take every precaution to ensure the safety of people and horses at all times
- The Polo Manager has full authority to prohibit anyone from riding on the Club grounds if the person does not possess adequate riding skills.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND INSURANCE**

- Toronto Polo Club is a private Club, which reserves the right to accept or refuse members at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- The membership season is January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>
- An application for membership must be filled in and submitted to the Club. The Membership Committee and/or Board of Directors will address all applications within 2 weeks of receipt.
- All players must sign a release waiver prior to playing and do so for each new year. This waiver will also be required of grooms, guests, and family who ride within the Club grounds or bridle paths.
- It is highly recommended that all Members carry medical insurance for themselves, their grooms and sponsored players.

**TORONTO POLO CLUB**  
**2009 TOURNAMENT RULE VARIANCES**

*As approved by the Toronto Polo Club Board of Directors on January 24, 2007*

1. In all tournament or match games, only non-professionals may hit a penalty 2 or 3, in rotation. If there is no Pro on the team, then a highest rated player (3 goals or above) may not hit a penalty 2 or 3
2. In 4-goal tournaments, all players rated higher than 3-goals may not touch the ball inside the 30 yard line.
3. In 6-goal tournaments, all players rated 5-goals or higher may not touch the ball inside the 30 yard line.
4. All decisions of the outdoor committee are final. The 2007 committee is Evan White Jr., Fernando Massalin, Scott Weir, Brian O'Leary, Annabel Begg.
5. In 6-goal tournaments, the same 3 players may play in a maximum of 2 tournaments out of the 4 scheduled.
6. A zero tolerance policy will be enforced by the Umpire and disciplinary committee during games. Violating players will receive a red flag and verbal warning after their first offence, and if they offend again they will be dismissed from the game and given a \$500 fine.
7. Discipline committee for 2007 is Cliff Sifton, Evan White Jr., Scott Weir