

## **FAQ ENG**

### **I read somewhere that Polo team members are required to have a current medical certificate in order to participate to activities. How does it work?**

Yes, both the Bocconi Equestrian Sports Team - Polo and the Italian Equestrian Sports Federation (FISE) require members to have a current medical certificate in order to practice Polo in Italy. Polo players with a Handicap are required to have a current certificate of fitness for equestrian sports valid in Italy. All the information will be given by the equestrian club where Polo activities are practiced.

### **Can I start practicing even though I've never ridden a horse?**

Yes, all Polo players have been beginners! The equestrian club will discuss with you the necessary steps to learn to play Polo: 1. learn to ride a horse; 2. learn to stick-and-ball; 3. learn to play chukkers; 4. play with the team.

### **I'm an experienced rider who has never played polo, how can I start?**

Check the previous page for our affiliated polo clubs and reach out to them!

### **Besides the horse, what kind of equipment do you need?**

The stick, known as a "mallet," is made from a shaft of bamboo with a head that is either bamboo root or a hard wood such as maple. Mallets vary in length from 48 to 54 inches and are very flexible in comparison to a golf club or hockey stick. The ball is usually plastic. It weighs 4 1/2 ounces and is 3 1/2 inches in diameter. In play, the ball travels about three times faster than the horse and rider who last hit it. A polo helmet provides safety and is designed to remain comfortable during play, and kneepads protect the player's knees when "riding off" or "bumping" an opponent.

### **Is it true you can't play left-handed?**

Yes. For safety reasons, lefties were banned from polo in the mid-1930s.

### **Are Polo Ponies horses or ponies?**

Originally, no horse higher than thirteen hands and two inches (54") was allowed to play in the game of polo, so the horses were of "pony" size. Today there is no size limit and the horses used range from 14 to 16+ hands. Most polo horses are between 5 and 15 years of age, and are thoroughbreds, or crossbreeds of thoroughbreds and quarter horses. The ideal polo pony combines speed, agility, courage, temperament and intelligence, and players acknowledge that a good pony contributes 50-80% of the pony/rider team's ability. This is why you will see "Best Playing Pony" honors being awarded after important games and tournaments.

### **How many players on each team?**

Four per team outdoors, three indoors (where four would be a crowd).

### **How many periods in a game?**

There are six periods, called "chukkers," in a polo game (four in Indoor/Arena Polo), each lasting 6 1/2 minutes. At the end of the 6 1/2 minutes, a bell sounds to let the players know 30 seconds remain. At 6 1/2 minutes, a horn sounds to end the period. In the event of a tie at the end of the final chukker, there is a 5-minute intermission to allow the players to catch their breath and change to a fresh mount before beginning a chukker in which the first team to score wins the match.

### **How does the player handicap system work?**

Players are rated on a scale of -1 to 10, determined by a player's horsemanship, hitting, quality of horses, team play, game sense, and sportsmanship. The team handicap is the sum of its players' handicaps. In handicap matches, the team with the higher handicap gives the difference in goals to the other team. For example, a 6-goal team will give two goals to a 4-goal team.