

4-H Equine - Project Options - About Polo

About Polo

Polo is one of the fastest, roughest, and most dangerous sports played today.

Polo is played on a 10-acre grass field, 300 yards in length by 160 yards, which is the approximate area of ten football fields. Goal posts are set eight yards apart on either end of the field.

The object of the game is to move the ball downfield, hitting the ball through the goal for a score. The team with the most scores at the end of the match is deemed the winner. Teams then change direction after each goal.

There are six periods or "chukkers" in a match, each is seven (7) minutes long. Play begins with a throw-in of the ball by the umpire at the opening of each chukker and after each goal; only penalties or injuries may stop play as there are no time-outs or substitutions allowed, except for tack repair.

There are four (4) basic shots in polo:

1. Near-side, forward (left side of the mount)
2. Near-side, back shot
3. Off-side, forward (right side of the mount)
4. Off-side, back shot

Shots can also be made under the pony's neck, across his tail, or the difficult under the belly shot, all variations of the basic shots.

A team is made up of four players, each wearing a jersey with numbers 1 to 4, which correspond to their assigned position. Each player is also assigned an opponent to cover on defense and must be prepared to shift offensive and defensive modes and to make any play that will benefit his team.

The polo ponies are essential to the success of any team. Players must change mounts after each chukker due to the extreme demands placed on the pony. A team usually has a minimum of 24 horses available during the match.

Although there are many rules to the game of polo, the primary concept to which all rules are dedicated is safety, for the player and his mount.

For more information on **Polo**, visit the following websites:

Polo Canada http://polocanada.ca/?page_id=2

United States Polo Association <http://www.us-polo.org/>