**Polo Legends; True Warriors!**

Polo is a sport celebrated worldwide and has furnished many illustrious names and legendary tales. A game of aristocracy and excellence, of grace and unique athletic prowess, Polo has exhibited and signified true sportsmanship and camaraderie, indisputably since its birth. Gradually, many anecdotes and spellbinding tales came to the fore as the game progressed in the pages of history. Its vivacity has been glorified. This royal sport bestowed us with many icons and legends, and the fascination with the sport is like religion for many.

Polo has never failed to express itself in the form of royalty, authenticity, ethics and its romantic aura. Boldness, serenity and charisma is felt on the polo arena, and makes Polo players stand out in a crowd of crème de la crème.

Numerous legendary stories and examples surround the spectacular sport. Polo originated in the serene state of Manipur and has always been an integral part of the Manipur ideology. Later, the Britishers gave a definite shape and structure to the sport, which are followed religiously even today. Hence, the birth of this dynamic game took place in India.

It is not a sport that is introduced to legends after a certain age. Persian Emperor Shapur II was introduced to the game at the age of seven, in 316 AD. The stereotype that you need to grow up to understand the sport and its rules was thus broken long back.

An eternal and refined relationship of compatibility and dependence brings a new zeal in the life of each Polo player. It is similar to the legendary tale of Maharana Pratap and his courageous companion Chetak: the essence of a responsible bond, understanding and trust can never be explained in a better way than reciting the example of these two great legends. Their love and support for each other is an illustration of what we aspire to have today with our companions!

Polo has always been a sport favoured, supported and popularised by the elites and royals. The elites of Egypt and the Sultans Saladin and Baibars were keen enthusiasts of Polo, and therefore popularised the game in Egypt and Levant back then. And then came the golden era of the Mughals who took to Polo tremendously. Mughal Emperor Jalal ud-din Akbar, a terrific player himself, introduced Polo to the Mughals and the nation by being a part of it wholeheartedly. Later, the legendary Mughal emperor, known to be one of the first king to win the loyalty of non-Muslim population, glorified this powerful sport throughout India. It was his custom to play Chaugan, with this extravagantly opulent stick, which performed not just blistering goals but acts of charity as well. Whenever the emperor would strike his mallet against the ball, a few gems would become detached, and the ground would be strewn with expensive gems. Spectators would rush to collect the gems.

Polo has been a prized possession of the Royals of Rajasthan. Sir Pratap Singh of Jodhpur is a huge and respected name in Polo because of his prodigious offering to Jodhpur with the gift of the sport. He invited the Bengal Lancers to raise the Jodhpur Lancers, introducing Polo to Jodhpur in its current form. HH Gaj Singh, Maharaja of Marwar-Jodhpur and the founder of the Jodhpur Polo & Equestrian Institute, worked persistently to reinstate Jodhpur as India’s main centre for equestrian sports in general and Polo in particular. He restored the well-known Jodhpur team and has been actively participating in hosting Polo events, celebrating the true spirit of Polo.

The involvement of legendary women in the sport turned out to be a huge opening of doors for women throughout India to be a part of this elegant sport. The support of Maharani Gayatri Devi of Jaipur is beyond comparison. Her participation to widen the reach of Polo for all is supreme in every possible way. And the foundation that was laid down by her has been gracefully carried by none other than Sawai Padmanabh Singh, a passionate lover of Polo and a renowned player worldwide!

TIPA vows to respect and idolise the mighty contribution of the legends, in building an honourable platform for the Polo fraternity. La Polo salutes the bravery and efforts put in keeping one of the oldest games of India alive in its true spirit.