



Aspen Stakes its Claim to
WORLD CLASS SNOW POLO

By Jane Solar
Snow Polo Photos by David Lominska

Aspen, City of Hollywood glitz and glamour was center stage for the Piaget Polo on the Snow 10th Annual USPA World Snow Polo Championship during the Christmas season.

Barry Stout's polo ponies were brought down from his Stout ranch for the Snow Polo Championships.



Team Bombay Sapphire members James Miller, Stuart Campbell and Chet Lott surrounded by the Bombay girls.



In North America, snow polo is played exclusively in Aspen, Colorado. The infamous Hotel Jerome hosted a cocktail reception and live auction to kick off the event which benefited Aspen Sister Cities on Thursday evening December 17th. The players began arriving from all corners of the globe on Friday and a Draw was held in the beautiful new Limelight Lodge followed by a supper hosted by L'Hostaria Restaurant and the Roaring Fork Polo Club. Under crisp but clear Colorado skies, the action began on Saturday in Aspen's Wagner Park. With magnificent mountain views as a backdrop, six teams took to the snow covered field to compete in a two day elimination tournament to win the coveted USPA World Snow Polo Championship. Barry Stout, the Event Coordinator and owner of The Stout Ranch, provided his top Colorado polo horses for the event.

Alan Martinez, playing for Team Crestview Genetics keeps his eyes and mallet on the ball.

Team Audi won the 10th Annual USPA World Snow Polo Championship. From left to right - Melissa Ganzi, Kris Kampsen and Juan Bollini.



Piaget, the title sponsor's team, consisted of high goalers Nacho Figueras, Marc Ganzi and Nicolas Roldan. Land Rover-Roaring Fork's team was comprised of two french players, Olivier Girard and Clemence Pierre along with Collen Clark. Playing for Bombay Sapphire was James Miller, Stuart Campbell and Chet Lott. Crestview Genetics team, in a repeat performance from 2008 was comprised of Alan Meeker, Alan Martinez and John Eicher. Audi's team was headed up by Melissa Ganzi, Kris Kampsen and Juan Bollini. The field was rounded out by Team L'Hostaria with Kishan Khanna, Mark Goode and Carlos Gracida on board. Head Umpire, Darrell Schwetz and George Olivas were in charge of the matches and Josh Hall was the event's veterinarian.

The polo was fast and aggressive due in part to the Polo Zamboni, a new snow cat leased from the Aspen Ski Company. The field was groomed every other chukker throughout the weekend. The polo was agreed to be played as an open competition. All the players were able to show off their talent as well as team play. Announcers, Christian Moon and Will Shore along with the music man, kept the games lively and the crowds enthused.

Christmas was definitely reflected in the VIP Event tent which was traditionally decorated with beautiful red bows, lovely wreaths and garlands. Keurig the well known international coffee company provided coffee, tea and hot cocoa to over one thousand fans that attended the two day event. Piaget's lounge was continuously peppered with spectators viewing their stunning Polo forty-five watches while players relaxed between chukkers. Italian fare was served buffet style by L'Hostaria while Bombay Sapphire provided continuous exotic drink concoctions served up by beautiful Bombay Sapphire models. The players and other guests retired for a special supper at Aspen's top Caribou Club on Saturday Evening. Six teams competed, but it was the Piaget and Audi teams who found

themselves in the final on Sunday. In the end, Audi was victorious with a 4/3 final score. Award ceremonies followed with the MVP watch presentation by Piaget to Juan Bollini. The BPP was Lee played by Olivier Girard. All winners received Lucchese boots and La Martina garments were everywhere. Players and attendees dispersed for the holidays with wonderful reflections of snow polo, new friends and a great time by all.

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