



## **Elephant Polo. The world's most exclusive sport.**

It's hard to think of a sport that is more exclusive than Elephant Polo. In terms of sheer tonnage it is undoubtedly the "biggest" form of Polo. Elephant Polo is legendary in polo circles, but few have the good fortune to experience the phenomenon firsthand.

Elephant Polo was dreamed up in a "watering hole" in St. Moritz by a Scotsman and a British expat: James Manclark, a former British Olympic Skeleton tobogganner, and Jim Edwards who had made his home in Nepal. The game that Manclark and Edwards developed is a modern version of the one played in India about 110 years ago by members of the British aristocracy. The World Elephant Polo Association (WEPA) was formed in 1982 at Tiger Tops Jungle Lodge in the Royal Chitwan National Park in south west Nepal. WEPA is the first and paramount organization to host the sport in modern times.

The rules are similar to horse polo, but the pitch is somewhat smaller (because elephants are slower than horses), the sticks are longer, and there are some necessary rules like the one that elephants must not lie down in front of the goal to block it.

The primary difference between elephant polo and horse polo, apart from the substitution of an elephant for a horse, is that the elephants are "driven" by their trainers (mahouts). The mahout controls the elephant with verbal commands and by applying pressure to the back of the elephant's ears with his bare feet. Apart from Nepal, WEPA has endorsed Tournaments in Thailand (Chiang Rai) and Sri Lanka. WEPA has the right to hold the World Championships in Elephant Polo and the winners get to hold the cherished trophy.

Over the years, the World Elephant Polo Association (WEPA), together with the Thailand Elephant Polo Association (TEPA) and the Ceylon Elephant Polo Association (CEPA) have generated through their tournaments money for charities, mainly for elephant conservation. In Thailand the King's Cup Tournament is sanctioned by the Royal Family.

WEPA Elephant Polo Championships and the images fly across the world and are shown on many networks and countless print media, as always, hence generating free publicity.

Comparable to Formula 1 car racing WEPA Teams are usually being sponsored by a company and flash their corporate logo in the Team name and uniform.

The unique and exclusive positioning of WEPA Elephant Polo and the prevailing popularity of polo fashion make this brand an attractive and different license.

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