

Promoting Polocrosse

Polocrosse is a brilliant sport, both to play and to watch. The problem is not enough people know about it and even if they do know about it they find it hard to start playing. We plan to work on both these areas but this document is designed to help you as individuals and as clubs to promote polocrosse in your local areas, to attract more spectators to your tournaments and to attract new members to your clubs.

Advertising

One of the best ways to get more people to come and watch and try out polocrosse is to increase the level of advertising. However advertising can cost money and that is the one thing that is invariably lacking in polocrosse. Therefore the following are low cost solutions to promote polocrosse:

- **Local Press** – a lot of local newspapers and magazine will run small articles about polocrosse tournaments if they are told about them, polocrosse tournaments are unusual and journalists like something a bit out of the ordinary. It is particularly good if the local paper has a dedicated equestrian sports section (which some local papers in more rural areas do) but otherwise they may well include it with general sports or just within local news. They may well publish something in advance for you and then follow it up with a tournament report (good polocrosse pictures are also always a useful thing to send them). Sometimes there are dedicated local equestrian magazines and these are an even better target as they are almost guaranteed to be interested. Below is a suggested wording for contacting local press and alerting them to your upcoming tournament.
- **Online Listings** – There are a number of websites that offer online listings services for local events and some which are dedicated purely to equestrian events. It is worthwhile spending a bit of time search the internet and putting your tournament on a few of them.
- **Posters and signs** – Posters and signs are a brilliant way to alert the local community that a tournament is approaching. Ideally the site of the polocrosse tournament should have large signs outside it during the weekend and preferably for a while before hand as well so that passing drivers can see them. Posters can be placed in local tack shops and feed merchants and anywhere else the local equestrian community is likely to go (e.g. local riding schools). Below is an example poster, where the details of your tournament can easily be filled in and then the poster can be printed off and distributed.
- **Your Players** – Polocrosse players don't just sit at home in between tournaments and when they go out they tend to wear clothes. If players wear their club coats and shirts around their local towns then people see them and invariably wonder "what is polocrosse?" This is a brilliant way of free advertising and is even more important if you have a local sponsor (as the more exposure you give your sponsors the happier they will be).
- **Have a dedicated press/ promotion officer** – Each club should have one person whose role is to promote the club within the local area and to ensure that each tournament is publicised as much as possible. By having one person dedicated to this role it stops any confusion and therefore stops anything being done twice or not at all (because everyone thinks someone else is doing it)
- **Have a website** – More and more people now use the web to research things, by having a club website your club has a way of being found by people who are interested in finding out more about polocrosse. It is also a useful source of publicity for any club sponsors you may have. Websites can be obtained for free from www.freewebs.com and also from other sources and these come with tools to help you build and design your website. Alternatively have a facebook page!
- **Guerrilla Marketing** – Don't be afraid to take unusual steps to attract attention to draw attention to your club and to polocrosse in general. For example leaving polocrosse magazines in doctors and dentist surgeries and making use of online items such as Youtube and Facebook. The only thing to remember is that you don't want negative publicity so probably don't spray paint "Polocrosse Rocks" over the all the doors in your street!

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is one of the hardest things to get for a sport the size of polocrosse, however it is possible! The first thing as a club you should ask yourself is do we need/ want sponsorship? If the answer is no then don't worry about it! There is no need killing yourself trying to get local companies interested if you don't really want it.

If you decide that you do want sponsorship then it is necessary to look at it from the point of view of the sponsor, as a sponsor there are three questions they will want to know the answers to;

- 1) How much do you want?
- 2) Why do you want it?
- 3) What do they get out of it?

Therefore before approaching any potential sponsors work out the answers to these questions. Reasons you might want sponsorship could be to invest in new playing shirts and equipment in order to grow the club and the sport in your local area. What the sponsor will receive out of it is publicity on both the local and the national equestrian scene (when you go travelling all round the country). Other things you can offer them in return include advertisements in the UKPA magazine and trade stands at your tournaments. It may help if sponsors have some sort of link to the equestrian world but it is not essential!

Approach local riding groups

Most people who take up polocrosse have ridden before therefore if you want to recruit new players then a good place to start is local riding clubs and riding schools. The UKPA have a brilliant new promotional DVD in order to show people what polocrosse is about so it is easy to go to local riding groups, give them a copy and then see if they would be interested in having a go after they have watched it. Again, it helps if one person does this role so that groups aren't approached more than once and it doesn't get confusing!

That's about all! Good luck promoting!

Suggested wording for contacting the press about upcoming polocrosse events:

Dear xxxxx,
xxxxx polocrosse club is holding its annual tournament on the xth and xth of xxxxxx and if you could give it any publicity in your newspaper/ magazine *(delete as appropriate)* we would be very grateful.
Polocrosse is basically lacrosse on horseback and is one of the fastest and action packed equestrian sports there is. It involves the stick skills and physical nature of lacrosse but on top of a horse travelling at high speed on a large grass pitch
The xxxxxx polocrosse tournament is an annual event that is held at xxxxx, xxxx, xxxxx each year and attracts most of the top polocrosse players from within the UK and invariably a number of top foreign players as well so high quality action is guaranteed throughout the weekend. Play runs from X to X o'clock on Saturday the xth and from X to X o'clock on Sunday the xth. Spectators are most welcome to come along and watch and it is entirely free of charge.
If you would like more information then please don't hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

xxxxx Polocrosse Club Publicity Officer



Anyone for...Polocrosse?

XXXX Polocrosse Club is holding its annual tournament on the Xth and Xth of XXXX at XXXX, XXXX, XXXX. Why not come along and watch one of the fastest and most action packed horse sports there is?

For more information on the tournament contact XXXXX on XXXX, and on polocrosse in general go to www.polocrosse.org.uk

Entrance is completely free to all, we look forwards to seeing you there!

