



2020 SPRING BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING RECAP



On April 18, 2020, the USPA Board of Governors convened for the first time in history via video conference for their annual April Board of Governors Meeting. Due to the pandemic the USPA decided in March to hold a virtual meeting for the safety of all those involved. Committees were encouraged to meet prior to the call and their reports were condensed into the various division presentations. The Board spoke in depth about the effect of COVID-19 on the polo community and approved two relief programs to be launched immediately, and a Tournament Stimulus Package to be utilized once the suspension had been lifted. Additionally, due to COVID-19, the Board extended the suspension of USPA Events until May 15, 2020, and postponed the June 1, 2020, NOCSAE Helmet mandate until January 1, 2021, to allow the manufacturers adequate time to acquire a sufficient amount of product. Below is a summary of the full events of the Saturday meeting:

The meeting took place from 9:00am to 4:20pm ET on April 18, 2020. Chairman Armstrong began the meeting and all 28 Board members, staff and additional invited guests were in attendance.

Secretary's Report

Mr. Smith, USPA Secretary, ratified the previous actions of the Board in his Secretary's report and presented a club action list to the Board. The Board approved the clubs per the list and gave a July 1, 2020, deadline to rectify any compliance issues. [April 2020 USPA Member Club Recommendations to the USPA Board of Governors.](#)



Treasurer's Report

Mr. Rudolph, Treasurer, presented a brief financial report. He stated that the USPA is in a solid financial position but must remain vigilant in exercising prudence in spending and mindful of the macroeconomic situation.

Finance Committee

Mr. Ramirez Jr., Finance Committee Chairman, offered a brief overview of the USPA's financial position in relation to the global economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic stating that the USPA's investments are in a strong position for the current market. For the short term, to preserve liquidity at USPA Global Licensing (USPAGL), the USPA and USPAGL have mutually agreed upon suspension of royalties until a review of sales later in the year. The USPA's financial advisors, Meketa Investment Group, presented the USPA's Fund Evaluation Report for the first quarter 2020. There was consensus that the portfolio's move to targeted investment allocations during fourth quarter 2019 facilitated performance in accordance with the Board-approved Investment Policy through the current reporting period.



USPA Global Licensing

Mr. Prince, President & CEO of USPAGL provided an update on U.S. Polo Assn. and the global impact of COVID-19. He mentioned that in February, he updated the USPAGL Board of Directors that the company had delivered a record 2019 following a record 2018. U.S. Polo Assn. continued to elevate as a brand and the business had grown significantly over the past two



years reaching \$1.7 billion in retail sales, expanding into 180 countries worldwide, opening more than 1,100 retail stores, and passing over five million social media followers.

The business through February 2020 was performing very strong and was on pace for another record year even though COVID-19 was negatively impacting China at the time. However, as of April 2020, most countries globally were on lock-down with the exceptions being China, South Korea and Sweden. He also mentioned that over 1,000 of the brand's 1,100 retail stores were closed and that almost all of the brand's department store partners globally were closed. U.S. Polo Assn. was generating some business from e-commerce, but most consumers were currently focused on necessities and not apparel. He discussed how USPA royalties would be negatively impacted for the foreseeable future during these unprecedented times. He shared with the Board that USPAGL is in a strong cash position and took immediate action in late February and early March to manage the crisis. He thanked the USPA for their partnership on the crisis and mentioned how he was managing royalty payments with the USPA as well as working with vendors and key licensing partners on their payments. USPAGL had also reduced expenses and were securing additional sources of capital such as a bank credit line and evaluating governmental stimulus packages to provide additional financial security. He also shared the support that U.S. Polo Assn. was providing around the world creating millions of face-covers with its licensing partners that would be distributed to those in need. Mr. Cummings, Chairman, reported that USPAGL management had taken prudent and responsible actions to minimize business disruption and economic impact caused by COVID-19. Mr. Cummings discussed the nominations of USPAGL directors Chip Campbell, Samuel Ramirez Jr. and Jack Shelton to three-year terms as well as Tony Coppola and Bob Puetz to one-year terms as ex-officio members. In closing, Mr. Prince thanked the USPA again for their support and reiterated that U.S. Polo Assn. was well-positioned for the long-term and would come out of these challenging times stronger because of its sport-inspired heritage, accessible prices and strong global partners!

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met frequently in the weeks leading up to the April Board of Governors meeting to help steer various COVID-19 initiatives to present to the full Board. Mr. Puetz, USPA CEO, provided a narrative for the three COVID-19 programs and summarized each of the plans. He reported that the process began with the staff reaching out to each individual club and assessing their various needs and concerns due to the pandemic and assigning each a risk rating. From that point they proposed three different plans to the Executive Committee: the USPA COVID-19 Equine Welfare Relief Program, USPA COVID-19 Distressed Club Relief Program and the COVID-19 USPA Polo Tournament Stimulus Package.



The [USPA COVID-19 Equine Welfare Relief program](#) provides immediate financial relief to support USPA clubs, Intercollegiate/Interscholastic programs, polo schools and private polo instructors who are struggling to maintain proper upkeep for their horses and are in desperate need of assistance to provide their horses proper nutrition. The [USPA COVID-19 Distressed Club Relief Program](#) is designed to support distressed clubs who have experienced a significant financial loss from March 15, 2020 to May 31, 2020 and are struggling to maintain the essential infrastructure of the club. The support will be focused on non-equine care related costs. The [COVID-19 USPA Polo Tournament Stimulus Package](#) is an effort geared to stimulate the clubs and boost the polo community as the country emerges out of the COVID-19 crisis. Through the Tournament Stimulus Package, the USPA will provide various means of support to clubs for their first two USPA tournaments after the suspension has been lifted. The Board unanimously supported each of the programs and requested they be launched as soon as possible.



In addition to the COVID-19 programs, the Board postponed the NOCSAE June 1, 2020, deadline to January 1, 2021. The decision was based on the inability of the helmet manufacturers to operate or produce product due to the COVID-19 pandemic work restrictions.

The Board approved the Executive Committee's recommendation to extend the suspension of all USPA Polo Events through May 15, 2020, and recommend that clubs continue to suspend



Club Events through that same period. The Board empowered the Executive Committee to make individual determinations subject to the law and local jurisdiction going forward.

The Board approved a donation to support the Museum of Polo and Hall of Fame and to build a line item into the future USPA budgets for an annual museum contribution.

Services

Mr. Stanislawski, Chairman of the Audit Committee, gave a brief report and noted that the annual audit is projected to be clean. He mentioned as the Chairmanship for the Audit Committee is on an annual basis Mr. Habib Narsullah will be taking over after this meeting. Mr. Stanislawski noted that his personal term on the Audit Committee would be expiring next year and they are continuing to look for a replacement member, who ideally would be a USPA member with a CPA degree.



Mr. Rizzo, Chairman of the Board and Staff Development Committee noted that the Committee will be looking into the limited liability company (LLC) structure to see if it is still effective. He mentioned that there is a strong need for a compliance officer.

Mr. Carlucho Arellano, Executive Director of Services, gave an overview of the Services Department and provided updates from various committees. He noted that the Equine Welfare Committee had successfully drug tested 24 horses in Florida and 48 horses in California. The



Horse Registry Committee had worked with Diego Cappella (Cappella Photography) to design a horse catalog for the GAUNTLET OF POLO®. Mr. Arellano gave a brief overview of the Tournament Database which was launched last year to streamline the applications and results for USPA tournaments. He reported that the High-Goal Committee, Handicap Committee and Rules Committee had been very active throughout the beginning of the year. The Arena Committee has continued to focus on Arena Development through the National Arena Amateur League and other initiatives. He reported that due to COVID-19 all International Events have been suspended for the year, however, the International Committee was successful in supporting the Women's India trip and the Federation of International Polo (FIP) Ambassadors Cup. He noted the Committee still has plans to support miscellaneous events like the Butler International Cup that is set to take place in September at the Oakbrook Polo Club.

The Board approved a motion from the Armed Forces Committee for Circuit Military tournaments (0-3 Arena – Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, 3-6 Arena – General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, 0-4 Outdoor – General George S. Patton, 4-8 Outdoor – General George S. Brown) to have handicap levels listed as recommendations and that clubs are able to request these tournaments outside of the recommended handicap levels.

The Board approved a motion from the Safety Committee to align the Rules with the decision to postpone the NOCSAE Helmet mandate to January 1, 2021.

The Board approved the [National and Sanctioned Tournament Applications](#) as presented.

USPA Umpires, LLC

Mr. Muldoon, Executive Director of the Umpires LLC, gave an overview of the Umpires LLC performance to date. He reported that under the leadership of Fergus Gould, Western Regional Umpire Director, 10 Umpires were officiating in Indio, California, on a rotating basis between Eldorado Polo Club and Empire Polo Club, umpiring up to 30 games per week. Dana Fortugno, Eastern Regional Umpire Director was brought in this year to help manage the East Coast. There were 249 games officiated throughout Florida during the months of January, February and March. Mr. Fortugno continues to make updates to the Video Rulebook and all 2020 changes have been implemented. Umpires LLC are utilizing a new scheduling app called PoloSK. The new platform provides immediate up-to-date information regarding all facets of managing the umpire program. It was noted that all Umpire contracts were paid in full and the Umpires continue to be engaged to help the polo community. They are offering virtual Rules Reviews for any clubs requesting them.



The Board approved the following revised mission statement for the Umpires LLC:

The mission of the USPA Umpires, LLC, is to support all aspects of the umpire services and programs within the United States Polo Association. This includes the training and certification of all umpires, the consistent interpretation of the rules on the field and training, the education of the players regarding the rules and rules updates and the support of the USPA professional umpires. The LLC aspires to create a safe, rules driven environment in every club it touches, with the goals of achieving respect and treating all participants fairly.



USPAGL Global Polo Entertainment

Mrs. Stilson, Assistant Vice President of Marketing, provided an update for USPA Global Licensing Inc. sports marketing and Global Polo Entertainment (GPE). GPE was created to market and promote USPA's most prestigious tournaments. The idea was to not only change the trajectory of high-goal polo by developing the GAUNTLET OF POLO®, but to enhance team participation, build attendance and public awareness, and attract corporate sponsors and promote U.S. Polo Assn.'s authentic connection to the sport.

In 2020, the goals were simple, build off the positive momentum from the 2019 GAUNTLET OF POLO®. GPE set out to deliver one-hundred percent satisfaction to the sponsors, including U.S. Polo Assn., to create a premium broadcast for CBS Sports and Eurosport (which is now postponed to 2021), continue to build upon momentum of the GAUNTLET with media and on-site fans, increase social media assets via the production department and execute a marketing plan for on-site attendance.



UNITED STATES POLO ASSOCIATION
9011 Lake Worth Road | Lake Worth, FL 33467 USA
uspolo.org

In November 2019, GPE launched a production department that would help support the newly created Global Polo TV, which is the premier destination for polo content around the world.

Global Polo TV is a television format platform that provides the United States Polo Association with a distribution channel for the thousands of hours of livestreamed polo coverage. Since the most recent COVID-19 measures (suspending polo in the U.S. including Wellington, Florida) to protect the sport of polo, fans, players, horses and staff, Global Polo TV created a weekly custom schedule that incorporates best plays of live games, stories of polo athletes and archived games from the USPA Vault.

To date Global Polo TV surpassed the initial goal of 5,000 subscribers and continue to create new content like the most recent show, "Inside the Boards," which showcases what polo players around the world are doing for charity and fun.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Live Games, On Demand Coverage, News and Highlights



Any Device, Anywhere, Anytime
globalpolo.com



WEEKLY LINEUP

MONDAY: Global Polo Productions | TUESDAY: The Best of Polo | WEDNESDAY: Game of the Week | THURSDAY: USPA Vault | FRIDAY: In Case You Missed It

USPA Communications

Mr. Baran, Director of Communications, reported on the USPA Communication Department. He noted that the USPA continues to be very active on all social media platforms in order to engage and grow followers. Since the Fall Board of Governors and Annual Member Meeting,



USPA social media platforms have grown 11 percent. The Communications team have been working with all departments to provide updates relating to the COVID-19 crisis on social media, the member email blast “This Week In Polo” and uspolo.org. He reported that the SEO strategy continues to be successful and helps drive searches related to the USPA and polo to uspolo.org. There was a 12 percent increase to the “News” section, 79 percent increase to “Learn to Play” page and 56 percent increase to the club landing page. Other notable pages that were built include: 2020 GAUNTLET OF POLO®, National Arena Amateur Cup and XII FIP World Polo Championship. A major focus for the department is to continue to provide USPA Member Club and tournament coverage. Since the Fall Board of Governors and Annual Member Meeting: 105 clubs have been featured in articles, 62 tournament recaps have been written, 36 Tournament Detail Pages built and 182 News Articles created.

The department has been working to execute new areas of development on the USPA Polo Network. Major changes were made to improve the on-air graphics, slow-motion replays, highlights before breaks, as well as, an additional announcer in the booth.

Additionally, the Annual Report has been completed and mailed out with the April edition of Polo Players’ Edition. The department is creating an average of eight to 10 articles per week that are sent out through the member email blast. The click rate is 41 percent and open rate is 28 percent, significantly above industry averages. Communications Manager, Cristina Fernandez, took the lead on creating horse features in conjunction with the GPE production department during the winter season in Wellington, Florida. The videos and interviews help expand the polo fan base by branding top players and horses; prompting fans to watch in person or on the livestream.

Polo Development LLC

Mr. Powers, Executive Director of Polo Development, presented a summary of the current endeavors of USPA Polo Development, LLC, as they relate to the COVID-19 crisis. Specifically, the Polo Development staff has developed contingency strategies for hosting the 2020 National intercollegiate and interscholastic championships in the fall of 2020 which were initially scheduled to be held in the spring in Charlottesville, Virginia and Houston, Texas, respectively. With respect to Junior Polo, the staff has been working to adapt the National Youth Tournament Series (NYTS) to COVID-19 restrictions. Currently, all NYTS tournaments are on hold until restrictions for play are lifted. The staff has developed three contingency plans for the season and ultimately the NYTS Championships slated to be hosted in Chicago in September of 2020.

In addition to the adjustments to Polo Development brought on by the onset of COVID-19, Mr. Powers also updated the Board of Governors on the Intercollegiate/Interscholastic (I/I)



Committee structure, policy development and strategic planning process, currenting being finalized by the strategic planning group. The Polo Development Initiative (PDI) grant review process has concluded with award announcements on schedule. Finally, the Junior Committee is set to begin a strategic planning process similar to the aforementioned I/I strategic planning process to develop a committee policy and effective committee structure to implement the current junior polo initiatives (NYTS and Young Player Opportunity grant) and explore and develop new initiatives such as the proposed Junior Open concept.

New Business

Mr. Armstrong reported that both the chairs for the Arena Committee and the Women's Committee would be stepping down. He thanked Mr. Coleman and Mrs. Gandomcar-Sachs for their work on their respective committees and their accomplishments. The Board approved

Robin Sanchez as the new Arena Committee Chairperson and Meghan Gracida as the new Women's Committee Chairperson.

The Board discussed the Fall Board of Governors and Annual Member Meeting and reported that they may make a recommendation to hold it as a virtual meeting. They would look at the specific details regarding the scheduling and other various components before making a determination.

