



## ...BUT DO THE PONIES RIDE THE CHAIR?

▶ A polo match typically invokes images of good-looking, well-dressed people laughing and sipping Veuve Cliquot while admiring well-groomed ponies and posh-looking riders happily galloping on the field. Canada's first "Snow Polo" match at **Mont Tremblant** last February wasn't too far off, except the field was a frozen lake—and the ball was a little bigger and brighter.

The very first official polo tournament on snow was held in 1985 on the frozen lake of St. Moritz, Switzerland, the quintessential birthplace of après-ski glitz. This age-old sport of kings is now reaching a much wider audience of ski resort-goers and horse-lovers alike, thanks to these glamorous sporting events held all over the world.

More than 2,500 spectators attended the first-ever international snow polo event in Mont Tremblant, with the ski resort serving as the perfect backdrop for international polo players and dignitaries. The event was such a success that organizer Herbert Ratsch of Sotheby's Mont-Tremblant confirmed that Lake Tremblant will be hosting the next three Snow Polo World Cups. "Four years ago, I had a far-fetched discussion in a bar that led to bringing this kind of high-end event to our ski resort. Soon Justin Fogarty, president of Polo Canada and Lawyers Polo, was on board, as well as top-rated player Marc Perreault of Landco Construction who helped me pull it all off."

Rules for snow polo are quite easy to follow: teams of three players on horseback try to score goals with a wooden mallet and a bright orange ball in the opposing team's goal over four "chukkers" or periods of around seven minutes each.



The much-anticipated match at Tremblant was preceded by a parade and opening ceremony with the RCMP. The match itself was as exciting as any other type of World Cup, the Canadians defeating the International team 4 to 2 to win the trophy in the finals.

The organizers plan to host six to eight international teams for the 2016 edition, with interest from Argentina, Britain, the U.S., and even Jamaica and Ghana who have yet to play on snow. More than 50 international players were in attendance, all eager to join the player ranks in the future. There will also be a charitable involvement and numerous lifestyle events, bringing the true snow polo experience to life. Grab your fancy toque and save the dates: February 26-28, 2016. [snowpolotremblant.com](http://snowpolotremblant.com)

—MARIE-PIERE BELISLE-KENNEDY

