

Pacific Coast Arena League Hits Second Gear at Lakeside Polo Club for 2024 Season

The second weekend of the 2024 USPA Pacific Coast Arena League took place at Lakeside Polo Club on September 6-8th.

LAKESIDE, CA, UNITED STATES, December 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- To much anticipation, the 2024 United States Polo Association (USPA) Pacific Coast Arena League ([PCAL](#)) tournament officially kicked off after a brief delay September 6th-8th. The second leg of the Pacific Coast Arena League tournament took place at [Lakeside Polo Club](#). This host site sported a newly renovated, lit polo arena where both players and spectators could get a great view of the action. This year's PCAL lineup featured a host of long-awaited match-ups, many included in the highly anticipated National Arena Chairman's Cup, various flights, and the USPA General Patton circuit event.



Luca Abboud and Garrett Bankhead go head-to-head during Pacific Coast Arena League (PCAL) at Lakeside Polo Club photo-Tequila Sunset's Photography

The National Arena Chairman's Cup saw many great match ups this year, giving spectators a real taste of a high-goal polo experience. One of the standout matches in this year's tournament was the clash between Sermus and Can This! during the preliminary round of the National Arena Chairman's Cup. Both teams brought their A-game, demonstrating impressive strategy and teamwork both in and out of the arena. Sermus eventually found victory in the form of a mere one goal separation.

“

At the end of the day, trust in and dependency on your teammates is what makes or breaks the team's morale and how you feel when you walk out of the arena, win or lose.”

Luca Abboud

“Another great PCAL under our belt. It was a scorcher but despite the heat and numerous time changes to combat the heat we had a great time. It was action packed for me

as I was part of three different teams. The Friday night high goal was fast and exciting as Garrett, Rehan and I took on the one and only Jarred Sheldon, Shaun and Alex. Nail biter down to the wire losing by just 1 point, 20-21. I was also in the A and B flights and got to team up with Marissa Wells in the A flight. She is so fun to play with and you catch yourself watching her make amazing play after amazing play instead of marking your man, lol. So many more teams in the B and C flights this year than in the past. I feel PCAL is really growing in its players. And big props to my girl Star Platinum who earned her name this weekend by getting BPP in two different flights! She was on point all three days, even in the heat I feel she has continued to improve for me each year.” -Spencer Hurtt

In addition to the National Arena Chairman's Cup, the 2024 PCAL tournament also featured matches in the USPA General Patton Circuit event which included the B-flight stage of competition. The B-flight was the largest of all three flights this year and boasted a staggering 12 teams.

“I have played on teams with players that I don't know and with whom I have never played, and I have played on teams in which I know the players well. This year, because I participated in both A and B flights, I played on teams both new to me and established. At the end of the day, trust in and

dependency on your teammates is what makes or breaks the team's morale and how you feel when you walk out of the arena, win or lose. The teammates I played with in both flights were the best anyone could ask for. No one player could make or break these teams; the accolades of



Ernie Darquea hits a neck shot during Pacific Coast Arena League - PCAL at Lakeside Polo Club photo credit - Tequila Sunset's Phottgraphy



Nicole Bankhead, Spencer Hurtt, Heather Perkins and Marissa Wells celebrate the Sportsmanship wins during PCAL (Pacific Coast Arena League) event at Lakeside Polo Club

one were the accolades of us all.”

-Luca Abboud

The C-flight provided a stage for up-and-coming players, where enthusiasm and determination shone brightly. Matches in this division were filled with unexpected twists as budding polo players showcased their growth and potential.

“In spite of the unusual heat, we were hosted by an outstanding Lakeside Polo Management Team for an excited round of [arena polo](#) games played this past weekend. As novice players, we were able to watch some spectacular arena polo played at its highest levels. We continue to learn and are so very grateful to the professional umpires, other players, and coaching staff for imparting their wisdom. We are looking forward to the next PCAL event at The California Polo Club!” -Matthew Messens

The A-flight was no less thrilling as it brought together passionate teams, delivering high-stakes matches characterized by strategic maneuvers. By incorporating these different flights, players of all experience level were able to hone and receive recognition for their skills.

“This is my first year competing in PCAL! I love the opportunity to play competitive arena polo on the west coast with and against players I don’t normally get to play with. Each weekend is at a new location with a different styled arena; some that I haven’t played in before. That’s what I love about arena polo is trying to figure out the arena; how the walls rebound and what the



Marissa Wells and Garrett Bankhead battle for the ball at Lakeside Polo Club during Pacific Coast Arena League PCAL photo credit Tequila Sunset's Photography



Ethan Bankhead works the corner at Lakeside Polo Club during Pacific Coast Arena League - PCAL photo by Tequila Sunset's Photography

footing is like. The game strategy changes depending on what arena you are in. " -Marissa Wells

Each game in PCAL awarded a most valuable player (MVP), Best playing pony (BPP), and Sportsmanship award at various levels. In addition to these awards, players earned points based on Win to Loss to Tie ratios that will factor into points for the End of League awards.

"Ava, Helena and I have been playing together since I joined the I/I team 4 seasons ago. We've always had so much fun in the arena together, and PCAL was no different. Our Friday night game against OC was definitely a warm up game for all three of us, but on Saturday we came out ready to hit the ground running and we won! I can't wait to see how we grow together even more between now and then end of the I/I season. I feel so fortunate that my coach, Nicole Bankhead, has given me the opportunity to ride and play Noche for the PCAL Series. Noche is an amazing horse, and I always leave the arena gushing about how well she did." -Shira Engel

Players truly gave it their all this year, making every game a nail-biting contest to see who would come out on top. No matter the final ranking, no one left the event empty-handed. On top of the traditional award presentation, every PCAL player received a limited edition PCAL hoodie from U.S. Polo Assn. Thanks to the support of U.S. Polo Assn. and other gracious sponsors, the 2024 Pacific coast Arena League delivered in all regards this season.

"This was my first time competing at the Lakeside Polo Club. Lakeside was a great host this weekend accommodating all of the games with the heat. It's the first time I've ever played polo at 6 am! Thankful for my very first Sportsmanship award too (in my life). Proof I am nice haha! Thank you Lakeside, the Bankhead's for hosting, and everyone who helped organize a great weekend of PCAL. I look forward to the next one. " -Marissa Wells

The list of award recipients for the weekend are as follows:

Casablanca MVP
Leigh Berteau
Matt Messens
Shaun Cornell
Garrett Bankhead
Rehan Kumble
Spencer Hurtt
Emma Blackwood
Zoey Tornillo
Ethan Bankhead
Fawn Rinalduzzi
Luca Abboud
Laura Hauschild
Lily Goebbels
Ava Abboud

U.S. Polo Assn. Sportsmanship

Heather Perkins

Aly Molongoski

Spencer Hurtt

Nicole Bankhead

Marissa Wells

Sebastian Lopez

Kelsea Galarza

Lisa Gonzales

Kylie Kufahl

Emma Blackwood

Ethan Bankhead

Nia Soliz

Chuck Stanislawski

Luca Abboud

Jackson Hole Horse Emporium BPP

Noche- Shira Engle

Lovely- Jessie Wileman

Syrup- Rehan Kumble (owned by George Dill)

Fifi- Jenny Alexy

Sombra- Luca Abboud

Callie- Ethan Bankhead

Guapa- Ernie Darquea

Matilda- Matt Messens

Star Platinum- Spencer Hurtt

Dakota- Helena Csiki

Star Platinum- Spencer Hurtt

Amelia Earhart- Lisa Gonzales

Ash- Ethan Bankhead

Atlas- Kylie Kufahl

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