

For Immediate Release

**USPA Announces Blue Ribbon Commission to Examine Additional
Safeguards for Horses
Dr. Bill Patterson to Head Committee's Efforts**

May 26, 2009 – Wellington, FL: Today, the [United States Polo Association \(USPA\)](http://www.us-polo.org) announced the 21 volunteer members of its Polo Pony Welfare Committee (PPWC), a committee tasked with examining current best practices regarding equine welfare in polo and other equine sports and presenting findings and recommendations to USPA at the next Board of Governors meeting in October.

The committee membership will include leading expert veterinarians, industry leaders, players, trainers and owners. In the wake of the apparently accidental and tragic deaths of 21 horses at last month's USPA championships in Wellington, Florida, the USPA Board of Governors commissioned the PPWC to review USPA's high equine safety and welfare standards, rules, policies and provisions and examine possible actions to improve them.

"USPA is dedicated to equine safety and this committee will continue our tradition of putting the safety of our horses first," said USPA Executive Director Peter Rizzo. "The PPWC has been given wide latitude to examine all safety aspects of the sport. The members of the committee represent a wide range of experts from all areas of polo and all are committed to working tirelessly over the coming weeks and months to examine best practices and identify improvements to our existing high standards for equine safety."

The PPWC will consist of 21 volunteer members; headed by Chairman Dr. Bill Patterson (full list available at US-POLO.ORG). Each member has been carefully selected to ensure that all areas of polo expertise are represented and to ensure that the PPWC will carefully examine all aspects of equine safety. The committee will also be charged with consulting other equine sport associations to review their policies and provisions in an effort to identify best practices for polo.

PPWC will include an executive committee that will create the specific by-laws, policy recommendations and equine safety provisions to be presented to the USPA Board of Governors. These recommendations will be based on the input, advice and consensus of the full committee members. The executive committee will consist of members of the full committee and will be chaired by Dr. Patterson. The executive committee members include Dr. Josh Hall, Clint Nangle, Peter Rizzo, Russ Sheldon, Charles Smith and Dr. Kathleen Timmins.

The USPA Board of Governors will consider the recommendations of the PPWC and the board will make the final decisions on enacting new USPA policies and by-laws. The USPA is 100% committed to providing the very best in safety and welfare for both players and their mounts.

United States Polo Association www.us-polo.org

The USPA has been organized and exists for the purposes of promoting the game of polo, coordinating the activities of its Member Clubs and Registered Players, arranging and supervising polo tournaments, competitions, and games and providing rules, handicaps, and conditions for those tournaments, competitions, and games including the safety and welfare of participants and mounts.

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United States Polo Association (USPA) Polo Pony Welfare Committee (PPWC)

The Advisory Committee:

Dr. Bill Patterson, Chairman

Is a 1984 graduate of Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine and subsequently completed an internship at University of Tennessee and Residency in Internal Medicine at University of Wisconsin; a senior member of USEF and an FEI Veterinary Delegate; licensed in 12 states and operates Good Thunder Veterinary Service in New Carlisle, OH; affiliated with Palm Beach Equine Clinic in Wellington, FL; introduced to polo while an undergraduate at Cornell University; a USPA member in 1992; served as USPA Delegate for Columbus of Ohio Polo Club; and, plays polo as an amateur in Lexington, Aiken and South Florida.

George Alexander

Is currently the USPA Secretary-Treasurer (2007-2009); played polo since 1972; served the USPA as Circuit Governor 1978-1995; Executive Director 1995-1999; Governor-at-Large 1999-2007; Delegate of the Blackberry Polo Club, in IL; and, currently chairs the USPA Constitution, Rules and Rules Interpretation Committees.

Dr. Grayson Brown

Is a D.V.M. and a 1966 graduate of University of Georgia; has been in private veterinary practice for 40 years; is a polo player since 1980 achieving a handicap level of 2; and, on the board of directors of the Aiken Polo Club and was its past president.

Dr. Richard Caleel

Is a member of the USPA since 1974; USA Ambassador to FIP; Medical Director for the World Anti-Doping Agency and the International Olympic Committee for the sport of Polo; former professor of surgery at Northwestern & Midwestern Universities; and, is a retired plastic surgeon.

Joey Casey

Is a third-generation professional player, polo horse breeder and trainer; Delegate and manager of Royal Palm Polo Sports Club; Delegate of the Palm City Polo Club; manages the largest polo horse breeding and training ranch in the United States; has bred, owned, and trained hundreds of horses, competing nationally and internationally, winning many of the top tournament events; his horses have won numerous Best Playing Pony Awards.

Joe DiMenna

Is the Managing Director of Zweig-DiMenna Associates and has been portfolio manager since co-founding Zweig-DiMenna Partners in 1984; currently serves on numerous boards for non-profit foundations including the National Museum of Polo; a horse owner, polo team owner and has played polo for more than 10 years, participating in many club and national polo events; and, owns several jumpers that have been shown at all levels, mostly at the grand prix level.

Craig Galle

Is an attorney whose law practice involves horses, polo and other equestrian disciplines; clients include the United States Polo Association, the owners and operators of the Winter Equestrian Festival, numerous polo teams, Olympic-level riders and various entertainment personalities in equestrian endeavors; handled countless equestrian-related

disputes and transactions in Florida, throughout the United States and in Europe; and, served on various committees for the United States Equestrian Federation.

Melissa Ganzi

Has been a polo player since 2001; equestrian background since 1974 – when a member of the U.S. Pony Club; has participated in several equine disciplines - such as eventing, fox hunting, showing and now polo; owns horses and participates in all levels of polo throughout the US; works closely with her veterinarian to care for the horses in her organization; director of the Museum of Polo; and, member of the USPA International Committee.

Denny Geiler:

Is chairman of the USPA Membership and Club Development Committee; chairman of the USPA Polo Development Initiative Committee; through his childhood was associated with quarter horses and has worked on a cattle ranch; along with his daughter, Shelley, rode in a variety of horse shows for many years; started his polo career in 1985; and, now own 15 polo horses and resides in Newport Beach, CA.

Sunny Hale

Is a second-generation, professional polo player for twenty years in seven countries; first woman in history to win the US Open Championship with "Outback Steakhouse Polo Team" in 2000; seven-time winner Polo Excellence Awards "Woman Player of The Year;" polo horse breeder and trainer; founder and president of the American Polo Horse Association; founder and president of the "Women's Championship Tournament; and, currently the highest rated woman polo player in the U.S. at 3 goals and attained the highest rating ever given to a woman – 5 goals in 2001.

Dr. Josh Hall

Is a third generation polo player and has played since 1966; manager of El Peco Thoroughbred Ranch from 1994-1996; worked in both the Northern and Southern California race track circuits from 1985-1989; currently practicing veterinary medicine in Wellington, FL and Santa Barbara, CA since 1989 and licensed in FL, CA, KY; has served on welfare committee of the American Association of Equine Practitioners for the past two years; current member of Squadron A, American Association of Equine Practitioners, Florida Association of Equine Practitioners, and United States Polo Association; and, co-founded the USPA Equine Welfare Committee with Dr. John Kuhn in 1993.

Dr. John Kuhn

Is a D.V.M. and a graduate of the University of Illinois; an equine practitioner for thirty years; a second-generation polo player for forty years; founder of the Naperville polo club (IL); co-chairman the USPA Veterinary Committee (now, Equine Welfare Committee); and, a ten-plus years member of the USPA Handicap Committee.

Jimmy Newman

Is the polo manager at International Polo-Palm Beach; a polo professional for over 43 years; worked as a groom, stable manager, horse trainer, professional player and polo club manager (33 years as a polo club manager of numerous clubs); and, served on the USPA Board of Governors and on numerous USPA committees.

Clint Nangle

Is the founding chair of the USPA Equine Welfare Committee (16 years); long-term horse owner and polo player; a USPA circuit governor and governor at large (17 years); served on eight USPA committees (chairs two); a director of the Museum of Polo and Hall of Fame; and, the USPA delegate of the Overbrook Farm Polo Club in South Carolina.

Dr. Vic Ramone

Is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, the UCSF Family Practice Residency in CA, and UTHSC Anesthesiology Residency in San Antonio, TX; since 1986, an anesthesiologist at the Baylor University Medical Center and involved in the Neural Blockade for Pain Management; has experience with compounding pharmacies; his family has been involved with horses and polo since 1933 in South Texas; started playing polo in 1981; and, is a member of the USPA Board of Governors as the USPA Governor for the Southwestern Circuit.

Peter Rizzo

Is the executive director of the USPA; a second-generation polo player who has owned horses for over fifty years; amateur and professional polo player; developed and managed numerous polo clubs; former Editor and Publisher of Polo and Polo Players' Edition Magazines; and, the USPA Equine Welfare Representative - responsibilities include being the primary contact for reporting to appropriate civil authorities that have jurisdiction to review and remedy cases of alleged horse abuse and neglect.

Russ Sheldon

Russell Sheldon, Poway, CA

Is an amateur polo player for 37 years; USPA Governor-at-Large; member of the USPA Executive Committee; Co-Chair of the Intercollegiate-Interscholastic Committee; member of the Equine Welfare, Arena (former committee chair), Rules and Tournament Committees; and, involved with horse activities such as Rodeo, Team Roping, Team Penning, Endurance and Competitive Trail Riding.

Charles Smith

Is retired from 37 years in the aerospace business with Lockheed Martin Corporation in 2004 where he held various engineering management and airplane program management positions; involved with the design and development of numerous military jet aircraft including the F-111, F-16, F-22, and F-35; a second-generation polo player, grew up in the polo world and has played polo most of his life; inducted into the USPA Hall of Fame in 2004; Governor-At-Large for the United States Polo Association; a member of the USPA Executive Committee; and, chairman of the USPA High Goal Committee.

Adam Snow

Is a third-generation polo player handicapped as an eight goal player (formerly handicapped at 10) and has played and won professionally, both nationally and internationally at the highest levels of the sport; owns, raises and trains many high-quality polo horses; and, has served on several USPA committees.

Dr. Kathleen Timmins

Is a 1993 graduate of the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine; internship - Illinois Equine Clinic outside of Chicago; 12 years at Palm Beach Equine Clinic, also licensed in SC, NY, VA, CA, GA; FEI Veterinary Delegate; USEF senior member; and, equine practitioner, with emphasis on equine medicine.

Dr. Paul Wollenman

Is a graduate of Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine in 1972. After three years of private practice in Texas, moved to Palm Beach and started an equine practice; in 1981 he founded and built the Palm Beach Equine Clinic at Palm Beach Polo and Country Club; his ambulatory practice focuses on polo ponies; provides veterinary service for the animals at Lion Country Safari; travels with his wife Renee and two sons, Colby and Luke, to Wyoming during the summer to continue his veterinary practice and play polo.

Executive Committee:

Dr. Bill Patterson, Chairman

Dr. Josh Hall

Clint Nangle

Peter Rizzo

Russ Sheldon

Charles Smith

Dr. Kathleen Timmins