

GREAT
— POLO CLUBS —
OF THE WORLD



India Jaipur JAIPUR RIDING & POLO CLUB



Rajmata Gayatri Devi of Jaipur probably knows more about Indian polo than anyone else. The widow of Maharaja Man Singh II, one of the greatest players of all time, she is patron of Jaipur Riding & Polo Club, which is based in the tranquil village of Sirsi, on the outskirts of the ancient city of Jaipur.

"Jaipur has been very closely connected with polo since days of yore," she says. "Indeed, Indian polo owes a great deal to Jaipur, which carried the game to heights never since matched anywhere in the world."

This latest venue for polo was founded in 2002 by Colonel Kuldeep Singh Garcha, a leading exponent of the game who reached a handicap of 5-goals. A sometime coach for the India national team, he holds the Arjuna Award, the country's highest national honour for outstanding sportsmen.

Affiliated with Guards Polo Club in England, Jaipur has a reciprocal arrangement with members there, and its home team has played around the world. Indeed, in the first season the team, under the lead of Colonel Garcha's son Satinder Garcha, played no less than 16 tournaments in England, Singapore, Spain and India, winning five of them and reaching the finals of another nine – no mean record for a new club.

Besides Colonel Garcha, who has brought so many young players into the game, the club is also fortunate in having 'Podger' El-Effendi as coach – a former 8-goal player who made his name as a professional in the USA. The club offers regular

polo clinics to introduce new players to the game and improve the skills of existing players.

Nor is Jaipur purely a man's club. It boasts a formidable ladies team that has participated in tournaments in many countries.

Tournaments: Ladies International (December)

Facilities: One field, stabling for over 50, large clubhouse, tennis, swimming, accommodation, corporate retreat packages tailored to specific requirements.

Location: Sirsi, near Jaipur City.

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Photos: Courtesy of Jaipur Riding & Polo Club

