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# WHAT'S COMING UP?

### **AUGUST**

16,17 Clubs (Coolah)

23,24 Dunnedoo

30,31 Gulgong Family Day

### **SEPTEMBER**

6,7 Mendooran

**27,28** Warren

18 Half yearly



"It doesn't matter how good you are. It matters if you have the passion."

- Unknown

### Welcome Aboard

The Board of NSW Polocrosse would like to introduce Kevin Stevenson and Rachel Hughes as the newest PANSW Directors.

Kevin has been involved in Polocrosse for almost 50 years and brings a wealth of sport knowledge which coupled with his business interests will be a real asset upon the board and for Polocrosse. Kevin has been appointed as an Independent Director until the 2027 AGM.

Rachel has not only been an avid polocrosse player for the past 23 years, she has also held various administrative positions at club and zone level and also a state junior selector. Rachel has a strong professional resume holding senior management positions with the ACT Government across several roles and will fill the vacant elected position on the board and be eligible for re election (subject to nomination) at the 2026 AGM.

Join us in welcoming both Kevin and Rachel to the board and we look forward to working with them for the betterment of Polocrosse in NSW.



Kaylene Wilson – President Graeme Elford Joanne McFayden Bruce Owen Kevin Stevenson Rachel Hughes

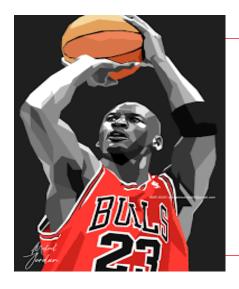




### Thankyou Rosie

We take this opportunity to welcome Kylie Deshon into the fold as our newest Sub Junior selector. Kylie is a mainstay of the sport who is well placed to contribute to the sub junior committee.

Kylie replaces Rosie Turnbull who has elected to withdraw from the committee. We thank Rosie for all her efforts and dedication over a significant period as a Sub Junior selector and to the sport.



"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed"

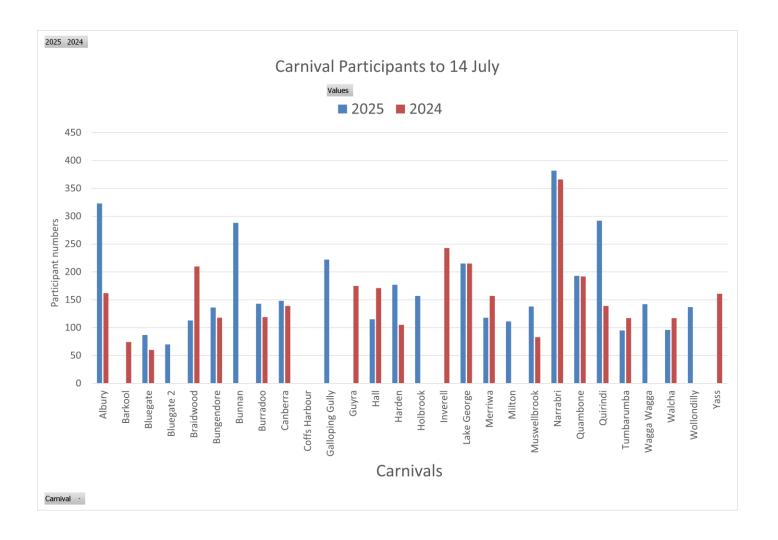
-Michael Jordan

### The Data Centre – all about numbers

Each edition of this newsletter, we will be running the numbers on a specific topic. We all have assumptions and guesses on how or what we think the sport is doing, however the data doesn't lie so we can get a clear picture of our current position.

This month we are looking at carnival attendance relative to 2024. The data tells us that excluding washouts where carnivals were cancelled in 2024 or 2025 and therefore incomparable, 69% of carnivals showed an increase in participation numbers, while 31% had a reduction.

This is an outstanding outcome and we applaud the hardwork from our club executives and volunteers and the dedication of the players to drive this improvement.



				No of
				carnivals with
Carnivals	Same	No	Same	Increased
held in	period	Players	period	player
2025	in 2024	in 2024	in 2025	numbers
23	22	3123	3898	69%

### An outsiders opinion.

As a newcomer to Polocrosse, I recognize that I don't yet have the depth of knowledge that many others in the sport possess. Polocrosse is a complex and multi-layered game, and I understand that gaining a full appreciation for it takes time and experience. However, I bring with me a long-standing background in sport, having spent many years at the forefront of many sporting associations and my experience is not clouded by long-standing assumptions, past grievances or internal politics.

That said, I'm always open to learning from those with more experience and different perspectives. So each edition, I will share my thoughts on something Polocrosse, you may like it, you may not however I welcome the discussion.

I remember when I was a kid, the warfare that was cricket, fought out in the coliseum that was the backyard of the family home. A garbage bin serving as stumps, Dad's right thong marked the batting crease, and his left one held station at the bowler's end.

It was serious stuff back then. Landing a cover drive into Mum's roses meant automatic dismissal, and the famous "one-hand off the garage roof" rule was introduced after one too many disputed catches. As a fat kid, I was always David Boon. My older brother Steve, well he was the swashbuckling Allan Border and the family dog was always the best fielder in the game. We had dreams—big ones. In our backyard, we were unstoppable, well at least until bad light and Mum's call for dinner ended play for the day.

Eventually, after what felt like an eternity of nagging, Mum relented. We joined the local cricket club—where we quickly discovered we might not have been quite as talented as we thought. And that standing in the field for hours under a scorching Saturday sun wasn't quite as fun as watching it on TV. But we played and we dreamed of donning the baggy green.

Fast-forward to now—Steve's a real estate agent. I'm the SEO at Polocrosse and the backyard pitch is now a townhouse development not unlike the one next to it and the one next to that.

What united all of us in those days was grassroots sport—coached by the wicketkeeper's dad, fuelled by sausage sandwiches, red frogs and TAB Cola, and powered by a collective love of the game. From that broad base, some climbed the ladder—zone, state, international. But we all started in the same place: the club. Where participation often mattered more than skill, and playing didn't always mean winning.

Polocrosse, like cricket, depends on a strong grassroots foundation. It's where future champions—club, zone, state, or even international—are born. Yes, we must celebrate those who reach the highest levels. But without grassroots, there is no elite, there is no national players, in fact there is no game and no future.

That's why I'm so disappointed about the recent clash between the PA High Performance weekend and local club and zone-level competitions. I support the high-performance vision and see its place in the Polocrosse landscape — but not when it comes at the expense of our foundation. We are collectively writing cheques we can't afford to cash. We're propping up the pointy end of the pyramid while hollowing out its base.

PA should be applauded for creating another step in the development pathway, and I am not critical of them or the HP weekend however maybe someone smarter than this washed-up choir boy can explain why it had to be scheduled for the conflicting timeframe that it was. Any activity (be it State or National) that compromises the grassroots in any way, shouldn't go ahead. We all collectively need to work harder ensure we don't create such clashes and importantly, we must ensure these kinds of conflicts don't happen in the future. It's in all our interests to protect and grow grassroots polocrosse. It's how we build a stable, sustainable future for the sport.

Now, let me be clear—this is just my opinion. You're entitled to yours. If you agree, disagree, or have something to add, I'd love to hear it. We'll publish responses in next month's newsletter. Write to me at seo@nswpolocrosse.com.au with your thoughts and your name and let's keep the conversation going.

Daniel Gatt (SEO – NSW Polocrosse)

# HORSE WELFARE - Hydration and Electrolytes for Polocrosse Horses

By Dr. Thomas Burke, Veterinarian and State Horse Welfare officer for NSW.

Polocrosse is a fast-paced, demanding sport for equine athletes. The physical demands of the sport often combined with travelling of horses for extended period time to carnival can leave horses at risk of dehydration. Here's what every polocrosse horse owner should know about managing hydration and electrolytes.

### Why Hydration and Electrolytes Matter

During polocrosse, horses sweat heavily to cool themselves. Unlike humans, horses lose much higher amounts of water and essential electrolytes—like sodium, chloride, potassium, magnesium, and calcium—through their sweat. If these losses aren't replaced, your horse can quickly become dehydrated and develop electrolyte imbalances.

Dehydration and electrolyte loss can lead to:

- Poor performance and fatigue
- Muscle cramps, twitching, or "thumps"
- Increased heart and breathing rates
- Higher risk of colic and overheating
- Impaired recovery after games or travel

### Water Alone Isn't Enough

It's a common misconception that offering water alone will rehydrate a horse. In reality, giving only water after heavy sweating can dilute the body's remaining electrolytes, making the problem worse. Horses need both water and the right balance of electrolytes to recover fully.

### **Choosing the Right Electrolyte Supplement**

Not all supplements are created equal. Natural salts like Himalayan or sea salt do **not** match the electrolyte profile of horse sweat. The best supplements are specifically formulated for horses, using pure ingredients to closely mimic what's lost during exercise.

### Look for supplements that:

- Contain sodium, chloride, potassium, magnesium, and calcium
- Are designed to be mixed with water (not just topdressed on feed)
- Use bioavailable forms of minerals (like citrates or chelates for magnesium and calcium)

 May include a small amount of dextrose to improve absorption and taste

### How and When to Supplement

- Offer an electrolyte solution about one hour before games or transport. This helps your horse start hydrated and ready to perform.
- Supplement during rest breaks, especially in hot weather or if your horse is sweating a lot.
- Continue to offer electrolytes and water before feeding dry hay or grain. Recovery can take several hours, and horses may keep sweating after activity ends.

#### Training Your Horse to Drink Electrolytes:

 Some horses are fussy about new tastes. Start with a diluted solution and gradually increase the strength over several days. Patience and persistence pay off!

#### Avoid:

- Giving pastes or slurries without enough water (can worsen dehydration)
- Relying on top-dressing dry feed with electrolytes after heavy work

### Can You Give Too Much?

If your horse has access to plenty of water and normal kidney function, extra electrolytes are simply excreted in the urine. Problems only arise if concentrated electrolytes are given without enough water—so always ensure your horse drinks well.

### **Key Takeaways for Polocrosse Owners**

- Hydration and electrolyte balance are essential for health and performance
- Use a well-formulated equine electrolyte supplement, not just salt
- Supplement before, during, and after intense activity or travel
- Train your horse to accept electrolyte solutions
- Always provide free access to clean, fresh water

A well-hydrated horse is a healthy, competitive partner on the polocrosse field. If you have questions about specific products or your horse's needs, don't hesitate to consult your veterinarian.

Stay safe, play hard, and keep your horses hydrated!

### **UMPIRING**

### Update

Welcome to our monthly umpiring article, where we keep you updated on the latest rule changes, clarifications, and key focus areas for officiating. Umpiring plays a crucial role in ensuring fair, safe, and high-quality gameplay, and staying informed benefits everyone— from players and coaches to officials and spectators.

Each month, we'll cover important rule updates, common misconceptions, and tips to improve game management. Whether you're an experienced umpire or just looking to understand the game better, this newsletter is here to support you. Stay tuned and stay informed!

### **RULE SECTION 9, 55A**

The State Umpiring Committee has been requested to provide explanation to some of the lesser known or understood rules in the rulebook. This month, we focus on Section 9, 55A accidents. The rule reads:

a) If a horse falls, or a player or a horse be injured, or in case of an accident to a horse's gear which in the opinion of the umpire, involves danger to the player or other players, the umpire shall stop the match. If a player/horse is injured during a game and cannot continue to play. The player causing the infringement must have a minimum of 3 minutes on the sideline. The state director of umpiring is to be notified, and the incident is to be reviewed for a possible set penalty.

Blood on horse or rider must be cleaned up immediately, prevented from occurring again and the source removed (eg spurs removed)

So what does this mean in simple terms?

In the event a horse or a player are injured, or if the horse falls or a if the horses gear is damaged the umpire will stop the match. However if that horse or player are injured and cannot continue, the player who caused the infringement must sit out the game for 3 minutes (at a minimum). The State Umpiring Committee will be notified and the player who had to sit out may be liable for a penalty after the incident is investigated.

### DID YOU KNOW / POP QUIZ?

Below are two answers and two questions, your mission is to match the correct answer to each of the questions. The correct answers can be found in the notice board section of this newsletter.

### **Answers:**

Answer one - Minimum 4 weeks or could be significantly mor.

Answer two - Minimum 2 weeks or could be significantly more.

#### **Question one**

What is the minimum suspension for a player using, insulting, threatening or obscene language by a member that is deemed bullying and/or intimidating towards or in relation to an umpire or official

### **Question two**

What is the minimum suspension for a player using, insulting, threatening or obscene language by a member that is deemed bullying and/or intimidating towards or in relation to another player.

### **COACHING - Why Culture Matters**

### Why Culture Matters in Your Sports Team

"Culture" has become something of a buzzword in sport. Coaches often cite it - sometimes vaguely - as the reason for their success or failure. But why should you really care about your team's culture?

The short answer is this: while some team cultures lay the foundation for long-term, sustainable success, others might bring only fleeting results - if any at all.

Culture is a critical driver of success in any organized group, whether it's a corporate company or a high-performance sports team.

#### What Is a Sports Team's Culture?

Every team has a culture - whether you're aware of it or not. Put simply, culture is the pattern of behaviours, values, and attitudes that your team promotes, tolerates, and reinforces. It's often best described as "the way we do things around here."

It's not about what you say your team values - it's about what your team actually does. A team may promote values like respect or discipline, but if daily behaviours don't reflect those values, the culture becomes inconsistent. In short, culture is the "talk you walk," not just the talk you talk.

The key question is: What impact is your current culture having on your team?

### What Is Cultural Alignment and Why Does It Matter?

Cultural alignment refers to the extent to which everyone involved in the team - players, coaches, support staff - is operating from shared values and working toward the same goals. When cultural alignment exists, teams are more cohesive, experience less conflict, and typically perform at a higher level. They also tend to enjoy:

- Higher athlete engagement

- Greater commitment to team goals

Improved morale

- Lower turnover

These are all outcomes any coach would want.

#### The Benefits of an Aligned Team Culture

- 1. Increased Engagement Research shows that when people, from athletes to coaches have a shared understanding of their team culture, levels of engagement rise. This includes satisfaction, commitment, and willingness to advocate for the team.
- 2. Improved Retention In elite sport, keeping top athletes engaged and committed is a constant challenge. Just like in business, where companies compete for top talent, sporting teams must work hard to retain their best performers. A strong, well-defined culture can be a crucial differentiator.
- 3. Stronger Fan and Team Loyalty Aligned cultures tend to foster loyalty not just from athletes, but also from fans, sponsors, and broader communities. When values are lived consistently, trust is built, and loyalty follows.

When athletes feel aligned with a team's mission and values, they're more likely to invest emotionally, work harder toward team goals, and stay committed longer. In turn, this positive energy extends outward - creating a ripple effect that boosts the team's reputation and performance.

### Final Thought: When Culture Is Aligned, Everyone Wins

If your team's culture is clear, consistent, and aligned with your goals, you're already on the path to long-term success. Culture isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a competitive advantage. The question is not whether your team has a culture. It does. The real question is: Is it the right one?

### BUNNAN

An epic weekend was had at the Bunnan Polocrosse Carnival and Masters Competition, held on June 7–8, 2025. With electric energy both on and off the field, this year's event brought the spirit of polocrosse to life in spectacular style.

A special highlight was the participation of the visiting New Zealand team, adding international excitement to the Masters Competition. Their presence brought a competitive edge and strengthened the bonds of trans-Tasman friendship through sport.

This year saw an impressive 47 teams from across the region take to the field, delivering fast-paced, high-intensity matches across all divisions. Players showcased incredible skill, horsemanship, and teamwork, making for an unforgettable weekend of competition.

The Bunnan Polocrosse Club would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all their amazing sponsors for their ongoing support and generosity, the many clubs who continue to attend and help the carnival grow and the New Zealand team for joining the competition and raising the level of play











## ALBURY HOLBROOK

Albury Holbrook Polocrosse Club Wraps Up May with a successful carnival weekend

The Albury Holbrook Polocrosse Club brought the month of May to a close with a fantastic carnival, made even better by phenomenal weather and a great turnout. Players, families, and supporters came together for a fun-filled weekend packed with exciting polocrosse action and a strong community spirit.

A highlight of the weekend was the South West Slopes Auction held on Saturday night, which drew a supportive crowd and plenty of participation. The club extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who got involved—whether on the field, behind the scenes, or at the auction.

Overall, the weekend was a resounding success, showcasing not only great sport but also the strength of the local polocrosse community. Here's to more weekends like this one!







### GALLOPING GULLY

The Galloping Gully Polocrosse Club held their annual carnival on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> June. Almost 40 teams from all over NSW and QLD enjoyed a weekend of glorious sunshine, amazing field conditions, a fun rooster chase and a long drive golf competition.

Gully fielded over 4 teams who enjoyed a few wins on their home soil and some players even snatched up some impressive awards.

Gully's A grade mixed side was Daisy Duncan, Jane and Jessie Melbourne, Clancy Knight, Fletcher Williams and Joe Melbourne. This well-oiled team had a cracking weekend winning all their games. Clancy took out best number 1 and champion male player of the carnival, Jessie was the best number 2 and Joe was awarded best number 3 along with his horse "Jayloc Andy" the best Australian Stock Horse of the carnival.

Gully's B grade open team was Campbell Williams, Geoff Hunter, Lachlan Melbourne, Hugh, Fergus and Max Hunter. This team was well and truly on a winning streak until a local Narrabri team defeated them in a tough battle. This Gully team ended up the runners-up with Fergus taking out the best number 2.

The Gully's C grade open side, better known as the 'Gully Gunners', was stacked with talented players back in the saddle after a lengthy break. The team was Hayden Grumley, Tom Hamilton, Dylan Duncan, Matty McInnes, Todd Melbourne and Mitch Wheaton. They claimed victory in the C-grade open competition after being undefeated over the two days. To top it off, Hayden took out the best number 1 and Todd best number 3.

Gully's D grade team was Bec Eccleston–Moore, Sally Hunter, Emma Gersch, Steffi Alison, Megan Mackay and McKenzie Van Gosliga. This team played some outstanding polocrosse although encountered an assembly of tough competition with the likes of Gundi, Inverell and Cubbaroo.

Gully's E grade side was made up of Claire Campbell, Natasha Rice, Elyse Wallace, Emma Campbell, Tom Lilliebridge and Sandra Williams. Despite their efforts to fully prepare for each game, with some 'well-thought-out' pep talks from team captain Sandra, this team was narrowly defeated in both games on Saturday which landed them in a social game on Sunday.

Gully's Savana Hunt was also back in the saddle after a length break and had fun getting amongst the D grade competition with a team from Inverell. Gully also had Xanthia Watson who claimed runners-up in the Junior comp playing with the Guyra Juniors, along with Ellie Eccleston and Ava Mackay having a great time in the sub-junior competition.



### WAGGA WAGGA

The 2025 Wagga Polocrosse Carnival hosted 28 teams from across New South Wales and beyond, delivering a weekend of competitive polocrosse.

The event successfully navigated a frosty start on Saturday morning presented a significant challenge which necessitated a delay in the scheduled start time for games. Organisers prioritised player and horse safety, waiting for conditions to improve.

As the day progressed, the weather cleared, providing a clear and sunny afternoon conducive to play.

Sunday enjoyed favourable conditions, allowing for the smooth progression of final matches.

The carnival concluded as a successful event, demonstrating the dedication of players, volunteers, and organisers. The participation of 28 teams underscores the strong interest in polocrosse within the region.

#### Results

### A Grade

- Winners: Jugiong 1
- Runners Up: Lake George 1
- Best & Fairest: Todd Weston

#### **B** Grade

- Winners: Jugiong 2
- Runners Up: Wagga 2
- Best & Fairest: Montanna Ross

### **B** Reserve

- Winners: Bungendore
- Runners Up: Albury 1
- Best & Fairest: Ollie Cardile

### C Grade

- Winners: Tumba
- Runners Up: Wagga 3
- Best & Fairest: Ella Morgan

#### D Grade

- Winners: Albury 2
- Runners Up: Narrabri Juniors
- Best & Fairest: Ross Gavin

### **Special Awards**

- Midge Peeke Award: Alysha Pearsall
- Sam Johnstone Award: Todd Weston
- Subbies Best & Fairest: Levi Macauly

### POLOCROSSE MOUNT RUSHMORE

For those of you who may not be aware, Mount Rushmore in South Dakota in the USA features the carved faces of four U.S. presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln.

Why the history lesson? – OK if we were to construct the Polocrosse version of Mount Rushmore, who would the four heads be. Which four individuals had the most influence on Polocrosse in Australia. They can be current, can also be historical, they can be players, admin, coaches, whoever, we are just looking for the 4 heads we will be carving into rocks. (for accuracy, we won't be carving them into rocks)

Write to us at <a href="mailto:seo@nswpolocrosse.com.au">seo@nswpolocrosse.com.au</a> with your opinion and if we get any responses, we will put them in the next newsletter. If we don't, we will put it down to being a dumb idea, disregard it and pretend it never happened.



### BLUEGATE

At the start of June Bluegate club held back-to-back carnivals at Pretty Pine. We had a great turnout of players at both carnivals and were thankful to have a range of generous sponsors across the grades. We would like to say a huge thank you to our club members and our supporters from outside the club who pitched in to make sure the weekends were a success, especially those who manned the canteen and firewood supplies!

The first carnival was held on the June long weekend and was well supported with 15 teams travelling from NSW, Victoria and South Australian clubs- the most we have had at a tournament in many years!

The weekend was chilly but there was plenty of polocrosse action and lots of young horses and players making the most of the soft sandy fields. We had a sprinkle of rain over night which was just enough to settle the dust before Sunday's finals. Our Bluegate C grade side made the finals, a great achievement with half of the players having only played a handful of games prior to this weekend.

Saturday morning of the second carnival started out quite foggy, and after an incident-free first weekend we had few unplanned graceful dismounts. Luckily everyone was able to get back on, the games continued and the sun came out (eventually!). A big congratulation to Tom Ford who made a well-supported polocrosse come back on the weekend in the winning A grade Ballan side.

Despite the chilly conditions there was some great polocrosse from our 12 teams. This weekend both of our club teams made the finals, with both coming away runners-up in their respective grades. Next year we will be looking for the wins!



### Results Week one

#### A Grade

- Winners: Corio Sponsored by 4CYTE
- Runners up: Central Districts Sponsored by Johnson's Natural Formula
- Best horse & rider: Brad Cooper Sponsored by Drovers Saddlery Echuca

#### **B** Grade

- Winners: Canberra Royals Sponsored by Tarryn Godfrey Halters
- Runners up: Albury Sponsored by Johnson's Natural Formula
- Best horse & rider: Amelia Amey Sponsored by Wyann Welsh Mountain Stud

#### C Grade

- Winners: Ballan Sponsored by Triangle Trading Company
- Runners up: Bluegate
- Best horse & rider: Chris Henkel –
   Sponsored by Liphuyzen Harvesting

#### D Grade

- Winners: Wagga Sponsored by Papworth Livestock
- Runners up: Tumba/Oakbank Sponsored by Southwest Stockfeeds Wagga
- Best horse & rider: Clancy Gibbs -Sponsored by Intersales

#### Week two

#### A Grade

- Winners: Ballan Sponsored by Barastoc Feed
- Runners up: Sale Sponsored by Browns Rural Supplies Deniliquin
- Best horse & rider: Harry Vines -Sponsored by Hume Equine Veterinary Clinic

#### **B** Grade

- Winners: Braidwood Sponsored by Barastoc Horse
- Runners up: Bluegate Sponsored by Browns Rural Supplies Deniliquin
- Best horse & rider: Erin King Sponsored by The Moran Family

#### C Grade

- Winners: Sale Sponsored by GTS Farm Supplies
- Runners up: Bluegate Sponsored by Southwest Stock Feeds Wagga
- Best horse & rider: Ella Rose Taylor –
   Sponsored by GTS Farm Supplies

### **CARNIVAL FACES AND PLACES**

















































### **NOTICE BOARD**



# DARWIN NATIONALS SELECTION TIMELINE

The NSWPA Board is pleased to inform our membership of the selection time- line for the 2026 Darwin Nationals to be held at Fred Pass Reserve, Darwin from June 22-28 2026.

Teams Selected - week of 24.8.25

Players informed – week of 01.09.25

Acceptances - no later than 21.9.25

### **QUIZ ANSWERS**

**Question 1** – Correct Answer is a minimum 4 week suspension for abuse, obscene or bad language to an **umpire or official** 

**Question 2** - Correct Answer is a minimum 2 week suspension for abuse, obscene or bad language to a **player** 

### WHOLE SPORT SURVEY

NSWPA Board is compiling a whole sport survey which will be released in the coming weeks. It is imperative ALL members partake in this survey so we can ALL accurately and informatively shape the future of the sport.

# STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING ALL WELCOME

We are commencing the process of developing the Associations 2026- 2031 Strategic Plan. We need your help in creating the vision and pathway for the sport and NSW Polocrosse for the next 5 years.

This is not PANSWs plan nor any of the club, it is a plan for all so we welcome all to attend the first phase of the process, This was initially going to be held in conjunction with the Zones Championships, however with it being cancelled for weather, we will rearrange another time and date for this to occur. More information will be released shortly however if you fail to contribute, your forfeit the right to complain thereafter so be part of the Polocrosse next chapter.

# NSW STATE **EVENTS 2025**



NSW Clubs is the main selection tournament for Darwin 2026 Nationals.



