



*Previous page: Brant at White Birch Farm in Greenwich, CT. This page: from left: Mariano Aguerre, Gonzalo Pieres, Hector Barrantes, and Brant at Saratoga Polo Association, winning the 1987 Palamountain Cup with Anne Palamountain, Will Farish, Mike Azzaro, Memo Gracida and Bill Farish.*

I started, I've always had great pleasure from playing the sport,' says Brant, who was once the highest-rated amateur player in the US, attaining a 7-goal handicap in 1989. 'My aim from the beginning was to take it very seriously. I played nine months a year against top competition all the time – and had good coaching from players who had been playing much longer than I had.'

Legend has it that Brant was introduced to the sport after meeting the American polo legend Tommy Glynn at the Fairfield County Hunt Club one day. Which is sort of true. Although Brant knew Glynn's daughter Sandy from his time in the racing world, it was another figure who set up the meeting between Glynn and Brant – Allen Jerkens – a Hall of Fame thoroughbred-racehorse trainer who saddled two horses that beat the mighty Secretariat.

Glynn – a member of Harvard University's polo team in the 1920s – taught Brant the finer points of the sport and introduced him to other knowledgeable figures, such as the world-renowned indoor polo instructor and player Tom Goodspeed.

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Brant founded White Birch in 1979 and started to climb the higher-goal rankings rapidly, playing with legends such as Gonzalo Pieres Sr, Hector Barrantes and a then-unknown 16-year-old Mariano Aguerre. 'Every time we went out there, we went to win – I thought that's what my team expected from me and that's what I expected from the guys that I played with,' says Brant.

When asked to identify the main factor in White Birch's climb to dominance, Brant credits their approach to selecting ponies. 'We looked at things like the class of the horse, conformation, breeding of the horse, where it was raised, who the breaker was, all of those things,' he explains. 'Other teams could see that really made a difference and they started to do the same thing.'

Many of the bloodlines that are in polo today can be traced back to the horses Barrantes bred during that time, many of which he owned in partnership with Brant. There is an endless list of these horses that ended up playing on White Birch and other teams around the world, including the Argentine Open.

Brant played some of the sport's top ponies, including Levicu – the Best Playing Pony of the Gold Cup in 1983, 1989 and 1990, and an inductee into the Museum of Polo's Horses to Remember circle in 2006. He also names Lechuza, one of Gonzalo Pieres's horses that eventually became a top broodmare, and Rumba, who Brant purchased as a four-year-old and played for 12 years until her retirement. 'Rumba never