

HALL OF FAME

The Ashton Brothers

The Ashton Brothers—**James, Philip, Robert, and Geoffrey Ashton**—were Australia’s first great polo dynasty, rising from a remote New South Wales sheep station to become one of the most feared and admired teams in the world during the 1920s and 1930s. Born to politician and grazier **James Ashton Sr.**, the brothers grew up working on **Markdale**, a 2,250-hectare property near Binda. Their introduction to polo came through a retired British artillery officer in nearby Goulburn, and the sport quickly became their shared passion. Every Friday they would ride their horses 90 kilometres to Goulburn, play all weekend, and return on Monday—an early sign of the discipline and horsemanship that would define their careers.

By the late 1920s the Ashtons had become Australia’s dominant team, winning the **Countess of Dudley Cup** five times between 1928 and 1939. In 1930 they embarked on an ambitious tour of England with 25 home-bred ponies. British newspapers predicted they would fail, but within weeks they were winning major matches, ultimately reaching the final of the prestigious **Champion Cup at Hurlingham**. Their bold, fast style captivated crowds, and **King Alfonso XIII of Spain** commissioned a trophy in their honour.

International tours to the United States followed, where the New York press hailed them as “**the greatest polo family in the world.**” Their success helped establish Australia as a serious polo nation and cemented the Ashton Brothers as icons of the sport.



