



# Opening Season

THE RETURN OF FALL HERALDS CHARITY BALLS, POLO MATCHES, PHEASANT SHOOTS, AND MORE THAN ENOUGH EXCUSES TO START COCKTAILING AT NOON. KRISTINA STEWART WARD ROUNDS UP THE SEASON'S INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL CALENDAR

## FANFAIR

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William W. Anderson throws a hammer in the Braemar Gathering, 1966.

#### September 3, Scotland

The **Braemar Gathering**. For 900 years, large Highland men in kilts have been competing in a testosterone-filled day of Scottish-clan sports. Tossing the caber, throwing the hammer, putting the stone, sprinting, and long leaping are among the offerings taken in by guests—including members of the royal family, who show up in native attire and grimace through a day set to an interminable bagpipe soundtrack.

#### September 8-11, Blenheim Palace, England

London may have just nabbed the 2012 Olympic bid, but the British horse set has the jump on hosting an international sporting crowd. For the first time in eight years, England will preside over the **European Eventing Championships**, allowing local nabobs to take in world-class dressage, show jumping, and cross-country racing.



Above, jumper in the German Grand Prix Dressage in Hamburg, May 2005; right, Argentine polo player in the World Cup Polo, 2001.

#### September 18, Greenwich, Connecticut

The whistle blows at the annual **Harvard-Yale polo game** at Conyers Farm. Any players wishing to trash-talk must do so in iambic pentameter.

#### September 19, New York City

The preppy set, including a number of Rockefeller- and Roosevelt- dress up in silky gowns and crisp tuxedos and discuss trust funds and winning the genetic lottery at New York's most blue-blooded of fundraisers, at the **Museum of the City of New York**.



Daysy Olarte de Kanavos, Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, Renee Rockefeller, and Lauren Shurtz at the New Yorkers for Children gala at the Mandarin Oriental, Time Warner Center, April 1, 2004.

#### September 21, New York City

Melissa Etheridge performs at the **New Yorkers for Children** gala, which this year honors **Russell Simmons** and is chaired by **Oscar de la Renta** and **Jerry Seinfeld**.

#### September 30, Los Angeles

Gertrude Stein has nothing on the ladies' luncheon that the **Natural Resources Defense Council's Elizabeth Wiatt** has made into an annual event.

#### October 1-9, Saint-Tropez

**Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez** is the classic sailboat regatta created by **Patrice de Calmont**, owner of celebrity-soaked Club 55 and a man not afraid to tell **Jack Nicholson** he'll be waiting an hour for his favorite table to be vacated by **King Juan Carlos of Spain**. Patrice uses his considerable pull to gather international mogul-sailors for this annual event.



Yacht Wettbewerb, skippered by Ronald De Wouf, in Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, 2004.

#### October 15, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

**Ironman** is the punishing half-day competition comprising a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride, and 26.2-mile run. It was dreamed up in 1978 by a group of Hawaiian runners who were debating which category of athletes—swimmers, cyclists, or runners—was the most fit. It seems that they decided all of the above. About a dozen "Half Ironman" races now play out worldwide over the course of the year.

#### October 15, the Plains, Virginia

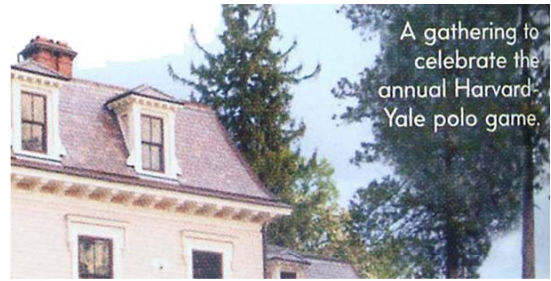
Washington, D.C.'s denizens mix it up with 30,000 others at the **International Gold Cup** horse race, where Thoroughbreds compete for the crown-shaped trophy donated to the event in 1903 by **King Alfonso XIII of Spain**.

#### The Catwalk

Fashion reigns for 40 days and 40 nights on the five-city tour of ready-to-wear collections:  
 • New York (September 9-16)  
 • London (September 18-22)  
 • Milan (September 24-October 2)  
 • Paris (October 3-11)  
 • Los Angeles (October 16-25)



Fall 2005 Calvin Klein Ready-to-Wear collection. CONTINUED ON PAGE 128



A gathering to celebrate the annual Harvard-Yale polo game.

#### November 19-December 10, Palermo, Argentina

Argentina's most famous exports (those rash heartrob polo players) take time off from the paycheck polo circuit to return to the motherland and trounce one another in the sport's premier annual competition: the **Argentine Polo Championship**. (No licat patrons are allowed to muck up the game; this is for real players only.)



A gathering to celebrate the annual Harvard-Yale polo game.



A scene from the 2001 Hôtel de Crillon Debutantes Ball.

#### Late November, Paris

The **Debutantes Ball** at the Hôtel de Crillon seems to have cornered the global market on the patrician auction block most commonly known as the debutante ball. About two dozen teenagers are presented in couture ball gowns before a handpicked crop of 300 suitable suitors and the girls' boldfaced name parents. This year's offerings are rumored to include **Ashley Bush**, sister of **Lauren Bush**, who debuted in 2000, as did daughters of **Gloria von Thurn und Taxis**, **Marcel Hemingway**, **Silvia Berlusconi**, **I. M. Pei**, **Patty Hearst**, **David Tang**, and **Anna Wintour**.

#### November 26, London

Scottish reeling season (yes, there is such a thing) runs from September through May, with the **London Reels**, **PGT Reels**, and **Hampshire Reels** all bowing to the **St. Andrew's Ball**, at Bonqueting House, as Lord of the Dance. Unless you already know the **Inverness Country Dance**, the **Strip the Willow**, and the 15 other regimented dances, you ought to stay on the sidelines or buy the unintentionally hilarious cribnotes: *The Swinging Sparran Reel Guide*.

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The fat lady sings and skinny, couture-clad women listen during six opening-night opera performances, all of which have gala parties:

- New York (New York City Opera, September 7; Metropolitan Opera, September 19)
- Los Angeles (September 10)
- San Francisco (September 10)
- Chicago (Lyric Opera, September 24)
- Houston (October 22)