

STICKS & STONES

CANADIANS AT THE TOP OF THE GAME: 2014 HIGHLIGHTS OF CANADIAN LACROSSE

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2014 MEN'S FIL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP: TEAM CANADA, LEGENDARY GOLD MEDAL

In front of nearly 12,000 fans at Dicks Sporting Goods Stadium in Denver, Co, Team Canada took to the field to battle Team USA for world title supremacy. Behind an abundant amount of skill and talent, Team Canada displayed grit and passion as they perfectly executed bench-boss Coach Randy Mearns' game plan to a "T" winning 8-5 to take their third gold medal in the World Championship, dating back to their 1978 upset in England. Canada's last gold came in 2006 when the Canadians overtook the title from the U.S. in London, Ont.

Canada opened their world championship journey against the United States on the opening day of the ten day tournament with their only defeat in the tournament on their run through to the championship match. A mix of rookies and veterans seemed to be a perfect combination for the boys in red and white. Captained by veterans Brodie Merrill, Geoff Snider, Matt Vinc and Jordan Hall, the players took to the field each and every game gaining more and more momentum priming them for their world title match-up.

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CONT'D: 2014 MEN'S FIL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP: TEAM CANADA, *LEGENDARY* GOLD MEDAL

During the gold-medal game Kevin Crowley, a former U-19 Team Canada star who had just three goals coming into the final, scored five goals to lead the patient Canadian attack. Canada held the lead from start to finish, leading 3-1 at the half with Crowley netting three of his five markers in the first 40 minutes. Canada also got scoring from Curtis Dickson and Cam Holding while middle Jordan Hall added two assists, doubling his tournament output for helpers. The Canadian side led 7-2 after three quarters and then a goal from Mark Matthews added to tally to gain their biggest lead of the game at 8-2 early in the fourth. Snider won 7-of-14 face-offs against the USA duo of Chris Eck and Greg Gurenlian, and Canada won the groundball battle 35-22.

The American defence could not find a solution to the patient and disciplined Canadian ball control game and faced a stellar goaltending effort from Dillon Ward. Ward was named the Most Valuable Player of the championship with a 63.3 save percentage to rank second in the tournament and a 4.45 goals against average that ranked fourth. With MVP honours, Ward became the first goalie to ever receive the honor.

Many lacrosse analysts have been reported heavily discussing just what put Team Canada back on top of the world lacrosse podium. The underlying consensus is that there were two elements that elevated Canada to the gold. One was that Team Canada's game execution was one of cohesiveness and trust, playing to the team's collective strengths. The second was that one cannot underestimate the emotion and passion Canada had in playing for former teammates Chris Sanderson and Kyle Miller, who both succumbed to cancer after long and courageous battles since both playing for Team Canada in the 2010 world championships in Manchester, England.

Not only was Ward named the MVP of the tournament, posting 10 saves for Canada in the championship game, he was bestowed Team Canada's highest honour of Player of the Game; an honour that carries with it earning Sanderson's 'Player of the Game' jean jacket. The jacket was sent by Sanderson's wife to Merrill and was given out by the team throughout the tournament after each game. As Ward put on the jean jacket it was a flashback of sorts as Ward's first lacrosse goalie camp was Sanderson's, a player and person that Ward looked up to.

The team represented Canada in a way that all Canadians and lacrosse fans can be proud of. They went beyond being a team, they were family; truly each member of the team, staff and management played not for themselves but for their country and for all members, past and present, of the Team Canada Lacrosse family.

Congratulations Team Canada, 2014 World Champions!



CANADIAN OFFICIALS AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME - RECAPPING THE 2014 FIL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FROM THE OFFICIALS PERSPECTIVE

BY: BY DAVID GOULET, CLA REFEREE-IN-CHIEF—MEN'S FIELD
DEPUTY RIC, 2014 FIL MEN'S FIELD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

At the conclusion of the World Championship in Denver, Canadian pride was evident in the faces of the players, coaches and support staff as they accomplished the ultimate goal of claiming the gold medal. They were able to wear the maple leaf and the red and white boldly and proudly.

What the world wouldn't see, and quite honestly couldn't see, was the same pride being shown by twenty other Canadians who also accomplished what they set out to achieve.

These men set aside national identity in order to step onto the field and act as caretakers of the game. Each official showcased the internationally recognized high-level of professionalism and knowledge Canadian officials are known for. For some, the sideline was as close as they got; assessing, evaluating and educating the officials on the field was the job they took on.

How do we measure the accomplishment of a crew of officials? How can we rate those whose job it is to be fair, consistent and preferably unnoticeable?

We can start by looking at the assignments on the final day.

There were five Canadians officiating in the Blue division and on the final day all five referees worked on championship day. Brent Coulombe refereed his third gold medal game. Lee Brien was Head Referee of the bronze medal game and was supported by Ian Wilson as CBO (Chief Bench Official) – it can be argued that the only reason Ian was not on the field for this game was because of an injury sustained during the US/Iroquois game two days earlier. Ryan Nose and Scott McMullen rounded out the day by refereeing the 5th/6th place game. In addition, Kody Moleshci earned the opportunity to officiate a Blue Division play-in game between Israel and England. This game had huge implications for Blue Division placement in 2018. Kody was recognized for his performance in this game with many noting how calm he was throughout.

Credit for the level of performance at the 2014 FIL World Championships must in part go to the officials who brought experience from previous championships. In addition to the Blue Division referees, Adam Crowe, Ryan Metcalfe and Shawn Grenier brought valuable experience and high expectations to those attending for the first time. Kody, Michael Drake, Greg Fancett, Terry Mosdell, Dave Hallett, Nathan Adams and Steve O'Shaughnessy learned firsthand what an exhausting yet exhilarating experience a world championship can be. They accounted themselves very well and I'm sure we will see them striving to be back.

Behind the scenes there were the assessors - Frank Lawrence, Brian Huntley and Al Sleightholme. As assessors they put in some of the longest hours of the tournament. With games starting at 8 a.m. most days and in some cases going past midnight, the assessors are true unsung heroes. They sit on the sideline with the unenviable task of debriefing, educating and supporting officials mere minutes after they have come off the field. It is a delicate balancing act that, if done properly, can have officials feeling good about their game and enthusiastic about improving on their weaknesses at their very next opportunity. Done wrong and a referee's confidence can be questioned and resentment created. I am confident in saying our assessors are true contributors and builders of referees.

As Deputy RIC I was privy to many discussions about the officials. In these discussions one thing became increasingly clear - there was a high level of respect for the Canadian referee crew. From the high level of officiating to the level of fitness to the support they offered every official regardless of their country of origin, the Canadian crew represented themselves, their program and their country admirably.

It must also be stated that these Canadian officials are true anomalies. They achieve this status when there is such a limited opportunity to referee high-level lacrosse. These men take every chance to referee and make the absolute most of it. They don't get to see the Grants and Rabils or any consistent level of elite lacrosse. What they do see is an opportunity every time they step on the field to hone their craft and be the best they can be. I am so proud to say that I have been able to call myself their RIC for the past eight years - what a great crew to lead!



2014: THE SUMMER OF SIX NATIONS LACROSSE

BY: RUSTY DOXTDATOR, CLA ABORIGINAL DIRECTOR, WITH EXCERPTS FROM THE TWO ROW TIMES AND TURTLE ISLAND NEWS PUBLICATIONS

Years, if not generations, of teachings has conglomerated in a wealth of talent that was brought together and rose to the summit of Canadian lacrosse excellence showcased by talented and skilled competitors of the Six Nations community.

Canadian lacrosse history was made this year when four teams from Six Nations competed and won provincial titles. Three of those four teams then went on to win their national title; a high level of victory in lacrosse that no other one community in Canada has ever achieved.

First the Six Nations Rebels won their fourth consecutive Founders' Cup (Junior B) national title, a history all in itself. Then the Six Nations Arrows travelled to British Columbia to claim the title of Canadian Junior A Lacrosse Champions, as they hoisted the Minto Cup. The Arrows came back from a 0-2 game deficit in the best-of-seven series against the Coquitlam Adanacs to take the 2014 Minto Cup in six games. Finally, the Six Nations Chiefs hosted Canada's most elite championship, the Mann Cup, on home soil. Packing the Six Nations of the Grand River Iroquois Lacrosse Arena game after game, the Chiefs reclaimed the title of Canadian Senior A champions winning the championships in back-to-back years.

The accomplishments of the Six Nations lacrosse athletes did not go unnoticed; it gained community-wide attention and support and was celebrated when the Six Nations Elected Council planned a celebration. The celebration hosted all four lacrosse teams, their friends, family, and community members who supported them throughout the season, including the Six Nations Elected Chief, Ava Hill. (Two Row Times, www.tworowtimes.com).

After the Six Nations Chiefs capped off the season with the Mann Cup victory, Six Nations Chief Ava Hill said, "This is truly historic for not only the community of Six Nations but for all of the Haudenosaunee who play the Creator's Game. We have four teams who have won all of the Ontario Championships and three who have won the National Championships. This is quite an accomplishment and we are all proud of the teams and the community who stood in support of the players and the coaches all year long." (Turtle Island News).

Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy also congratulated the players and coaches of the Six Nations Chiefs lacrosse team on winning the best-of-seven Canadian senior championship four games to two this Saturday in Six Nations. "This a great victory for the Six Nation lacrosse community who have worked hard all year long and take enormous pride in this sport and have come out on top," Regional Chief Beardy said. "This is not only a victory for them but for all First Nations people who dare to dream big." (Turtle Island News).

When the community gathered to celebrate this amazing season of lacrosse they celebrated not only the successes but that there were a number of "firsts" woven in amongst their success - the Jr 'B' Rebels winning their fourth consecutive Founders' Cup with 2 consecutive perfect record regular Seasons; the Major/Senior 'A' Chiefs repeating as Mann Cup Champions and doing so for the first time as hosts on Native Land; and en collectively, being Provincial Champions, with three out of four achieving National Championship status with the forth being National Finalists.

No Lacrosse Community has been able to achieve this level of excellence in the history of Canadian Lacrosse. Six Nations set the bar high for lacrosse supremacy, it was earned in 2014. We cannot wait to see what next season, and years to come, brings.



CLA RECOGNIZES MICHEAL 'KANENTAKERON' MITCHELL WITH THE PRESTIGIOUS LESTER B. PEARSON AWARD



© Canadian Lacrosse Association, 2014

Micheal Mitchell (right) receives the 2014 Lester B. Pearson Award from CLA President, Joey Harris

The Canadian Lacrosse Association (CLA) is honoured to name Micheal 'Kanentakeron' Mitchell as the 2014 recipient of the Lester B. Pearson Award. Considered to be the highest honour in the Canadian lacrosse community, the Lester B. Pearson award is presented by the CLA to an individual in recognition of their outstanding contributions of sportsmanship and leadership in the game of lacrosse, along with the physical and mental development of our young athletes through unselfish dedication as a volunteer. A recipient of the Lester B. Pearson award has made a significant contribution, enhancement or legacy to the game of lacrosse at the national or international level and has promoted a positive image and respect for the game of lacrosse.

Mike Mitchell epitomizes all of those qualities - a leader, a contributor, an advocate and relentless promoter of the game, giving his time, unselfishly, as a dedicated volunteer.

Mike was born into lacrosse; both of his parents were involved in the making of the hickory lacrosse stick, a piece of the game that embodies the traditional and spiritual values of the game, a tradition which was passed on to Mike at a very early age. From a playing standpoint, Mike played in the St. Regis, Cornwall Island & Cornwall Minor Lacrosse systems of eastern Ontario & western Quebec for many years and is considered by many to be one of the best face-off men and stick handlers to come out of Akwesasne.

Mike's greatest contribution to the game of lacrosse is quite possibly his quiet determination to promote the game of lacrosse as the Creator's Game and that it's a game of thanksgiving to the Creator for all He has provided to us. While Dr. William George Beers is considered the Father or founder of the modern game of lacrosse, Mike has been and continues to be a true champion of the game nationally and internationally - not just for the Mohawk people, but for all other First Nation people.

In 1990, Mike started his vision of promoting lacrosse by reviving the Akwesasne Minor Lacrosse Association. After many dormant years, Mike's revival of the Akwesasne Minor Lacrosse Association would have minor teams once again competing in the Ontario Minor Lacrosse Association. His drive to further promote and grow the game continued with the development of the Iroquois Lacrosse Association over twenty (20) years ago.

In 1993, Mike was appointed to the CLA's Board of Directors where amongst his duties as a Board member, he led the campaign to have First Nations participants recognized and inducted into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame (CLHoF), both as players and builders. In 2003, he himself was honoured by the CLHoF with his induction as a Special Contributor in lacrosse.

Mike's selfless advocacy for the game and those who play it continued as he played a key role in establishing the Akwesasne Lacrosse Hall of Fame [presently in a transition stage to become the Akwesasne Sports Hall of Fame]. Most recently, he was recognized for all that he has given when he was the proud recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal for his service to his people and Canada.

In his nomination letter for the Lester B. Pearson award, the nominator perfectly summarized what makes Mike a valuable recipient of the award, "In our First Nations communities and in the lacrosse organizations both here in Canada and in the United States and possibly abroad, Mike is lacrosse and he epitomizes how lacrosse is to be demonstrated and played to celebrate our good life, a healthy body, mind and spirit, to never to lose sight that we play the game for the Creator and that it is a gift from the Creator."

It was with great pleasure that CLA President, Mr. Joey Harris, presented the Lester B. Pearson award to Mike at the 2014 CLA Semi-Annual General Meeting, held in Montreal, QC.

Thank you, Mr. Micheal 'Kanentakeron' Mitchell.

2014 MINOR NATIONALS CONVERGE ON THE WEST COAST

The 2014 Minor Nationals Lacrosse Championship is the pinnacle championship event for the best minor lacrosse players across the country. This year's hosts aimed to show the history and share the passion for the sport as the New Westminster Salmonbellies celebrated their 125th anniversary while proudly co hosting the 2014 Nationals with the Coquitlam Adanacs lacrosse club.

The Tournament itself took place on the famous wooden floor in New Westminster's Queen's Park Arena, and at the newly renovated Poirier Arena in Coquitlam, British Columbia. With its deep lacrosse history, Queen's Park Arena is considered one of the "Mecca's" of the lacrosse world and all medal games were played there along with the opening and closing ceremonies.

There was no shortage of lacrosse being played during the Pee Wee, Bantam, and Midget Nationals.

Similar to the 2013 Minor Nationals, Team Ontario repeated as "A" division winners, winning Gold in Pee Wee 'A' and Bantam 'A'. Team Ontario faced off against Team British Columbia in both gold medal match ups. The games were all tight competitions - great skill, determination and passion were all evident throughout the championships. In the Pee Wee final Team Ontario emerged victorious defeating Team BC 8-2. In the Bantam game, Team BC looked to end the winning streak of Team Ontario, but alas Team "O" would hold onto the title, claiming their seventh consecutive Bantam national title with a close 5-4 victory. In the Midget 'A' Gold medal game Team BC faced off against Team Alberta, ultimately taking the Midget national title with a 14-2 victory.

Team Nova Scotia won their third consecutive Gold in the Pee Wee 'B' division as well as Gold in the Bantam "B" division, while Team Saskatchewan won Gold in the Midget 'B' division. Team Nova Scotia faced Team New Brunswick in Pee Wee 'B' division finals, Team Nova Scotia faced Team Manitoba in Bantam 'B' division finals and Team Saskatchewan faced Team New Brunswick in the Midget 'B' division gold medal match-up.

2014 Pee Wee Nationals

'A' Division

Gold - Team Ontario

Silver - Team British Columbia

Bronze - Team Alberta

'B' Division

Gold - Team Nova Scotia

Silver - Team New Brunswick

2014 Bantam Nationals

'A' Division

Gold - Team Ontario

Silver - Team British Columbia

Bronze - Team Alberta

'B' Division

Gold - Team Nova Scotia

Silver - Team Manitoba

2014 Midget Nationals

'A' Division

Gold - Team British Columbia

Silver - Team Alberta

Bronze - Team Nova Scotia

'B' Division

Gold - Team Saskatchewan

Silver - Team New Brunswick

THE CANADIAN LACROSSE ASSOCIATION CONGRATULATES ALL THE 2014 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS:

Female Bantam Nationals: Team BC
Female Midget Nationals: Team BC
Junior Women's Nationals: Team Ontario
Pee Wee Nationals: Team Ontario
Bantam Nationals: Team Ontario
Midget Nationals: Team BC

Founders Cup: Six Nations Rebels
Minto Cup: Six Nations Arrows
Presidents Cup: Onondaga Redhawks
Mann Cup: Six Nations Chiefs
Alumni Cup (U16): Team Ontario
First Nations Trophy (U19) : Team Ontario

TEAM BC AND TEAM ONTARIO TAKE HOME NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES

The Alumni Cup and First Nations Trophy, Canada's under-16 and under-19 national championships took place over the 2014 Labor Day weekend in Edmonton, AB. The talent was exceptional while the games showcased the skill level and talent that Canadian field lacrosse athletes are quickly becoming recognized for.

This year, the Alumni Cup six teams from across the country competed for the national title. Team Ontario went 5-0 leading up to their 12-4 victory over defending champion Team British Columbia to capture the Alumni Cup. Team Alberta finished a strong tournament in their home turf with a 19-5 win over Team Saskatchewan to take home the bronze medal.



Five teams competed for the First Nations Trophy national championship, Team Nova Scotia, Team Alberta, Team Saskatchewan, Team BC and Team Ontario. There were some great games played by great teams, with many future stars taking to the field. After a full round-robin play the top team received a bye into gold medal game, while the remaining four teams faced off in semi-final action. After semi-final action was complete, it was Team BC facing Team Ontario for the First Nations Trophy championship, and Team Saskatchewan versus Team Alberta for the bronze medal. Congratulations to Team British Columbia who topped Team Ontario 16-11 to take home the title of 2014 First Nations Trophy Champions.

© Lorrie Stinson, 2014

Team Ontario poses after winning the Alumni Cup — Canada's U16 National Field Lacrosse Championships.

The 2015 lacrosse season is just around the corner and with that comes the anticipation of another National Championship season. Even though the snow covers our fields and ice has taken over the arenas, the host organizers for each of the national championships are already busy planning.

The dates for the 2015 National Championships are:

Female Box Nationals – July 21st - 25th, Calgary, AB
Pee Wee & Midget Nationals – August 3rd - 9th, Whitby, ON
Bantam Boys Nationals – July 21st - 26th, Saskatoon, SK
Founders' Cup – August 17th - 23rd, Calgary, AB
Minto Cup – August 21st - 31st, Ontario
First Nations Trophy/Alumni Cup – Aug. 28th - 30th, Halifax, NS
Presidents' Cup – August 31st – September 6th, St. Catharines, ON
Mann Cup – September 4th - 13th, British Columbia
Ross Cup/Victory Trophy - October 9-11, To be confirmed

Do you have a great story about lacrosse in your province or community you'd like to share?
 Send it to sticksandstones@lacrosse.ca.

LOCAL LACROSSE IN THE NEWS

CANADIAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS PLAY A LACROSSE GAME TO DEMONSTRATE THAT AN ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLE MAY BE ACHIEVED FOLLOWING TRANSPLANTATION

BY DAVE ARSENAULT

CLA ATLANTIC COORDINATOR - NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA

From July 7th – 12th organ transplant recipients from across Canada gathered in Moncton, NB for the Canadian Transplant Games. These games are used as a showcase for recipients to enjoy competition which include events such as track & field, swimming, golf, table tennis. In the past the recipients, who range from 5 – 85, finished the event with an east vs west ball hockey game. However this year they choose the game of lacrosse to celebrate their second chance of life and to promote the success of organ donation and transplantation.

Dave Arsenault, Atlantic Co-Coordinator for the CLA and Technical Director of LNB, represented the CLA and LNB at this wonderful event. Recipients were quickly taught the basics of lacrosse and given the opportunity to practice them before it was "game on". Dave reported that it was amazing and encouraging to see how well these athletes did from the 12 year old heart recipient to the 8 double lung recipients. With a huge trophy and a ton of pride on the line along with a very loud and enthusiastic crowd the players played with passion and competitiveness. The highlight of the game came when the 5 year old recipient picked up a loose ball at the center of the floor and had to work vigorously as he dodged around at least ten giant adults as he made his way to the net. The crowd cheered and chanted louder and louder and his eyes got wider and his giggles got louder with each defender he dodged around until finally he reached the net and scored past the diving goaltender.

At the end of the day these recipients had a great time playing lacrosse and certainly displayed their strength and competitiveness. They did indeed celebrate their second chance of life and promoted the success of organ donation and transplantation.

SPOTLIGHT: ROB MARTIN - LOCAL LAX CHAMPION

SUBMITTED BY: D. KRUSSELBRINK

Rob Martin is a Local Lax Champion in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia. Rob was the driving force behind the creation of the Kentville Minor Lacrosse Association (KMLA), which is currently in its second year. He serves as the KMLA President. The amount of time and energy Rob dedicates to local lacrosse is stunning. In addition to being a founding member of the KMLA, Rob coaches two Pee Wee teams, referees and supervises junior referees, and works with representatives of other recently formed associations in nearby areas to organize exhibition games and weekend tournaments, all in the name of growing the game in western Nova Scotia.

Rob is a tireless lacrosse supporter who has enthusiastically taken on the role of educator. As many kids and parents in the area know very little about lacrosse, Rob has taken it upon himself to educate kids and parents alike about the rules, technique and tactics of lacrosse. He also mentors junior referees both during and outside of competition; he is literally creating a lacrosse culture in western Nova Scotia.

As a parent of a young boy with a growing love of the game, it is so encouraging seeing a role model who constantly emphasizes the beauty and speed of lacrosse—but without diminishing the role of physicality in how the game is played. At the beginning of this season, the first weekend of Pee Wee exhibition games were very rough—at the expense of skill. Rob sent a lengthy email to all parents and kids explaining that, even though lacrosse is a physical game, the performance on the weekend was not what lacrosse was all about. He went on to say that now that the kids had gotten the excessive roughness out of their system they could get down to learning how to play. At practices, at competition, and outside of the rink Rob is always encouraging, both in word and in tone. He treats every mistake as an opportunity to learn, and it is paying off. The KMLA has more than doubled in size in its second year; the kids are excited to practice and play, and their skill level and game sense is rapidly progressing.

Kudos to Rob, we are all very thankful to have him as our **Local Lax Champion**.

Know a **Local Lax Champion**? Send in your stories and let's celebrate the unsung heroes of lacrosse who volunteer their time so Canadians get to play the game we all love. Email sticksandstones@lacrosse.ca

SPREAD THE WORD

The Canadian Lacrosse Association is online - follow us on Facebook and Twitter!
Engage with others in the Canadian lacrosse community.



Share upcoming events, find scores and final results for all the national championships, talk lacrosse, and so much more.



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COMING SOON.....A BRAND NEW LACROSSE.CA!

The CLA is launching a new and improved www.lacrosse.ca - a sleek new design, easy-to-navigate and all the information athletes, coaches and officials need! Coming soon!

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES...

January 28— Officials clinic fees are due

January 31 — Deadline for notification of attendance at minor nationals

March 1 — Deadline for nominations for Lester B. Pearson Award

March 4 — Transfers begin

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