

2013 Sr B Presidents' Cup

Kahnawake, PQ

August 26 – September 1, 2013

The event started with a very successful welcoming coaches' meeting, held at a local pub/eatery. CLA Convenor, Stewart Begg, introduced the RIC, Terry King, the tournament chair, Greg Horn, and the referee team. All teams were represented.

The venue was good. There was obstructed views from center floor on both sides, due to media platforms. The player benches are on opposite sides of the floor and both penalty boxes on one side, beside that player bench. This changes the dynamics of the game slightly. The team that has the bench with no penalty boxes has the same gate positions, offensively and defensively, throughout the game. The team that has the penalty boxes beside their bench has to adjust slightly for that, depending on whether offense or defense is leaving that gate.

The organizing committee was well prepared and security was evident. I did not hear of any pass abuse and the tournament committee seemed to have lots of staff to monitor their doors. There was a very good selection of t-shirts, hoodies, etc, a very good concession, a daily cumulative 50/50 and daily raffle draws. Several vendors of lacrosse equipment and a private concession were outside the venue.

Teams were given a ballboy at the coaches' meeting. Unfortunately, the young man assigned to the Mounties showed up prior to Monday morning's game, but failed to show for any games after that. The Tournament chair offered to provide another one in midweek, but the Mounties declined the offer.

Game Details

The Calgary Mountaineers were scheduled into the opening game of the championship against the St. Catherine Saints, the 2012 silver medalists. The game was quite evenly matched for the first 2 periods, (8 – 6, St Catherine's) but the Mounties showed the travel fatigue by the 3rd period and were defeated with a final score of 15-6.

Monday was also the day for two games for the Mountaineers. Another tough team to play right away with the Mounties facing Caughnawaga Indians. The team has the privilege of having a group of brothers playing on it that are arguably some of the best lacrosse players ever to grace our game, or at least in recent history. The Thompson brothers are absolute beauty in motion, given an open chance to perform. The Mounties held their own for another 2 1/2 periods but again showed fatigue in the final half of the 3rd period and were downed 11 -7 final.

So now Alberta is down 2 games after the opening day. Mentally, for the Mounties, this was tough. One can easily speculate that the schedule was set with that exact intent.

The Mounties bounced back to win their games on Tuesday and Wednesday and found themselves back in the mix. They defeated Capital Region Axemen (Ottawa) on Tuesday and Nanaimo Timberman on Wednesday.

Thursday saw a good game between the host Kahnawake Mohawks and the Calgary Mountaineers. Although a very close score with constant trading of leads, the Mohawks defeated the Mounties. This brought many teams into the mix as there were now several teams with 3 losses and the Mounties were a game at hand to all of the top ranked teams.

By the last regular game for the Mounties, it was a must win for both the Mounties and the Onondaga Redhawks to make the playoffs. The Mounties were successful.

The Mounties lost the 1 vs 4 semi final game to St Catherine's, placing them into the bronze medal game against the Caughnawaga Indians. The Indians were upset by Kahnawake in the 2 vs 3 semi final game. The Bronze medal game was very good but the Mounties again couldn't hold the Indians and were defeated to finish 4th in the tournament. The gold medal game, Kahnawake vs St. Catherines, saw the

I felt the Mounties performed well, given the circumstances. They are generally a young team and many of the players did not have a great deal of national championship experience. The team was well behaved and were good ambassadors for the ALA and the RMLL.

Congratulations to Tyler Melnyk, who was the tournament overall points winner and also named to the 1st All-Star team. This was last accomplished by an Alberta player in 2002 by Jamey Bowen. In 2008, Jeff Pringle, an Alberta native, also won this title but he was playing for Ladner, BC that year.

Also, Congratulations to Mike Klotz, who was named to the 2nd All-Star team.

Areas of Concern

I would like to see the CLA work on getting a consistent schedule format for the Presidents' Cup in the future. We are all aware that the host plans the schedule and it is approved by the CLA. However, it's becoming a bit too strategic in the planning of the schedule, with distinct disadvantages being given to teams. For example, a team that travels on Sunday from the other side of the country should not be given the opening Monday morning game and a double header on the opening day. And both of these games were against the top two ranked teams in the tournament. There was no need to have a 9 AM game on Monday morning, as all other days had the 1st game at 11 AM. As well, the Mounties were given more morning games than anyone else. Although, this proved to be a blessing in disguise, as it was cooler and drier in the arena in the morning.

There was also concern on some of the ref assigning. In the game against the Ottawa Axemen (2nd Quebec team), both Quebec refs were assigned to the floor. The Axemen see these refs on a regular basis during the season. They were very pleased with the refereeing of that game. I was not pleased with the refereeing and when the Mounties coach came to the post game meeting, it was very apparent that he wasn't either.

I felt that our ref, Palmer Funkenheiser, performed well, given his young age and lack of national experience. He was not selected for the medal rounds, but was competing with a pool of refs that all are very experienced, either in the NLL or major lacrosse.

An enjoyable week of excellent lacrosse.

Shauna Sterparn

RMLL Sr B Commissioner