



Annual Report of the RMLL President

Duane Bratt

September 2020

On June 1, 2020, the RMLL cancelled their 2020 Season due to COVID-19.. However, of the 40 Alberta Franchise Holders, approximately 14 ran some sort of programming in July-August as part of the ALA's Return to Activity Protocol. Some simply ran practices (such as JrA Mountaineers, JrB Mountaineers, Shamrocks, Sylvan Lake Yetti, and Lethbridge) and others ran 4v4 tournaments (such as JrA Raiders, Miners, and Rebels). It is likely that some Franchise Holders will re-start some sort of programming in Fall and Winter 2020-2021.

As of the beginning of September though, the RMLL is still in limbo. Given many lacrosse players play hockey and other sports, will Franchise Holders have enough players to run the ALA's Return to Activity Protocol in the Fall if a player is still only allowed to participate in one sport cohort? Although the actual games in the RMLL 2021 season do not start until the end of April, the 2021 Season actual starts the Monday after the 2020 AGM and 2021 Planning Meeting. Dr. Henshaw's announcement that a decision re returning to normal sports play will not being made until they have a chance to review a couple of months' worth of data re the COVID-19 impact of return to school means that we may not know by our AGM and Planning Meeting what a 2021 Season will potentially look like.

In addition to challenges around COVID-19, our 2021 Budget is also a huge challenge as the RMLL income comes from Franchise Fees and our Casino. What impact will cancelling the 2020 Season have on our historic RMLL attrition, especially Sr. B, Sr. C and Sr. Ladies? Traditionally, approximately 250 Graduating Midgets were registered annually on RMLL Franchises, 7 Jr. A representing 9% of Jr. A players, 84 Tier I representing 30% of Tier I players, 110 Tier II representing 27% of Tier II players and 49 Jr. Ladies representing 32% of Jr. Ladies players. Depending on the criteria for allowing 17U players to register in Major Lacrosse will Franchises have to fold due to a lack of players? If Tier II was not allowed register 3rd year Midgets, then our current 18 Alberta Tier II Franchises would potentially drop down to 9 Franchises leaving a number of 18 to 21-year olds with no Franchise to play on. Historically, 60% of the players on Jr. Ladies Franchises are 1st and 2nd year players, so if 30% of the 17-year olds did not want or meet the criteria to register in Jr. Ladies, the current 7 Jr. Ladies Franchises would also decrease. With Junior now 18 to 21, our future Casinos are at risk meaning we lose Casino revenue of \$70,000.00.

Our 2019 AB Team Payer Age Stats were:

2019 AB Team Player Ages																
Summary																
Sr. Divisions	Total			1997	1997%	1996	1996%	1995	1995%	1994	1994%	1993	1993%	1992<	1992 < %	
Total AB Sr. B	160			19	12%	14	9%	18	11%	17	11%	14	9%	78	49%	
Total AB Sr. C	248			23	9%	22	9%	21	8%	17	7%	14	6%	151	61%	
TOTAL AB Sr. Players	408			42	10%	36	9%	39	10%	34	8%	28	7%	229	56%	
Jr. Divisions	Total					2002	2002%	2001	2001%	2000	2000%	1999	1999%	1998	1998%	
Total AB Jr. A	74					7	9%	17	23%	20	27%	15	20%	15	20%	
Total AB Tier I	281					84	30%	59	21%	52	19%	49	17%	37	13%	
Total AB Tier II	412					110	27%	100	24%	101	25%	54	13%	47	11%	
Total AB Tier III	0															
TOTAL AB Jr. Players	767					201	26%	176	23%	173	23%	118	15%	99	13%	
Sr. Ladies Division	Total	1997 >	1997 > %	1997	1997%	1996	1996%	1995	1995%	1994	1994%	1993	1993%	1992 <	1992 < %	
Total AB Sr. Ladies	97	5	5%	8	8%	8	8%	11	11%	10	10%	7	7%	48	49%	
Jr. Ladies Division	Total					2002	2002%	2001	2001%	2000	2000%	1999	1999%	1998	1998%	
Jr. B AB Ladies	151					49	32%	42	28%	22	15%	23	15%	15	10%	
Total AB Jr. Ladies	151					49	32%	42	28%	22	15%	23	15%	15	10%	

What will these stats look like at the end of the 2021 Season?

The RMLL still has our AGM and planning meeting scheduled for Nov 13-15, 2020. However, we have no idea how it will occur. Will it still be in-person (scheduled for Red Deer) or virtual? Although our Bylaws state: "A majority of the Members in Good Standing must be present in person to form a quorum at the AGM or any General or Special General Meeting." Does present virtually meet the "in-person" criteria? Will it be about wider RMLL issues (such as impact of 17U) or the traditional breakout meetings by division? At this moment, we expect to have a 2021 season, but there is no guarantee. Come November will gatherings of 100 even still be allowed?

We also need to look at revising our regulations based upon the 17U change. What impact will this have on drafts and protected lists?



Vice-President's 2020 Season

Hello all,

In the spirit of these uncertain times, I would like everyone to see the importance of this unprecedented act of sportsmanship. This reflects the true nature & spirit of the Creator's Game. We can all strive to achieve similar acts of sportsmanship & respect for all our members, as we move forward. This is my message to the RMLL this season.

(CNN)- In a remarkable show of sportsmanship, Ireland's lacrosse team is withdrawing from an international tournament to allow a Native American team to play instead.

The team withdrew from [The World Games 2022](#) and the Iroquois Nationals lacrosse team will take its place, [World Lacrosse announced](#) last week.

"It's simply the right thing to do," Michael Kennedy, chief executive officer of Ireland Lacrosse, [said in a statement](#).

"We are a proud member of World Lacrosse and we recognize the importance of The World Games to the continued growth of our sport. As much as our players would have been honored to compete, we know the right thing is for the Iroquois Nationals to represent our sport on this international stage."

"You have gone above and beyond not only for us, but for what you believe is right," [the Iroquois Nationals tweeted to Ireland Lacrosse](#). "Your actions have spoken louder than words showing everyone the true power of sport, and the spirit of lacrosse. We will never forget that."

Lacrosse was created by Native Americans in North America as early as the 12th century, [according to the Iroquois Nationals](#).

The Nationals represent the Iroquois Confederacy -- [also known as the Haudenosaunee](#) -- a confederacy of six Native American tribes that dates back hundreds of years. The confederacy is comprised of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora tribes.

The team is the only Native American team that has been authorized to play a sport internationally, and has been competing in international lacrosse since 1990, [according to the team's website](#).

I DTEANNTA A CHEILE (Together as one)

Mike Fynn

RMLL Vice-president



2020 Executive Director Report

The function of the Executive Director is to carry out the administrative support of the RMLL on behalf of the Executive. Although a volunteer position, this role is a full-time job for all twelve months of the year.

2020 started out as a positive season for the RMLL. The season began with the Division Planning Meetings and AGM in November 2019 followed by Graduating Midget Communications in December, to Graduating Midget Info Sessions in January and Combines and Drafts in February. Franchises had updated their Franchise Certificates, Franchise invoices had been issued, Senior B, Junior A and Junior B Tier I had posted their Protected Lists, eight hundred and seventy (875) players had completed their RMLL Intent-to-Play and most of the 2020 Division schedules had been posted. Then on March 11, 2020 everything came to halt with the ALA announcement that due to COVID-19 all lacrosse activity was suspended until further notice. With the CLA announcing on May 28, that they were cancelling the 2020 National Championships, the RMLL finally cancelled their 2020 Season on June 2, 2020.

Promotion

The Graduating Midget "welcome" documents were posted to the RMLL website January 2. Copies of the documents were handed out to everyone attending the North and South Information Sessions.

We again held our North and South Graduating Midget Information Sessions. The South Session was held in Calgary on Friday, January 3 at the Acadia Recreation Centre. Although held during the Christmas Break, the South had their largest ever attendance, as over 150 players and parents attended. The North Session was held in Edmonton on Friday January 10 at the Central Lions Senior Rec. Centre and this year the Info Session was also live streamed.

Once again, the RMLL held our North and South Junior Combines. Online Registration was used again for both Combines. The North Combine was held on Saturday, January 25 at Servus Place in St. Albert. Fifty-one players registered of which ten were goalies. The South Combine was held on Saturday, February 8 at the Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary. Eighty-five players attended of which included ten goalies.

Drafts and XX Man Protected Lists

Senior B – The North Draft was held on February 5 and the South Draft was held on Feb. 6. The Senior B 50 Man Protected List was last posted on February 19. Due to COVID-19 and lacrosse activities being suspended, the List was never dropped down to 40 at the April 15 deadline.

Junior A - The Drafts were held on February 10. The Junior A 60 Man Protected List was last posted on March 7. Due to COVID-19 and lacrosse activities being suspended, the List was never dropped down to 50 by the second Sunday in April deadline.

Junior B Tier I - The North Draft was held on February 8, the Lethbridge Draft was held on February 11 and the Central and South Drafts were held on February 12. The Junior B Tier I Protected 45 Man Protected Lists were last posted: North – March 5, South – February 12, Central – February 21 and East – February 17. Due to COVID-19 and lacrosse activities being suspended, the Lists were never dropped down to 35 at the April 11 deadline.

RMLL Intent-to-Play

As of March 30, eight hundred and seventy-five (875) players had completed the RMLL Intent-to-Play.

	Registered to a 2019 Team End of Season	# of 2019 AB Teams	RAMP Registered 30-Mar-20	# of 2020 AB Teams	Player Difference
Jr. Male	814	34	563	33	-251
Jr. Ladies	164	7	132	7	-32
Sr. Male	438	14	153	14	-285
Sr. Women	97	5	27	5	-70
Total	1513	60	875	59	-638

Junior Male Players – Of the 563 players, 251 were male Graduating Midgets (birth year 2003). Given there were 486 male Graduating Midgets from the 2019 Season, this would represent a retention of 52% which is our historical retention number for Graduating Midgets going back to 2009.

Junior Female Players – Of the 132 players, 45 were female Graduating Midgets (birth year 2003). Given there were 120 female Graduating Midgets from the 2019 Season, this would represent a retention of 38% which is close to our historical retention number for female Graduating Midgets.

2020 Schedules

On March 11 when all lacrosse activities were suspended, the Sr. B, Jr. A, Tier I, Tier II South, Jr. Ladies and Sr. Women's schedules were posted. The Tier II North Schedule was completed but not yet posted. The Sr. C Schedule was the only schedule that had not yet been created.

RMLL Contracts

Contracts included Hartzler Enterprises for bookkeeping, SportzSoft for the RMLL System and website and the City of Calgary for the RMLL arena.

Planning For 2021 Season

The RMLL is still very much in limbo as currently although we hoping to have a 2021 Season, as of right now there is no guarantee. For things that are coming up shortly like the Info Sessions for 17-year-olds and Combines, we are having to try and structure the events under current Alberta Health Rules which means options may be less than ideal. With the 2020 Season being suspended in the first half of the Season, many things were just partially completed or not even started, like rosters. RMLL Regulations will need to be revised to include some specifics for the unfinished items from the 2020 Season as well as any adjustments required for just the 2021 Season.

Christine Thielen
Executive Director, RMLL



2020 Senior B Commissioner's Report

The 2020 Season was rather un-eventful to say the least.

Our draft was held on February 5th and 6th in Edmonton and Calgary respectively.

Our suspensions were down 100%

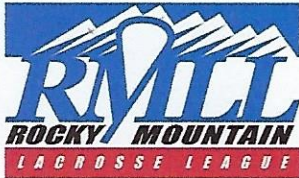
Our attendance league wide was down 100%

Our games played were down 100%

I look forward to the 2021 season with great anticipation.

Yours truly,

Norm Shaw
Senior B Commissioner



2020 Senior C – Season End Report

That 2020 Senior C season end report can be summed up on a tiny post-it note – non-existent, thanks to the COVID -19 pandemic.

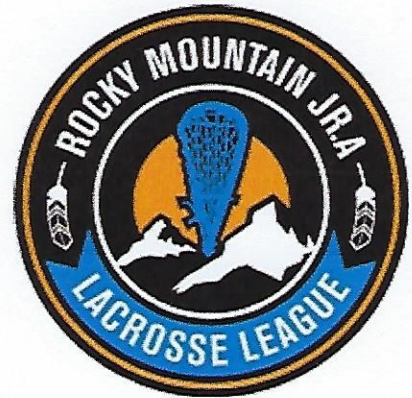
The division is looking towards 2020 with cautious optimism.

The Airdrie Mohawks have been given permission by the BCLA to move the planned Glen (Moose) Scott Tournament to 2021. The team is moving forward with their plans.

Yours in lacrosse,
Tracey Haining
Senior C Commissioner

RMLL JR A COMMISSIONERS REPORT

November 8th, 2020



EXECUTIVE SEASON REPORT

1. Growth and Recruitment

- i** *As there was no season this year there were no league initiatives surrounding growth & recruitment.*

2. Season Overview

- i** *There was no season this year. However, individual teams ran ALA & AHS compliant cohort programs this summer and fall.*

The Raiders and Miners ran cohort leagues this summer that garnered a good amount of attention.

3. Accomplishments

- i** *This September, the NLL draft really emphasized the progress The JrA division is making in developing high level lacrosse players.*

Laine Hruska (Swat), was drafted 13th overall in the 1st round, immediately followed by Harrison Matsuoka (Raiders) taken at 14th by Calgary.

Brett McIntyre (Raiders) was selected in the 2nd round (22) along with Tyler Sceviour (Raiders) at 33.

Rounding out this year's draft were Isaac Bot (Mounties) at 55, Cody Arseneault (Mounties) at 69 and Wyatt Haux (SWAT) at 92

4. Setbacks

i COVID19 presented a substantial headwind this season to say the least.

The announcement of the extension to minor for 17U by the CLA and subsequent announcement from the OJALL to move to a 22U format has presented challenges for the division. While 17U doesn't have a large impact at the JrA level, the move by the OJA has presented conflict between the leagues and the CLA. (expended commentary in Observations)

5. Upcoming Season Goal/Objectives

i 2021 Objectives

- *Planning for a regular unimpeded season. (with contingency plans being developed)*
- *New league operating policy (in Committee). CLA regulation changes present headwinds*
- *Game streaming for all clubs*
- *Increase number of regular season games from 15 to 18*
- *League Sponsorship and marketing program*
- *Expanded social media presence*

6. Observations

i *With the OJALL announcement moving to 22U the JrA Division needed to discuss and formulate a position. While the majority consensus of the Governors was to support a 5-year Major lacrosse program. The Majority also support the 22U age group but differ in how that should be delivered. Finally, the Majority also support respecting the CLA process with the LTAD committee. It would have been preferable that the 17U decision was tabled or suspended until the committee could complete its work.*

This season has demonstrated that decisions being made at the National Governing and MA level are not necessarily being made with the appropriate levels of notice and consultation. It's imperative that we ensure our decisions are fully informed and the impacts known before moving forward.



2021 Jr. B Tier 1 Commissioner Report

Welcome back everyone,

It has been a very historic year for society & it's not quite over yet.

There was good news & bad news from last season.

Good news – the Shamrocks are still Founders Cup Champions.

Bad news – We lost the entire 2020 season.

As we go forward into 2021 there will be many challenges & changes to our game.

Local, provincial, federal governments & sports governing bodies will determine many more of the parameters from which we will play next year. There will be protocols put in place to keep everyone involved safe & healthy. These protocols may change depending on numerous factors out of our control, so we will have to plan & adapt to whatever is necessary to ensure current safety standards. As it stands, there is no clear picture as to how we can/will operate this year. We may be required to have contingency plans for interprovincial travel, length of season, season or playoff start times, arena availability, rosters, player lists, etc.

Based on that, the divisional meeting this year will be busier than normal, but I am sure everyone is raring to get back on the floor & participate in the Creator's game we all love. Let's work together, get all our issues & problems worked out so that the upcoming season can be as seamless as possible... after the rust falls off.

Our goal is to keep the Founders Cup in Alberta.

I hope this finds you all safe & healthy,

Mike Fynn

RMLL Jr. B Tier 1 Commissioner



Junior B Tier II Commissioner Report

Growth and Recruitment

The 2020 Tier II Season was to have 20 teams in total. The north division 10 teams would have consisted of the Crude, Edmonton Warriors, Parkland Posse, Sherwood Park Titans, and the Westlock Rock in the North Central Division. Lakeland Heat, Lloydminster Xtreme, Red Deer Renegades, Sylvan Lake Yeti and the Wainwright Wolfpack in the North East Division. Red Deer and Sylvan Lake moved to the North division to accommodate Cranbrook and West Kootenay moving up into the Tier II division. The South Division teams would have been Calgary Sabrecats, Calgary Axemen, High River Heat, Medicine Hat Sun Devils and the Strathmore Venom in the South Central division. The South West division would have been the Calgary Wranglers, Cranbrook Outlaws, Olds Stringers, Rockyview Rage and the West Kootenay Timberwolves. Each team was to play an 18 game season (9 home and 9 away).

Recruitment

It is important for the 2020 season that teams contact their 17 year old (third year midgets) to see their intent to play at the Junior B Tier II level with the new changes, The third year midgets must complete an Intent to Play with the ALA in order to play at the junior level. Information regarding this process was sent to the teams in September.

Season Overview

Our Tier II division was optimistic about having a 2020 season and held out until the end of June to see if any type of season could be played. Unfortunately, that did not happen. It was encouraging to see the desire of the teams to hold out as long as possible to try and have some sort of season where the players could be engaged. We will need a lot of diligence and determination to recruit and retain players for the 2021 season. Some teams ran summer programs for their cohorts which I understand were successful in keeping their teams engaged through COVID. Great job to those teams who were able to run some type of programming through a difficult time.

Season Accomplishments – NA

Season Setbacks

Obviously, the major setback was COVID and the loss of the season.

Looking to the Future/Upcoming Season Goals

Going into 2021, teams are going to have to be diligent in recruiting and retaining players. It sounds like most teams are planning to return if there is a 2021 Season. Some discussion will have to occur regarding the south division with the two teams from British Columbia. If teams will not be permitted out of province, we will need to readjust to accommodate this obstacle.



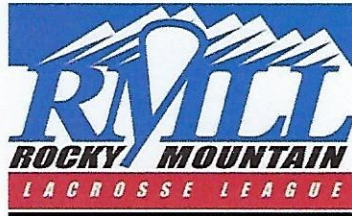
Sr. Women's Division 2020 Season Report.

The Sr. Women's Division was the first division to cancel the 2020 season due to the COVID 19 pandemic and even after a couple attempts were made to modify the season, in the end we were unable to produce viable teams to continue.

The main challenge facing the division in 2020 was retention and recruitment of players to the division to complete team rosters to competitive numbers. Looking forward to 2021 the division will face the same challenge as in 2020.

Thank you,

Alex Traboulay



2020 Junior Ladies Commissioner Report

The Jr Ladies were the 1st division to pull out of the 2020 Season. After a conference call, 2 zoom meetings and the uncertainty of when the season would start, we decided that a shortened season would not work for the majority of the teams. Most teams had a number of girls going away to school in August.

We did talk about another of different options including a Winter Tournament where the division could play each other over a weekend. This proved to be a struggle as the guidelines for Corona Virus change often, as well as how many cohorts you belong to and this would be during Hockey and Ringette.

The teams were left to decide if they wanted to run a floor time with a small group for skills, join any camps that would be going on or apply to the ALA to run a cohort camp following the social distancing rules in place.

A few of the North/South players also played field lacrosse for the summer months, but I am unsure of the numbers.

Now here we are, doing damage control for 2021 due to Corona Virus, a year off and ALA changes. We have lots of work to do but will persevere.

Tammy Machado
Jr Ladies Commissioner

RMLL 2020 Season Report

The loss of the 2020 season means two things for the RMLL in terms of officiating. The first, is that the 2019 report still encapsulates the issues and current state of officiating within the RMLL. The second, is that how leagues and provinces intend to deal with COVID, is still very much undecided. I anticipate that due to cohorting and restrictions, should they still exist in the 2021 season, will have our pool of officials shrink. As such, the ALRA will put even more emphasis on recruiting new officials through the fast-track program, and reaching out to officials who may have left a few years ago, for personal reasons. Included below is the 2019 Season report. A few items were addressed, and I am pleased to announce a much more collaborative relationship has been established with the ALA in the selection process for officials to national and international competition.

RMLL 2019 Season Report

1. Growth and Recruitment

Approximately 75 officials who were assigned RMLL games, or were eligible to be in 2019. With a turnover of retiring officials, or officials who may no longer be interested in the RMLL, I expect this number to stay approximately the same for 2020, which is consistent with the last three years. The officials working their way through Minor Provincials, Summer Games, and Minor Nationals have continued to impress, and should continue to push for the above number to increase. Christine and I had discussed an RMLL Application form, for officials who are interested in starting to work the league, which was published on both the RMLL website, and the ALRA website. We received responses from four individuals, two of which were utilized during the 2019 season. My goal is to have this published more prominently for the 2020 season, so more responses are gained. Currently, all who filled out the form were already officials, but I would like to see more individuals with lacrosse experience who are interested in officiating, but may not be currently registered in the ALRA, filling out the forms, especially retired Sr B players, and Junior graduates who are not continuing on the Senior lacrosse.

2. Season Overview

The approximately 75 RMLL officials all received RMLL jerseys, which was a goal for the 2019 season with the addition of the jersey number line on the RMLL games sheets. There is discussion about a redesign for the RMLL jersey to standardize with Saskatchewan and Manitoba, adopting the WLA/NLL style of black and white stripes. Over 700 games were covered, with one game needing to be canceled due to poor highway conditions and the subsequent road closer, which blocked the official from being able to make the game. Due to the conflicts with clinics and other games, we unfortunately could not find another official to cover this game. Less than 1% of the games needed their start times moved in order to facilitate appropriate officials to be assigned. Mileage costs did not significantly differ from 2019, but were slightly reduced. The inclusion of two BC based Tier III teams, accounts for approximately 14% of the RMLL's total mileage bill, but only represents approximately 3% of the total games played. In an effort to reduce this cost, I am reaching out to the BCLOA, ALA, and RMLL to host and certify officials in this area to be Level 3 referees, which are required for Junior and Senior

level games. This would have two benefits in terms of mileage. The first would be the cost of sending officials to BC to work these games. The second would be allowing the Alberta officials who would have to spend their weekend in BC to be in Alberta to help us cover our games.

3. Season Accomplishments

The 2019 season largely carried on the programs from 2018. These were:

- Tier II Three-Official Mechanic
- Referee Interprovincial Exposure Agreement
- Uber Clinic
- Sr B Three-Official Mechanic
- Jr A Regular Season Shot Clock Official
- Individual Official Achievements

Tier II Three-Official Mechanic

The Three-Official Mechanic was piloted in the Tier II division in 2018 with the goal of having twelve games (six in Wheatland and six in SALA) staffed with one official each that we are preparing to be full-time RMLL officials. The full details of this project's origin and vision can be found in the 2017 RMLL planning meeting minutes. The results for 2019 were a sharp drop from 2018. In 2018, seven games utilized this program, while in 2019, only two were completed, while eight were budgeted for (\$680 total). As such, it is my recommendation that this program not be utilized in 2020, and I will not be submitted the project request. The reason so few games were able to use this was largely due to scheduling conflicts with other games, both minor tournaments, and other RMLL games.

Referee Interprovincial Exposure Agreement

The RMLL is unique as it spans four provincial bodies, allowing for difference in officiating standards to go unnoticed, or accepted. As our league grows and becomes more established at the Tier I and Jr A levels, where out of province teams are the most common, a unified standard becomes more important. We succeeded in having one Alberta officials travel to Saskatchewan to work Jr A playoffs, and one Alberta official travel to Manitoba for Tier I (three regular season games). One official traveled from Saskatchewan to Alberta to assist with covering Jr A playoffs. For the first time, we had a Manitoba official travel to Alberta to officiate two Tier I games, which was a goal for the 2019 season. Saskatchewan official also traveled to Manitoba for their playoff series against the SWAT (two Tier I playoff games). We unfortunately were unable to have Manitoba officials travel to either Alberta or Saskatchewan, but it is a goal for the 2019 season to accomplish both. This will be done likely by lowered the Saskatchewan travel to Alberta, although the demand of the RMLL season did require Saskatchewan officials to travel to Alberta to cover the games with qualified officials. A matching budget of \$7,000 that was allotted in the 2018 and 2019 seasons is requested for the 2020 season.

Uber Clinic

The 2019 edition of the Uber Clinic was one of the best attended in recent years. Primarily attended by officials who currently working in the RMLL, or were about to enter their first year of the league, we also had officials who wish to enter the league. One of the goals of the 2019 Uber Clinic was to expose more officials to the RMLL and what it has to offer. The Friday portion was reinvented, borrowing from the WHL where our new or second year RMLL officials traveled in one day earlier to focus on league specific expectations and rules, in an environment of their peers. This was a goal arising from the 2018 Uber Clinic feedback.

Sr B Three-Official Mechanic

In an effort to deepen the pool of Sr B officials, we borrowed from the Tier II Three-Official Mechanic, and applied this for two home games per Sr B team in the 2019 season. The goals were similar, to utilize officials who we believe to be skilled enough to begin officiating in the 2020 season, or even the end of the 2019 season, as Sr B regulars. We used three officials in the south, and three officials in the north. All teams had their two home games staffed with three officials. We are in need of former players or officials who have taken time off to return continue this program. The officials we currently have were slightly less experienced than was desired, although all will receive either two-man or three-man Senior B assignments next season. The challenges of this division are different from Tier II, as the level of officiating is required to be much higher, as the players are much more skilled, and used to a certain standard of officiating. The commissioner, Norm Shaw, and I were in contact throughout the year discussing the pros and cons of the system. It needs to be communicated to the teams that this is not a system using referees to achieve a higher rate of correct calls and non-calls, but rather to introduce new officials to the level. If the division is interested in pursuing the utilization of a three-man mechanic for performance, then different selection of officials would occur, where they were all very experienced with Sr B, as opposed to just being introduced.

Jr A Regular Season Shot Clock Official

The Jr A Division, through commissioner, Sean Aggus, requested a third RMLL official be provided at the end of the regular season, after issues arose in the application of players leaving the bench at the end of periods/games, and during altercations. This copies the model Saskatchewan has used, where this official runs the shot clock, as well as monitors the benches and the minor officials. I believe this was successful, as the four games it was utilized in before the playoffs had no issues. To make sure this is cost neutral to the teams, I would suggest that this come from fine money for coach feedback forms that were not submitted on time, or through the casino funds (guidelines for casino funds in relation to officials/referee cost can be found here:

[https://aglc.ca/sites/aglc.ca/files/aglc_files/Guidelines%20-%20Sports-Use%20of%20Proceeds%20\(5504\).pdf](https://aglc.ca/sites/aglc.ca/files/aglc_files/Guidelines%20-%20Sports-Use%20of%20Proceeds%20(5504).pdf)

Individual Official Achievements

One of the easiest ways to judge the performance of a program is the number of officials it produces that make their way to the pinnacle of performance. With this in mind, I would like to congratulate Joe Catalano on his recent hire to the NLL, joining Ron Getz, Ray McCarthy, and myself as the four RMLL officials in the league. Additionally, Red Deer resident and social media magnate, Todd Labranche, has giving his years of NLL experience and feedback to RMLL officials he has watched in person. Todd has also taken on the role of WLA (BC Sr A) Referee-in-Chief, which afforded me to travel to the WLA to officiate Sr A lacrosse over the summer. The plan is to open up a pipeline of Alberta elite officials into BC, to allow for our top end officials to continue to develop over the summer. Joe also attended the Minto Cup, working two games in the final series, and Raymond McCarthy officiated the gold medal game at the Presidents' Cup.

4. Season Setbacks

This 2019 was one of turbulence for the ALRA. The loss of the Manager of Officiating Position at the ALA office, along with international and national referee selection issues highlighted strained relationships. That being said, none of these issues are unsolvable, and open communication and dialogue would solve most of the issues.

- Scheduling
- Coach Complaints, Process for Rule Interpretations & Perceived Conflicts of Interest
- Larry Bishop Memorial Tournament
- RMLL Interprovincial Assigning
- World Championship and National Selection Issues

Scheduling

Scheduling of appropriately qualified officials continues to be a struggle as the sport of lacrosse is primarily a weekend endeavour. The logistics of the RMLL, in terms of travel, arena availability, and scheduling constraints, demand that it be a weekend league, so more officials or more officials who are primarily dedicated to the RMLL are required. The questionnaire have developed is designed to find officials who may have fallen through the cracks at the LGB level, officials that have taken time off, or those who are new but qualify for the "Fast-Track," program. As demonstrated in the 2019 season, this silver bullet will not change our fortunes overnight. The RMLL has done a fantastic job of utilizing more weekday games, which has lessened the referee drain, but a significant effort needs to be made to not stretch referee resources thin in our two major centres. Calgary vs Calgary, or Edmonton vs Edmonton games on Friday, Saturday, and Sundays are a significant issue. These are the days we need to focus on travel games, especially in an effort to reduce Tier II's overall mileage, which typically consist of rural teams. This one change would drastically reduce overall mileage costs, albeit at the cost of a few practices for each team a year.

Additionally, the times that games start at needs to be examined. Not every home team can have the ability to play in "primetime" at 7 pm on a Saturday night. Teams and divisions need to be open to making sure their games do not overlap with the time of games of their geographical neighbours. For example, if there are a group of home games in the Wheatland area, Vermillion, Lloydminster, and Wainwright should not all be playing at the same time. Instead, staggering the games in Vermillion and Lloydminster, so the same officials could work both games, whether they are traveling in or not, would help dramatically lower their mileage bill, and the number of officials the ALRA needs to send to cover games. This is also true in Edmonton, where Tier II teams often play at the same time.

One method that should also be looked at is the scheduling of back-to-back games with the higher division team scheduled first. For example, if there are Sr B and Tier II games to be played on the same day, or Jr A and Sr C, if the officials are "fresh" in the higher

level games, this provides a better product for the higher level teams. Additionally, the second game would then have higher quality officials, who can handle the rigors of back-to-back games, with the second being not as strenuous as the first. This also allows for mileage to be split.

Coach Complaints, Process for Rule Interpretations & Perceived Conflicts of Interest

The RMLL needs to ensure that complaints from coaches are handled correctly, and the forms for feedback are utilized, in addition to conversations with the division commissioners. Without these datapoints, we are unable to track trends, growth, and regression. Any rule interpretations are to include the RMLL Referee-In-Chief, as per RMLL Bylaw 7.08.2. Direct contact with the CLA has been discouraged by the ALA office in the past and occurred again this year. Unfortunately, during an RMLL playoff game, it was reported to me that a member of the ALA Executive, who was affiliated with the team in the game, chased down the division commissioner while carrying a rulebook, shouting obscenities at both the officials in the arena and the commissioner. This type of conflict of interest is prevalent in lacrosse and leaves the RMLL with a blackeye when it occurs. This type of referee abuse must be handled severely.

Larry Bishop Memorial Tournament

Unfortunately, we were not able to have a Referee-in-Chief at the Larry Bishop Memorial Tier I tournament, which took away from the development of five of our RMLL officials who committed to Red Deer under the belief they were going to receive coaching and feedback from one of our top RMLL officials. All officials were appreciative of Mike Fynn, the division commissioner, stepping in to help when needed, but not having an RIC was a negative at the event. We rarely get to have our top officials in the same room for a day, let alone a weekend, so it was disappointing to not have someone with a high-level officiating background to assist the officials in terms of enforcing the RMLL standard and rule interpretations. To correct for this, I have submitted a budget proposal for an Larry Bishop Memorial Tournament to have an RIC.

World Championship and National Selection Issues

At the eleventh hour, the ALA did not endorse the ALRA's Founders Cup, Minto Cup, and Presidents' Cup selections. The blanket blocking was unprecedented, and reasons given actually raised issues with the ALA's Regulations for selection, not the ALRA's process. Fortunately, an amicable resolution was agreed upon, with the original Minto Cup and Presidents' Cup selections, Joe Catalano and Ray McCarthy, attending those tournaments. As mentioned above, Joe worked on-floor in the final Minto Cup series, and Ray McCarthy was the Crew Chief in the Presidents' Cup gold medal game. The level of disconnect in the ALA referee evaluation cannot be understated, and shows the ALRA's efficacy in referee selection for these tournaments. Unfortunately, due to similar reasons as mentioned above, the RMLL will not have any officials attending the 2019 World Indoor Lacrosse Championship in Langley, BC, after Tony Reid officiated the Gold Medal game in 2015.

5. Looking to the Future/Upcoming Season Goals

The 2020 season appears to be one of advancement for our RMLL officials. We will need to promote officials, especially in the Wheatland and CDLA regions to facilitate covering the games with qualified officials. Goals for the 2020 season will be to lower the need of GELC officials travel to Wheatland, and lower the travel for the BC teams, by facilitating a collaborative Level 3 clinic in BC. The Sr B Three-Official mechanic, the Interprovincial Exposure Agreement, and the Uber Clinic are all goals to continue pursuing in the 2020 season.