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RMLL Update on 2021 Season Start  
January 8, 2021  
Duane Bratt  
RMLL President

**TO: All Alberta Male Players Born in 2004**

## **WELCOME to Major Lacrosse!**

This is an update on the 2021 season start.

In December, the ALA BOD decided to delay implementation for 17U and has decided to stay with the 16U age category for the 2021 season. The ALA's December 9, 2020 communication explaining this decision can be found at this link:

<https://rockymountainlax.com/ala-17u-division-update-december-9-2020/>

This means that those born in 2004 will play Major Lacrosse in 2021.

Before I provide an update on the 2021 season start, I would like to provide some information about Major Lacrosse.

Here are some of the significant differences between Minor and Major Lacrosse:

- all games are 3 twenty-minute stop time periods, with 10-minute intermissions with a minimum 30-minute warmup.
- Season is usually longer, depending upon how deep you go in the playoffs.
- Nets are bigger (4'X4'6" instead of 4'X4'4").
- Provincial travel (and in some divisions, inter-provincial travel).
- Home and away uniforms.
- New teams to play.
- Playing against better players will make you a much better player.
- Five-year age category.
- Different tactics and introduced and developed.
- In many cases, better coaching.

Major Lacrosse encompasses all players who turn 17 as of December 31, 2021 (birth year 2004). We have two age groups: Junior and Senior. Junior Lacrosse is for players between 17 and 21 years old as of December 31, 2021 and Senior Lacrosse is for players who are over the age of 21, who still wish to play competitive lacrosse. The governing body for Alberta Major Lacrosse is the Rocky Mountain Lacrosse League (RMLL).

In 2021, there are 7 Divisions and 65 teams in the RMLL:  
Alberta Series Lacrosse (formerly Senior B) – 5 teams  
Senior C – 9 teams  
Junior A – 4 teams  
Junior B Tier I – 15 teams  
Junior B Tier II – 20 teams  
Senior Women's – 5 teams  
Junior Ladies – 7 teams

Each RMLL Division has a Commissioner who is appointed annually by the Franchises in a Division. The Commissioner is a Member of the RMLL Executive, represents their Franchises on the Executive and is responsible for administering their Division. All RMLL Divisions must meet the same standards and are treated equally.

The Commissioners for Junior Men's lacrosse are:

Jr. B Tier II Commissioner: Pat Hanson - [Trish035@telus.net](mailto:Trish035@telus.net)  
Jr. B Tier I Commissioner: Mike Fynn – [m.fynn27@gmail.com](mailto:m.fynn27@gmail.com)  
Jr. A Commissioner: Sean Aggus - [s\\_aggus@shaw.ca](mailto:s_aggus@shaw.ca)

## **Junior Tiers**

Excluding the Junior Ladies Division, we have 3 tiers of Junior Lacrosse: Junior B Tier II, Junior B Tier I and Junior A. The main difference between each tier is the increased level of play. For example: as players develop their skills, the game becomes faster, harder hitting and with each level game strategy becomes even more of an integral part of a team's success.

A player's time commitment also increases with each level as a Junior B Tier II player is most likely on the floor 2 to 3 times a week whereas a Junior B Tier I or Junior A player is on the floor 3 to 4 times a week.

The Junior B Tier II Franchises are the entry level teams for most first-year Juniors. In 2019, of the 201 first year Junior males who played in the RMLL, 7 played on a Junior A Franchise, 84 played on a Junior B Tier I Franchise and 110 played on a Junior B. Tier II Franchise. During the five-year span of Junior Lacrosse, players are encouraged to move up through the Junior Tiers as their skill level develops. The Junior Tiers are responsible for player development and provide players with the tools to further their playing skills.

## **Registration**

Registration in the RMLL is a two-step process

1. All first-year Juniors must register in 2021 with the club which has their first playing rights regardless if the Club only offers a Tier II Franchise. This includes drafted and non-drafted players who may be trying out for Junior B Tier I and/or Junior A. All Junior players attending higher level team tryouts, must keep the Franchise they initially registered with apprised of their progress and must also try to attend floor times of that Franchise. Players successful in making a higher-level Franchise roster will have their full team registration fee either transferred or refunded.

2. All Juniors MUST ALSO complete an on-line **RMLL Intent-To-Play form**. A player cannot go on the floor with a RMLL team unless they have completed the Intent-To-Play form. Go to this link for further information regarding the RMLL Intent-To-Play form:  
<https://rockymountainlax.com/intent-to-play/>

**Note:** When you complete the RMLL Intent-To-Play form, you will need to submit the ALA Player Registration Fee of \$60.25.

## **Boundaries**

Boundaries for the initial registration of a first-year Junior male is with your Minor Club if your Club offers a Tier II Franchise. If your Minor Club does not offer a Tier II Franchise, then you are a Tier II Free Agent and may register with any Tier II Franchise.

If a player, in the last year of 16U, was given a one-year release from their Minor Club to play in another Minor Club, then the player's rights are held by the Club who gave the release.

If a player, in the last year of 16U, was given a permanent release from their Minor Club to play in another Minor Club, then the player's rights are held by the last Club they played for.

## **Junior Entry Drafts**

To assist with keeping the competitiveness of Franchises in a Division consistent, the Junior A Division and the Junior B Tier I Division hold annual Graduating 16U Entry Drafts.

**Graduating 16U Player Draft** – At the end of each playing season, the ALA provides the RMLL with a list of all the 16U players graduating from the season just completed. This list is the Graduating 16U Player List. All players on this list are eligible for the Junior A and Junior B Tier I Graduating 16U Drafts. Each of the three Alberta Junior A Franchises, the Calgary Mountaineers, Edmonton Miners and the Okotoks Raiders draft thirteen (13) players from this list. The Crude, Sherwood Park Outlaws, Edmonton Warriors, Fort Saskatchewan Rebels and Lethbridge Barracudas Junior B Tier I Franchises may each draft up to twenty (20) players from this list and the Red Deer Rampage, Mountainview Mavericks, Rockyview Silvertips, Calgary Chill, Calgary Shamrocks, Calgary Mountaineers and Okotoks Marauders Junior B Tier I Franchises may draft up to fifteen (15) players from this list. The Graduating 16U Player List is divided regionally to ensure teams can only draft players who reside within specified boundaries. These boundaries are different for Junior A Franchises and Junior B Tier I Franchises. Details of the specific boundaries for each of the drafts will be included in a future communication.

## **Rosters**

In Major Lacrosse, each Franchise can have a maximum roster of 25 players. The exception to this is Alberta Series Lacrosse (formerly Senior B), and Junior Ladies who may have a maximum roster of 30 and Senior C and Sr. Women's who may have a maximum roster of 40 players. However, for all Franchises in all Divisions, you can only dress 20 players for each game. i.e. max 18 runners and 2 goalies.

## **Travel**

All Franchises in Major Lacrosse, regardless of the Division they are in, must travel. It's up to the policies of the individual Franchises whether buses are used for travel games.

## **Schedules**

We try to have all Division schedules posted on the RMLL website by mid-March. This gives players a six-week notice period in case they must arrange/re-arrange work schedules, etc. Depending on arena availability, we try to schedule weekday games against two teams in the same local area, leaving Saturday and Sunday for travel games. i.e. team travels or team plays a traveling team. Given this year's situation with Covid-19 this timetable may be delayed until we have received updated input from the Government of Alberta.

## **Player Development**

Call-ups are an important piece of player development. The number of times a player can be a call-up during a season is unlimited. To encourage call-ups, each Tier has a set night for weekday games. Tier II Monday and Wednesday, Tier I Tuesday and/or Thursday and Junior A Wednesday and Friday. This allows a Tier II player to be a call-up for a Tier I team on a Tuesday and Thursday and for a Tier I player to be a call-up for a Junior A team on a Wednesday. Given the possible impact Covid-19 may have on scheduling and other rules this traditional scheduling and ability to call up players may not be possible.

## **Governance**

Governance rules in Major Lacrosse are different from Minor Lacrosse and policies may change from Division to Division depending on if a Division has their own Operating Policy.

## **Update on 2021 Season**

The RMLL Executive had a December 20 meeting to discuss the planning for the 2021 season. We remain optimistic that there will be a 2021 season. However, there will be a delay to many of the essential preparations that are normally done. As a result, of Government of Alberta restrictions, due to Covid-19, on in-person gatherings and sport, we have had to delay the following events:

- Our annual Graduating 16U (formerly midget) information nights. These were initially scheduled to be held on January 7 (Calgary) and January 8 (Edmonton).
- Our annual combines (Edmonton and Calgary) for graduating 16Us and Junior B Tier II players that were initially scheduled for late January.
- All winter floor times by RMLL teams have been cancelled until further notice.
- Given that we missed the 2020 season and RMLL Junior teams have not been able to see potential players on the floor, the Junior A and Junior B Tier I drafts, initially scheduled for mid-February, have been delayed until March.

Once we have more information, we will announce the new dates of the above events.

There are several other points of information that need to be shared. We are working on three different schedule formats: 1) a regular schedule; 2) a cohort schedule for Alberta only teams; and 3) a cohort schedule which includes Division out-of-province teams. A cohort schedule (if required by Alberta Health Services) would involve the same teams

playing each other for a sustained period, followed by a two-week break, and then a new set of teams would be arranged. At this point, we are assuming that inter-provincial travel will not be allowed when we start our season but are including national championships in our planning just in case allowed once the season is underway.

I would reiterate that we fully expect a 2021 season, but we do not know what form that will take. What we do know is that there will be a delay to several of the key events that allow us to prepare for the 2021 season. I can assure you that the ALA and RMLL are monitoring and dealing with these matters and are working hard to make the necessary adjustments that will allow a 2021 season.

Our next communication, hopefully coming soon, will include the new dates for our Information Sessions, the details for registering in the RMLL Intent-to-Play system, specifics for the Junior A and Junior B Tier I Drafts, Combine information and the details of the 2021 Junior A, Junior B Tier I and Junior B Tier II Division seasons.

Please be sure to visit the RMLL website on a regular basis for league and Franchise news, announcements, floor times, tryouts, and updates.

<http://www.rockymountainlax.com>

Also, follow the RMLL on Twitter @RMLaxL

For further information, Franchise contact information or any additional questions about Junior Lacrosse, the RMLL Junior Divisions, drafts, player rights, etc, please feel free to contact:

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**President:** Duane Bratt - [dbratt@mtroyal.ca](mailto:dbratt@mtroyal.ca)

**Vice-President and Jr. B Tier I Commissioner:** Mike Fynn – [m.fynn27@gmail.com](mailto:m.fynn27@gmail.com)

**Jr. A Commissioner:** Sean Aggus - [s\\_aggus@shaw.ca](mailto:s_aggus@shaw.ca)

**Jr. B Tier II Commissioner:** Pat Hanson - [Trish035@telus.net](mailto:Trish035@telus.net)

Major Lacrosse is for those players aging out of Minor Lacrosse who still wish to play competitive lacrosse. The growth in Major Lacrosse and sustainability of Major Lacrosse teams is totally dependent on the number of players coming up from Minor Lacrosse. We sincerely hope you register for the 2021 Season and look forward assisting you in any way we can as you continue playing *“the fastest game on two feet”*.