



2025 President's Cup Report

The 2024 President's Cup was hosted by the Brooklin Merchants at the Iroquois Park Sports Centre.

The tournament featured 7 teams: Host Brooklin Merchants (Host) Ladner Pioneers (WCSLL), Miners (RMLL), Snake Island Muskies (TNSLL), Six Nations Rivermen (OSL), Allegany Arrows (CALL), Saskatchewan Roadrunners (PGLL) Winnipeg Blizzard (MB). With 8 teams this year, the Presidents Cup was played in a Pool Play format for the second time (Leduc 2016) was the first time pool play was used. This changed the whole face of the tournament, in the past a champion was sometimes the team with the least amount of injured players able to play in the final, and playing 8 games in 7 days to win the championship. This year the Snake Island Muskies went on to win the championship. They played 6 games in 7 days to win. This format is so much better for the player safety side of the game, and made for a very exciting playoff round as well when teams are competing with rested and healthier rosters. The Edmonton Miners went on to win the Bronze Medal defeating the Six Nations Rivermen 12-2 in that game.

This was probably the most difficult and political Presidents Cup I've seen. Chaos erupted at the coaches meeting over ineligible players and controversies brewed all week long. A loop-hole was exploited by the FNLA in which they allowed players to cross from one league to another league for the P Cup. A formal protest was filed with Ontario, Alberta, BC submitting a written appeal. This went to a hearing before the opening ceremonies where it was decided by those appointed to hear appeals on behalf of Lacrosse Canada deciding they couldn't render a proper ruling and that it should be decided by LC. Unfortunately, with all of the LC executive attending world championships in Korea, communications had a 14 hour lag. What was discovered during the entire process is that the loop-hole is this: No players may be picked up from one MA to another MA for the Presidents Cup. Trade deadlines and transfer portals close in July. The FNLA is ONE MA and has two leagues under it, so they ruled that they don't require transfers, therefore this rule doesn't apply. This appeal remains open as it was not resolved to our satisfaction and we did not accept our money back when offered. It is our hopes as commissioners that this loop hole gets closed with a simple tweak changing verbiage from "MA to another MA" to read from "one league to another league".

When games finally got rolling, the Miners faced the Saskatchewan Roadrunners in their first game. Saskatchewan, who is slated to host the 2026 Presidents Cup showed up with 10 runners and 3 goalies. They were an "all-star" team made up of players from all 5 teams in their league. In the past Saskatchewan has sent their league champions. This team was embarrassing to watch as they were badly outmatched at every position. The Miners set an all-time scoring record against them, winning the game 33-4. This immediately became the "talk" of the tournament, with people saying what a disgrace this was to the game. Things did not get any better for Saskatchewan as the week went on. By The end, all Sr B leagues under Lacrosse Canada had met with Jim Bomhof, the Convenor for this tournament to voice concern over the 2026 P Cup. If Saskatchewan cannot field even one competitive team with a full line-up, are they really able to host a national championship which would also entail a second team spot for them? The Presidents Cup should be a showcase of the absolute best players at this level, not a rec league tournament.

This year saw the Manitoba Blizzard attend the President's Cup as well with an "all-star team". Although they did not win a game, they were very competitive and in games. They carried a full bench and were in most games. They faced the eventual champions Snake Island twice and lost by wide margins in those games, but played last year's champions Ladner Pioneers to 11-5 and 9-6 losses. We hope that they can continue to build Sr B lacrosse in Manitoba.

On Day 3 a new controversy arose when the OLA Commissioner noticed that Snake Island Muskies had 3 former Sr A import players (within last two seasons) on their active roster. I was called back to the arena and asked to submit a protest by the Ontario commissioner. I had extensive meetings with all commissioners, the Convenor, as well as Jordan Cornfield, GM of the Edmonton Miners. The Miners had just been beaten by the Muskies 10-3 earlier that day. When reviewing the entire situation, we determined that 2 of the players had actively played in the game against the Miners, the third player was the back-up goalie who did not see any play time in the game. It was decided that as the third player did not have any involvement in the game and did not affect the outcome of a game in which the Miners clearly did not deserve to win with their play, that there would be no protest of the game. The remedy was to remove that goalie from the remainder of the tournament. A new system of player approvals pre-tournament needs to be instituted by Lacrosse Canada. This point will also be reflected in the Convenor's report.

Lastly, it was also found during the week that one of the Six Nations Rivermen coaches did not have proper certifications to be on the bench and they were removed part way through the tournament as well.

Overall, it was a very intense week with almost 10 hours spent in additional meetings and appeal hearings instead of taking in other games. It was good to have almost every commissioner from across Canada (except Saskatchewan) present. Being able to meet in person and have discussions made for some productive outcomes. At the final day, it was decided by all commissioners of the Sr B council to direct Jordan Cornfield, the Chair of this council, to approach Terry Rayner, Executive Director of LC with our concerns for the 2026 Presidents Cup. We look forward to hear what Lacrosse Canada has to say on the issue. It was determined that both BC and Alberta would be able to step up and host the 2026 PC on short notice if necessary, as long as it does not affect the regular rotation in 2027(BC) and 2028(AB).

Regards,

Norm Shaw
Senior B Commissioner