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National game of canada lacrosse

We believe that in lacrosse and hockey, our two National Games, we have the best moral, physical and mental developers of all the known games in the sporting world. A.E.H. Coo, President canadian Amateur Lacrosse Association April 12, 1926 Revised January 1995 NOTE The Canadian Lacrosse Association would like to thank the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association for its assistance and support in the search for this document. We would also like to thank the Lacrosse Hall of Fame in New Westminster, British Columbia, and the Archives of Canada in Ottawa for their assistance in preserving our heritage with such care and dedication. Thanks also to Mike Mitchell, Director of North American Indian Travelling College for his contribution. PREFACE The roots of our country have developed in many cultural soils, and Canadian society has grown and benefited from contributions from people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The English and French are recognized as the dominant influences in the creation of this country and the foundation of our nation. Before the English, The French and many other immigrants from this continent tried and competed to build Canada. Aboriginal societies and cultures dominated North America. Unfortunately, Canadians today are little aware of the nature and complexity of First Nations societies. There is even less understanding or appreciation of the rituals and activities of these cultures. Lacrosse, because of its unique history, exists as a link between these disparate components of Canadian society. This is one of the few examples of First Nations culture accepted and adopted by Canadian society. To the religious and social rituals of the early North Americans, the settlers brought European concepts of structure and rules, and together they produced one of the first symbols of the new Canadian nation, the sport of lacrosse. There is a long history of speculation about the origin of lacrosse, but as North American Aboriginal people, this issue is of little importance. We don't ask who invented the lacrosse, or when and where; our ancestors have been playing the game for centuries - for the Creator. Tewaaraathon, Akwasasne's Story of Our Indian National Game: North American Indian Travelling College, 1978 LACROSSE A GIFT FOR PEOPLE OF CANADA by Mike Mitchell, Director, North American Indian Travelling College One of the greatest contributions of our Aboriginal people in Canada is lacrosse, which in turn has been shared with the world. At the time of European colonization in Canada, it was discovered that all the nations and tribes of the country were playing lacrosse in one way or another and that they all had names for their sport. The two largest language families in Canada both had names for Lacrosse; Algonquin called him and the Iroquois nation called it Tewaaraathon. At the beginning of French, the stick reminded them a bit of a crozier or a bishop's stick. The French word for crozier is lacrosse and soon they started calling the game La Crosse, which is the name that everyone knows now. Originally, lacrosse, when played only by Aboriginal people, had spiritual significance in the Indian way of life. Lacrosse was a game to play for their Creator, for Aboriginal people to show their gratitude to the Great Spirit for living a full life, which allowed them to live in harmony with nature and in peace with themselves. Lacrosse was also played for honored members within the Indian nation, and a game would be played to recognize the Great Spirit that they were grateful that an elder or medical person with a great knowledge of many things existed among them. In the early days, contrary to popular belief, a lacrosse game would be played to settle a dispute between two tribes. In times of difference between Indian nations, the rulers and elders would organize a lacrosse game and the winner of this game would be considered the one with the correct point of view, sanctioned by the Great Spirit. Lacrosse was an integral part of the culture of the Indian people, as well as a spiritual connection with its Creator. Once the settlers began to settle in Canada, they developed a great taste for lacrosse and it wasn't long before almost every small town in Canada boasted a lacrosse team. Meanwhile, rules have been established for the number of players on each side and the playing area to be covered. Today, lacrosse has gone from a spiritual game of our Aboriginal people to an exciting and thriving sport that is practiced in every province of Canada. It is commonly referred to as the fastest sport on two feet and rightly so. In addition, lacrosse is one of the few sports in the country that can boast of being from the land proudly called Canada. HISTORY OF THE CROSSE IN CANADA No one can question the origin of this sport. Jean de Brebeuf recorded observations of a set of lacrosse in 1683 in what is now southern Ontario, Canada. A native-American heritage of European settlers, lacrosse remains one of the few aspects of Aboriginal culture that has survived and prospered under the tutelage of settlers. Pre-dating recorded history, sport has roots that are long and deep in North American society in general and the life and culture of Aboriginal people in Ontario and Quebec. Several centuries before the white man set foot on the North American continent, our indigenous people received the gift of lacrosse Creator. Although there was a great variation in the type of stick used and the kind of game played, the philosophy, spirit and relationship of the lacrosse and the Creator was one; each tribal group held the lacrosse in very high Tewaaraathon, Akwasasne's Story of Our Indian National Game, North American Indian Travelling College, 1978 It was in the early 1800s that Montrealers became interested in this activity of Mohawk tribes. In the 1840s, the first lacrosse games were played between urban dwellers and Aboriginals. The action and skill of the game quickly won the hearts of the locals, and although it was many years before any major victory were recorded against the Natives, the lacrosse game was quickly winning the loyalty and interest of the new North Americans. In the late 1850s and early 1860s, lacrosse was established in the sports society of the time and the first non-Aboriginal lacrosse clubs were formed. This quickly led to the formation of interbank rivalries and challenges, and the competitive base of the lacrosse sport was born. The role of Montreal's athletes and organizers in creating a structured sport that has captured the imagination of a young nation cannot be ignored. These visionaries took the Aboriginal game with all its beauty, skill and dedication and turned it into a competitive sport that captured the hearts and minds of early Canadians. Lacrosse was first declared Canada's National Game in 1859. Although the original government documents have never been found, hundreds of references cite this event, from renowned encyclopedias to books on Canadian history, particularly government communications and textbooks, particularly newspapers and other media reports from history. One of these references can be found in scribner's Monthly, Volume 14, May-October 1877. The lacrosse game, which was adopted as Canada's national game on July 1, 1859, the first Dominion Day... Lacrosse gaming gained this status in the 1800s, not only because of its popularity or economy, but also because it made important and lasting contributions to the history and development of this nation, its people and the sporting community. Lacrosse is known as Canada's national game around the world. THE birth of a nation is soon followed by the need for the people to establish their identity and proclaim themselves to the rest of the world. Peter Lindsay stated in his paper at the Symposium on the History of Sport in Canada (1972) that nationalism can be seen as manifesting itself in a characteristically predictable way, as an attempt to focus attention and promote a positive identity. George Beers, a fervent Canadian patriot, embodied this reality in his words and actions as a leader of the and science in this country. Beers clearly understood and accepted the role of sport in integrating the disparate aspects of the new Canadian society, and its love of the new country required that the symbolic sport through which this nationalism be channelled be entirely and exclusively Canadian. He wrote in 1869: If the Republic of Greece was indebted to the Olympic Games; if England have reason to bless the name of cricket, Canada can also be proud of lacrosse. He raised a young manhood throughout the Dominion to active and healthy exercise; it has created a popular sense of physical exercise and has perhaps done more than anything else to invoke a sense of patriotism among young men in Canada; and if this feeling is desirable abroad, it is certainly with us. The peer acceptance of beers in the sports community was reflected in the motto of the first national sport governing body that proclaimed OUR COUNTRY - OUR GAME. The press of the time also accepted and promoted this principle, as it proudly proclaimed that lacrosse was our national game. Lacrosse is deeply rooted in Canada's history, tradition and culture. As our nation expanded from coast to coast, lacrosse played a vital role in bringing these remote regions together. Douglas Fisher, in his article Sport as Culture, looked at how sport unites this country. In 1885, the federal government rushed the troops, through the newly completed railway, to end Riel's rebellion. That same year, a New Westminster lacrosse team used the same steel route to travel across the country to challenge a Toronto team for the National Championship. As political realities tear the country apart, Lacrosse brings the regions of the country closer together. As was the nature of their European origin, the settlers quickly felt that the game needed more structure and stability. This transition occurred throughout the 1860s, thanks in large part to the efforts of Dr. George W. Beers of Montreal. Dr. George Beers' name remains etched in Canadian sporting annals, as he was primarily responsible for setting the tone and direction for the development of the sport in this country that continues today. Although well deserved, this recognition is not often granted, but as former Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport Iona Campagnolo said in her introduction to Sport in Canada: a Historical Perspective: Lacrosse, on the other hand, is from this country. The wild Indian game and baggataway scrum has been transformed into a modern lacrosse by an energetic young Montreal dentist named George Beers. Beers was our pioneer of the sport. In 1867, the Montreal Lacrosse Club, led by Dr. Beers, organized a conference in Kingston, Ontario, to create a national organization to govern sport throughout the newly formed country. This is a because the National Lacrosse Association, the predecessor of the CLA, became the first national sport regulator in North America to focus on the governance of a sport, the rules and competition, as well as the management of national championships to promote good camaraderie and unity across the country. The first symbol of the national championship was a set of banners donated by T. J. Claxton of Montreal. The Claxton flags, as they are called, proudly bore the organization's motto OUR COUNTRY - OUR GAME. IN IMPORTANCE During the 1880s, lacrosse grew tremendously until the turn of the century, it was Canada's leading sport. By the end of 1867, there were about 80 clubs operating across the country. In 1877, there were only 11 clubs in Montreal and 7 in Toronto. The major clubs also operated in Ottawa, Hamilton, Quebec, and there were more than 100 clubs in cities and communities in Ontario and Quebec (Allen Cox, History of Sport in Canada, 1969). However, the game was not limited to these two provinces. By 1871 Manitoba had joined the ranks of provinces that played lacrosse with clubs operating at Fort Garry and Winnipeg (J.K. Munro in Canadian Magazine, 1902, Vol.19). In the spring of 1883 Albertans played the game (Edmonton Bulletin, March 31, 1883). Lacrosse spread in the Maritimes in 1889 in New Brunswick (New Brunswick Reporter, April 25, 1889) and Nova Scotia the following year (Globe and Mail, April 14, 1890). British Columbia, long one of the main strengths of lacrosse, began playing the game in the 1890s and in 1890 the British Columbia Amateur Lacrosse Association was established. By 1893, the last remaining province, Saskatchewan, had formed its first clubs and was active in the sport (Winnipeg Free Press, April 18, 1893). In addition to the number of clubs playing the sport, fans and the press have become obsessed with lacrosse. In the 1880s, 5,000 fans routinely attended games, and it was not uncommon to see up to 10,000. The press of the time took great care and attention to report not only the most recent games and scores, with complete descriptions of the games, but also to report on all the activities of meetings and assemblies. A common message that has been repeated over and over again was the reference to lacrosse as the national sport of Canada. The Canadian press knew that it was the most important sport for its readers. Among the many achievements of the lacrosse sport of this era was innovation in the presentation of the sport to fans. One of the first night games to be played under the new Electric Light was played in August 1880 at Montreal's Shamrock Lacrosse Field. In order to help the fans to follow what was happening on the field at night, in a second game, the promoters decided to coat the ball with Another major innovation was the concept of presenting other sports as entertainment during breaks in the game. It was common to organize athletics competitions and demonstrations during half-time breaks Games. THE TOURNANT OF THE WORLD The advent of the 20th century saw lacrosse as the dominant sport in Canada. There were many amateur and professional leagues across the country and teams travelled regularly from Quebec and Ontario to B.C. and vice versa to challenge supremacy in the game. As an example of its popularity, a Montreal team went to New Westminster in 1910 to go to the Canadian Championship. More than 15,000 fans attended the game. The total population of New Westminster at the time was less than 12,000. In 1901, Lord Minto, Governor General of Canada, aware of what gambling meant to the Canadian public, donated a silver cup to become the symbol of Canada's Senior Amateur Championship. The Minto Cup, now a symbol of supremacy in the junior ranks, remains one of the proudest lacrosse awards. Fierce competition for senior supremacy in Canada led to the dominance of professional teams and soon the Minto Cup became the professional league trophy. In 1910, Sir Donald Mann, chief architect of the Canadian North Railway, donated a gold cup to be awarded to the senior national amateur champion. When it was awarded in 1910, the Mann Cup was valued at \$2500.00. Today, it is one of the most precious and beautiful trophies of all sports, and the championship award for the best senior lacrosse box team in Canada. The sport was so popular that notables such as P.D. Ross, owner and editor-in-chief of the Ottawa Journal, donated trophies for competitions in their area. The Ross Cup, first offered in 1906 for the Ottawa Region Championship, was re-enacted by the C.L.A. as a senior men's lacrosse championship trophy on the field. The 1904 and 1908 Olympic Games saw lacrosse, very popular in Canada, the United States and Great Britain, chosen as part of the program. This sport, which is so much a part of community life, provided one of Canada's gold medals in 1904, which was the first Olympic Games to which Canada sent an official delegation. The Olympic program of those early years was much determined by the host country. As a result, when the sites moved to European sites, lacrosse, which is not very popular on the continent, was abandoned from the competition programme. Although his Olympic career was short-lived, lacrosse remains the only team sport in which Canada has won more gold medals than the rest of the world combined. The society of the early 1900s was influenced by the evolution of technology and social evolution. The arrival of the automobile as an affordable means of transport, the desire to leave the growing in the summer and the growth of mass participation sports like baseball and golf have created a challenging atmosphere in which a summer sport has struggled to attract attention and participation. In addition, it was difficult to promote the participation of young people in school, school, fell during the summer holidays. However, beyond these circumstantial issues, the most important problem has been the rise of professionalism in sport. Between 1880 and 1915, lacrosse, clearly the most popular sport in the country, was increasingly in conflict with the social values and manners of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As early as 1880, the intrusion of professionalism into sport became a problem within organizations and between organizations and a society that, for the most part, vilified such an activity in favour of the amateur ideal. In May 1880 press reports demanded the professionalism of evil and that his hateful presence was fully declared (Toronto Star, May 25, 1880). Professionalism had become such an important issue in sport that by the late 1890s the 1890s, the fragmented and fragmented National Amateur Lacrosse Association gave way to the formation of a professional organization, the National Lacrosse Union, and an amateur organization, the Canadian Lacrosse Association. Although they continued to compete against each other, the battle lines were clearly drawn. A few years later, the creation of a second professional league, the Dominion Lacrosse Union, was born. Professional athlete status was not a major concern at first because compensation was not significant. As the sport prospered, however, the importance of professional players on all teams increased, and eventually all professional teams created demand for higher salaries and more benefits. In his 1972 article on the history of B.C. lacrosse, David Saveleff stated that in 1908, an average player could earn up to \$100 per season and that stars could earn \$1,000 a year. Cyclone Taylor, the famous multi-sport athlete, made nearly \$2000.00 that year playing for the New Westminster Salmonbellies. In 1917, Newsy Lalonde earned more than \$3,000.00 while playing for Vancouver. The sport of lacrosse, years ahead of its time to become a professional, had made a virtue and standard of a practice that was in direct conflict with the majority vision of a society that still reflected the Victorian ideals of amateurism and excellence in sport for its own good. The nature of this controversy was reflected in the struggle within the Montreal Amateur Sports Association to resolve the fact that lacrosse was the only professional sport in the organization. The result was significant conflicts between the organization's factions, and in 1920 the Montreal Lacrosse Club, part of the M.A.A.A. and founder of the lacrosse sport, had been so severely restricted and penalized by his professionalism that he could no longer compete in any league (M.A.A.A. Minute Books, 1911 - 1920). THE INTRODUCTION OF BOX LACROSSE In 1925, Lacrosse organizers across the country began to realize the need for solidarity and combined efforts to revive the game. Game. year saw the re-creation of the Canadian Amateur Lacrosse Association with all the sport united under one banner. The Mann Cup was awarded to Canada's Senior Champion and the Minto Cup was awarded to the Junior Champion. Unfortunately, the years of war and the new freedoms offered by the technology and the appeal of the campaign have wreaked havoc on available athletes and sport is still struggling to participate. The arrival of the 1930s brought innovation to sport once again. Proponents have begun to consider alternatives to lacrosse playing in the field. The popularity of hockey was on the rise and in order to capitalize on the familiar winter spot of indoor rinks, the promoters embraced the two most popular games, lacrosse and hockey, and created the indoor lacrosse, also known as Boxla Crosse. The game was built on speed and action

and very quickly gained massive support within the organization. By the mid-1930s, the field game had been completely replaced by Boxla and the box version became the official sport of the Canadian Lacrosse Association. Soon, nowhere in Canada was anyone playing the original version of the lacrosse game. As Canada turned its back on the lacrosse game on the field, the sport gained popular support and developed rapidly south of the border and abroad. Introduced to the United States in the 1870s, lacrosse had continued to expand and gain acceptance along the east coast. More welcoming weather conditions have helped to make lacrosse flourish in higher education institutions, particularly in Ivy League schools, as a spring sport. England continued its passion for the Canadian game introduced in the 1870s and, like the exhibition games played before Queen Victoria, it became a higher-class sport and found a home in private schools and universities. Australia was the other home of lacrosse. Imported from Great Britain, it has adopted itself and has existed with happiness and popularity since the 1880s and 1890s. So, outside of Canada, sports fans had taken to our game with passion and while they cared about the traditional game, back home to Canada Box Lacrosse was passion. MODERNE LACROSSE The lacrosse game has been a talk of Canada's uniqueness and individuality as a nation for more than a century. He fulfilled this role in large part because of the willingness of the government, historians, writers and the sports community to use it as a symbol of Canada. It has been recognized around the world that it is an integral part of Canadian culture and history. The in Lacrosse had a roller coaster story. While the game grew in the late 1800s, participation declined in the 1920s until the introduction of Box Lacrosse. And although the game has experienced phenomenal growth since then, it has seen further and low increases, but in and during the 1990s, participation rates have increased exponentially in all forms of Game. Currently, more than 100,000 players are registering with the Canadian Lacrosse Association. The Canadian Lacrosse Association now recognizes three distinct disciplines in the lacrosse game: Box, Men's Field and Women's Field. Box Lacrosse, to which we, as a nation, have remained uniquely engaged, make up the bulk of the Canadian lacrosse scene. Field Lacrosse, the traditional game, was dominated for all intents and purposes by the Americans, although it was played in Great Britain, Australia, Japan and other countries. Women's field stick is a very popular sport in Canada, Great Britain, Japan, Australia and the United States and has remained true to the traditional form of the game. The men's lacrosse on the field has been modified from the original version of the game to such an extent that the distinct disciplines of men's and women's lacrosse are unlikely or not to resemble the rules of the game and strategy. The men's game is a contact game in which participants wear protective equipment and players are highly specialized. The women's game is contactless in which the equipment is not worn and is in fact discouraged. Players tend to be required to be versatile and the game focuses on ball movement. The other discipline is Inter-Crosse. A recent innovation, this game is a contactless, skills-based activity. Its main function is to introduce a wide range of young athletes to lacrosse skills and to provide an educational tool to help develop conditioning and coordination in young athletes. The game emphasizes cooperation and respect for opponents and is extremely flexible in how and where it can be played. The World Lacrosse Championships, which take place every four years, are very important for our country. The main difficulty in the 1960s and 1970s was that while other countries were playing lacrosse on the ground here in Canada, we were only playing lacrosse. For the first world championships, the CLA was forced to convert its leading box players into field players and do our best. The culmination of this effort came in 1978, when against all odds, the Canadian team managed a major upheaval and beat the powerful U.S. team in the championship game. It was the only time the Americans have lost the world title since its inception. After losing to the Americans in the round robin by a score of 24-3, the Canadian team stormed again to win the championship in overtime 17-16. The fallout from this victory was the renewed interest and participation in lacrosse sports on the field women in Canada. The resurgence of these games has produced a form of lacrosse that is unique in Canada. The combination of skill, patience and strategy of the game on the pure field with the speed and reaction of the Box game is what makes lacrosse in Canada different from anywhere else in the world. Dozens of countries are now involved in lacrosse - - UNITED STATES, Australia, England, Scotland and Wales to newcomers relating to Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Sweden, etc. The Iroquois, a North American Native American team, are participating in the men's World Cup as a separate national team. Lacrosse has made a comeback, and there is no sign of decline in its current level of growth and increased popularity. CONTRIBUTION AT SPORT IN CANADA The National Lacrosse Association, established in 1867, was the first national organization dedicated to the governance of sport, the standardization of rules and the holding of national championships to promote unity and fraternity throughout the country. Canada, because of its nature as a large, sparsely populated country, has been one of the First Nations interested in the growth of the concept of national championships. Lacrosse was the first organization capable and willing to organize these competitions, thus creating an integral part of modern sport. This provided a place of apoliticism and a social environment for bringing Canada's regions together. Similarly, the N.L.A. has been at the forefront of the concept of a national standardized set of rules and has made maintaining and amending these rules the function of a governing body. Early on, the organizers of Lacrosse accepted the principle that sport should be for all participants. This was not limited to a simple consideration of economic or social status, but included the need for sport to be for both men and women. Dr. George Beers created a set of rules that would allow women, still hampered by the social norms of the time, to play the sport of lacrosse. In addition to promoting their own sport, lacrosse organizers provided a venue for other sports of the time to spread their own popular appeal. Part-time demonstrations of other sports were commonplace during lacrosse matches, and special competitive occasions in other sports were often sponsored by the lacrosse organization in the community. Many other innovations, social and technological, have come directly from the spirit and heart of the lacrosse community. The concept of All-Star games began in the early 1800s, with Ontario defying Quebec at an annual game. When the city of Memphis, Tennessee, was decimated by yellow fever, lacrosse clubs in Ontario and Quebec organized fundraising games to help alleviate the suffering that took place there. The first attempts by the promoters to use the latest electrical technologies have already been mentioned. The desire and motivation of lacrosse lovers to create an organ extended to other sports. The Montreal Lacrosse Club and the Montreal Snowshoe Club have formed one of the most important sports organizations in the country, the Montreal Amateur Sports Association. The widespread influence of this organization was recognized by former Minister of State Iona Iona He (the M.A.A.A.) has proven to be the major force behind the organization of a large part of the sport in this country. Its members were responsible for the Canadian Wheelmen Association, the Canadian Hockey Association and the Canadian Rugby Association. Sport in Canada, Lindsay P.C., 1977 CANADA'S NATIONAL SPORTIVE Lacrosse has been known as the National Game of Canada since 1859. In 1925, A.E.H. Coe, President of the Canadian Amateur Lacrosse Association, spoke not only of lacrosse as Canada's National Summer Game, but also of Canada's other national game, hockey! In 1967, the late Honourable Lester B. Pearson, the Prime Minister of Canada, who was himself an accomplished lacrosse player, when he discussed the confirmation of a national game in the House of Commons, suggested that Canada have a summer national game (Crosse) and a national winter game (hockey). Although hockey or lacrosse has been discussed several times, the debate has not been resolved. In 1976, Canada hosted its first Olympic Games. With great fanfare, Canada proclaimed itself to the rest of the world and used the Games as the centrepiece of what Canada is. The \$10 Olympic commemorative coin was a set of lacrosse played by Native Americans. Lacrosse was the only sport that was not in the Olympic program to be represented in this way, and it was used because it is a symbol of Canada. In 1978, although lacrosse was a demonstration sport at the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, the medal also proclaimed it Canada's national game. On February 8, 1994, Nelson Rios introduced a bill of parliamentary interest (C-212) in the House of Commons to recognize hockey as a national sport. However, substantial support for lacrosse led to the introduction of an amendment to the bill (proposed by the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Canadian Heritage) which was unanimously accepted. On May 12, 1994, Bill C-212 received Royal Assent and became law. Recognizing hockey as Canada's national winter sport and lacrosse as Canada's national summer sport. This order is known as Canada's National Sport Act. The recognition of lacrosse as Canada's national (summer) sport in 1994 is a reaffirmation of the importance of Native American contributions to the development of our society and culture, the Recognition by the Canadian Government of the Importance of Sport to Our Country and Confirms Our Pride in the Game We Have Given to the World. Canada is the product of an evolution that began with Aboriginal people and was shaped by European settlers. It took the combined efforts of these people to open up this country to development. Part of this development has to the invention of the National Winter Game of Canada - Hockey. Once again in 1994, lacrosse was the official demonstration sport of the Commonwealth Games, once again illustrating its importance to Canada. Canada. Post issued a lacrosse stamp for the Games, as well as a statement of the importance of the game to our country. SUMMARY The sport of lacrosse is an integral part of Canadian culture, tradition and heritage. The recognition of lacrosse as a national game for Canada in 1859 was a positive statement of sport's contributions to the development of our country. The government of Canada's passage of Bill C-212 is a testament to the enduring nature of lacrosse, Canada's oldest sport. And we owe everything to the First Nations peoples - and to the Creator. Creator.

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