Presidents message for the AGM

As I reflect on our past year, my first as President, I recall several challenges that the Board faced. From changing to a new registration system, to the Evaluations and the issues that we see every year and few discipline issues, I shrug my shoulders and think all in all these were not that significant that we should dwell on them. In fact what we should do is celebrate being Axemen and our successes!

To that note here are our successes from 2018:

1. We grew our registrations to a point that we are the largest club within ALA. Of the major clubs in Edmonton and Calgary, we are the only club that grew in 2018.
   1. Minor teams increased by ~5,8% to give us 50 teams
   2. Junior teams decreased due to the RMLL accepting a new Sabercat Team into Tier 2; this took available players from our teams and resulted in our decision to withdraw from the Tier 3 division in 2018 leaving us with 2 teams; we will re-evaluate in 2019
   3. Approximate registrations by age group is:  
      (numbers are approximate due to RAMP Reporting structure)
      1. Midget – 57
      2. Midget Girls – 30 (includes players that we accepted from the Knights and Strathmore)
      3. Bantam – 74
      4. Bantam Girls – 46
      5. PeeWee – 137
      6. PeeWee Girls – 20
      7. Novice – 129
      8. Novice Girls – 34
      9. Tyke – 142
      10. Mini-tyke – 82
   4. To set a picture for 2019 based on birth years and growth(retraction) the age groups would potentially look like this (no girls teams within the Axemen Club starting in 2019):  
      (numbers are approximate due to RAMP Reporting structure)
      1. Midget – 26 graduates; 36 moving from Bantam; 10% loss to other Sport = 70
      2. Bantam – 36 move up to Midget; 67 move up from PeeWee; 10% loss to another sport = 95
      3. PeeWee – 67 move up to Bantam; 60 move up from Novice; flat retention = 134
      4. Novice – 60 move up to PeeWee; app. ~45 move up from Tyke pending the number of girls from the 60 Tykes that move to Calgary Girls Lacrosse (estimated 25%); add 10% growth = 132
      5. Tyke - 68 move to either Novice or to Girls lacrosse; 51 moving up from Mini-tyke; add 15% growth = 146
      6. Mini-tyke – 51 move up to Tyke; New growth of 61 (projection) = 92
      7. 2019 Projected registrations of 662 (no girls teams with in the Axemen starting 2019)
   5. Projected team numbers – total from 42 to 43
      1. Midget from 3 to 3 (possibly 4)
      2. Bantam from 4 to 5
      3. Peewee from 8 to 8 (possibly 7)
      4. Novice from 8 to 8 (possibly 9)
      5. Tyke from 9 to 9
      6. Mini-tyke from 10 to 10
2. I am very proud to speak to the success that our athletes and coaches saw in 2018:
   1. Team Success
      1. Midget C – Playoff Silver Medal
      2. Bantam A – Regular Season; Play-off and Provincial Champions
      3. Bantam B2 – Regular Season and Playoff Champions
      4. Bantam Girl 3 – Regular Season Champion; 2nd place in playoffs
      5. Novice Development 1 AX2 – Regular Season; Play-offs and David Fehr Champions
      6. Novice Development 1 AX1 - 2nd Place in Regular Season; Play-offs and David Fehr
      7. Novice Development 2 AX4 – Playoff Champions
      8. Novice Development 2 AX3 – Playoff Silver Medal
      9. Novice Girls 1 – David Fehr Champions
   2. Player Success
      1. Kean Moon and Nik Amiot – Team Alberta Midget - National Midget Champions
      2. Chloe Elliot; Ella Benson; Brooklyn Generoux and Ali Loshuk – Team Alberta U-19 Field – Silver Medal
      3. Livy Bartolome; Kianna Carsolio; Maya Dowling; Mika Kulynych; Paige Murphy; Kaylee Siemens and Asha Jamieson – Team Alberta Bantam Girls – National Silver Medal
      4. Jacob Harlow; Connor Murphy; Max Pocherewny; Nick Shankland and Anthony Summers Team Alberta U-15 Field – Bronze Medal
      5. Eric Jamieson; Carter Linkletter; Nick Luitwieler; Carson Mann; Seth Miller; Liam O’Dwyer; Caden Pickell; Jared Robbins and Mason Schroeder – Alberta Games Gold Medal
      6. Arley Wasson; Andrew White; Wyatt Schnurer; Cohen Lalonde; Hudson Isaacs; Aren Cej; Hale Dobbyn; Carter Papp; Lucas Harlow; Kaiden McDonaugh and Cooper Williams – PeeWee Jr. Roughnecks (including Red Shirts) – Jr NLL 2nd Place
      7. Jered Robbins; Hayden Wasson; Carter Linkletter; Graham Podrasky; Owen Williams; Seth Miller; Carson Mann; Jackson Unger; Caden Pickell; Caiden Moon; Aiden Pilson; Liam O’Dwyer and Mason Rockley – Bantam Jr Roughnecks (including Red Shirts)
      8. Joel Lucas; Colton Jones; Riley Isaacs; Hunter Lalonde; Jimmy Murphy; Jacob Harlow; Ashton Wilson; Jacob Siepert and Carter Webber – Midget Jr Roughnecks (including Red Shirts) – Jr. NLL 2nd Place
   3. Coaching Success
      1. Andy Williams – PeeWee Jr Roughnecks; Jr. A Mountaineers at the Minto Cup
      2. Al Houghton – Bantam Jr. Roughnecks; Axemen Volunteer of the Year
      3. Gary Playsted – Bantam Jr. Roughnecks; Axemen Coach of the Year
      4. Darrel Knight – Team Calgary @ the 2018 Alberta Sumer Games; Team Alberta U-16 @ the 2020 North American Indigenous Games
   4. Special note
      1. Steve Harlow – Jr. Roughneck Co-ordinator
      2. Ashley Dobbyn – Jr. Roughnecks PeeWee Manager
      3. Kim Miller – Jr. Roughneck Bantam Co-Manager
      4. Meghan Mann – Team Calgary Manager; Jr. Roughneck Bantam Co-Manager
      5. Amanda Harlow – Jr. Roughneck Midget Manager
      6. Chris Webber - Jr. Roughneck Trainer
3. Other notes
   1. ALA has voted to add Affiliate Players for use at tournaments and Provincials. Under the new structure, as I understand it today, teams can affiliate the following:
      1. Up to 2 runners if your roster for the tournament or Provincials is below 15
      2. 1 goalie if your rostered goalie(s) is not available for the tournament or Provincials
   2. Thank-you to Chris Webber for his hard work and extra effort to bring forward the Athletic Injury Management and Taping courses that the Axemen offered to our on-bench trainers again in 2018. We petitioned the ALA to recognize the AIM course for inclusion in the minimum requirements for trainers to be on the bench for Provincials and out of province tournaments but at this time, they have declined our request. Once the new Board is engaged we will discuss our path forward, but it is my intent that we stay a path that has trainers that are not coaches as I feel that is the best way to protect our athletes.
   3. ALA will again only field teams in the following divisions for the 2019 National Championships
      1. Midget Box
      2. U-19 Ladies Field
      3. U-15 Boys Field
      4. Bantam Ladies Box
   4. The Axemen have invested in a system from Asset Panda to better monitor and track club assets.
   5. In 2019 we adopted the CDLA policies pertaining to:
      1. Abuse; Harassment and Bullying Policy
      2. Confidentiality Policy for Employees, Volunteers and Board Members
      3. Rule of 2
   6. In addition to the adoption of the CDLA Policies; your Board of Directors also adopted our own policies on Code of Conduct for Players; Coaches and Parents as well as a Fair Play Policy
   7. The CDLA has approved the creation of the Calgary Girls Lacrosse League to start play in 2019. This will see that the member clubs of the CDLA will no longer have all female minor box lacrosse teams.
   8. It was great to see our older athletes giving back to our younger ones in 2018, with Midget players assisting with evaluations of the Tykes and then Midget and Bantam players practicing and helping out with Mini-Tyke; Tyke; Novice and PeeWees. Thank-you to Pat Anderson who has also put a significant effort into formalizing the Axemen Mentorship Program, I look forward to seeing the next evolution in 2019.
   9. We ran into a significant issue as a result of the availability for all teams to declare into Provincials. The Axemen had a number of teams enter into the Provincials with coaches that had not met the minimum requirement from NCCP for the level they were coaching, this created a panic need to put together a special training session. Please if you are interested in coaching in 2019; start early to get the required registration for coaching. The CDLA will not accept the need for a last minute clinic again and we will have to remove coaches from their teams. The NCCP is in the interest of the athletes and needs to be completed.
   10. We have passed a motion at the Board level to add the position of Fundraising Coordinator. The role description is not fully established but will include voluntary fundraising options for our member families, which will offset their registrations as well as a new approach to target corporate sponsorships. We recognize that the cost of lacrosse is growing and we look to this to assist in offsetting these increases.
   11. Finally, we have voted in favour of re-structuring the role of Discipline Director to Governance Director. This will place an individual in charge of ensuring that not only are our policies and bylaws relevant and up to date but that we are all adhering to them. The Axemen members are proud and respected by many others in the CDLA and Alberta; this role will aid all of us in rowing our reputation as leaders in Alberta Lacrosse!

In close, I would like to thank the members of the Axemen Lacrosse Club; you are passionate and dedicated to Growing our Game and Honouring the Game! To all the volunteers, we are nothing without you! To our athletes, keep playing for the love of the game and growth of your abilities! To the Board of Directors; thank-you for your long hours of work, your acceptance of feedback from our members and your passion for lacrosse! To Ashley and Colin you both are key assets to growing our club in numbers but more importantly in ability and sportsmanship! To the Executive; Steve; Chris; Shawna and Melissa I can’t even pretend to be able to add up the hours you have all put in to ensure that our players can play the game! And to Michelle, definitely the better half in our house; I can’t express how much I appreciate your support for me in taking on the role of President, the listening to my crazy ideas and other rants, I always remind myself that when I volunteer, you get a big role as well by default, thank-you for everything you do to enable me to be a part of something special here with the Axemen!