**Board Update: VP – Women’s Field Lacrosse**

1. **Women’s Field Sector Meeting (CLA Semi-Annual Meeting, Saskatoon, SK)**

On behalf of AFLA, I attended the CLA Semi-Annual Meeting in Saskatoon from May 23rd to May 25th, 2019. I set on the Women’s Field Sector which oversees the women’s field game at the national level. Representatives from BC, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Quebec, First Nations, and Nova Scotia also participated in this meeting. Key agenda items included:

* **Goggles:** In 2018, the Women’s Field Sector mandated the wearing of goggles at all CLA sanctioned national events. This requirement was extended at the 2019 to include all CLA sanctioned events. Injuries to the eye, including loss of vision were common before the requirement to wear goggles enforced in the US. As a result of this rule change, orbital injuries in women’s field lacrosse in the U.S. have dropped by 82%. As an element of risk management, the CLA cannot allow players to participate without goggles as the known level of risk is unacceptable. This rule change will come fully into effect in 2020. I would recommend that all Alberta member clubs enforce this rule now to be in compliance by 2020.
* **Game Format Changes - 2028 Olympic Bid**: Lacrosse (both men’s and women’s) is on the list of sports being considered for inclusion at the 2028 Olympics as a demonstration sport. It is important to understand that, at this point, lacrosse is merely on the list for consideration. The game has NOT been approved as an Olympic sport thus far. To warrant serious consideration, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has asked the Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) to revamp the game significantly in order to appeal to an international audience. The FIL has struck a committee known as “The Blue Skies Working Group,” to develop and trial a new format for the game. The proposed new format for women’s field lacrosse involves:
* 6 vs. 6 (five runners, one goalie) with a maximum bench of four substitutes.
* One player from each team must stay back on side (two in defensive end). Over and back is a technical violation.
* Games will be four quarters of eight minutes running time, with the last two minutes of the game being stopped clock if the difference is 2 goals or less.
* There will be one draw per quarter. A goal will result in possession of the goaltender of the team that was scored against.
* All sticks must be between 40-42 inches long.
* There are three penalty types:

1. Technical - non time serving and result in change of possession
2. Minor - 20 second time serving foul releasable by a goal
3. Major - 40 second time serving foul that is not released by a goal

* A player will foul-out after 2:00 of penalties accrued by any combination of minor and major penalties.
* The team to touch a ball last before it exits the legal playing area will concede possession (read: if you shoot and miss, that is a turnover)
* There will be a 45 second shot clock that begins upon possession, anywhere on the field.

Earlier this spring, FIL members (including the CLA) received the draft playing rules for the new format and have been asked to trial the new discipline, and provide feedback, during the next few months.

Based upon feedback from the FIL membership and further revision to the discipline and playing rules, the Blue Skies Working Group intends to present a final proposal for approval at the FIL General Assembly, August 12-13 in Peterborough, Ontario.

If approved, the new discipline will be a complement to the current field and box disciplines sanctioned by FIL. It is not intended to replace conventional field or box lacrosse. The new discipline pertains to both men’s and women’s lacrosse, and is not a unified or coed division.

* **Women’s Field National Championship 2019:** The Women’s Field National Championships will be held in Peterborough, Ontario on August 5-6. Team Alberta will compete against Team BC, Team Ontario, Team Quebec, and Team Nova Scotia. First Nations Lacrosse may also field a team in the tournament. Play will adhere to the 2018 FIL rule changes for women’s field lacrosse:
  + 10 vs. 10 (9 runners, one goalie)
  + 4 quarters of 15 minutes each running time
  + All players MUST play with an FIL approved crosse. No exceptions. Sticks must comply with the FIL approved list dated April 30, 2019. The FIL Approved Crosse List can be found at: <https://worldlacrosse.sport/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Womens-Approved-Crosses-Pockets_30April2019.pdf>
  + All coaches must hold NCCP Competitive Introduction – Trained in order to coach at the Women’s Field National Championships.

The 2019 Women’s Field National Championship is part of the larger FIL Women’s Field Lacrosse World Cup that is also being held in Peterborough from August 6th to August 10th, 2019. In addition to the National and World Championships, the CLA will also be hosting a U18 and U15 festival. The festival is open to national and club teams from anywhere in the world and will see teams from Israel, England, Wales, USA, BC, and Ontario complete against each other. Alberta Lacrosse is not entering Team Alberta teams in the festival for 2019.

* **Women’s Field National Championship 2020:** The ALA has offered Alberta as the host for the 2020 Women’s National Field Lacrosse Championships. Thus far, no planning has begun. I will work with Lisa Grant at the ALA to develop a plan for AFLA’s involvement in the planning of the 2020 Championships.

1. **Team Alberta U19 Women’s Field**

* Try-outs for Team Alberta U19 Women’s Field took place in Calgary on June 7-8.
* The ALA did checks BEFORE the try-outs to ensure that all of the players at the try-out were registered with an AFLA sanctioned field club.
* Charleigh Kondas, who had been named as the Head Coach for Team Alberta U19 Women’s Field stepped down in early June owing to personal issues. Paul Rai has been named as the coach for the team. Paul is certified as a women’s field coach and has experience coaching the women’s elite travel team with Vimy Lacrosse.
* The roster for Team Alberta U19 Women’s Field has not been released yet. The release is expected to come in the next week.

1. **Coaching and Officiating Clinics**

* **Umpire Clinic (July 19-20, Lacombe).** Sydney Hara from Vancouver will be facilitating the clinic. Sydney is a former Team BC player and the Head Umpire for BC Lacrosse and the Pacific Coast Lacrosse League. Sydney officiated at the 2019 National Championships in Calgary. I will host Sydney during her brief stay in Alberta. To register, please contact the ALA Office. We need more umpires!!!! Please encourage people to attend.
* **Coaching Clinic (June 22-23, Sherwood Park) - Women’s Field – Competitive Introduction.** We need to bring the TA coaching staff up to the required standard for national competition so this clinic is being held on short notice. All coaches who are currently certified at Community Development may attend.

A Community Development clinic was offered at Vimy Ridge Academy in April. We can offer another clinic if we have sufficient numbers. Please let me know if you have coaches who require Community Development training and, if so, how many and your suggestions for a date/location.

Submitted by:

Heidi Bates

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VP – Women’s Field

Alberta Field Lacrosse Association