

Alberta Lacrosse Referee Association
Annual General Meeting – Friday, November 3rd, 2023
Agenda

1. Call to Order
 -
2. Roll Call
 -
3. Establish Quorum
 -
4. Approval of Agenda
 -
5. Review and Adoption of Previous AGM Minutes
 -
6. Business Arising from Prior Minutes
 -
7. Financial Report
 -
8. Executive Reports
 - President
 - Vice President Member Services
 - Vice President Finance
 - Vice President Development
 - Vice President Technical
9. Board of Directors Reports
 - CALL Referee in Chief
 - CDLA Referee in Chief
 - GELC Referee in Chief
 - RMLL Referee in Chief
 - SALA Referee in Chief
 - WLA Referee in Chief
 - AFLA Referee in Chief
10. Review Special Resolutions
 -
11. Notices of Motion
 -
12. Elections
 - Vice President Member Services (2 year term)
 - Vice President Development (2 year term)
 - Vice President Technical (2 year term)
13. Adjournment

Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association

Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2023

	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalent	
1-1111 Chequing Account-ATB	780.38
1-1112 Petty Cash	0.00
1-2950 Undeposited Funds	198.62
Total Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$979.00
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	
1-2000 Accounts Receivable	68,821.49
Total Accounts Receivable (A/R)	\$68,821.49
1-2200 Accrued Receivables	0.00
1-3000 Inventory Asset	9,525.35
1-3440 Jerseys	24,039.75
1-3460 Referee Bags	294.00
1-3480 Rule Books	1,505.00
1-3500 Whistles	3,146.98
Total 1-3000 Inventory Asset	\$8,511.08
Total Current Assets	\$108,311.57
Total Assets	\$108,311.57
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	
2-1000 Accounts Payable	14,483.25
Total Accounts Payable (A/P)	\$14,483.25
2-2000 Accrued Liabilities	13,410.81
2-2250 Loan Payable-ALA	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$27,894.06
Total Liabilities	\$27,894.06
Equity	
3-3000 Opening Balance Equity	82.33
Retained Earnings	72,605.68
Profit for the year	7,729.50
Total Equity	\$80,417.51
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$108,311.57

Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association

Profit and Loss

October 2022 - September 2023

	TOTAL
INCOME	
4-1200 Program Income	
4-1210 LGB's Game Fees	163,074.50
4-1215 Travel for LGB Games	2,031.25
4-1217 Mileage/Travel	120,775.09
4-1218 Perdiem	21,167.99
4-1230 Registration Fees	47,472.17
4-1240 Tournament Fees	111,383.15
4-1250 Admin/Late Fees	2,861.00
4-1260 Clinics	7,200.00
4-1270 Field Game Fees	4,246.00
4-1280 RIC Fees	15,556.00
Total 4-1200 Program Income	495,767.15
4-1290 Referee Evaluations/Mentorship	6,155.00
4-5000 Interest Income	9.70
Total Income	\$501,931.85
GROSS PROFIT	
	\$501,931.85
EXPENSES	
6-0000 ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	
6-1050 Accounting & Audit	1,118.78
6-1090 ALA Officials Fees	28,299.25
6-1150 Bank Charges	1,553.46
6-1151 Plooto Fees	671.49
6-1152 Merchant Processing Discount	71.90
6-1770 Internet & web page	525.00
6-2675 Software	
6-2677 Software-Arbitr Assigning Sys.	3,787.25
Total 6-2675 Software	3,787.25
6-2775 Telephone Services	
6-2815 Teleconferencing	157.92
Total 6-2775 Telephone Services	157.92
6-2850 Travel & Conferences	
6-2851 Accomodation & Meeting Space	805.99
6-2853 Meals & Refreshments	353.70
6-2855 Mileage & Travel	386.80
Total 6-2850 Travel & Conferences	1,546.49
Total 6-0000 ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	37,731.54

	TOTAL
6-4000 PROGRAM EXPENSES	
6-4700 Clinics	
6-4703 Clinics-Clinician Fees	8,375.00
6-4706 Clinics-Facility Rental	917.68
6-4712 Clinics-Meals & Refreshments	1,395.65
6-4715 Clinics-Mileage & Travel	1,828.60
6-4717 Clinics - Hotel	3,744.69
6-4720 Clinics - Clinicians - Mileage & Travel	1,505.00
6-4721 Clinics - Clinicians - Hotel	620.75
6-4722 Clinics - Clinicians - Meals & Refreshments	888.70
6-4723 Clinics - Clinicians - Facility Rental	254.98
6-4724 Clinics - Clinicians - Entertainment/Promotion	317.63
Total 6-4700 Clinics	19,848.68
6-4900 Referee Evaluations/Mentorship	
6-4903 Evaluations/Mentorship Fees	6,668.00
6-4905 Evaluations/Mentorship Mileage	321.92
Total 6-4900 Referee Evaluations/Mentorship	6,989.92
6-5300 Referee Accomodation Paid Out	2,031.25
6-5400 Referee Fees Paid Out-Box	249,119.64
6-5405 Referee Fees Paid Out-Field	4,420.00
6-5500 Referee Mileage Paid Out	
6-5503 Mileage Paid Out-LGBs	79,992.02
6-5506 Mileage Paid Out-RMLL	41,792.81
Total 6-5500 Referee Mileage Paid Out	121,784.83
6-5600 Referee Per Diem Paid Out	20,957.49
6-8025 RIC Fees Paid Out	16,319.00
6-8100 Scheduling Fees Paid Out	15,000.00
Total 6-4000 PROGRAM EXPENSES	456,470.81
Total Expenses	\$494,202.35
PROFIT	\$7,729.50



Annual Report of the ALRA President
Kevin Kohut
October 2023

The 2023 season was a challenging one on many fronts. The key ones being a shortage of Officials (which is the case in most organized sports right now) and Abuse of Officials. The factors for both of those issues are somewhat intertwined and yet some are mutually exclusive. We will be discussing how we can combat both of those issues at our planning meeting and are hoping that we will have the support of, not only the ALA, but all of the LGBs.

The ALRA hosted 24 separate clinics in 2023 in an attempt to provide those interested in Officiating an option that worked for their individual schedule. The specific clinic breakdown is as follows:

- Entry Level / Level 1 ... 14 (CALL – 3; CDLA – 3; GELC – 3; SALA – 2; WLA – 2; Fort McMurray - 1)
- Level 2 / Level 3 ... 9 (CALL – 1; CDLA – 1; GELC – 1; SALA – 2; WLA – 2; Online – 2)
- Level 4 – 6 ... 1 (Uber Clinic in Okotoks)

The first clinic was held on March 4th with the last one being held on May 6th. From those clinics we were able to register 365 Officials for the 2023 season (an increase of 13 from 2022), of which 191 were newer Officials. Only 322 did at least one game. Breakdown as to the number of Officials at each level is as follows:

- Entry Level / Level 1 ... 246 (67.4%) - Level 2 ... 33 (9.0%) - Level 3 ... 47 (12.8%) - Level 4 ... 33 (9.0%) - Level 5 ... 3 (0.8%) - Level 6 ... 2 (0.5%)

The breakdown of the number of games per Official is as follows:

- less than 10 – 74
- greater than 10 less than 20 – 68
- greater than 20 less than 30 – 52
- greater than 30 less than 40 – 32
- greater than 40 less than 50 – 19
- greater than 50 less than 60 – 7
- greater than 60 less than 70 – 8
- greater than 70 less than 80 – 8
- greater than 80 less than 90 – 9
- greater than 90 less than 100 – 4
- greater than 100 less than 110 – 5
- greater than 110 less than 120 – 3
- greater than 120 less than 130 – 2
- greater than 130 less than 140 – 1

Based on those numbers, 7% of our members were responsible for covering 26% of the games during the 2023 season. An even more interesting statistic was our attrition rate from 2022 to 2023. Of the 219 new Officials we had register for 2022, only 65 returned to register for 2023. We lost 154 Officials which is an attrition rate of 70.4%. Not a promising statistic. Granted there are multiple factors that influence this, however in a brief sample size survey I conducted, 59% percent of the sample size stated Official Abuse was their main reason for not returning. Based on the number stated

above in conjunction with the numbers stated regarding registrations, it would appear that we do not have a recruiting issue, we have a retention issue.

The 2023 season saw us introduce our new jerseys (both minor and major) with the updated Lacrosse Canada logo designed in partnership with Xtreme Threads. This jersey was well received by the ALRA membership, that although not mandated, some chose to replace their old jersey with a new one. The jersey design was also incorporated by LC to use as the standard jersey for the Minor Nationals, Founders Cup and Mann Cup. Jerseys were prepared for the Minto Cup but for some reason were not utilized.

The ALRA Board recognizes the challenges we face looking ahead to the 2024 season and realizes that we have our work cut out for us to invoke the changes we believe we need to see moving forward. The challenges/changes include, but are not limited to:

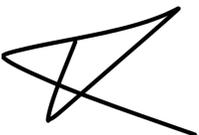
- recruitment and retention (as mentioned earlier more so retention)
- schedule alignment between minor and major
- discipline minimums (LGB consistency)
- discipline structure (LGB consistency)
- mileage fee rate consistency
- expansion of 3-man mechanic
- review of ALA regulation 14 – ALRA
- review of our bylaws
- possible revival of the Manager of Officiating role at the ALA

Looking ahead to the 2024 season we will be instituting our requests for clinic dates from the LGBs post our planning meeting the day before the ALA AGM in hopes that, with dates secured sooner, we can begin the clinic planning process. There may also be some developments from LC in regards to the method of distribution of clinic material which could drastically change how we facilitate clinics and how we utilize the time spent with Officials in training. I am looking forward to working with all of you in 2024.

On a reflective note, I believe that this year's Board of Directors was able to function quite well together, and although there were instances where we had our differences, the passion we all have for, not just the game, but for Officiating was the basis of all discussions. I want to take this time to thank all of the Executive and extended Board of Directors for their time and effort this past season. It is greatly appreciated.

There are things we need to improve on both administratively and functionally that I hope to address in preparing for the 2024 season. The Board as a whole, and its respective members can, and should, do more for our members. I know I can personally improve on my role as I was not able to put forth and fulfill all of the ideas I would have liked to introduce to the board and hear their respective feedback on them. There were some key initiatives from our 2023 Planning Meeting that went nowhere as I did not follow through on initiating them. I plan to improve on that for 2024 and plan to hold the board more accountable for their portfolios as well.

Thank you



K.J. (Kevin) Kohut
ALRA President

2023 Vice President Member Services Report

Season Summary

The 2023 season unfortunately did not happen without its fair share of issues, especially around referee abuse. I think the common statement that I heard and would echo is I have not seen it this bad before. However, with that being said, I do think that we owe a lot of appreciation to those ALRA members who stepped up this year to make the season possible for so many youth, and those who committed countless volunteer hours to the sport.

Positive Notes

1. I felt that this year we had an Executive and Board of Directors that for the most part worked closely with one another, and was able to agree on important topics. This allowed a consistent approach on development, assigning, and ways to address referee abuse. I would like to thank everyone involved, especially those I worked directly with this season for their efforts and collaboration. I would encourage that in the coming seasons, the ALRA Executive looks to expand, especially with the Manager of Officiating position being pushed aside by the ALA for the 2024 season. I would recommend that the ALRA looks to split the Vice President Member Services position, and the Vice President Development position into a North and South split for each. I believe that this would increase engagement in issues and development. I would also add that the ALRA considers a Female Director, similar to the approach taken by many lacrosse associations, even if added as a non-voting member (such as the Privacy Officer role). As spoken to in GELC, I also recommend that each area's RIC and Assignor have someone who can be a succession plan, working into roles, even if it be on a development team like in CDLA.
2. Recruitment this year was higher than last, with us seeing 191 new officials, bringing the total roster to 365. I like to think that a large part of that recruitment came by social media and positive interaction with posts made on the ALRA social media accounts. I believe that there is opportunity to expand resources available to support in Arbiter use, RAMP Registration, and officials' resources, however, would recommend that this work be compensated where possible.
3. On floor mentorship and evaluations proved to be quite useful this year with positive responses received about officials who attended provincial and national events. In each centre the RIC's and Assignors were able to host at least one development event, and evaluations were able to be done to support officials with potential to move up when we needed it most. We were also fortunate to have dedicated evaluators in addition to an RIC at Canada Day and ALA Minor Provincials which allowed a lot of officials to be worked with consistently in one weekend. In addition to the Uber Clinic this year we ran a Tier 1 development weekend which focused on supporting officials moving into the RMLL, or who had just started in the RMLL last season. This was a great opportunity and one that I think should be continued.

4. This season the ALRA Executive and Board of Directors passed a Minor Fines Framework and agreed on a standardized evaluation form across the province. While fines were not implemented because of the many issues with receiving schedules and assignment changes, this step along with changes in process it brought will support assignors in the future. The evaluation form was slow to be rolled out this season, and was not fully adopted across the province, however next season now that the structure is in place, it should be easy to start with and maintain.

Notable Challenges

1. Referee abuse was the most consistent issue voiced by our members and reflected in the game reports and number of repeat offenders that many times got off with minimal recourse. I look back to two instances that really reinforced on a provincial level that we have a problem, and that is when one of our underage members was pushed by a coach while on floor, during a game, and the second being the three instances involving RCMP intervention at Minor Provincials this year in Beaumont. I strongly believe that referee abuse will not properly be addressed until the provincial association needs to deal with retaining officials in addition to their efforts to develop coaches and players. Perhaps with the shortages seen this year at many points in the season, we are finally seeing this crossroads happen with the ALA.
2. Discipline consistency across leagues was an issue, and one that is currently being reviewed to my knowledge by the ALA. In CDLA, the RIC is removed from discipline proceedings and their escalation for repeat offenders was rarely followed. In addition to this, I would say that across all leagues this year, there was a clear conflict of interest in multiple discipline cases. This was not necessarily defined by relationship, but sometimes policy when there is monetary compensation for a position that is supposed to be impartial in all reviews. I believe that a standard framework must be created by the ALA and then adopted by the LGB's with modifications only being allowed if increasing the suspension time or adding a hearing process for offences.
3. Assigning minor versus major lacrosse. This was a point of contention multiple times this season, and at times I think was not handled correctly under the stress that games would not be assigned. I would agree that we should assign our most experienced officials to our highest levels, however I think that when we were short, many officials' preferences were overlooked. A common complaint I received from experienced officials was around travel or being overworked, feeling pressured at times to take games with future assignments in mind. As much as we look to retain our new officials, we need to retain our experienced ones as well, while also finding common ground across assignors for fair expectations.
4. Clinics proved to be a challenge in Edmonton this year, and I believe that we fell short officials in the area in part because of late clinic additions and changes. I would like to mention that during the season, multiple clinics were run online, with shadowing on the

floor for officials that we felt had potential to support us where we were short. Next season, I would support the movement towards online clinic material with the on-floor session replacing the day typically spent in a classroom. I was fortunate to evaluate in both Calgary and Edmonton, centers that had an on-floor portion to their clinic, and it was clear that these new officials benefitted from the on floor sessions with increased confidence in their first games on floor, and having a sense of in game procedures.

5. Engaging officials and having them cover games as 142 officials did under 20 games, with 43 not stepping on floor at all. I think it was clear this season that majority of games were covered by a small percentage of our membership. I do not have the breakdown of previous years numbers as we did this year to compare but can speak to this being a problem that was not isolated to major centres, but rather spread out across the province from speaking with RIC's.

GELC Assigning Comments

This year in GELC I took on most of the assigning process, however I heavily relied on the assistance of Pierre Ouimet, Kevin Kohut, Jon Bennett and Wes Kendall. Majority of games were assigned only a matter of days before, with it being a regular routine of redoing an entire schedule during the day for that evening. Our new officials lacked commitment, players lacked notice of their own schedules to enter availability, and in general just time to properly assign. There have been many discussions that arose during the season and on-going about improving the process, and I do not want to focus a lot on things that went wrong as I think they have been recognized. Moving forward, I appreciate the positive outlook from the GELC and early engagement ideas for planning for next season.

Final Thoughts

This was my first year as the ALRA's Vice President of Member Services and will be my only year. This is not necessarily because of the problems that need to be addressed in this sport, or the time that these volunteer positions often require, rather a change in upcoming commitments that I have outside of lacrosse. I look forward to supporting the transition to our next Vice President Member Services and want to thank everyone that I have had the privilege of working alongside for their support over this past year. It is the dedication from members such as yourself that make this sport possible across the province for so many players and families.



Cameron Lafreniere

Vice President Member Services (Volunteer)
Minor Assignor, Greater Edmonton Lacrosse Council
Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association

2023 ALRA Vice President Finance Report

Dear Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association Members,

Our 2023 season demonstrates a pattern of stability and a solid financial outlook consistent with the previous two years. Increased lacrosse programming in line with the preceding year's improvement aided revenues, and efforts to support financial stability have been ongoing, focusing on minimizing administrative expenses and enhancing inventory tracking.

The organization continued to gain revenue from scheduling and registration fees and maintains cost-saving strategies such as internal financial reviews, contracted bookkeeping services, and streamlined payment processing methods through Plooto. Moreover, the commitment to maintain a balanced budget was successfully met in 2023, ensuring financial discipline and effective expense management.

Referee payments were efficiently managed, with regular bi-weekly payments (with few exceptions) and the culmination of RMLL mileage payments at the end of the season. Moving forward, there are plans to transition RMLL mileage to a monthly structure, aiming to streamline and simplify payments.

To further support officials and volunteers, a recommendation has been made to review clinic registration fees and to increase assigning fees, aligning with the overarching goal of enhancing support while preserving the ALRA's financial sustainability. Additionally, plans to update the inventory asset are underway, ensuring a more accurate representation of our current limited inventory.

In wrapping up the financial snapshot of 2023, our organization maintains its steady financial course, reflecting consistency in revenue and a focus on smarter financial management. Our commitment to maintaining a balanced budget, paying referees regularly, and exploring ways to streamline payments indicates our dedication to ensuring smoother operations and financial stability. I encourage any member with questions, comments or suggestions to attend our AGM and contact a member of the ALRA Board of Directors.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jonathan Bennett', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Bennett

Vice President Finance, Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association
vpfinance@albertalacrosserefs.ca

2023 Year End Report - Vice President of Development

This report pertains to my role as the Alberta Lacrosse Referee Association (ALRA) Vice President of Development for the 2023 lacrosse season. Overall, the 2023 season should be considered a success by means of development of its officials. We saw a positive growth in various officials at both Minor and Major divisions. Nationally, Alberta was well represented at the various Lacrosse Canada events. However, there were various items which became evident throughout the season that should be considered to be re-evaluated for future seasons. This report will explore the above noted topics.

World Lacrosse

Mr. Lawrence Zdrill represented Alberta and Canada as an Evaluator while attending the 2023 World Field Lacrosse Tournament in San Diego, California, USA. His experience and knowledge made him a valuable asset to the Officiating team.

Nationally

This season, the ALRA was fortunate to have two of its members perform the duties of Official in Charge (OIC) at two national events. Mr. David Westwood was the RIC for the Minto Cup and Mr. Zdrill, along with Saskatchewan's Mr. Ian Wilson, were co-OIC's for the U17 and U19 Men's Field Lacrosse Nationals. Both of these events operated at a high level under the leadership of Mr. Westwood and Mr. Zdrill.

Our officials who attended the Major Box Lacrosse Nationals performed well, earning on floor roles in various games. At the Men's and Female's Minor Box Nationals, almost all officials earned a Gold or Bronze medal game. Some were spoken very highly of by their RIC's from the event. Unfortunately, one official was removed from the Female Box Nationals due to performance issues; however, they did earn a medal game at the U13 Female Festival in Saskatchewan.

At the Men's Field Lacrosse Nationals, our officials continued their success by earning on field medal games. The ALRA did not have any representatives at the Females Field Lacrosse Nationals.

For the first time in several seasons, the MacDonald Cup, a Jr B Tier 2 Western Canadian Lacrosse tournament, operated successfully. The ALRA chose one official to attend this event,

which they performed adequately. I am hopeful in the years to come the ALRA will be able to send more officials.

Provincially

At the Major Box Provincials and playoffs, the chosen ALRA officials all performed exceptionally well. This in turn allowed for the highest level of skill by the players in a safe and fair environment. With Alberta hosting the Minto Cup, the Jr. A division had two teams (Edmonton Miner and Calgary Mountaineers) attend the event. As these teams had a hard fought series that went to a game 5, this allowed additional experience for officials.

The Jr. B Tier 1 Provincials was a success for development as well. Under the leadership of Mr. Weston Kendall, officials were provided feedback after each game, to which they applied throughout the tournament. The Jr. B Tier 2 and Jr. Ladies Provincials, OIC'd by Mr. Zdrill, were equally a success. All reports indicate each official performed exceptionally well. None of these tournaments had major issues.

The Minor Box Provincials were OIC'd by Mr. Cameron Lafreniere, with assistance from Ms. Shelby Deis. Although there were off floor issues with parents and fans, the tournament appeared to go well. Each arena had an on-site supervisor to provide constant feedback to officials following games. There were mixed reviews regarding the officials on floor performances, however all officials appeared to grow and appreciated the feedback. Assignments were provided on performance.

This past summer, the Alberta Summer Games (ASG) took place in Okotoks, Ab. Mr. Sylven was chosen to be the RIC for the event. Along with Mr. Sylven, 8 officials were chosen to attend the event. According to Mr. Sylven the event was well operated overall. His well detailed report is as follows:

ASG RIC Report:

- Intro

This years 2023 Alberta Summer games was overall a great success. We had 8 officials selected for a total of 14 round robin games and 2 finals. Unfortunately, Jillian from the ALA was unable to attend the event due to a family emergency. My deepest condolences go out to her and her family as I believe that a family member had suddenly passed in BC. Due to this, Brent Robinson and I were the only ones to facilitate the games, (leading to myself having to actually calculate the goal differential for the tie breaker to who plays in the gold medal game.)

- Officials and Performance

Overall, I was very happy with how our officials did in the tournament. I did my absolute best to give every official a very in depth evaluation of their games. With that being said, it was definitely hard to stay focused after watching 8 hours of lacrosse with no breaks. The medal games were selected based on performance (which I believe was the best way to not only motivate officials to do their best but to prepare officials for a national championship) Throughout the weekend they faced many challenges and for the most part, I think they handled themselves very well. Deciding the medal game assignments was not easy as every official made my job hard to decide. Some of the medal assignments actually came down to as far as off floor behavior and the initiative to improve fellow officials. With that being said, I would like to recognize the gold medal crew as Branko VDW as crew chief and Rob Marsden as AR. For the bronze medal crew I would like to recognize Zack Kohut as crew chief and Noah Clason as AR.

- Board and behind the scenes

Before the tournament, there was quite a bit of confusion with out of town officials and accommodations. This was eventually sorted but definitely caused some stress among our officials traveling. Before the tournament I was informed that Alberta Sport/ALA was only paying for 3 out of town officials. Later I was told that this would be waived by the ALRA to send our best officials to the games. This was great as it created more competition amongst officials and made my job very hard to decide the medal crews. Even with being down one of the chair members for the tournament, I think Brent and I did a decent job on keeping things in line. Like I had said earlier it was kind of a nag to have to help out with deciding tied gold medal team continents but I was happy to help where help was needed.

- Discipline

Overall I was very happy that players and coaches decided to behave for the most part. With 4 majors, 3 5+GM, 1 game ejection and of course a coach being grossed after the gold medal game. Since we were down a member on the discipline board, Cam Lafrenier took initiative to call in and be the third member of the meeting. Thankfully we only had to have one hearing but I was not overly pleased with the outcome and where the ALA representative stood on it. This coach had jumped onto the floor after losing in overtime and berated officials. The officials immediately told him to leave the arena where he then joined his wife in the corner of the arena. He then approached me and began berating me of how bad he thought the game was officiated. (for the record I thought they officiated the best game of the tournament) Overall, I would like this to be looked into as this coach is a confirmed repeat offender and should be reviewed by the ALA for further suspension.

Good:

- Selecting the right up and coming officials to work the tournament

- Supplying more resources for out of town officials to come in and work the tournament.
- Behavior of parents, coaches players and officials was great for the most part
- Being included in the coaches meeting before hand and letting them know that there was zero tolerance for abuse
- The use of an SCO on the last couple days
- Pumping my own tires a little here but I think on the first day I had done my best to create a team aspect throughout the weekend that I thought worked very well.

Bad:

- Putting in very detailed evaluations, it was tough with the schedule to do this for every game and an assistant RIC or Evaluator would've taken some stress off myself.
- Applications for ASG sent out and making it clear that officials are committing for the entire weekend.
- Discipline of Angus Jenkins GRM after gold medal game
- Need SCO's for every game of the tournament, supply 9 officials to manage this.
- Would be nice to have accommodations for all officials, obviously not going to work but at least for the RIC to be able to have more time to give feedback/manage the team.

Jr. B Tier 1 North Development Weekend

During the Spring, the select officials participated in a development weekend in conjunction with the North division Jr. B Tier 1 teams. Officials were selected and invited to the event as a developmental exposure to Jr B Tier 1 Lacrosse and the 3 Official mechanic. On day 1, Officials joined mentors on floor shadowing for the first period and then given an opportunity to officiate with one Mentor on floor. Day 2 was modified to having 1 mentor on floor with 2 invitees. All officials who attended this event believed this was invaluable in their development and preparedness for the season.

Field Lacrosse

Due to the nature of Field Lacrosse in Alberta, the development of its officials is more challenging, however, the leadership team has done well to date.

Developmental Achievements

For the second year in a row, the ALRA had one of its members, Mr. Sylven, hired by the National Lacrosse League as an official. This achievement for Mr. Sylven is astounding and is a role model for our membership. Mr. Sylven represented the ALRA at the Founder's Cup, showing strong skills and ability to officiate a box lacrosse game.

Mr. Cole Smith was identified as another official who significantly improved throughout the season. His hard work and dedication earned him a on floor role of the Jr. B Tier 1 provincial final.

Congratulations on a great season!

Areas of Improvement

After my second season in this role I have identified several areas that can be addressed to improve the development of the ALRA's officials in both box and field lacrosse. These areas are;

- Selection of Officials to Lacrosse Canada event,
- Selection of Officials to the Alberta Summer Games,
- Further support to each LGB,
- Promotion of development,
- Field Lacrosse,
- Acknowledgment,
- Jr. B Tier 1 Easter weekend,

Selection of Officials to Lacrosse Canada Events

This past season the application process to apply to Lacrosse Canada (LC) Nationals was changed to permit Officials to only apply to two national events. I had intended on completing interviews with each official, however, LC had requested an earlier than expected date of notification of its officials. I found this limited the selection of which officials may attend which events. Moving forward I would like to revert to the old process of applying to any events desires. Officials will be required to choose which events they would like to attend, with identifying their selections with a ranking system from most desires to least desired.

For major lacrosse events, I believe an interview process should be considered again as these events have shown to be very competitive in play and the quality of officials being sent by other provinces is high. An example of this is for the Minto Cup and Founder Cup, Ontario and BC have been sending Officials who are employed by NLL. When considering the selections for Minor nationals, I believe it is in our best interest to send our best officials to each event, with the goal of having Alberta represent the province in Medal games.

I would like to have the selection of Officials completed earlier into the season to allow for greater development throughout the season. This would require our social media presence to increase in the advisement of the early selection process. Depending on the development of the Jr. B Tier 1 development weekend, it may also be used as a tool in determining selection.

The challenging aspect of this idea is for Field Lacrosse as the season does not begin until well after the selection process.

Selection of Officials to the Alberta Summer Games

This past season I reached out to all of the RIC's requesting for several names of Officials who would benefit from attending the Alberta Summer Games. Of these names, I strongly advised any Official who was attending Minor Nationals be selected for the event as well to allow for further development. I believe this was a good idea and should continue to be implemented for further ASG. The tournament only had one RIC for the event, which went well, however, after further recommendations I believe the VP of Development and/or another selected individual should be the leadership team for this event. The other individual should be chosen by the VP of Development along with the suggestions of the Board of Directors. The leadership team will then review the suggested applicants, make further inquiries with the local RIC's about performance, and make a decision on attendances. The next Alberta Summer Games are scheduled to occur in 2026.

Further Support of LGB's

An area of issue I found was the further support of local LGB's and the development of its officials. Unfortunately, this issue is a direct result of scheduling issues with the ALA. Although this is a greater issue than what we can control, I would like to propose a sub-committee for development. The chosen individual of the LGB would be the point of contact for the VP of Development and would be able to attend facilities to evaluate and mentor officials. Again, the barrier of scheduling will cause issues with this, however, I believe this may be an opportunity to help develop those officials in the level 2-3 range.

Awareness of Development

I believe the majority of our membership does not take advantage of the VP of Development. I acknowledge my approach to the role is different than previous individuals who have held this position, however, I would like to try and promote the one on one aspect of the role more with our membership. There are very few officials who have chosen to reach out to me for this type of development. I believe if we promote this type of development through our social media there is a possibility our number of individuals will increase. There were concerns in the past of "too many officials reaching out". This has not been the situation over the last two seasons. If there is a surplus of individuals who express interest in this type of mentoring, small group sessions may be considered.

Field Lacrosse

Field Lacrosse in Alberta has issues that are not able to be addressed by the ALRA, however, I believe we can do a better job of promoting the sport. As Box lacrosse appears to be the primary focus of Alberta, many of our officials are committed to it. However, I think we should further market Field as a separate entity. In other provinces, Box and Field are viewed separately; there is a population of individuals who only officiate one or other. Promoting of Field can be done

during the Box clinics and throughout the Box season as it ends. Field presents significant opportunities for officials to attend National events, as they are often in more need of officials for events compared to Box. We have tremendous knowledge and experience that can be further taken advantage of.

Acknowledgement

I would like to begin to acknowledge the success of our officials throughout the season. This can be done through our social media by acknowledging the positive work by our officials. It can be after a well officiated tournament, selection to medal games, selection to Provincials/Nationals, etc. I acknowledge this role would be time consuming, however, I believe if we acknowledge the success of our officials it would potentially increase retention.

Jr B. Tier 1 Development Weekend

Should the ALRA be invited to join the Jr. B Tier 1 North teams I believe we can create a greater opportunity to develop our officials. I believe we made the most of the opportunity and learnt on the go what was working well. In the future, we may use it in the same manner. We may also use this as an opportunity to get a look at Officials who are interested in attending Nationals and begin a mentoring process. This event would benefit Officials who Officite U17 A division or are first year RMLL. In the more controlled environment, it would provide an experience of Tier 1 lacrosse and ease in the transition from Minor to Major. Should financials of travel be a concern, I think it would be beneficial if the Southern teams have a similar weekend where we may develop our officials in this region

Conclusion

The above report details the 2023 Lacrosse season as my role of VP of Development in the ALRA. I enjoyed working with the members of the ALRA and seeing the positive growth of its members. I look forward to the 2024 season and working with everyone.

Yours in Lacrosse,

Julian Grbich
ALRA VP of Development

Dear ALRA and ALA Members,

This year was yet another challenging one, even more so than the year before. In my role as VP Technical, I have never had such issue managing clinics as well as a referee managing games on floor.

Again we have had a lot of new faces in roles that were previously held by members with significant years of experience. Although this is great to see new people stepping up, I see they are set up for failure as the majority of our operations go undocumented and change year to year. I would hope to see the ALA lead and start documenting procedures as well as guide new executives towards success.

The majority of actions happen last minute, between knowing who was going to teach the clinic to where the clinic was to the technology used it was very rushed. In the future I hope for more commitment on all those involved including myself.

This year on floor I worked over 140 games, most of which were with less than 24 hours notice. We cannot continue to operate this way. Most of our members take 2-4 days to respond to requests to referee. If this continues we will see an increase in the number of cancelled games. I also noticed an alarming amount of referee abuse, it makes perfect sense that the retention rates are so low due to the lack of support from the ALA clubs. I am also a coach with the Sherwood Park Titans and quite frankly embarrassed to say based on how a number of the Sherwood Park Titans' coaches treat officials.

Lastly, there needs to be more recognition from the ALA for officials. It is alarming that there isn't one iota of recognition for our members from the ALA. Without our membership there is no game as well as the way officials call the game directly has an impact on how the game is played and how players develop. Given the recent success of our teams at the national level there may be a correlation between how good are members are, although you wont ever hear that from the ALA which is something that I believe the leadership of the ALA should reflect on.

Regards,

Wes Kendall

VP Technical



CALL/ALRA

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November 03rd, 2023

Mr. Cole Smith
CALL RIC
CALL 2023 RIC Season Report

2023 CALL Season RIC Report

Report Outline

- Season Summary
- Assigning
 - Summary
 - Continued Schedule for 2024
 - New Assignors
- Official Development
 - Development Program
- Growth & Recruitment
 - 2022/23 Recruitment Program
- 2023 Plans of Interest

● CALL Season Summary

During our 2023 season, CALL had **60 officials** who registered and officiated within the ALRA. This number is quite significant, as we saw a **26.67% increase** in officials compared to last year's growth. These growing numbers are attributed heavily to the CARD program and the boards within Central Alberta lacrosse and their unwavering support and devotion to growing the sport. With the last few years of our CARD program focused on mid level retention, I would like to say that we have had several mid to high-level officials return this year and a small group of entry-to-level who are excelling beyond expectations, thanks to part to the teaching techniques of our mentorship team. Secondly, CALL anticipates two to three officials who will be aspiring to join the RMLL next season and begin their entry phase into major lacrosse. Lastly, Nathan Hamilton will be the RIC for the Central Alberta Lacrosse League in the 2024 season. The CALL BOD and I would like to welcome him and wish him all the best in his lacrosse endeavour.

● Assigning

- Nathan Hamilton and I (Cole Smith) were the main assignors within CALL. Nathan did an impressive job this year and kept our season neat and organised. With scheduling conflicts and assigning multiple tournaments and season games simultaneously, he established himself as our MVP and soon-to-be RIC.
- In the past, many tournaments and season games co-occurred on select weekends, combined with the number of officials within Central Alberta. The schedule was too overwhelming. With that, we introduced a new schedule back in 2019 and have used this format ever since. After discussion with the board, we have concluded that during tournament weekends, CALL's Season will be on weekdays; only younger ages on tournament weekends, and the tournaments will have control over their weekend, thus eliminating the staggering number of games our officials have had to endure, and assignors have had to assign in the past. In addition, the new rules league-wide will only assist with a staggering

number of games needing to be assigned during tournament weekends. Nathan and I look forward to seeing how next season goes with these vital changes.

- For the 2024 season, we will need new assignors and will spend the next few months evaluating CALL's options and determining who would best fit this leadership position.

● Official Development

- **Referee Development Funding:** We kept a similar budget for our CARDP (Central Alberta Referee Development Program) this year and the upcoming year. Typically having an annual Budget of **\$8000.00** to spread out over the season, with our main focus being on our newer officials and expanding our count (number of officials) outside of Red Deer. This budget was agreed to at the start of the season and was broken down to see the payments for each community as the season progressed.
- **New Development Program Part I:** With many communities commenting about mileage and the cost to train and transport new officials from one of our outlying communities, it became a hot topic last year. To battle this, I decided to introduce a large budget. With this, I can pull our newer officials from our outlying communities and pay their mileage under CARDP. With the payment of transportation being handled, we (meaning Nathan and I) decided to use our Eye Opener tournament as our primary training source for them and have done this for a number of years now. These officials would be given multiple back-to-back games this weekend to help save costs and improve their rule and game knowledge.
- **New Development Program Part II:** Over the years, we have lost many mid-officials to College & University. I had to think of a retention plan and a new form of skill development for our more experienced and up-and-coming officials.

With that, I decided to introduce Raymond's Provincial tournament format into our playoffs. Pulling money aside from our CARDP budget, I could pay for two RIC/Supervisors. Julian, Nathan Hamilton and I hand-selected (through trial and error) six officials that would work our U11 and six that would work our U13. Our playoffs being hosted in one community for the weekend created the perfect conditions for the idea. With our budget, we cover mileage, per-diem and RIC fees, giving anywhere from 4-6 games per official and a wealth of constructive feedback to further their careers within the ALRA. Those who did not officiate were more than welcome to join the supervisor and watch the other officials. The reason for this was to help create a referee community and bond within CALL. This was met with overwhelmingly positive feedback and will continue into the 2024 season.

● Growth & Recruitment

- **2023 Recruitment Program:** With our main goal this year being to recruit many more officials, especially from outside of Red Deer, in our smaller communities, we saw the challenge over the years. With an average of 8-15 new officials per year and 50% typically coming from Red Deer. I suggested we implement a payment plan for officials from our smaller communities. Having multiple associations anywhere from 45min - 1.5hr away creates a large amount of mileage for our smaller communities. This has been an ongoing concern, with some communities receiving a bill worth thousands. At the beginning of the 2019 season, the board and I introduced a new payment plan. The idea is that these small communities offer to cover the cost of the official's course and entry gear should they ref five or more games. The concept and hope are that at least one of these players/officials will enjoy it enough to continue officiating for more than one season, thus paying off their side of the bill within their first 2-3 games they ref. With the community investing in their officials, we hope to create a sense of bonding with the ALRA in these small towns and to produce a positive budget within said associations while expanding the ALRA name and family. This has seen a significant improvement over the past few years, with an overwhelming

number of our new officials coming from outside of Red Deer. With 2024 on the way, I and Nathan plan to make this payment plan stronger and more effective to help CALL diminish our mileage and also to aid us in growing our numbers.

● 2024 Plans of Interest

- Pursuing and creating a more flexible schedule for both tournaments and season games. Thus helping to alleviate some of the stress on the assignors.
- Follow the guidance & advice of the United States Field Lacrosse Development Program to create a more inclusive form of skill & rule knowledge amongst our aspiring officials.
- Continue with our retention plan of officials while pursuing new and effective solutions and beta ideas.
- Further expand on our Growth & Recruitment Plan for 2024.
- Finding Assignors for the 2024 lacrosse season..

I want to thank all of my colleagues for helping to guide the ALRA within Central Alberta and for helping to educate me on mistakes and successes that occurred this year. I look forward to another successful season in 2024 and continuing to improve this great sport we all know and Love.

Yours in Lacrosse,

Cole Smith

Referee In Chief, CALL

2023 CDLA RIC Report

Season Summary

In the 2023 season, 127 officials were registered within the CDLA. Of the 127 officials, 110 officials actively officiated games, meaning 17 CDLA officials did not officiate any games this season.

Assigning

Assigning for all levels in the CDLA was completed by Logan Parsons. Within the CDLA in 2023, there were approximately 1481 games assigned out of 4332 total in the ALRA (34%) including regular season, tournament, and playoff games. Automatic dark days helped alleviate issues from previous seasons; there were fewer game declines than in previous years. Most games were assigned 2-4 weeks in advance, with an emphasis on utilizing lower-level officials in order to reserve RMLL officials for higher-level games.

Tournaments

Most tournament schedules were received more than 2 weeks prior to the start of the tournament. There were minimal issues with assigning tournament games. In future seasons, there should be emphasis on not starting tournament games too early on Fridays to ensure adequate official coverage (i.e. after 4 p.m.).

There were 42 officials on the Canada Day officiating staff, 8 of whom were from out-of-region, including one tournament RIC. There were 11 floor supervisors during the tournament, including 6 junior supervisors watching U11 games only. This format was utilized to develop referees entering into the RMLL levels and to free up more senior officials for higher-level games. Throughout the tournament, 3 supervisors were watching floors at all times, including the tournament RIC. Most officials worked 4 games or less a day, but we ran into some issues with the small number of officials, especially on medal day with some officials returning to work. In future years, it would be beneficial to utilize more out-of-town officials to ensure we have enough referees committed to officiating the entire tournament, depending on CDLA availability.

Development

For first-year officials, 3 on-floor development days were provided that covered game mechanics and positioning without active gameplay. There was also a U11 development day involving first-year officials refereeing at least one period of a U11 game on-floor with support from senior mentors. We used a red/yellow/green evaluation system for this development day to determine the preparedness of new officials. 42 first-year officials attended both development days, and 8 first-year officials were able to attend one.

Throughout the season, 62 formal referee evaluations were completed. For the Canada Day tournament, 78 formal referee evaluations were completed. Throughout the season, it was the tournament RIC's responsibility to provide evaluations and feedback to referees when time permitted, therefore many informal evaluations were completed at tournaments in CDLA by the tournament RICs.

Challenges

CDLA had 87 game reports of 274 total within ALRA (32% of the total). Of the 87 game reports, 37 of those were coach-related (43% of CDLA) and 2 were fan-related (2% of CDLA). This is compared to 81 total coach-related reports (30% of the total) and 12 total fan-related reports (4% of the total). Based on this information, CDLA had significantly more coach-related game reports than other areas of the province.

2024 Plans of Interest

It is important to address referee abuse in future seasons. This year, we had a significant incident of referee abuse, and even though we as the board of directors formulated a plan to address the abuse, we ultimately did not have it implemented. This plan should move forward in its entirety to future seasons, and we as the board of directors need to be more stringent on addressing referee abuse in order to protect our members and encourage retention.

It would be beneficial to have all LBG RICs involved in discipline to ensure suspensions are consistent and effective. Having a standardized suspension guideline across the province would also be beneficial so that regular season and tournament suspensions are applied consistently.

The use of on-floor development days in CDLA allowed new officials to practice being on the floor as an official with support from senior referees. In future seasons, I would propose utilizing split classroom/on-floor clinics such as what was trialled in GELC this season. If this is not possible, the use of development days is a good substitution. I would also like to continue running the U11 development day as well.

During the regular season this year, less than 50% of officials received a formal evaluation (some individuals received more than one formal evaluation due to scheduling). In future seasons, it would be beneficial to try to complete more evaluations throughout the season to develop officials, though this is challenging given senior officials' commitment to RMLL games.

After observing the success of the Whatsapp chat in GELC, I believe it would be beneficial to implement it in other areas including CDLA to promote more engagement and interaction amongst officials.

GELC RIC Report 2023

November 2023

Season summary

A season with many celebrations but several challenges as well. Unfortunately, the shortage of experienced officials, GELC scheduling issues, and abuse of officials were dominant themes throughout the season. Notwithstanding these setbacks, 1700+ slots were assigned, and we had a season that most players, coaches, and lacrosse fans enjoyed.

Celebrations

- The dedication (and patience) of Cam Lafreniere, with the support of Kevin Kohut, Jon Bennett, and Wes Kendall, in assigning minor games for the GELC, is cause for celebration. That more games were not postponed or canceled altogether is because of their efforts and commitment.
- The collaboration of these four gentlemen, with myself and a few others, in trouble shooting issues and having discussion on important topics even when there wasn't consensus or agreement among us.

Challenges

- Abuse of officials dominated much of the season. As somebody new to the RIC role, I was struck by the volume of abuse incidents and asked if this was the norm. I was told this year was particularly bad.
- While I was not privy to all decisions, player and bench personnel discipline (consequences) seemed inconsistent at times, not only with the abuse issues but with other applications as well.
- Assigning – the turnover in the GELC office led to many inefficiencies, particularly the release of league and tournament schedules. One such example is the release of the 70 game (140 slot) Tyke Wind Up schedule, three days before the start of the event. Fines were assessed and included in the Officials invoice. It does appear that the GELC is taking steps to rectify this for next year. Despite all of this, Cam (with a bit of help from a few others), did a fantastic job in assigning 1700+ slots this year.
- The coordination of RMLL and Minor schedules needs to be looked at so that they don't collide as often. Too few officials are available leading to U15 and below rarely seeing an experienced official work one of their games.
- Shortage of officials (especially those who can work U15 and up). Of the 110 officials in the GELC, 66 worked less than 20 games, 16 of those didn't ref at all. We had five officials who worked 100+ games or approximately ¼ of all of our assignments.

Official Development

- Clinics were late getting organized in the GELC and changes/cancellations occurred through March and into April. Thus, they were not well attended compared to in the past.
- Mid-season Online clinics with on floor time shadowing was successful and something we look to continue.

Growth and Recruitment

- Mentorship and evaluations were successful, but again, with so many experienced officials busy on the floor and being overworked, more could have been done working with our new(er) officials to build capacity.
- Though I was not directly involved, the development that occurred at Provincials and Nationals worked well and was extremely well received.

As my first year in the RIC role, I learned a few things and have a perspective of the “behind the scenes” workings of the GELC and the ALRA in general, that I didn’t have as “just an official working my assigned games”. I look forward to supporting the officials, players, and coaches next year. Thanks for listening.

GELC - Referee in Chief

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Pierre Ouimet', is written over a solid horizontal line.

Pierre Ouimet

2023 RMLL RIC Report

In the second traditional season since 2019, we continued to build on what we've learned about returning to "normalcy." This was a challenging, but successful, endeavour for our officials at the league, provincial, and national levels.

Season Accomplishments

The RMLL continues to maintain an overall high level of officiating competency. This was highlighted at the national level by RMLL officials refereeing on-floor for the 12U, 14U, 17U, Junior Ladies, and Minto Cup finals. The RMLL sent four officials to Minto Cup as the host, with three of those officials working the final series. I was also fortunate enough to be named Official in Charge (RIC) of the event. We have also had another RMLL Alberta official hired to the NLL (one who refereed at the Founders Cup), along with two Saskatchewan officials (one attended Founders Cup, the other Minto).

We had officials be successful, despite their ages, at Founders (21) and Presidents (22). The feedback we continue to receive from out of Province OIC's at nationals is remarkably positive, and is a testament to the games played at the RMLL level, and our officiating standards and practices.

Season Overview

We recovered some of the officials who elected to take time off after the modified/return to play season, and promoted many others into the RMLL, or new divisions within it. The implementation of the 3-official mechanic at the leagues with National Championships (Jr A, Tier I, and Sr B) was another large success. In addition to more adequately preparing our officials for higher levels of lacrosse, it also serves a valuable purpose for the teams to get used to the floor coverage before nationals, and before moving to Sr A or Professional levels. Jr A utilized the 3-official mechanic throughout the season, including all playoffs and Minto Cup. Jr B Tier I utilized the 3-official system for nearly all of the regular season games in all three provinces, all of their playoffs, and at Founders. Sr B used the 3-official system in the vast majority of their games, both regular season and playoffs, but a decision was made very close to Presidents to not use the two-official system in the round-robin. In watching bits of the Founders Cup games, it was apparent which teams were and were not used to having 3-sets of eyes on the floor, in terms of infractions assessed and reaction to restarts. The quality of officiating at Presidents Cup substantially improved when the 3-official system was utilized.

The teams are seeing benefits from the 3-official system they might not be aware of. In speaking with Christine, the drop in serious penalties (Matches, Grosses, Game Misconducts - especially fighting & third player in) correlates directly with the implementation of the 3-official mechanic. Having another official on the floor to de-escalate scenarios behind the play, or assess infractions, or even staying low when teams spread the floor, still allows for two officials to move up with the play and maintain adequate sightlines/coverage. Additionally, when fights/scrum/altercation occur, two officials are able to defuse the situation, while the third is able to control the benches and record additional infractions away from the scrum, or that the

officials breaking up the situation may not be able to see. Using hockey as an analogous sport (and controlling for cost in the comparison), the comparable leagues to the RMLL have nearly all moved to four-official (WHL, USport, ACAC, Jr A, Sr AAA, Jr B, Sr AA), and did not adjust their fees downwards. Included [is a link to compare](#), but the difference between a University Men's game and Sr B is over \$100/referee, and \$5/linesperson). This is due to the increased speed and rules that emphasis speed and skill. It is not unreasonable to have the third official standard in our leagues with National Championships and then cascade down, as more officials become available.

The Minto Cup was a great display of how well our teams competed on the floor, and our organizational committees are able to put on such a large-scale event. The production quality of the stream and feed was immaculate, and really assisted the officiating team in reviewing plays after the event, in order to learn from them and keep the same standard.

Season Setbacks

The relocation of Lloydminster to Hillmond, Sk and Cranbrook's home games were difficult to schedule referees. Both of these centres will require local officials to continue to host home games, especially for short-notice playoffs. I will propose again that teams can only host playoff games if they have officials who live within 50 km of their home arena. I communicated to the LGB RIC of Wheatland that I was willing and available to to assist promoting officials to the RMLL for this year, and next. We have had to utilize more Saskatchewan-based RMLL officials to help cover busy weekends, especially Sr C in Wheatland.

Additionally, an RMLL clinic in Cranbrook, or having Cranbrook officials travel to Alberta to certify will be a necessity in 2024. I have began the preliminary steps to have a clinic for Junior level officials in Cranbrook with the BCLOA, as last year we had no referees able to consistently referee in Cranbrook, and should they move to Tier 1, I am very concerned about their ability to officiate their home games without dramatic support from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba traveling out, and/or BCLOA officials traveling from the Mainland. I may be able to go out myself while working WLA games, and catching a flight back.

Scheduling with arena availability continues to be a struggle. With multiple teams requiring weekend games to accommodate travel, it would be ideal if games within 100 km travel (round trip) could be played on more weeknights (Monday-Thursday). The downside to this would mean fewer potential practice days for teams, the upside would be lower referee travel fees. This is a decision the teams would need to consider.

Even if more weekday games are not possible, planning to only have one game per day in Wheatland, coordination to share facilities, or scheduling to allow for officials to officiate one game, and then travel to another game in the region on the same day will need to be addressed.

A change in assigning practices is required. The current system led to single games being charged for an official traveling a great distance, and not having it be split by another team to reduce the costs. In all likelihood, I will be the initial assignor for all games, with either Wes or

Jon looking after changes or turnbacks, along with billing being completed and submitted monthly. Refining the mileage and expense process is at the top of the list for the season, and a new form has been created based on the feedback improvement, which I believe we have now corrected. The ALRA will be making changes to paying our officials out, including expenses, so they are able to have a single-payer, the ALRA, and be paid expeditiously. This process will lead to a much cleaner billing document at the end of the year, as well.

The Minto repayment process has been problematic. At the time of my report, four officials are owed game fees, all travel to and from the facilities has yet to be paid, as well as per diems. The committee did an outstanding job of managing the onsite product and creating a fantastic on-site experience, but there were logistical overlooks. In the future, I would suggest the committee reach out to the OIC and LC to allow for communication about executable responsibilities ahead of time. The two other MA's/leagues still owe money to their officials, as well. I am intentionally not submitting my Minto Cup OIC report until all officials are reimbursed.

Growth and Recruitment

With the success of LC utilizing the 3-official system and moving towards it for major national championships, the RMLL would best support the continued excellence of officials at national championships by using the 3-official system for all playoffs and provincials. This will continue to require more officials be moved into the RMLL and be available during July & August. Having two normal season where officials gained experience in real game situations was crucial to promoting more officials to the RMLL, especially as more officials are retiring and others are requesting to limit the amount of games they work in a week. Existing officials also have improved over the course of the last season.

Three budget items have been submitted for consideration to the RMLL executive. The first is to reinstate the RMLL travel budget to move officials between the four provinces to help the newer officials in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Cranbrook travel into Alberta to work with more experienced officials, and potentially higher levels. The inverse is true too, as more experienced officials from Alberta would be traveling to the other three provinces to work with the upcoming officials in the RMLL from there. The second is to help offset the cost of potential officials with past RMLL player experience start officiating. The third is to fund a supervision/coaching team directly, so we can target specific officials and areas to improve their skills and abilities. Tony Reid, Wes Kendall, and Jon Bennett have all been approached and are interested in running the program out of the northern parts of the province.

My goal is to work about about 20 on-floor RMLL games this year, and spend more time coaching our officials and reviewing games online. I plan on traveling to work the WLA on 2-3 weekends this summer, and work to move more of our officials into the Sr A circuit.

Looking to the Future/Upcoming Season Goals

Staffing 100% of all regular season games in the leagues with national championships, and 100% of playoffs/provincials with the 3-officials system is one goal. We are planning on adding 10 new former players to our officiating staff, as well as at least 10 additional referees from the minor levels.

Thank you to everyone for their support in making the 2023 season an enjoyable experience.

David

RMLL RIC

SALA 2023 Season

This was my first season as SALA RIC. From my understanding SALA experienced a high change over coming into this season which lead to a number of challenges out of the gate.

Season summary

This year we had 31 officials across SALA - 17 of those were brand new officials and 5 who ultimately ended up not doing any officiating.

32% of the officials resides in Medicine Hat and of that 6 played or coached at the u15 level making it challenging to coordinate those officials into skill appropriate games throughout the season. 6 officials also had capabilities at the RMLL level which brought additional challenges to SALA as we don't currently have a mid level range of officials.

Assigning

Myself and Trent Olesen worked together for the first few weeks of the season to assign games, and ultimately I continued to assign through the season once we found where officials meshed most accurately.

Due to the lateness of SALAs schedule being published, teams participated in more tournaments than allowed by the SALA bylaws, which created a high scheduling conflict and many makeup games were required. Due to this SALA has agreed to ensure drafts of the schedule for next year are completed by our winter meeting, which will allow for a more timely scheduling to take place. In addition, there will be no season games on the tournament weekend & u17 will remain on a weekday, with the additional implementation of SALA league games on Sundays as well as Saturdays to ensure the easier spread of officials.

Official Development

With the large turn over going into the 2023 season, there was nothing set out in the beginning of the season for official development.

The officials who attended the Taber clinic however were able to get on the floor to ask some questions & while it was planned last minute, 5 officials game out to an exhibition game at the Tier 2 level and were able to watch a 2 man system and speak to the officials on floor in between the periods.

As for the 2024 I would like to see more pre-season opportunities for development, as well as another exhibition game for officials to watch and ask questions.

It is on the agenda to discuss official development - both budget and specifics at the next SALA meeting.

Growth and Recruitment

SALA offered incentives to their officials for officiating x number of games, where their clinic fees would be reimbursed.

This was not consistent throughout SALA, and this is something that if we are going to do, I would like to see be consistent and better managed as it was unclear to officials on how they got their fees back and through whom, another point that will be discussed at the coming SALA meeting.

Post season I asked the officials to reflect on their year and provide feedback + their intentions to return, if our 17 brand new officials, only 5 responded and only 3 plan to return. SALA as a whole needs to work on the retention of their officials and it comes down to having the season not feel so rushed together, better cohesion within the SALA BoD and the ability to develop our officials where they feel confident in their game skills and increasing their self understanding to want to return to the game of officiating.

Summary

SALA certainly had their triumphs this year. The season was rocky, which had to be expected with the change overs that occurred and the large number of new bodies and faces. As we enter the 2024 season, our general expectations and desires of our officials and our club are out in the open, and we are preparing to put a plan into action to improve on our next season. From my understanding SALA has come a long ways, but we still have a ways to go.

Meg Hanna

SALA RIC



Wheatland 2023 Season Summary

November 1, 2023

To: ALRA Executive

2023 Wheatland Season Summary

During the 2023 Box Lacrosse season, the Wheatland had 30 active referees which included 5 from Fort McMurray. It was nice to return to in-person clinics as I feel it is much more productive and easier to relay the content of the course. Thankfully, it was great to see the enthusiasm of the new referees when they officiated their first games.

LGB team registration up from the previous year, specifically in the lower age groups across the Wheatland. With the bulk of the referees being Entry Level/Level 1, this led to opportunities for the younger officials to gain experience.

Year End Tournament for the U9, U11, U13 & U15 was held in Lloydminster. It was difficult to assign enough officials, as previously mentioned, we had a limited pool of experienced referees for the higher age groups.

2023 Challenges

Recruitment was effective and while 30 officials seemed to be a good pool of referees to draw upon, there were only 3 referees above Level 2; this is down from 6 last year. Being that the Wheatland is so expansive in area and the limited number of experienced referees, assigning the U15 & U17 was challenging and at times, had to rely on importing referees from the GELC or other areas. Experience for the younger referees was limited to U9, U11 & U13. As previously mentioned, getting all of our younger officials games to gain experience was difficult as there were limited number of teams and therefore a limited number of games.

Additionally, with the SALA crossover weekend the first week of May in Vermilion, the Wheatland was again challenged to provide enough experienced referees. In addition, some U15 games were also scheduled for cost and travel efficiencies, and this added a bit more complexity to the assigning.

Finally, while it was nice to have Fort McMurray interested in training referees, this was a last minute, impromptu clinic; it will be easier to accommodate in future years if clinic intent is given on more than 2 weeks notice.

Assigning

The assigning duties fell to Carmen Zayac for the 2023 season. Carmen did a fantastic job as this is a thankless position. Several hours were dedicated to assigning the Ice Melter tournament, two U9 festivals, Fort McMurray festival and finally playdowns.

With the amount of time required to assign the referees (including cancellations, out of town referees, etc.), it may be necessary to investigate additional compensation in the future to ensure there are people willing to perform this important task.

Officials Development

With most of the officials in Wheatland being Entry or Level 1, an initiative was made to have additional pre-season, on-floor time to the referee pool for additional training, like what took place in 2022. Unfortunately, due to scheduling issues, this couldn't take place and it seems that this combined with the limited number of games being assigned in the Wheatland, development was stunted compared to the previous year.

2024 Recruitment and Development Plan

Recruitment for the upcoming season will be following a similar path from previous seasons, relying heavily on the younger players for the U9 & U11. It seems the Wheatland will have some more experienced referees returning for the 2024 season so it will be beneficial for the U15 and U17 games being played to utilize local referees.

Wheatland will also continue to work with myself and the ALRA regarding the pre-season, on-floor sessions. This work along with the following scrimmage gives the Entry and Level 1 referees additional confidence when thrust into their first games.

Regards,

Rod Pettigrew

Wheatland RIC

2023 Field Lacrosse Report

In terms of clinics, with the pre-clinic now being available online, as well as a ton of example videos through the Canadian Lacrosse Thinkific site, a number of officials used this to their advantage to get a look at some of what would be covered well in advance. Similar to the past few years, I decided to host two clinics online to keep travel expenses down. A number of box officials had expressed interest in refereeing, but once it came time for clinics they were either no longer interested or not available.

This year, we had seven new officials register, with only five working games. Eight officials returned from previous seasons, but only six were able to work games due to commitments elsewhere.

As has happened in previous years, because so many players were involved with Provincials during the first set of Field Days, there weren't a lot of games to officiate, however with the shortage of officials that weekend most referees were working 4-5 games each. For the second set of Field Days, there were a number of people that weren't available due to the Alberta Summer Games running the same weekend (and people involved as either players or referees). Despite this, we were able to squeak by with enough officials for this weekend, although there were only four officials available on the Saturday. For the third set of Field Days, we had enough officials to work a series of games 3-man, which was a huge help to those officials who had not worked games in this fashion before. This weekend finally saw a number of first-year officials take the field for the first time, and most of them did quite well, being familiar with the game from playing. The same goes for the fourth set of Field Days, where we had enough officials to cover off all of the games.

We were in a good position for working on mechanics, with Lawrence having just returned from assessing at the World Games, and he was a huge help in breaking down new positioning and transitioning with the new systems in place. Also, with the opportunity for additional officials to attend Nationals this year, we had the chance to send two officials to Halifax for the U-19 Nationals, which will be an opportunity to bring experience back.