



November 2, 2023

President's Report – Annual General Meeting

Titans Members,

Tonight, I come to this podium with mixed feelings. After six years as a Titans board member, including two terms as President, I have made the difficult decision to step down. This is also an end of an era for our family – over 20+ years of Titans minor lacrosse in varying capacities.

Last season started off with significant issues with the schedule – including delays in posting and repeated game errors. The Titans were extremely vocal with our concerns. As the largest club – we were impacted significantly. Our ask is simple, that there is a level of accountability and expectations across all lacrosse organizations both at the association and club level. Sadly, the conflicts over the schedule directly affected the Titans and our relationships in the lacrosse community throughout the remainder of the season.

Unfortunately, early indications are that this season is also going to also come with some challenges. Once again, there is going to be a significant push to go to Parity Plus across the GELC, there is also talk of centralized registration, particularly in the women's program and finally, the ALA has decided that there will be two main tournaments in Alberta which means the Titans Classic could be significantly downsized and potentially puts Rock the North in jeopardy.

These initiatives at the GELC and ALA level are concerning for the Titans. We have the registration to sustain a strong A program - and we believe our membership feels A Level lacrosse is important. We also have the largest women's numbers in the north, at over 100 players in our system last year. The Titans are the only club that were able to host a team in each women's division – with 2 U11 teams and 2 U15 teams. We are self-sustaining – centralizing registration and combining our athletes with the other GELC clubs, in my opinion is not an option. And finally, having a reduced Titans Classic tournament will be impactful on many levels – most concerning is that the tournament is our biggest fundraiser.

It is more important than ever to have the Titans voice be heard – and based on the struggles of last year, it is obvious that we need to have new representation at the GELC table. I am confident that our membership will be well represented by the new executive team. That said, in my role as Past President, I hope to be able to continue to contribute to the Titans in various capacities behind the scenes – in particular driving initiatives for continued growth and supporting Titans women's lacrosse.

Despite the difficulties at the association level – we once again increased our registration numbers. We had 448 players registered - an increase from 404 in the 2022 season. On the floor

the Titans were extremely successful. We closed out the season with 6 of the 9 Provincial divisions having Titans representation (U13A, U15A, U15B, U13 Women, U15 Women and U17 Women). Our Titans competed hard - with the following teams coming home with Provincial medals: U13 A Gold, U15A Gold, U13 Women – Silver, U17 Women Gold.

I would like to spend the last few minutes summarizing our accomplishments over the last few years. This board has made the club better from an executive and membership perspective. We pride ourselves on focusing on constant improvement and more importantly creating a positive experience for our athletes and their families.

The immediate need, when we set out four years ago, was to establish a system for storing all Titans documents. The Titans now have a robust Google Drive, filled with documentation from the last four years and a wealth of information to support future Titans boards.

Secondly, we created the Titans Policy and Procedure Manual that provides our members with comprehensive information on how the Titans club is run. The current version of the manual is now over 40 pages long. We consider this document very fluid and therefore conduct a review and update on a yearly basis.

One of our biggest accomplishments early on, was to continue to offer programming during COVID. We went above and beyond, shifting quickly after each AHS update, to ensure that our athletes were able to keep sticks in their hands. In addition, we opened our doors to other clubs – once again, being a leader in growing the game in the North.

We also have managed to develop an incredibly strong board. Our board has consistently had over 17 members, all have varied skill set that have made an impactful contribution to Titans lacrosse.

I have been so incredibly fortunate to work with this team of passionate volunteers. I have always been able to count on them to execute any idea or initiative that has been brought to the table. And even more important, I know without a doubt that they have my back. A special shout out to Rene, who has consistently been at my side, through every conflict, every issue – we jokingly refer to him as my bodyguard, which is not far from the truth.

From a membership perspective, we have created a culture where our athletes can be proud to be part of the Titans organization. Over the last few years, we have implemented the following:

- Rebranded the Titans – launching new jerseys for the 2022 season
- Apparel – partnering with Sin Bin locally to have Titans apparel readily available.
- Supporting our coaches and goalies by hosting Titan goalie camps and Titans Coaching Clinics over the last two years
- We lead the GELC with our strong social media presence that has proven to be instrumental in driving our registration and recognizing the accomplishments of our athletes.
- A monthly newsletter distributed to our membership – keeping them abreast of everything Titans.
- Yearly membership surveys – with a focused effort at the board level to make meaningful changes based on feedback received
- This is the third year of our graduating player ceremony. My hope is that future boards continue to acknowledge all these players for their hard work and perseverance over their minor career.

- Last season, we started our “Player of the Week” – acknowledging those players that made an impact on their teams (not always necessarily on the floor).
- Also, last season, all bench staff received a Titans golf shirt, as appreciation for the countless hours they put in. As well, we felt it was an important step towards our club image
- Titans were instrumental in getting approval from the ALA for the first Rock the North tournament. We partnered with Beaumont Raiders for the first year – our hope is to partner with other clubs for future Rock the North tournaments and support growing the women’s game. Women are under-represented in lacrosse – Rock the North provides athletes an environment where we meet the social needs of females and increase female participation and retention in lacrosse.

And finally, we realize that our volunteers also deserve to be recognized - volunteers are the heart of the Titans organization. Tonight, for the first time, we are celebrating excellence with our Volunteer and Coach of the Year awards. As well, this year we are handing out the new Pinnacle Award, honoring a member of our lacrosse community for outstanding contribution and achievement in Titans lacrosse.

That all said, when I reflect on the last four years, what I personally am most proud of is the culture that we have created – a culture of family. We care for each other and our community, we support each other, there is a sense of Titans pride, a sense of belonging. The Board prides ourselves on open communication and transparency and making each of our members feel important, valued and respected. That is a family.

It is this culture of family that will continue to make Titans the strongest club in the North – I leave here tonight confident that you, our Titans family, are in good hands.

Yours in lacrosse,



Karen Wellner