

## ONTARIO LACROSSE MAGAZINE

Ontario Lacrosse Magazine is the primary source of information for Ontario lacrosse players, parents, coaches and officials. Published quarterly (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall), Ontario Lacrosse Magazine is mailed directly to more than 45,000 members of the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA). Our readers turn to the magazine for the latest lacrosse news, products, trends, insights and expert opinion. All editorial submissions and article queries should be sent to Ron MacSpadyen, editor: ron@ontariolacrosse.com. The views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the Ontario Lacrosse Association.

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Canadian Publications Mail Agreement #41833525

**Return Undeliverable  
Canadian Addresses to:**  
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3 Concorde Gate, Suite 306,  
Toronto, Ontario, M3C 3N7.

Printed in Canada

[www.ontariolacrosse.com](http://www.ontariolacrosse.com)

## CLA ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF NATIONAL TEAM DIRECTOR — WOMEN'S FIELD

Gait, a name synonymous with lacrosse, more specifically with Canadian lacrosse, is making its way back to the Team Canada Lacrosse family. The Canadian Lacrosse Association (CLA) announces today the appointment of Gary Gait as the new National Team Director for Women's Field.

Gait a native of British Columbia, is the latest addition to the CLA's national team strategy that is taking shape in an effort to ensure long term international success and to maintain quality national programming for developing players. Gait joins Johnny Mouradian, the CLA National Team Director for Box Lacrosse and David Huntley, the CLA National Team Director for Men's Field Lacrosse. Each National Team Director oversees the national team program staff, guides the player identification and selection process, monitors team members and oversees the planning for their respective discipline at the national team level in conjunction with the National Team Chair, Dean French, and CLA VP of International Competition, Stewart Begg.

Many familiar with Canadian lacrosse are well aware of the experience, passion and knowledge of lacrosse Gait is bringing with him to this role. "Gary knows lacrosse; he has experience as both a player and coach at all levels - he has a pulse on what is going on in our game." commented Stewart Begg, CLA VP of International Competition. "Sure we all know him from his playing days on the field, but he's not new to the women's game - he's actively on the sidelines, he's aware of what's going on. Gary is a great fit with the National Team program - I look forward to working with him and seeing just where we can take the women's field program. He carries a tremendous amount of respect from and for the women's game."

Canadian born and bred, Gait started his lacrosse career in his BC hometown of Victoria in the minor league system. After a successful playing career, including being a 4-time ('90, '94, '98, '06) national team player, Gait took to the sidelines in another capacity, taking on both management and coaching positions. He is not new to Team Canada Lacrosse management either, having held the role of head coach for the 2007 gold medal winning Men's Indoor team and the 2003 and 2008 U-19 Men's Field silver medalist teams.

"I am very excited to take the next step with the CLA and help the Canadian women's



lacrosse program compete at the highest level." said Gait upon his acceptance of the role.

Gait's accolades is a large list, his lustrous career expands beyond his playing years; as current head coach for Syracuse University's women's field team, Gait took his team to the NCAA Div I final four this year, a trip he's led the team to three other years since his start in 2007. He has been named the 'Big East Women's Lacrosse Coach of the Year' twice (2011 & 2012) and named the 'NCAA Women's Lacrosse North Region Coach of the Year' in 2008 and 2012.

Dean French, National Team Chair for the CLA expressed how Gait's involvement at the National Team level will pay dividends with women's field lacrosse, and lacrosse in general, across Canada. "Gary was a great asset to the national team program both as a player and coach. Stepping into this role, Gary recognizes that a successful national program will help us to continue growing women's lacrosse across Canada. I am really looking forward to working with him and seeing where the program can go."

His first task in the role will be working with the National Team Chair and VP of International Competition to name the 2015 U-19 Women's Field head coach, who will lead the team towards a world title in Edinburgh, Scotland July 23-August 1, 2015.

Gait will be stepping into the role following a long and successful tenure from the previous National Team Director for Women's Field. The CLA wishes to express its sincere gratitude to long-time Director, Joanne Stanga, for her years of dedication and commitment to the Team Canada women's field program.



## FESTIVAL RETURNS WITH NEW LOOK AND NEW LOGO

The eleventh annual Ontario Lacrosse Festival returns to Durham Region August 1st-10th. Sporting a new logo and new series of national championships, the fun kicks off Friday, August 1st with the Harrow/OLA Pee Wee and Gait/OLA Bantam Provincial Championships (see page 18).

New to the Festival this year are national championships for the Bantam, Midget and Junior divisions of female players. Mark the evening of Saturday, August 9th on your calendar as the Festival hosts double-header, national championship gold medal games at Iroquois Park Sports Centre in Whitby. One ticket gets access to both the Midget and Junior championships beginning at 6:30 PM.

For the eleventh consecutive year, Rogers TV will broadcast the national championship games, featuring the familiar broadcast team of Gary Mark (play-by-play) and Rob Dymont (commentary and analysis) calling the action.

Along with the new nationals competition, the Festival introduced an up-dated revision of the Festival logo, originally designed in 2004 by Glenn Ryan of PIX Design Group.

"Having helped launch the concept of the Festival as an event, the new revision places emphasis back on the name of the sport" said Festival Marketing Director Ron MacSpadyen.

This year the Festival welcomes approximately 565 teams, 10,865 players and coaches competing for thirty-four national and provincial titles. Ten-day attendance estimates are near 55,000 including all participants and fans.

Festival Presenting Sponsors are Brine, Gait Lacrosse, Harrow Sports, STX, Under Armour and Warrior.

## OLA PARTNERS WITH PLAY SAFE INITIATIVE

In partnership with the Play Safe Initiative, the OLA is increasing education and awareness of injury prevention in sport and working to better understand the role injury plays in lacrosse. Play Safe is a collaborative of organizations with a common interest in reducing injury in sport and recreation. Led by Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and Lakehead University, the Play Safe Network includes more than 30 organizations, including the OLA, leading the way in reducing injury in their activities.

Injury is not a normal outcome of the lacrosse experience but sometimes people assume "it is just part of the game". Along with other sports, the OLA is looking to dispel this myth and develop strategies that reduce the likelihood and severity of injuries in lacrosse including: education, resource development and injury tracking. Better injury data can help identify when, where and why injuries are occurring in lacrosse activities. With better data comes better safety decisions.

It might surprise you to learn that sport injury in Canada is not well tracked. Media reports of injuries on the rise or decline are based on data collected by hospitals and that data was never intended to drive prevention research or policy change. The purpose of hos-

pital data is really only to assist with the clinical care of the injured or ill patient. That researchers have been relying on this data to support their hypotheses in sport is because there is nothing else available for them to use.

Play Safe aims to change this reality by deploying a robust web-enabled injury surveillance tool – the Play Safe Injury Tracker – to help organizations track their injuries. This is the real data that can help organizations, like the OLA, stay informed of injury trends, develop strategies and evaluate the impact of prevention programs and policies. This August, at the Ontario Lacrosse Festival, trainers and parents will have the opportunity to test the Play Safe Injury Tracker and help the OLA test this new method of injury surveillance to inform future prevention strategies.

"Injury prevention is a team effort and it takes good partnerships to effect change in sport" says Joanne Banfield, Manager Trauma Injury Prevention at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, "and while we wish every participant a safe and healthy experience in sport, we know that injuries can happen in the course of contact sports. Should an injury occur we will want to capture the information in a way that will help shine a light on future prevention strategies."



Sooner or later, all sports come to understand how unique the lacrosse stick is. When 14 year-old **Annaleise Carr** made history recently as the youngest person to conquer the fierce winds and metre-high rolling waves of Lake Ontario, look what technology assisted the 27-hour swim... **Photo: Tim Alameciak/GetStock.com**



### MISSISSAUGA TOMAHAWKS ON THE MOVE

The Mississauga Tomahawks of the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) Junior "A" League will have a new home next summer. The Tomahawks of the OLA Junior "A" League will relocate to Mimico beginning in the 2015 season.

The franchise amalgamation of the Mississauga Junior "A" and Mimico Junior "B" entries will be operated by a joint management board from the existing clubs. Mississauga will continue to operate a team in the OLA Junior "B" League and be affiliated with the Junior "A" club, while the current Mimico Junior "B" team will not be operating after this season.

The changes were recently approved by the OLA Junior "A" Board of Governors and the OLA Board of Directors.

"We feel this transfer is an excellent move to strengthen the overall OLA Junior "A" league" said OLA Junior "A" Commissioner Dean McLeod.

"The new club will have support from a Mimico system currently competing in "A" lacrosse at the minor level, which in turn, can only serve to produce a more viable franchise long-term for the community and the league".

The OLA Junior "A" League is the most elite amateur box lacrosse organization of Junior-aged players (17-21 years) in the world. Established in 1937, the league is composed of eleven franchises and celebrates its 77th season in 2014.

The OLA is the governing body for the sport of lacrosse in Ontario. The organization was established in 1897 with the mission to govern, foster, develop and perpetuate the sport through the development of technical programs, supervision of competitions and hosting provincial championship events.



Guelph goalie **Blake Milne** turns away some late Burlington pressure during the Midget "A" final of the McCauley Memorial Tournament in Brampton. The Guelph Regals captured back-to-back Midget "A" tournament championships in Brampton, 3-2 in overtime versus the Chiefs, and at the Orangeville Barry Burman Shootout, 4-3 over Burlington. Regals held the top spot in Midget "A" OLA MyLax Rankings after Week 5.

### HIGHWAY OF HEROES CHALLENGE CUP

Round One of the Highway of Heroes went to the Whitby Warriors.

Whitby defeated the Oakville Minor Lacrosse Association (OMLA) 10 wins to seven at Toronto Rock Athletic Centre in the first edition of the Highway of Heroes Challenge Cup, an all-day box lacrosse tournament that pitted all of the two rival associations' rep teams against each other.

The event, created by Whitby Minor Lacrosse Association vice-president of rep Craig Wright and former OMLA vice-president of rep Pat Walko, is held in tribute to fallen Canadian soldiers. The Highway of Heroes is a stretch of Highway 401 between Toronto and Trenton that is dedicated to Canadian soldiers fallen in the line of duty.

"The idea came because we take the heroes portion of the highway for part of the trip," said OMLA President Michael Hackl. "So we thought, let's call it that and see if we can do something good for veterans."

Proceeds from the tournament went to Wounded Warriors Canada, a non-profit organization that assists Canadian Forces members who have been wounded or injured during service. Representatives from Wounded Warriors Canada, the Royal Canadian Legion Colour Guard and players from the National Lacrosse League attended the inaugural challenge.

"The day was a great litmus test for the Oakville teams as Whitby is traditionally the



strongest club to beat in each age division across the province," said Darlah Cordingley, the OMLA's director of communications and public relations.

"We look forward to the Highway of Heroes tradition continuing for years to come. The overall sportsmanship that was displayed by both organizations left an incredible feeling of camaraderie. The best part was two rival clubs worked together by contributing to Wounded Warriors Canada." Wright says the event will alternate cities each year, moving to Whitby for the 2015 edition.

"Everyone took what the game was supposed to be and just grew upon it," said Wright. "They were sitting there saying it was really neat and they were proud to be a part of it. It just seemed like the right fit to have Wounded Warriors involved."

*Franki Ikeman, courtesy of the Oakville Beaver*