

2003 Tier I Commissioner, Year End Report

First I would like to thank all those involved on the Executive and on the teams that supported me in my Role as Commissioner this year. It was gratifying to receive the respect and support by team management as I performed the sometimes-unpopular task of levying suspensions and fines in accordance with the league bylaws. In that I assumed the Commissioner role part way through the year most of my comments will be focused on the time I spent in this role.

2003 has been one of the most significant in the history of the RMLL, we have grown to such a size that no longer was it feasible to meet as a complete Board of Governors and many of the decisions have had to be made by those on the executive, while I believe this is the best approach we have lost some connectivity with the teams and that I believe is another challenge for the league in 2004. Before I get too far into this report I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Teams that rose to the top of each division of our league and claimed the titles as RMLL Provincial Champions and went on to represent our league at a National Level.

In the Senior division the Outlaws again captured the Provincial Crown, kudos to them for the showing they made at the Presidents cup, although they were not successful in defending the Cup they did represent Alberta well in what I'm told was against very stiff competition.

In the Junior "A" Division congratulations to the Miners for their achievement not only at the provincial level but also at the Minto Cup. To accomplish what the Miners did in the first year of a Junior "A" program is commendable, I understand their accomplishments were confirmed when after the final game that they played in, one of the Team members for the opposing bench came over to the Miners bench and congratulated them for the competitive level that they brought to the championship, it was meant and came a real complement to the team. It sounded like the competitiveness of the Alberta contingent came as a big surprise to those teams with quite a history at that level. AJ congratulation for living up to you promise.

In the Junior "B" division congratulations not only to the Warriors for taking the RMLL Provincials title but also to the Jr. Mountaineers for the neck and neck competition that they provided. It is really great to see that level of competition provincially, this is the division that I believe we have to focus on in the future, we really have to set this up as an independent division for graduating Midget players to aspire to as they move thru the Tier II division on their way to Junior "A", I'm convinced that the expansion of this league will entice athletes to stay in the game and allow us to really seriously challenge for the Founders cup in the next two to three years.

One of the anomalies this year was our link to the west, hats off to the teams that bit the financial bullet and support the RMLL in its connection to Prince George, the Pose has to be congratulated for the strength they added to the competition in Alberta and as you all of course know this paid off in spades for them. They have to be commended for their success in the BC Junior "B" Provincial Championship and with the authority they went to the Founders Cup. .

I would like to thank all those who took the lead roles in support of the RMLL All-star Game, I believe this event really helps bring the members of our league together in a positive atmosphere, and that it is important for the league to maintain this event and continue to look for ways to use this opportunity for the betterment of lacrosse in Alberta; it may be helpful to use it as a showcase for our league by linking it to one of the Alberta Minor Lacrosse major events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the bigger issues that I had to deal with as commissioner this year was the education aspect of fines and suspensions. In future, I suggest that each Commissioner have all Team Managers sign off on a document that commits to the communication of the following "I Manager of the _____ lacrosse team hereby confirm that I have personally held a discussion with all team members outlining the details contained in League Regulation 9 & 10, "Player/Team Suspensions and Fines", pointing out the specific penalties (fines and suspensions), in accordance to these regulations, are automatic and with no option to appeal,".

The success of the inclusion of the Pose from Prince George in our League I believe was a positive experience, with this success I believe the next step, if it is feasible structurally from the BC perspective, for the betterment of Lacrosse in Western Canada would be a situation where we would see the Pose move to the Junior "A" division; especially if we go to the Senior-Jr. "A"/ Junior "B" split in the RMLL, it should be a best fit for all concerned for them compete in the Senior-Jr. "A" division

One of the other things that I believe needs to happen is for the Disciplinary Committee Chair to have a link to one specific executive member, this may help alleviate a current outstanding issue that was passed on to the disciplinary committee that is without resolution "the clip board incident" which requires final assessment and closure. Other than this there is no fines or suspensions to carry over to the 2004 season.

All in all with the growth that we experienced in Alberta in 2003 I believe there were many positive outcomes for our sport, we all know that with the graduating Midgets coming up thru the ranks in Alberta this is just the start of a lot more to come we all need take a serious look at everything that worked well and build on those successes while at the same time analyze all those areas where there were more challenges than successes and brainstorm of the best path to pursue those challenges. Thanks again for all those who provided the support, to not only myself but the whole executive to make 2003 the success it was.

Respectively submitted:

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