

2016 RMLL Sr. B Season Report
Shauna Sterparn
Sr. B Commissioner

The St. Albert Miners were hosts for the 2016 Presidents' Cup, allowing for two RMLL/ALA teams to be entered. Traditionally, a hosting year is extremely competitive, with teams posturing to put the best team together to secure a spot at nationals. The Sr. B division, with 6 teams, faced some challenges in the 2016 season, starting in the pre-season.

In the off-season, a team was in the precarious position of not being allowed to play in 2016 due to arrears. With truly admirable effort by the players and management, they were able to amend that position in time for the Jr. draft in February and we confirmed 6 teams in the division for 2016.

The north draft saw 33 players drafted from Jr A (9), Jr TI (12) and Jr TII (9). The south draft saw 31 players drafted from Jr A (14), Jr TI (12) and Jr TII (1).

Unfortunately, an unprecedented trade at the south draft, by exchanging several core/management players for draft positions, proved to be unraveling for one team. I was assured, at the time, that the team would be secure and the plan was to rebuild. From February until the end of April, I did not hear otherwise. In late April, with one week until the opening of the season, the division was informed that the team would not be participating in the 2016 season. The other teams quickly rallied to aid the team and some non-rostered players from the other 2 teams in the area were sent over (released) to provide assistance. The north teams were unable to provide too much assistance, but offered up protected Sr C players as affiliates when the team came to the north. All teams assisted by having their trainers provide double duty for the team all season. New management joined the team, as well. Unfortunately, all of the collective efforts didn't prove to be too beneficial, due to the late start to getting the team organized in time to start the season. Players were lost to other commitments by then and the team struggled throughout the entire season. The 2017 season will be a fresh start and I'm confident that it will turn around for them.

There are many Sr B players in the north and the south areas and there are more than enough eligible players to fill 3 teams in each area. It would be very detrimental to our sport to lose the roster spots of any Sr. B team. Collectively, we need to work hard to ensure the viability of all of the teams. This is not the first time that a Sr B team has struggled in rebuilding and it will not be the last. All teams need to strongly encourage the younger players to become involved in the day to day and season duties. Many hands means light work for all involved and there is less burnout. The load is heavy if there are only 1 or 2 people involved. Significant others and parents are also needed to build a strong volunteer base. This is crucial to the success of the teams.

After opening the season with a tied score against the Rockyview Knights, the St. Albert Miners posted a near perfect undefeated record of 20 wins and 1 tie to take the Provincial title. They defeated the Edmonton Warriors in the RMLL playoffs. The Calgary Sr. Mountaineers, finishing 3rd in the regular season, defeated the 2nd place Rockyview Knights in the RMLL playoffs and went on to face the Miners in the ALA Provincials. The Miners and the Mounties were the representatives at the 2016 Presidents' Cup.