

President's Speech for AGM May 2009

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you very much for coming to the AGM this evening.

Firstly, I thought it might be helpful to just outline my role. As I am not responsible for any one specific aspect of Lacrosse Scotland I felt it might be useful to tell you what I do.

The President is expected to uphold and actively promote the ethos of Lacrosse Scotland and be prepared to play a leading role in fostering good relationships with other lacrosse associations, including the Federation of International Lacrosse - the new International Governing Body of both men and women's Lacrosse which was formed in Finland last August. I was fortunate to attend that meeting in Finland, together with Craig Brown and Rob Powell and it was interesting to see just how many countries are now involved in lacrosse. The representatives from each country were asked to sign a document indicating their presence on this historic occasion. For the players the European Championships, held in Lahti, Finland were a great success for both the men and the women.

The President is also required to maintain Scotland's influence and presence on the international stage. Not only have I attended meetings in Finland in the past year but I have also met this spring informally with the Director and administrators at US lacrosse in Baltimore and the English President in Liverpool. I shall be going to Prague in June for the entire Women's World Cup. I hope to meet with many representatives from the other participating countries, members of the outgoing IFWLA Executive and with members of the FIL Board. I feel that it is well worth looking at what is going on in other Countries. Bertrand's visit, earlier in the year, to New Zealand enabled him to bring back some excellent ideas, which he is now putting into place here.

The Lacrosse Scotland President is also required to achieve international support for the development of lacrosse within our home country. I am sure many of you wonder what the FIL are going to do for our own organisation. I am very pleased to tell you that they have just donated 24 men's sticks for Lacrosse Scotland.

I should like to thank all the members of the LS Board who have worked conscientiously this season on your behalf. They and all umpires, coaches, managers, physios. and tournament organisers have given generously of their time in order to ensure games, tournaments, and internationals have taken place. Schools have kindly allowed the use of their facilities. We are most grateful to all who have supported Lacrosse Scotland in so many ways this season. It is particularly good to see old timers such as June Caithness and Penny Heidleberg, formerly Penny MacLeod coming to the rescue when help is required. It sometimes seems that a small core of our membership appear to organise and run everything and we do appreciate all that you do to keep the organisation up and running.

Child Protection has been an important responsibility for the Board in the last eighteen months and about a year ago I agreed to act as the Child Protection Officer for Lacrosse Scotland. I am pleased to report that, during the year, over 30 members of Lacrosse Scotland have successfully been through the Disclosure Scotland enhanced check.

If anyone has any real interest in Anti Doping, a massive document has come in from the FIL from WADA – the World Anti Doping Agency. I circulated this to all

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Lacrosse Scotland Board members and on behalf of our organisation I have accepted their recommendation, but if anyone would like to see the document I am willing to send you a copy – just let me know.

At the last AGM the Lacrosse Scotland Board agreed to undertake a survey on Eligibility, outstanding from the year 2006. I am most grateful to all those who completed the survey. On the whole most people who returned forms were fairly happy with the current situation. However, 66% of those who returned a form did indicate that they would like the eligibility criteria to include having a Scottish grandparent. The Board discussed this but decided, it was important firstly to advertise *Clause F* more widely. This clause enables those who do not fit the eligibility criteria, but would like to play for Scotland, to apply in writing for their specific case to be considered. This season three people applied for consideration. One application was agreed and two rejected. The FIL will be producing new eligibility criteria for World Championships in 2010.

Most of you will now be aware of the new Lacrosse Scotland logo, which has been designed recently. I am most grateful to Julia Taylor for overseeing this important development. It took a huge amount of time and the circulating of numerous e mails to achieve this. She has been the driving force behind a number of new and exciting initiatives.

Julia also edited an excellent newsletter for the LS membership, which was placed on the website. The idea of a newsletter came about as a result of a need to inform the membership of what is going on. Many people comment that communication is poor and I quite agree, but is not just a problem with information cascading down but also information being sent “up. If the LS Board members do not know what is going on they cannot pass on the information. However, please be aware that if you are not a member of Lacrosse Scotland you will probably not receive information! I was admonished by someone in the summer about being left out of the Eligibility Survey but, as the person in question was not a member of Lacrosse Scotland, it was not exactly surprising!

We spend most of our time looking ahead but I would like to try and locate the SLLA archive. I know that Pat Reid and Jenifer Davidson have some material but the whereabouts of the very early archive is unknown. Jenifer only has material from about 1975 and Pat Reid told me that the information she has dates from about the 1960s. Liz Bellamy has all the *News and Views* magazines from 1962 and at St Leonards we have a dissertation, done in 1979, about the History of the SLLA by Anne Russell, a former Scottish GK. So far that is all I can account for. I have absolutely no wish to keep these things myself but I do think that we should know where they are presently held. Our heritage is valuable and should be preserved. We probably should deposit the SLLA archive with Edinburgh University or the Records Office so that it can be looked after correctly and accessed easily. Scotland won the very first women's lacrosse International ever against Wales in 1913 (11-2.) We were the second Association to be formed in 1920. Wales and Ireland set up their Associations in 1930 and the USA followed in 1931 – our archive is valuable. Any information gratefully received.

We were sorry that Jen Cairns left Lacrosse Scotland before Christmas and were most grateful to Caroline McCosh for taking on some of her work at very short notice. We appointed Andrew McIntosh in the New Year as the Development Officer for

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Lacrosse Scotland and he has done sterling work. Andrew's background is in American Football and his experience working with another minority sport is proving invaluable. Development is now in his hands, under the direction of Julia Taylor, the Development Chair.

With the exception of the Development Officer, Lacrosse Scotland has to rely totally on volunteers to undertake every aspect of the work of Lacrosse Scotland - unlike US lacrosse who have 43 paid employees, and even England apparently have 12 administrators. As a result, we are not easily able to undertake the work other organisations pay people to do. One example of this is developing a new coaching award. A coaching scheme has been developed for England, which they are more than happy to share with Wales and Scotland and it would seem sensible to be part of the same scheme. Sports Scotland encourages this and other sports in Scotland follow this pathway.

Julia Taylor has very kindly hosted many Lacrosse Scotland meetings in her office and at her home and this has enabled board members, not based in Edinburgh, to sometimes take part in a meeting via a conference call. I am also most grateful to her for making it possible for Lacrosse Scotland members to use conference call facilities. Another area of concern is encouraging people to take up umpiring. There is a dearth of umpires and I don't think we should be surprised. We do need to encourage our younger umpires not criticise them all the time.

We are all delighted that Lorna Powell will be attending the Women's World Cup as a Technical Delegate. Very well done Lorna.

Is there a member of Lacrosse Scotland who is knowledgeable about insurance? We do need to find someone who has some experience of insurance to ensure that LS members are being adequately protected. It is important to find someone to take charge of this. The responsibility does not require attendance at meetings and it is not a LS Board position.

Please let me know if you feel you can help. At the moment we are not serving the LS membership as well as we should on this issue.

We do have some vacancies on the Board and I do hope some of you will consider stepping up to take on these roles. We cannot run an organisation without a Secretary. We thank Annabel very much for the work she has done for us and accept that her work commitments no longer allow her to undertake the LS work she has been doing. Lorna has done a fantastic job for Lacrosse Scotland but has decided to step down as a LS Board member. Thank you Lorna.

Our good wishes go to the Women Squad as they prepare and take part in the World Cup in June. Our thanks go to the coaching team for all the work they have put in to prepare the players. Good Luck.

Fiona Reid has been made a new Honorary Vice President.

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The Barratt Trophy is presented annually to the most improved Scottish female player as decided by the coaches at each level – Junior Scotland, U19, U21 and Senior.

Nominations

Emily Zaborski, U19 Scotland Squad
Emily Clixby, U21 Scotland Squad
Emily Knight, Senior Scotland Squad
Jemima Garthwaite, Senior Scotland Squad

The winner for season 2008-2009 is: **Emily Zaborski, U19**

Emily Zaborski has played with the U19's since the World Cup in 2007. This season she has improved tenfold - her attacking knowledge is that of a senior player and she is clearly the most dynamic and threatening home on the pitch.

She has lead the team by example - her enthusiasm and dedication to the task at hand has raised the bar for the team; I will be putting her forward to train with the seniors next season (I am sure you will all be impressed!).

She is the leading scorer for the team- she has worked immensely hard to improve her crease rolls and her fakes and left-handed shots. The diligence with which she approaches identifying and improving weaknesses in her game and overall play is admirable and a new mature approach to her lacrosse. The difference in her play from weekend to weekend was instantly recognisable.

Jane Claydon - President, Lacrosse Scotland - 20 May 2009