

## President's Report from Jane Claydon 2010



Thank you very much for coming to the AGM this evening. It is very kind of Fettes College to allow us to hold our meeting here.

My two years as President have passed very quickly. One of my responsibilities is to try and promote Lacrosse Scotland within the international lacrosse community. I was delighted to be able to go to Prague to the Women's World Cup in July last year. In addition to watching many matches I attended various formal and informal meetings with representatives of other participating countries. I also enjoyed attending the Celtic Cup, held here at Fettes last August. It was a very well run event and a number of people mentioned to me that the venue the organisation was excellent as was the venue.

In January I attended the US Lacrosse Convention in Baltimore. I know one or two members of Lacrosse Scotland have been to this event in the past. It is a quite an amazing affair. Perhaps the existence of two or three indoor fields, all under one roof, impressed me most, together with the thousands of people who had come together to attend the many different coaching and referring clinics that were being run. I went to help John Kenny, the Men's Coach run the Lacrosse Scotland stand. The men's T-shirts were easier to sell than the women's shirt. At least I was able to tell one American Citizen where Scotland was. He seemed to have only a very vague idea. I also told one guy, when he asked whether Scotland would be starting a women's programme soon, that essentially it began in 1890. He soon moved on!

At home things have been more difficult – I suppose much of my term as President has been taken up by what I might call fire fighting. I inherited one or two problems, which have essentially slowed down Lacrosse Scotland's progress. The Board have had to spend hours trying to sort out these difficulties.

We all need to be aware that it is now very rare for a National Governing Body to rely on volunteers. Most have at least one or more paid employees running an office and the day to day administration. The English Lacrosse Association has at least 12 paid employees and a grant, apparently, of 2.2 million. Last year I told you US Lacrosse had 43 employees – it is now up to 62 employees and their income is huge.

We are meant to be on a level playing field with all the other lacrosse National Governing Bodies but this is now impossible. Lacrosse Scotland, at present, receives £11,000 pa from **sportscotland**. Apparently we are the only NGB in Scotland which does not have a paid administrator. NGB are expected to have allsorts of policies in place, but with a very small team of volunteers it is inevitable that we cannot keep up with all the regulations that are now expected. Board members are all volunteers and we cannot expect them to always be available to do lacrosse work. Jobs, families have to come first.

Last summer **sportscotland** generously offered help Lacrosse Scotland put together a 5 year strategic plan. Julia Taylor and I were put in touch, with Bruce Crawford by Fiona Houston. He offered to help us with our plan and **sportscotland** agreed to pay him on as a consultant for Lacrosse Scotland. We had hoped to get the plan in place before Christmas but there were unfortunately delays – not of our doing.

I am most grateful to Rebecca for taking on the Chair of this Committee in December. It has not been easy. We had high hopes of involving far more people in our discussions but latterly time restraints made this impossible.

As a result of the work with Bruce Crawford and **sportscotland** the Lacrosse Scotland Strategic Plan is now in place. It required a great deal of time by a very small group of people to achieve this. The Lacrosse Scotland Board has agreed it in principle. I have asked Rebecca to do a presentation about the Strategic Plan later in the meeting.

What is envisaged will make Lacrosse Scotland look and feel different but **sportscotland** have clearly indicated to the Board that unless we change, modernise and become more professional we cannot expect to be supported by them in future. Basically Lacrosse Scotland has reached crunch time. If we attempt to follow the new plan that has been put in place and agreed by the Board then there is a chance that we will get more funding and be able to continue as a NGB. If we do not, I cannot see that Lacrosse Scotland can continue. We have to change dramatically or cease to exist. It is as simple as that. I know many people want Lacrosse Scotland to comfortably jog along as it always has done but that is no longer an option.

Scotland has to have a NGB affiliated to the Federation of International Lacrosse if participation in World Cups is to continue. If Lacrosse Scotland were forced to disband there would be no more opportunity for teams to compete in World Cups at any level. You cannot represent your country if there is no NGB.

I should like to congratulate the Women's World Cup squad who came 8<sup>th</sup> in the World Cup in June last year. We extend our best wishes to the Men's Squad as they play in their Championship in Manchester this coming July. Rob Powell and I will be representing Lacrosse Scotland and attending the Federation of International Lacrosse General Assembly in July in Manchester and also attending the European Lacrosse Association's AGM.

I should also like to thank Emily Knight, Jenifer Davidson, Lorna Powell and Andy and Jenny Pearson for the work they did to organise and run the Senior Home Internationals. Lorna resigned from her role as the Women's Umpiring Chair at the AGM last year but no one has come forward to take over from her. I am most grateful to Lorna for taking on the organisation of the umpires for the Women's Home Internationals in April. Without Lorna, Andy and Jenny Pearson, Emily Salvesen and Fiona Reid and their helpers we could not have hosted the event, which would have been extremely embarrassing. In the end the event was a huge success and run over the weekend by about eight volunteers. (The home baking, organised by Jenifer Davidson, also made a huge contribution to the success of the event.)

The established schools have had a busy season and I am most grateful to Emily Bryson for her excellent work on behalf of the schools who play field lacrosse. Fettes College has been most generous in allowing Lacrosse Scotland to use their pitches and facilities.

Members of the Board have worked hard this year to try and sort out a number of complicated problems. I know many of you wonder what we do – it is not all about lacrosse any more. The Men and Women's Performance Chairs run the national programmes on a day to day basis. My role seems to be mostly about fielding e mails of complaint and trying to resolve difficulties.

Andy Pearson has very kindly said he will post all the Board reports on the website. It will then be possible for members to read what has been recorded. I feel it is very tedious and time consuming for reports to be read out at AGMs. This way members can read the reports they are interested in at their leisure.

It is perhaps invidious to pick out one member of the Board. However I would particularly like to thank Rebecca for the work she has done this year. This is by no means a complete list of what she has done:

- League Secretary and the Development Chair
- on top of this she took on sorting out the insurance for LS members as no one else came forward, despite several pleas to the membership for help.
- spent hours researching the membership fee structure of other NGBs in an attempt to modernise and bring our membership fee structure in line with other sports.
- set up the Fife Lacrosse Association
- ran the Pop Lacrosse events
- flagged up that the official number of people playing lacrosse is many many more than we actually have registered and our funding from **sportscotland** is reflected in the number of people who play.
- Chair of the Strategic Plan Working Party.

As a result of her work I would like to present Rebecca with a new award **“The President's Award for Volunteer of the Year”**.

As Rebecca has been responsible for the League this season she is now going to talk about the past season.