

MARCH 2024



Rams Newsletter

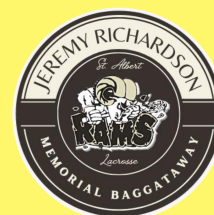
HIGHLIGHTING ALL THINGS RAMS LACROSSE



The 2024 Box Lacrosse Season is here!!

"A" Level tryouts are complete and Parity evaluations are set to begin. Excitement for the 2024 season is starting to build.

With the 2024 season right around the corner and the kids taking to the floor in the coming days, the March edition of the Rams interactive newsletter will be the one stop shop for all information needed to be fully prepared to hit the floor running. We'll educate you on sticks and equipment, the evaluation process, and what you may need if you are interested in helping out a team in anyway this season.



Registration
Opens March 15

Click to get the latest info on the JRMB.



Get your Gear for 2023

The Rams Apparel Shop is open 24/7 to get you geared up for the 2023 season!



Registration is open for the 2024 season

Follow the link to sign up for the 2024 season!

LAX FACTS

The first **Women's Lacrosse game** was played May 17th 1890 at a St.Leonards School in Perth, Scotland

SHARE WITH US

Have a team, player, coach or event you would like recognized? Email it to marketing@ramslacrosse.ca and you could see it in the next newsletter!

We want to highlight our members, on and off the floor!

FOLLOW THE RAMS

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2024 North Zone "A" Teams Announced

Congratulations to all the players that have been selected to represent the North Zone at the "A" Level.

After a furious four sessions, players left everything they had on the floor by the time the final whistle went on the "A" division Tryouts! The Rams are extremely proud of every player that stepped on the floor with aspirations of playing for the North. Representing the North in 2024 will be:

U13 - Head Coach - Buck Mar

Gavin Hanky	Cohen Courchesne
Calder Sonnichsen	Van McKenzie
Colton Clark	Austin Klita
Riley Reich	Damien Cardinal
Lincoln Boucher	Sawyer Bieganek
Dexter Bostrom	Nate Rathwell
Harrison McRitchie	Eli Hromota
Seely Young	Callum Cunningham
Dylan Currie	Ty Krueger
Declan Hope	Nathen McCauley

U15 - Head Coach - Carter McKinley

Blaine Nelson	Cartyr Charlet
Cohen Tomaszuk	Owen Muir
David LaRose	Nicholas Ouellet
Griffin Way	Mason Tymkow
Jack Champagne	Cayden Kapy
Chase Cronin	Bennet Sedo
Hudson Currie	Auley Hilkewich
Mason Hodge	Braiden Carter

U17 - Head Coach - Bobby Harris

Charlie Graham
 Miller Beck
 Nolan Beis
 Riley Carter
 Calum Chau
 Rylan Connors
 Lucas Evans
 Leland Harris
 Bryder Ibsen
 Noah Keller
 Eric Rudneski



Sam Hilkewich
 Liam James
 Kai Levesque
 Kalen Stauffer



RAMS WOMEN'S DIVISIONS – REFER A FRIEND

We are still learning what the St. Albert Rams Women's divisions will look like for 2024. But the sad fact is that since returning from COVID our female registration has almost completely disappeared. Not only for our club, but across the GELC as a whole. If we don't have enough women to fill a team in their respective division, they'll have the option to play co-ed in the Male division, or join the pool of players from around the GELC. The Rams have introduced a Refer a Friend promotion for our female players entering the 2024 season. If you have a friend sign up you'll receive a \$50 credit or refund in your 2024 registration. Contact Brooke or Heather for more information.

SEEKING LACROSSE AMBASSADORS

HELP GROW WOMEN'S LACROSSE IN ST. ALBERT

PROMOTION

Until May 15, 2024: If you refer a female lacrosse player & they register with Ram's Lacrosse you will earn a \$50 credit or \$50 refund for the 2024 season.

Email: womenscoordinator@ramslacrosse.ca to receive your promo code. Visit <http://www.ramslacrosse.ca/> for more information

Lacrosse Sticks 101

Are Lacrosse Sticks the most customizable piece of sports equipment on the market today?

Given the **extremely long history** of our sport, we are not that far removed from the days when a lacrosse stick was purely a master craftsman's creation. An artisan's vision of pride, of culture and of individualism. Created as a weapon, not for harm, but for competition. Though the competition was created out of battle, it became sport. It became culture, it became leisure, it became passion, and as most things do, has come full circle and is now again competition, now being performed at the highest levels.

This past fall, that recency really set in for me, when visiting with my cousin Todd. Todd grew up playing Lacrosse on the west coast in the 70's and 80's so we brought some sticks for my U17 age Son to throw a ball around with him. This would turn out to be the first time Todd would pick up a modern stick consisting of a composite shaft, a plastic head and synthetic mesh. Having to leave the game following a **Minto Cup victory in 1988**, playing along side Paul and Gary Gait (*who shortly thereafter, began to innovate stick construction into what we know today*), he only knew Lacrosse as played with a traditional wooden stick. That's when it struck me. That I'm actually becoming old (though Todd is quite a few years older than me), or that we are still young in this version of Lacrosse as we now know it.

Much as it was during the course of Lacrosse history, the stick is not just a piece of equipment used to play the game, but it has become a source of self expression. A tool designed to create personal advantage, and a symbol of identity and inclusivity. A modern stick can be created with endless possibilities, not all of which would ever be captured in a single article, but maybe we can shed some light on the basics so you have a small idea of what to look for and what to ask when shopping for a stick for your young lacrosse player.

Without getting into the personalization, ascetics, modification, and the expression a stick can possess, here are the basics when looking for a stick for your young Lacrosse player.

HEAD TYPES



ATTACK - Tightly pitched longer up the throat with an exaggerated flare at the scoop. Designed to create a tight channel for more accurate shooting and better ball retention. Generally lighter weight.



DEFENSE - Wider at the throat with a short pinch before flaring for the scoop. Made out of stiffer, heavier plastic. Designed to knock down passes and withstand delivering stick checks and slashes.

SIDE WALLS



Sidewalls vary from stick to stick. The main items to focus on with the sidewall is the offset and the sidewall holes. The offset will change the moment to ball is released from the pocket. The most common offset is down below the centerline of the shaft.

The sidewall holes are what you use to create the pocket. The more holes available, the more customizable the pocket can be. Certain sidewalls are designed to create a specific pocket.

POCKETS

LOW POCKET



The ball naturally sits lower in the head. Creates more feel of the ball in the stick and a smoother, slower release but has less ball retention. Generally low whip and good for new and defensive players.

MID POCKET



The Ball Naturally sits in the middle of the head. Reduces the feel of the ball in the stick, but quickens the release point of the swing. Creates stronger ball retention and provides the opportunity to adjust the whip level. Works well for offense and defense

HIGH POCKET



The Ball sits naturally in top of the head. Creates the least amount of feel of the ball, but has a high amount of whip and hold, resulting in a very fast release. Ideal for players shooting from in tight.

Rams Player Evaluations Evolving With the Times

Modern Software and the digital generation are the perfect combination to adequately assess a players skill.

It was not that long when our player development director needed a secretarial degree to organize the the weeks worth of paper score sheets and manually input them into a spreadsheet prior to the parity snake drafts. Our evaluators would arrive to a stack of papers, grab their seat in the bleachers and frantically shuffle papers while the players are being run through the paces on the floor. And quite often, for multiple runs in an evening.

Following an evening of evaluation sessions, the Player Development Director would then take the 80-100 manually filled out sheets and enter them into a spreadsheet. Repeat this process 3-4 times per age group over the course of a 2 week evaluation period, and you can understand why the evaluation team went home with a little less hair and patience each night.

But as times change so can we! Last season the Rams Executive Board passed a motion to find and utilize a digital evaluation platform. Settling with the [TeamGenius](#) platform, the Rams felt like this would be a major step into streamlining the evaluation process, and year one of the platform proved to be the case. In fact, we saw even greater benefits then expected.

The process now consists of having the registered players exported directly into TeamGenius, assigning pinney numbers to the players, and entering the schedule. Our evaluators are then assigned their groups, and now grade the players with an app on their smart phone or device. The evaluators only score the players assigned to them during that particular session, and are seeing the players as numbers without names to maintain an unbiased and honest evaluation.

Cont. On next page

Are You Ready to Coach?

The Rams continue to have such strong support within our coaching ranks. With the droves of new young players, are coming new and experienced coaches to help develop our young players, and give back to the sport they grew up playing and loving.

Are you interested in coaching, but not sure where to start or worried about being qualified? A detailed list of requirements can be found [here](#) on our webpage, but here is the jyst.



As the age level increases, so does the requirements as a coach. And every year the ALA hosts [coaching clinics](#) around the province and are free to attend for coaches and assistants. Once you've become "Trained" in the Competitive Development Course, you are qualified to coach at all minor levels.

New to the 2024 season is the requirement for families to have taken the [Respect in Sport](#) course prior to the season beginning. Check out the [GELC page](#) for sign up information.

Reach out to [Karlie](#), our coaching director with any questions.

Information Exceeding Expectations.

When you hire quality help, you get quality results.

Historically for evaluations, the Rams have worked very hard to recruit some of the best Lacrosse minds in the area. We have been fortunate to have had support from current and former NLL players. Current and former Junior and Senior players. As well current and former coaches from all competitive levels.

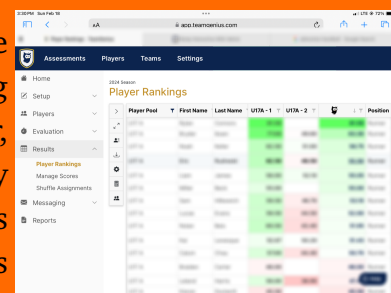
For the 2024 “A” division try-outs, we had high level evaluators from all clubs in the zone, from the NLL, Jr and Sr ranks. And as we expand our evaluation roster into the parity evaluations, these evaluators and their peers will continue to provide the highest level of evaluation possible.

Make a job easier and better better results.

When discussing the idea of using a digital assessment platform, priority was put on

the hours saved by the evaluation team during the evaluation period. It became pretty clear, pretty quick that the accuracy of the assessments would also increase greatly. What we didn’t realize, is that the information that the evaluators were able to provide though the app, would greatly benefit the players and coaches as the season began.

With the scoring becoming quicker and easier, and with the ability to adjust the scores as many times as



desired throughout a session, that left time for our evaluators to write down very meaningful and helpful comments. These comments helped coaches make decisions during the selection process and how to approach early season practices based on that input. So not only do we now have to ability to choose the “A” teams moments after the final tryout, but we can share those comments with those who didn’t make the cut, so they know what to improve on.

COMMENCE PARITY EVALUATIONS

With the “A” Division tryout behind us, we shift our focus to the parity and B division evaluations. The parity evaluations will operate the same the “A” tryouts. A series of 4 sessions will give our evaluators ample opportunity to provide the best assessment of the players to help build even teams. Check out the evaluation schedule on the Rams Homepage for the latest information.



Getting Social with Lacrosse

Same Team, New Name



It was announced at the end of February that the New York Riptide will be relocating North of the Border and become the Ottawa Black Bears

Revolution is My Name

Paul and Gary Gait revolutionized the game of Lacrosse, so its no surprise that they continue to do so with their equipment line. The Gait D2 line of heads is the next generation of their controversial Gait D which was released a couple years ago. The Gait D was quickly outlawed in many sanctioning bodies, even though it complied with all rule sets. Well the Gait D line has expanded and been improved upon. What will they come up with next!!

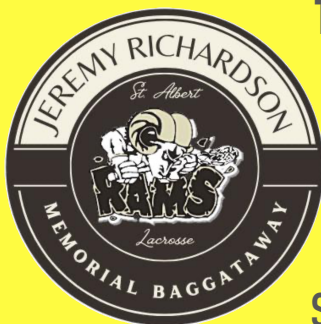


Rams on the Road



Rams players, Charlie Graham and Liam James, along with a handful of players from around the GELC brought home the Gold Medal at the [Wasatch Box Invitational](#) in Salt Lake City, Utah with the Oregon Timber Kings coached by Rams Alumni Reece Runco.

Charlie Graham followed that performance up by earning a silver medal with the Erik Turner and Reece Runco coached PAC NW allstars in the [USBOXLA Winter Nationals](#) netting himself a Goalie Goal in the process!



THE RAMS ANNUAL "JEREMY RICHARDSON MEMORIAL BAGGATAWAY" RETURNS FOR 2024. WITH TEAMS EXPECTED FROM ALL OVER THE PROVINCE, IT IS SURE TO BE ANOTHER JAM PACKED EVENT. THE JRMB RUNS FROM JUNE 7-9 AND WILL BE HELD ACROSS VENUES IN AND AROUND ST. ALBERT. HEAD TO THE [TOURNAMENT PAGE](#) ON OUR SITE TO LEARN MORE.

LACROSSE STICKS 101 CONT...

Shafts are not quite as important as the pocket, especially for the younger age kids, but have benefits in certain situations. Shafts are built with various types of metal, carbon fiber, composites, and wood. At the younger ages, the most important aspect of the shaft is the length. Shaft length is proportionate to the size of the player, so long as it is within the rules of that age division. Much like a hockey stick, the size of the stick will grow with the player. Junior shafts, not to be confused with “[mini sticks](#)” or “[fiddle sticks](#)”, have a smaller diameter shaft, and come with a sleeve to fit into the Lacrosse Head. Offensive shafts are generally lighter, while defenders prefer a heavier, more robust shaft.

7U to 13U: 34" to 46"
15U & older: 40" to 46"



Mesh is what the pocket is made out of. There are many types of mesh and can vary in diamond size and count, hardness, weight and now various styles of construction. The most commonly used in Box Lacrosse is the 10 diamond mesh in some variation from soft to hard compound. Softer mesh allows the pocket to shift more, creating more feel with the ball in the stick, where hard mesh creates a more consistent channel but may not offer the same amount of ball control while in the stick.

Stringing Patterns, provide more detail in the stick construction than any other modification can have to any other piece of sports equipment available today. There is an endless combination of knots that can be used to completely customize how your pocket will perform. Stringers have spent decades personalizing stringing patterns that they feel separates their stringing style from others. It's pretty easy to fall down a social media rabbit hole learning about stringing patterns and techniques. [String King Ustring](#) offers great tutorials and stringing patterns for almost every stick in existence, and is a great resource for those interested in learning to string.

It should be noted, that most “off the shelf” pre strung sticks, are not necessarily properly strung, and may need some work to suit your young player. **A well strung stick will not make increase their ability to perform, but a poorly strung stick will hinder their ability to.**

Important Dates in March

March 7 - U11 and U13 Evaluations

U11 Group 1 - 5:30pm - 6:30pm

U11 Group 2 - 6:30pm - 7:30pm

U13 B - 7:30pm - 8:30pm

March 9 - U11 and U13 Evaluations

U11 Group 1 - 10:00am - 11:00am

U11 Group 2 - 11:00am - 12:00pm

U13 B - 12:00pm - 1:00pm

March 9 - ALRA Level 1 Reffing Clinic

9:00am - 4:00pm

March 14 - U11 and U13 Evaluations

U11 Group 1 - 5:30pm - 6:30pm

U11 Group 2 - 6:30pm - 7:30pm

U13 B - 7:30pm - 8:30pm

March 16 - U11 and U13 Evaluations

U11 Group 1 - 9:00am - 10:00am

U11 Group 2 - 10:00am - 11:00am

U13 B - 11:00am - 12:00pm

March 16 - ALRA Level 2/3 Reffing Clinic

Online

March 17 - ALRA Level 1 Reffing Clinic

9:00am - 4:00pm

March 18 - U11 and U13 Team Formations

March 23 - Team Alberta U17 ID Camp

9:00am - 3:00pm

March 24 - ALRA Level 2/3 Reffing Clinic

Online

March 24 - U9 Evaluations

11:00am - 12:00pm

March 24 - U9 Parent info session

11:00am - 12:00pm