

Editor's Note



hen the snow (in northern states) melts and spring comes, the thoughts of many children, students, and more accomplished athletes (and fans) turn to lacrosse—the sport we feature in this issue. Although lacrosse is the oldest sport in North America, played hundreds of years ago by Native Americans, it is a sport that many people still don't know a lot about.

For many years, lacrosse was played mainly in the northeastern United States, where the sport has some history and universities have well-established lacrosse programs. Other parts of the country didn't follow the sport because lacrosse has not gotten the same media coverage as other college sports have. And lacrosse is not a game that parents naturally pass on to their children—most parents never played lacrosse because it generally has not been taught in public school gym classes.

For those reasons, when I was growing up, not many people played lacrosse. My family lived in Minnesota, where winter lasts for months and there are many frozen lakes and skating rinks, so we naturally loved hockey. But when hockey season was over, my brothers played lacrosse, too. My brother Paul described lacrosse as a sport that has “all the best parts of hockey but with better weather.”

But lacrosse has other things to recommend it. According to my brother Peter, “Lacrosse is fast-moving and fun. It combines many skills and strategies found in other sports, including hockey, basketball, and soccer. Beyond that, it has a rich tradition of sportsmanship and camaraderie that makes all of the players (teammates and opponents alike) feel like they are part of a common brotherhood.”

My brother Jake says that he has a passion for lacrosse because “it is a game that can fully engage your entire physical and mental capacities.” He admits that in the spring lacrosse can take over his life. But it is a part of his life in the winter, too, because he is an off-turf official in various capacities (goal judge, penalty box official, and penalty timekeeper) for the Minnesota Swarm, a professional indoor lacrosse team of the National Lacrosse League, which, unlike other lacrosse leagues, plays in the winter.

These days my brothers are not the only ones playing and watching lacrosse. Lacrosse is the fastest growing team sport in the United States. Boys and girls (including some of my nieces and nephews) are taking up lacrosse in droves, and lacrosse is now an organized high school sport in 40 states. It is also played in Europe, Asia, Australia, and some countries in other parts of the world, maybe even your own.

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