THE CREATORS GAME
TRIBUTE TO INDIGENOUS YOUTH

OUR INTENT
To share inspiring stories and lacrosse highlights from across TURTLE ISLAND.

P. 02
PERSONAL STORIES
Young athletes share their thoughts and perspectives on the game.

P. 06
IROQUOIS LACROSSE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
ILP has reached over 107,000 students/program participants since 2009, find out what’s on the horizon!
This first issue of the Creators Game will look at the incredible individual journeys of three amazing lacrosse players, the story of crafting sticks for the creators game, upcoming Iroquois Lacrosse Program events and highlights and future plans for the Iroquois Lacrosse program.
BACKGROUND
Over the past nine years, the Iroquois Lacrosse Program has offered lacrosse instructional camps, origins of the game teachings and traditional games to First Nations, non-profit organizations, urban Indigenous healthy living programs, schools, recreation centres and lacrosse clubs across Canada and the United States. Nya:weh to the schools, First Nation communities, Friendship Centres, Recreation Centres and lacrosse clubs who have engaged our program to provide a unique cultural lacrosse experience.

STRATEGIC VISION
Iroquois Lacrosse Program is a world leader in the planning and facilitation of lacrosse skills development, origins of the game presentations, cultural education teachings, traditional games and hosting cultural sporting events.

MISSION STATEMENT
To respect and honor our games and teachings

O = O’gwe;ho;weh
R = Respect
I = Inspirational
G = Ganikwiyo
I = Innovative
N = Nation Building
S = Sho;gwii;ya;di;soh
KIANA POINT

Age: 19
Nation: Popkum First Nation, BC

What age did you first start playing lacrosse?
I started playing at 5 yrs., (mini-tyke) had two older brothers/Dad who all played and I was at the arena all of the time, just seemed natural for me to play the game (I wanted to play like them), was the only girl

Where did you play?
North Okanagan Minor Lacrosse (Vernon, BC), Armstrong Shamrocks (Jr. B), and Kelowna Raiders (Jr. B)

Who got you started?
My Dad and brothers

What inspired you to play?
The way I feel during and after I play; get lost in the game, feel free when I’m with the team (everything flows)

Why do you play?
My family inspired me to play, my Grandfather played many years ago, Dad and my brothers helped me a lot to learn and understand the game; helps me to become a better person, made me who I am today, helped me a lot (i.e., confidence, team work, push myself a little harder)

Who has been your greatest supporter?
My Mom, because she has been there since the beginning, she would drive me 4 hrs to Langley every weekend to try out for nationals; my brothers and Dad coached and they pushed me, inspired me to keep going and said don’t listen to other people, follow your heart doesn’t matter if you are the only girl playing

What does the game mean to you?
The game is part of our culture, we are carrying on the game for our people and future generation; it’s our game and our gift

What are some of the challenges to the game?
Lacrosse is geared to boys only; I was the only girl on my team for years and the only female referee in North Okanagan, opportunities are not there for the girls

What type of support is needed for the girls’ game?
There’s not enough camps for girls wanting to learn fundamentals and improve their skills development, everything is promoted toward the boys and men’s game; should be more opportunities for girls to learn field lacrosse throughout the province. I believe the girls game
will grow, there’s a movement forward; you are seeing more female coaches, however, we have
to get more females involved in refereeing, coaching and training young female athletes; we
need more positive promotion, that girls can play lacrosse and it’s alright to play

**What advice would you give a young girl interested in playing lacrosse?**
I’m 5’ and 100 lbs, yet still compete and play as hard as I can every shift/game; I would tell
them to go ahead and do it, it’s not about your size/gender what matters is what’s in your
heart; have at it; anybody can play this game (note: in our region there are only 2 girls out of
approximately 70 players)

**Can you describe your North American Indigenous Games 2017 Experience?**
It was like amazing; couldn’t believe I was there on Six Nations it was unbelievable, I was
pumped, it was history being made as this was the first time girls box lacrosse had been played;
felt a lot of pressure, excitement leading up to the first game vs. Team Ontario, players were
nervous in the dressing room and throughout warm up not only because it was the first game
but there were five camera operators following us around (CBC) and right in our space and face;
it was definitely an experience I will never forget and in the future I hope to be playing and or
coaching at Masters Indigenous Games Competition

**What are your future plans (i.e., personal and lacrosse)**
I’m going to study Human Kinetics (University) and plan to get into Sports Medicine; my future
lacrosse plan is to continue playing, offering lacrosse camps for girls, assist with growing the
game, coaching and grow the game in FN communities
What age did you first start playing lacrosse?
I started playing organized lacrosse at age 4

Where did/do you play?
Six Nations Minor Lacrosse, Six Nations Arrows, Six Nations Chiefs, Rochester Knighthawks, Vancouver Stealth, Minnesota Swarm, Georgia Swarm and Iroquois Nationals

Who got you started?
My family, the game is part of our culture and passed on from the family to the next generation

Why do you play?
Family, I was very passionate about playing at a young age, it’s part of our tradition (not like a job) and I knew from a young age I wanted to play professional lacrosse

Who has been your greatest supporter?
My parents are my greatest supporters I talk to them a lot about lacrosse and life and my brothers are always there and play as well

What does the game mean to you?
The game is a way of life, you are always learning as you go; it’s passed down the family; there’s the ceremonial game which I understand and then there’s the contemporary game which we now play
I can relate to the team aspect it’s kind of like life (i.e., if you are positive then what happens in life and on the floor will be positive and can change the outcome; if you are negative then bad things can affect your household or team)

What are some of the challenges you’ve experienced?
Confidence has been the greatest challenge playing pro; I was scared to mess up, wasn’t scoring which affected my playing ability and there was a time I didn’t want to play
I learned to accept mistakes are just a part of the game and developed a different attitude (didn’t care what people thought was just going to play my game) which helped me grow into the player I’ve become

What type of support is needed to grow the game?
It’s important to try to get into the schools to market and promote (field or box) and get parents involved; grants and sponsors to support the game locally and within schools

What advice would you give to young players interested in playing professional lacrosse?
You must have confidence in yourself, must be positive, willing to learn and open to ideas
Play as much competitive lacrosse as you can at the top level (i.e. box and field) you will
have to travel to do it and jump to Jr. A Lacrosse as soon as you can; it really helped me and a lot of professional coaches are also involved in coaching successful Jr. A lacrosse teams.

**What are your future plans (i.e., personal and lacrosse?)**

After my playing career is over I would like to coach more and share more of the cultural aspects of the game; I accepted a position with Wallaceburgh Jr. B team next season where my brother is playing. I’d like to balance life and lacrosse going with the flow right now, I like where the NLL is headed see a positive outlook and future expansion, plus hoping it eventually can become a full-time job for the next generation of players. One of my personal goals is to help Iroquois Nationals win the WILC 2019, win a President’s Cup in the future and I like our (Swarm) chances of repeating as we have a solid team and I think we have a good shot at repeating.
The Lacrosse category of these games was hosted by Six Nations of the Grand River and NAIG Host Society at the following venues, the Iroquois Lacrosse Arena (ILA), Gaylord Powless Memorial Arena (GPA) and Harry Howell Centre (HHC).

All reports indicated that this competition was well run and enjoyed by the players, coaches, parents and families. The lacrosse venues attracted thousands of fans with over 2000 fans attending the gold and bronze games.

The atmosphere at the girl’s final game was electric, filled with awesome energy and enthusiasm and the game did not disappoint with Eastern Door taking home the Gold Medal with a one goal victory over Team Ontario. Team Ontario Boys U19 won the gold over Team Haudenosaunee (NY) and Team Ontario Boys U16 defeated a spirited Team Saskatchewan who advanced to the gold medal game for the first time in the history of the games.
CULTURE AND HOSPITALITY

The hospitality was second to none, Six Nation’s hosted an Opening Ceremony, Lacrosse Festival with all Haudenosaunee NLL players including Cody Jamieson, Kedoh Hill, Johnny Powless, Angus Goodleaf, Vaughn Harris, Thompson Brothers with a surprise cameo appearance by Brandon Montour, NHL, Anaheim Ducks, Minto Cup Champion Six Nations Arrows; hosted a social food and fed over 400 individuals/athletes; coordinated a Fashion Show and Music Celebration at Chiefswood Park. Six Nations organized daily transportation to and from McMaster University and on a few occasions picked up athletes and team official’s right at Harry Howell Centre and other venues to bring them to Major and Jr. A lacrosse games.

Iroquois Lacrosse played an instrumental role in planning, coordinating and executing the games whether it was by providing equipment, scheduling expertise, hosting teams, providing meals, gifting, or officiating services, we’d like to acknowledge our amazing team of volunteers, staff and officials who dedicated their time and energy during an incredible and tiring six day run.
PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTS
INTERACTIVE CULTURAL EXPERIENCES (ICE)

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (BOX AND FIELD LACROSSE)
  a. Introductory 50%
  b. Intermediate 40%
  c. Advanced Training 10%

Iroquois Lacrosse Program offers three (3) unique products to prospective users at the community level. Currently, 90% of our core business is introductory and intermediate level training sessions.

CULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING, SCHOOLS, TRADITIONAL GAMES AND LACROSSE

The demand for cultural education programming has increased every year in both public and catholic schools, ILP anticipates growth in requests, as more than 60% of Ontario teachers do not feel comfortable teaching about Indigenous people and games.

TRADITIONAL GAMES

One of our most popular program experiences is our traditional games program which ILP offer to schools, Friendship Centres, Recreation Centres, sport organizations and lacrosse clubs who desire to participate in interactive learning modules which gives them a spiritual connection and experience to our beautiful culture.

CULTURAL SPORT EVENTS

ILP is the leader in planning, organizing and executing cultural sport experiences recently hosting events such as the 2017 North American Indigenous Games, 2015 Pan Am Para Pan Games along with providing planning and logistics coordination for World Indoor U19 Lacrosse Challenges, OFSAA Field Lacrosse Championships and other international box and field events. Our next event is Nations Cup 2018, Minor Lacrosse Tournament which will be held in Six Nations of the Grand River and Fun Lacrosse Cultural Event in Northern Ontario.
The following describes ILP’s core programs offered to schools, Indigenous communities, recreation centres, Friendship Centres and lacrosse associations/clubs.

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ORIGINS OF THE GAME TEACHINGS
The spiritual essence of the game is taught through a variety of mediums, one being a multi-media presentation and the other being oral and interactive teachings which illustrate the true origins of the game as told through our Haudenosaunee traditions.

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WOODEN STICK TEACHINGS
Through our family alliance with Henhawk Lacrosse Stick Makers, ILP offer presentations on how to make a wooden stick in an interactive Question and Answer along with stick stringing and interactive stick trick demonstrations where students get an opportunity to experience. Sticks are available for direct purchase or orders.

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COACHING AND MENTORING
ILP offers coaching and mentoring assistance to new and existing coaching staff working with box lacrosse and field lacrosse programs. ILP draws for our own Haudenosaunee style of playing, combined with offering assistance with practice plans, mentoring new coaches, sharing agility drills, and strength and cardio conditioning training techniques.
BOOKING CAMPS & CULTURAL SPORT EXPERIENCES

If you are seeking a box/field lacrosse or cultural games experience, please contact:

Kevin Sandy, Director at 226-922-9097, 705-235-4179 or kvsandy9797@yahoo.ca, explaining proposed number of participants, age group, anticipated length (half-day, evening, day), location, equipment and facilities (indoor / outdoor) you have available. The standard participant to instructor ratio is 20:1.

If you are interested in sharing a story of a young inspiring Indigenous athlete, please contact us as we plan on featuring stories from across Turtle Island.

FORT ERIE NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE EXPERIENCE

ILP has worked with the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre on numerous occasions and in some cases large scale events like our Youth and Elders Conference and our Indigenous Youth Leadership Days.
Kevin’s team has the ability to share a historic component as well as incorporates like skills, leadership skills and mainstream techniques in his programming. Their experience with sports and recreation programs are far above par. There many years of experienced and in-depth knowledge of the Creator’s Game (lacrosse) and other traditional games helps his team rise above others.

His programs help develop the self-identify of our Indigenous youth as well as build their self-esteem through his traditional holistic teaching methods. His highly motivated attributes as well as his great rapport with all those he works with, proves to be a stellar program. In closing, I would not hesitate to recommend him and the ILP to any interested parties; he’s very professional, yet down to earth.

Please feel free to contact myself for any elaboration at (289) 321-0304 or culturecoord@fenfc.org.

Gary Parker, Cultural Resource Coordinator.
JADYN BOMBERRY

AGE: 19
NATION: MOHAWK NATION, TURTLE CLAN

What age did you first start playing lacrosse?
I started playing lacrosse when I was 11, which is kind of late compared to when my current SU teammates started (i.e., 7 and 8); I received this old stick (blue/yellow shaft) from my Aunt and started to play around with it and tried passing and catching with her

Where did you play?
Six Nations Girls Field Lacrosse, Haudenosaunee Women’s Lacrosse (U19 and Women’s) and Syracuse University

Who got you started?
My grandma played, my Aunt Julie motivated me to play I would go and watch her play, she really got me interested as my Mom never played lacrosse

Why do you play?
I like it because the game is fast-paced, I enjoy running and cross country when I was younger so the game blended with what I like; the ball and the game is quick moving

Why does the game mean to you?
I play for family, my grandma and auntie played, my Mom never played, however, she’s there almost every game; it’s for the people and the game gives me energy
I knew I wanted to play at the top level back in Grade 8, I did this writing assignment for an Elders Book and there’s a blurb at the back (which I still have) which says I want to play women’s field lacrosse at Syracuse, Cornell or Duke, when I look back at that now I just cry because my dream came true

What type of support is needed for the girls’ game?
The boys game gets all of the attention and support (i.e., coaching/financial) we have to find a way to make the girls game more known and people have to be aware of where it can take you; there has to be more tournaments and people have to understand with good grades your education can be supported at the D1 level; must promote field lacrosse as box lacrosse can’t get you into a good school, professional league or world game

Who has been your greatest supporter?
My Mom, I feel like crying (I’m crying) she has always been there for me, if it wasn’t for her I probably wouldn’t be at SU; she was there all the way throughout my journey (i.e., sideline, coach, mentor) and now at SU; she made sure I was taking the right classes to pursue post-secondary in the states and was my greatest supporter when I felt down or had thoughts that I couldn’t do this; she was there to remind me of running and school work; I’m so grateful for her

What advice would you give a young girl interested in playing lacrosse?
I would tell them not to get disappointed if you can’t pass and catch right away because it takes time to learn and involves a lot of muscle memory, repetitions and hrs (practicing) in developing during the off-season
I would tell them to work on their stick skills, conditioning regularly and make sure your Grade Point Average (GPA) and SAT’s can get you into your school of choice if post-secondary is on your horizon; play at tournaments like Presidents Cup (Florida) where there are a lot of college recruiters
Please describe your World Cup 2017 Experience?

I was so happy because it was a life-long dream and my first world competition; in 2015, I made the U19 Haudenosaunee Women’s Team, however, we couldn’t go and it hurt my view of lacrosse, I kind of shut down even though there were honor ceremonies (i.e., Pan Am Para Pan Games) everyone was just sad because we wanted to be there competing.

This year we made it to Suffolk, however, I didn’t think our training was not at the level to compete with the better teams, we have great stick skills which won us some games, however, we only 14-15 players which hurt our chances to advance to the next level because everyone had no energy and had little aches and pains (i.e., massage therapists were busy)

I feel if we are going to compete with Canada, USA and other top teams our program has to start identification and recruiting camps at ages 11 to 13; we have to develop our girls early get them working and playing together in fall ball and spring tourneys to develop chemistry; our recruiting process needs to improve.

What are your future plans (i.e., personal and lacrosse)?

I’m going to finish my education and lacrosse at Syracuse (Child and Family Studies Major) then I want to study my language at Six Nations Polytechnic, then hope to become a Teacher’s Assistant at IL Thomas and eventually a Physical Education Teacher.

In the long-term I would like to become a Personal Trainer, build a gym and train athletes and players who want to compete at the next level and get them into high end recruiting tournaments/events.
Bo Henhawk is only 22, but he’s been crafting traditional — meaning made out of wood — lacrosse sticks for eight years. Henhawk lives and works on the southwest side of Six Nations, plays for a New York team in the Can-Am lacrosse league and won national junior B championships with the Six Nations Rebels.

He wants to preserve the historic and spiritual links between the Earth and The Creator’s Game (lacrosse) through his sticks made from shag-bark hickory trees, found in and around Six Nations.

“I started because very few people were making them any more and I couldn’t find ones that I liked,” says Henhawk, who gets help in his stick-construction business from his father, Darryl, and well-known lacrosse player Cam Bomberry.

Lacrosse has been getting a lot of attention with the North American Indigenous Games, which conclude Saturday, staging most of its matches at the Iroquois Lacrosse Arena and the Gaylord Powless Arena, both on Six Nations.

Since the mid-1970s, plastic sticks with alloy shafts have been making major inroads in the game, to the point that the majority of players now use them and some leagues no longer allow wood sticks.

Injuries are often cited as one reason but Henhawk says he’s suffered only bruises from wood sticks while he’s incurred cuts playing against players with plastic sticks.

“I don’t like the way plastic sticks have taken over everything,” he says.

“They’re trying to ban wood from the game, you hear that rumour all the time.

“That’s going to take away from the game.”

Henhawk’s sticks, used mostly by minor lacrosse players, cost $50 or $60 for mini sticks, all the way up to $225 for “my sticks. The ones that I would use.” There’s strong demand for them.

Traditionally, the webbing in the head of the stick was made from the hide of deer killed by the stick maker himself, while the guard — the piece connecting the curve of the head to the shaft — was often made from the intestines of small animals. But now, Henhawk buys cowhide in bulk from a Hamilton store.

He’d like to see more lacrosse players using wood sticks all the time.

“Not just Natives, everybody,” he says. “It’s what the Creator gave us to play with. It’s the most natural thing we use, and it’s been around as long as the game has been played.”

To see Spectator photographer Barry Gray’s video essay on Henhawk’s wooden sticks, go to the spec.com.

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All photos courtesy of the Hamilton Spectator

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO ORDER A STICK
CONTACT: 519 445 0300
IT'S WHAT THE CREATOR GAVE US TO PLAY WITH
NATION’S CUP
LACROSSE
2018

MAY 10TH - 13TH, 2018

GIRL’S & BOY’S DIVISIONS
TYKE TO JUNIOR

SIX NATIONS OF THE GRAND RIVER TERRITORY
& SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

For Information Contact
Kevin Sandy, Director  Iroquois Lacrosse Program
The event theme is: respect, honor, culture and community, all which embodies the beautiful and rich history of Indigenous people.

Nations Cup 2018 organizers have witnessed the growth of the Little NHL Hockey Tourney which has grown from 17 teams to 207 teams from Indigenous communities from across Ontario, making it one of the largest hockey events in North America.

The event will feature divisions ranging from Tyke, Novice, Pee Wee, Bantam, Midget and Junior. It is our hope the tournament will become a major cultural sport event in our communities. Teams will be coming from the west coast and east coast to participate, we’ve had inquiries from many communities. The tournament will be the first of its kind for minor Indigenous lacrosse teams from across Turtle Island.

The event will feature cultural activities and bring our nations and communities together in the spirit of competition.

The event will be held from May 10th-13th, 2018 in Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and surrounding communities. Tournament registration is $200 per team and teams have until March 31st, 2018 in order to pay and register. Team registration lists are due by Friday April 30th.

For further information please contact Kevin Sandy, Nations Cup 2018 at 226-922-9097, 705-235-4179 or kvsandy9797@yahoo.ca. The event is pleased to partner with Room Roster, www.roomroster.com who will serve as the tournament scheduling software and hotel booking group for the tournament. More sponsors and donors will be updated on the event site and FB page.
### UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**FEB - MAR 2018**
- Iroquois Lacrosse Camp, Vancouver Island, and Lower Mainland, Ininew FC (Cochrane)

**MAR 2018**
- Iroquois Lacrosse Camp, Seneca Nation Territory, FENFC Youth Conference & Humber College

**APR 2018**
- Peel District School Board, Mississauga/Brampton, DPCDB Schools

**MAY 9-13**
- Nations Cup, Six Nations of the Grand River

**MAY 24-27**
- Confederacy Challenge, Six Nations Minor Lacrosse Association

**JUNE**
- National Indigenous Day Events, FN Communities and Schools

**JULY 12-15**
- Master’s Indigenous Games, Downsview Hangar Sports Park, 3 on 3 Lacrosse Tourney, Northern Ontario

**AUG 2018**
- Iroquois Lacrosse Camp, Hamilton, ON., Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT & Pequot Lacrosse Camp, CT

**SEPT 2018**
- Men’s Nations Cup, Six Nations of the Grand River

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Serene Porter - Graphic design team for the Creators Game