



Western Lacrosse Association PRESS RELEASE The Legendary Game of Canada

WLA Welcomes Todd LaBranche as Referee-in-Chief

Ray Durante, Nick Thomas Also Join League Staff

February 19, 2019

Burnaby, BC – The Western Lacrosse Association (WLA) is thrilled to continue its mission to maintain the integrity of The Legendary Game of Canada by welcoming to its staff Todd LaBranche as Referee-in-Chief, Ray Durante as Associate Referee-in-Chief, and naming Nick Thomas as Head Referee.

A box lacrosse official for over 42 years, LaBranche logged 21 years with the WLA and is in his 19th season with the National Lacrosse League (NLL). In that time, he has been on the floor for 277 regular season home games, 45 playoff games, and 9 championship games. Well respected on and off the floor by fellow officials and league and team executives, the WLA is excited to welcome him back for the 2019 season.

Joining LaBranche as Associate Referee-in-Chief will be retired player and official Ray Durante. Better known as “Radar”, Durante played in the WLA from 1974 to 1982, winning 2 Mann Cup rings, and tallying 316 points in the process. Following his playing career, he began refereeing in 1983, working the floor for almost 32 years, during which he worked 383 regular season and playoff games, and 20 Mann Cup games.

Nick Thomas will be joining the leadership group as Head Referee this season, after 10 years and 4 Mann Cups as a WLA referee. Thomas will continue as an active official in the WLA, and in the NLL, where he is currently in his third season.

“We are thrilled to welcome Todd back to the Western Lacrosse Association. He brings unparalleled experience and maturity to the WLA and will be a great mentor for our on-floor officials.” said Commissioner Paul Dal Monte in a statement. “Todd has worked with both Ray and Nick, and together, they will provide our referees with the leadership, support, and guidance they need to allow us to continue to improve our game.”

The Western Lacrosse Association (WLA) is an amateur league of men's Senior A box lacrosse sanctioned by the Canadian Lacrosse Association. The WLA consists of seven teams, based in cities throughout southwestern British Columbia, playing an 18-game schedule from late May to the end of July. Each year, the playoff teams battle for the right to compete against the Major Series Lacrosse champion (Ontario) for the Mann Cup every September. The championship is hosted alternately between Ontario (MSL) and British Columbia (WLA) every year.

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