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AUSTRALIAN LACROSSE COUNCIL

Annual Report Year ending 31st March, 1939

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' CLUB, MELBOURNE, ON MONDAY, 29th MAY, 1939.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to submit for your approval the Eighth Annual Report of the Australian Lacrosse Council covering the year 1938. During the past three years it has been my pleasing duty to comment on the steady progress lacrosse was making, but to-night I regret that I have to report there has been a very serious setback in respect to the number of players during the year under review. In 1937 the total number of players in the Commonwealth stood at the record figure of 2,702; this unfortunately has decreased during the past year by 272 to 2,430, or in other words 10 per cent. of our players were lost. This is a very serious position, and I therefore propose to deal with it later in my report.

MEETING.—Only one meeting of the Council was held during the year. Our President, Mr. C. Lempriere Abbott, once again made a special journey from Adelaide to preside, which was greatly appreciated by the delegates.

INTERNATIONAL VISIT.—At the last meeting of the Council a sub-committee was appointed to investigate the possibility and cost of an international visit and to suggest methods of financing same. Shortly after the appointment of this committee affairs in Europe took a very serious turn, which, in my opinion, rendered it futile to think of international visits. I therefore take the responsibility for not calling this committee together. I would suggest that the committee be reappointed and authorised to make a report before the next Annual Meeting, provided the international outlook shows signs of improvement to justify consideration being given to a venture of this magnitude.

PROPOSED REVISION OF RULES.—In my report of last year I made reference to the laws of lacrosse and enumerated a number of alterations that had been successfully brought into operation in other countries, notably the United States of America, and made suggestions that a number of these innovations were worthy of a trial in actual play. The Council adopted these recommendations, and the State Associations were requested to make a thorough test of these proposed rules under match conditions. It is pleasing to report that all States readily adopted the Council's request, and staged a number of games in which these proposed rules were in operation. It is to be regretted, however, that although asked for last year, all the reports did not reach me until a few weeks ago, and in certain instances the information was so meagre that it was of very little value to the sub-committee appointed to collate the reports. From this report, which will be placed before you to-night, it will be noted that the only suggestion that was unanimously received was that dealing with the enlargement of the centre ring. Those suggestions relating to off-side play, the reduction in the number of players constituting a team and the dimension of the playing field were rejected. Regarding the proposed substitute rule, the views of the States are somewhat obscure, and it is suggested that this question should be referred back to the State Associations for further consideration.

GARLAND McHARG CUP.—The deed of trust in reference to the Garland McHarg Cup as adopted by the Council, and appointing Messrs. C. Lempriere Abbott, R. O. Moore and I. J. Taylor as trustees, has been drawn up and now awaits the final act of signing, which will be officially carried out to-night.

AUSTRALIAN LACROSSE CARNIVAL.—The Queensland Lacrosse Association has advised the Council that the date for the Ninth Australian Lacrosse Carnival has been fixed for 15th to 22nd July, and all States have signified their intention of competing. A very successful carnival is confidently anticipated.

FINANCIAL.—The Hon. Treasurer, when submitting the financial statement to-night, will report that the Council has a credit balance at the Commonwealth Bank of £42/5/9, and assets amounting to £48/9/9.

RHODES SCHOLARS.—The selection of Messrs. J. H. Chinner (Victoria), D. C. Menzies (South Australia) and E. E. Jarvis (Western Australia) as the Rhodes Scholar of their respective States for 1938 is a unique record, and I doubt if any other sport can claim such a wonderful achievement as three Rhodes Scholars in one year. Anticipating your wishes, I sent a letter of congratulation to each of these gentlemen wishing them every success at Oxford, and also expressing the hope that on their return to their native land, they would continue their lacrosse activities.

INTERSTATE VISITS.—It is pleasing to note that an unusually large number of interstate visits were made during the year. All States participated, and at least one match was played in every capital with the exception of Brisbane. Provided that reasonably representative sides can be sent, these visits help to create enthusiasm for lacrosse, and consequently are very desirable, especially to the far distant centres. To-night you will be asked to give consideration to a proposal sponsored by Western Australia, which seeks to place interstate visits during non-carnival years on a more regular basis.

OBITUARY.—It is with great regret that we record the passing of Mr. Alex. Beech. The late Mr. Beech, who was a son of Mr. George Beech, the father of lacrosse in Australia, was Honorary Record Secretary of the Victorian Lacrosse Association, and was well known throughout the Commonwealth.

The Victorian and South Australian Lacrosse Association have suffered a severe loss in the death in tragic circumstances of Mr. R. S. Symonds. The late Mr. Symonds was a Pilot Officer in the R.A.A.F.

To their sorrowing families the Council extends its deepest sympathy.

STATE OF GAME.—In the current issue of "Wisdens," Don Bradman contributes a very informative article under the title of "Cricket at the Cross Roads," and while reading it the thought occurred to me that probably lacrosse was also at the Cross Roads. This was forcibly brought home when I endeavoured to ascertain the causes responsible for the loss of 10 per cent. of our playing strength as mentioned in the opening paragraph of this report. A loss such as this must be taken seriously and is a matter of grave concern to all. I would therefore suggest that an effort be made by the associations concerned to endeavour to interview some of these lost players and ascertain their reasons for giving up lacrosse, and it may be that from the answers given something useful may eventuate.

From personal observations I am of the opinion that kindred associations such as hockey and baseball are definitely obtaining a greater proportion of recruits than lacrosse. Why this should be so it is difficult to understand, as I am sure no lacrosseur will admit that these games can offer any greater attractions than lacrosse. The fact, however, must be faced that lacrosse has had a setback, and while we hope that it is only of a temporary nature, nevertheless a drift has commenced, and if not immediately checked will soon become irreparable. I would, therefore, suggest that the Council should express its deep concern at the turn events have taken and adjourn any discussion on the subject until the next meeting of the Council, which will be held in Brisbane during the carnival.

In the meantime the State Associations could be asked to institute an immediate enquiry into the causes of the loss of players and report as to what steps are being taken to remedy the position. At the same time clubs and individuals might be asked for suggestions for the improvement of the game, and in this respect I have in mind a very constructive suggestion submitted to me by Mr. Arnold Hudson, Chairman of the New South Wales Association, which will be placed before the Council to-night. In the pooling of ideas I am very confident that something helpful will be brought to light that will be beneficial to the game as a whole. The loss of players mentioned above represents the gloomy side of the year's activities. Happily there is another side, which records South Australia's progress both in its steadily increasing numbers of players and its greatly improved standard of play as revealed by its first victory over Victoria for the past twelve years. Congratulations are due to Western Australia for nearly sustaining its members despite the loss of the Goldfields Association.

In conclusion, I desire to thank the secretaries of the State Lacrosse Associations for the continued assistance they have afforded me in carrying out my secretarial duties.

Yours faithfully,

I. J. TAYLOR,

Hon. Secretary A.L.C.

TABLE A.
REGISTERED PLAYERS.

| Year | Q'sland | N.S.W. | Vict. | S.A. | W.A. | C/wlth. |
|------------|---------|--------|-------|------|------|---------|
| 1933 | 165 | 144 | 1068 | 390 | 327 | 2094 |
| 1934 | 90 | 58 | 1039 | 425 | 308 | 1920 |
| 1935 | 64 | 72 | 1004 | 405 | 269 | 1824 |
| 1936 | 236 | 79 | 1078 | 377 | 283 | 2053 |
| 1937 | 255 | 80 | 1104 | 520 | 341 | 2300 |
| 1938 | 185 | 76 | 1032 | 512 | 357 | 2162 |

TABLE B.
NUMBER OF TEAMS.

| Year | Q'sland | N.S.W. | Vict. | S.A. | W.A. | C/wlth. |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|-------|------|------|---------|
| A Section | | | | | | |
| 1933 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 35 |
| 1934 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 37 |
| 1935 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 31 |
| 1936 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 29 |
| 1937 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 34 |
| 1938 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 33 |
| B Section | | | | | | |
| 1933 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 36 |
| 1934 | — | — | 9 | 10 | 6 | 25 |
| 1935 | — | — | 9 | 10 | 4 | 23 |
| 1936 | 9 | — | 10 | 9 | 7 | 35 |
| 1937 | 9 | — | 10 | 10 | 8 | 37 |
| 1938 | 4 | — | 9 | 14 | 7 | 34 |
| C Section | | | | | | |
| 1933 | — | — | 12 | 7 | 4 | 23 |
| 1934 | — | — | 12 | 6 | 4 | 22 |
| 1935 | — | — | 11 | 6 | 4 | 21 |
| 1936 | — | — | 8 | 10 | 3 | 21 |
| 1937 | 5 | — | 9 | 10 | 7 | 31 |
| 1938 | 4 | — | 10 | 8 | 4 | 26 |
| D Section | | | | | | |
| 1933 | — | — | 8 | 5 | — | 13 |
| 1934 | — | — | 9 | 6 | — | 15 |
| 1935 | — | — | 13 | 4 | — | 17 |
| 1936 | — | — | 13 | — | — | 13 |
| 1937 | — | — | 10 | 7 | — | 17 |
| 1938 | — | — | 10 | 5 | 5 | 20 |
| E & F Section | | | | | | |
| 1933 | — | — | 23 | — | — | 23 |
| 1934 | — | — | 21 | — | — | 21 |
| 1935 | — | — | 21 | — | — | 21 |
| 1936 | — | — | 26 | — | — | 26 |
| 1937 | — | — | 30 | — | — | 30 |
| 1938 | — | — | 29 | — | — | 29 |
| Schoolboy | | | | | | |
| 1935 | 10 | — | 17 | — | — | 27 |
| 1936 | 4 | — | 11 | — | — | 15 |
| 1937 | — | — | 11 | 6 | — | 17 |
| 1938 | — | — | 5 | 9 | — | 14 |

TABLE C.

ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED WITH PARENT BODIES.

| | 1937 | | 1938 | |
|--|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Teams. | Players. | Teams. | Players. |
| Ballarat Lacrosse Association, Victoria | 6 | 90 | 6 | 90 |
| Port Pirie Lacrosse Association, South Australia . . | 3 | 40 | 3 | 45 |
| Eastern Goldfields Association, Western Australia | 2 | 30 | — | — |
| | — | — | — | — |
| Total | 11 | 160 | 9 | 135 |

TABLE D.

TOTAL NUMBER OF TEAMS AND PLAYERS.

(Including Schoolboys and Affiliated Associations.)

| | 1937 | | 1938 | |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Teams. | Players. | Teams. | Players. |
| Victoria | 85 | 1348 | 79 | 1132 |
| South Australia | 44 | 648 | 48 | 700 |
| Western Australia | 25 | 371 | 23 | 357 |
| Queensland | 17 | 255 | 12 | 185 |
| New South Wales | 6 | 80 | 4 | 56 |
| | — | — | — | — |
| Commonwealth | 177 | 2702 | 166 | 2430 |

