

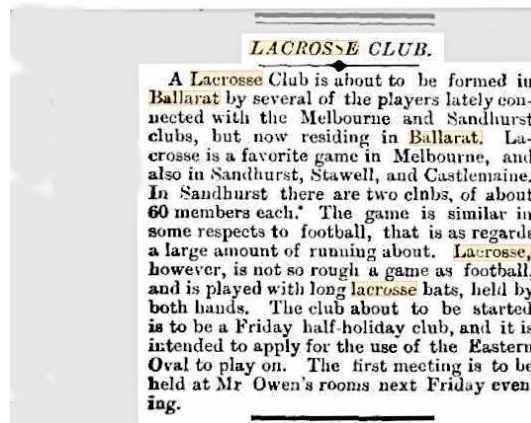
A BRIEF HISTORY OF LACROSSE IN BALLARAT

Who introduced lacrosse to Ballarat we do not know but the "Gold Rush" was what brought Lambton Mount's family to Ballarat from Montreal, Canada in 1853, but he did not introduce lacrosse to Australia until 1876, and that was in Melbourne. But things were happening in Ballarat because of the "Gold Rush", and the State of Victoria and its economy were growing rapidly, largely due to gold, sheep and wheat.

"Checker", in "The Australasian" of 29 May 1882 reported that new clubs had been formed in St. Kilda, Richmond, Collingwood and Ballarat. On 17 June 1882 the report stated that the newly formed club at Ballarat had begun practice for their match against a metropolitan club, which was to take place on Separation Day.

The 1886 season saw further growth in lacrosse where clubs now existed at Bendigo and Sandhurst. A match had been arranged between Sandhurst and the Ballarat. It was reported that the country clubs of Bendigo, Sandhurst and Ballarat had enjoyed successful seasons.

The Ballarat Star (Vic. : 1865 - 1924) / Wed 28 Apr 1886 / Page 4 / LACROSSE CLUB.



The report in "The Australasian" of 15 April 1899 by "Left Attack" reflected optimism for the future of the game, and significant development in the colonies. The Ballarat Lacrosse Club though had disbanded, but it seemed a propitious time to revive enthusiasm for the game. Several Melbourne players had moved to Ballarat, the best known of whom was Mr. G. Batchelor.



The Ballarat club and association seemed to be doing well up until WW1, which as we now had a disastrous impact on lacrosse, with many players enlisting to support the Empire, with many paying the ultimate sacrifice, many coming back impaired, and people had to start careers and their lives all over again.

TABLE C.
ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED WITH PARENT BODIES.

| | Teams. | Players. |
|---|--------|----------|
| Ballarat Lacrosse Association, Vict. | 6 | 90 |
| Port Pirie Lacrosse Association, S.A. | 3 | 45 |
| Eastern Goldfield Association, W.A. | 2 | 30 |
| Total | 11 | 165 |

TABLE D.
TOTAL NUMBER OF TEAMS AND PLAYERS.
(Including Schoolboys and Affiliated Associations)

| | Teams. | Players. |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------|
| Victoria | 84 | 1349 |
| South Australia | 31 | 450 |
| Western Australia | 19 | 299 |
| Queensland | 14 | 214 |
| New South Wales | 4 | 72 |
| Commonwealth | 152 | 2384 |

The above is from the 1935 ALC annual report

What the above shows is that lacrosse in the Ballarat area, assuming it included Bendigo and Sandhurst and perhaps others, had 6 teams and 90 players, significantly larger than N.S.W. at that time. But the strength or numbers were not necessarily in Ballarat but in the area and they had an association.

We do note through newspaper clippings that in 1936 a Ballarat Association team played against the S.A. B senior team (Defeated 7-3) and a S.A. junior A team (Defeated 10-9) during the senior carnival in Adelaide.

It would appear that despite the adverse impact of WW1 on lacrosse in the Ballarat area the game as at 1935 was doing well, but WW2 erupted in 1939, and from there we cannot see any record of lacrosse in the area after 1945 until very recently.

The Port Pirie Lacrosse Association will send a team to Adelaide. A combined C grade team will be selected to play the Pirie team at Neutral ground at 1 p.m. on August 15. This will give the players an opportunity of attending the Victoria v. South Australia match, which will be played at 3 p.m. The selectors for this match are Messrs. C. Teague, S. Doig, and J. Tainsh.

The Unley Oval will be used instead of the Prospect Oval for the last day of the carnival and this means that the entire carnival will be played at Unley.

Referees For Carnival

The following referee appointments have been made for the carnival and interstate matches:—Saturday, August 8—Curtain raiser, South Australia B grade v. Ballarat, Mr. J. T. Martin; South Australia v. Queensland, Mr. V. P. Selth. Monday, August 10—Junior interstate match, South Australia Junior A team v. Ballarat, Mr. T. D. McCormick. Tuesday, August 11—Victoria v. Western Australia, Mr. A. E. Harvey. Thursday, August 13—Victoria v. Queensland, Mr. T. D. McCormick; South Australia v. Western Australia, Mr. E. B. Selth. Saturday, August 15—Western Australia v. Queensland, Mr. E. B. Selth; South Australia v. Victoria, Mr. J. T. Martin.

There is no further mention of lacrosse in Ballarat until recent years when former Malvern player Tasi Stampoultzis introduced junior lacrosse in Ballarat with the formation of the Ballarat Royals Lacrosse Club, and in late 2023 Ballarat hosted the national Under 15 championships.



Woodville & Ballarat Royals junior players from 2023
At Ballarat