

LINDSAY SCOTT – AUSTRALIAN LACROSSE REFEREE ALTRUIST

Lindsay Scott was introduced to Lacrosse in 1966 whilst residing at St George's College at the University of Western Australia. Two other residents, Jeff Horner and Bob Gunn were both playing for Nedlands-Subiaco. The A reserve team was short of players, and he was asked to come and play to make up the numbers. "Lacrosse is an exciting sport that once one has played it, it sort of gets in the blood, and so the rest, as they say, is history." Subsequently several other residents of St George's followed including John Ferguson, Keith and Allan Longbottom, and John Rowe. Lindsay was fortunate to play in 3 A grade grand finals, winning two of them before retiring as a player early in 1976.

Early in 1976 he was approached by senior members of the Nedlands-Subiaco Club to see if he would become the panel referee for the Club, as the W.A.L.A. required all clubs to have at least one panel or club referee. He had always said he would eventually take up refereeing and so agreed to do so. Murray Redfern and Bob Stratton visited him at home in order to sit the examination. He passed and so moved into the world of refereeing (Officiating as it is now called). For some reason he seemed to take to it a bit like a duck to water and quickly rose up the ranks to become a consistent official at A grade Level. Lindsay remained the Club's panel referee from 1976-85 when he retired from full time officiating, but continued to officiate part time at club level from 1986-90. He refereed most W.A. grade finals from 1977-85.

His first national championship was the 1979 junior championship which he attended with Peter Reid. It was held at the Albert Ground in Melbourne, and being the new kid on the block he was always given the far side, which required him to run through a very muddy cricket pitch area! Following that event he then went on to officiate at the Colts championship in 1980 and then the national senior championship in 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1985, being selected to referee the senior championship final in every year except 1981.

During his time as an official he held the post of ALC Chief Referee from 1984 to 1986, following the retirement of Don Reymont. In 1987 this role was renamed ALC rules adjudicator which he held from 1988 to 1991. In his rules adjudicator report to the ALC in November 1985 he proposed that an accreditation panel be set up to assess and mentor officials across Australia. In 1992 this resulted in the establishment of the National Technical Committee, formalising what had been proposed back in 1985. This arrangement is still in use today, albeit with quite a bit of enhancement over the years.

In 1985 he applied to represent Australia as a referee at the 1986 World Championship in Toronto but managed only to be selected as the alternate. He felt the selection and evaluation process left a lot to be desired as it was largely done by people with little or no officiating experience, and so he decided to retire from full time officiating at the end of the 1985 season and concentrate on developing a coaching / mentoring process for referees, as they were known in those days, and set up a suitable process for selection of officials to attend national championships and world championships, including the creation of the national referee grading system.

In the initial stages he travelled at his own cost to the various national championships and asked various other suitably qualified retired referees, including Don Reymont, Basil Greenhalgh and Dennis Marsden, to join him on the side lines to observe and then provide feedback to the participating referees. It was as a result of this work he was appointed the Australian rules adjudicator in 1988.

He attended all but a few of every national senior carnival through to 2001, firstly as an assessor in a voluntary/honorary capacity and then, after the establishment of the national technical committee, as referee in chief (W.A.) from 1992 to 1995, and then as referee in chief for Australia from 1996 to 2002.

In 1998 he was selected by the International Lacrosse Federation (ILF) to be the chief referee at the 1999 Under 19 World Championship in Adelaide. At this championship he introduced the ILF to the assessor / mentor system that had been developed in Australia. In 2001 he was selected as chief referee for the 2002 World Championship in Perth where he was again able to demonstrate the system to the ILF and its senior officials. Following the 2002 championship, the assessor /mentoring system was formally adopted by the ILF and has been continued to be used, with ongoing enhancements, ever since.

Sadly Lindsay was forced to retire from his highly active involvement in lacrosse in 2003 after his wife Nancy was severely disabled in a workplace accident, which necessitated Lindsay becoming her primary carer. Fortunately, he was able to continue to attend world championships to help administer the assessment system.

From 2006 he was invited to attend world championships to assist with the administration of the system which led to the ILF establishing the formal position of Referee (Officiating) Administrator. Just to further explain the roles, the referee administrator is responsible for the administration of the referee assessment system for the participating referees, controlling the assessment process, to facilitate grading of referees over the championship, and providing reports to the chief referee. The chief referee is in charge of allocations, controls the team of assessors, and is responsible for all officials.

He was subsequently appointed to this position for 8 world championships up to and including 2022. As the system gradually became computerised and the size of the officials' team increased the role of officiating administrator morphed into the role of team manager for the officiating team. For the 2018 World Championship in Netanya, Israel, the officials' team had over 100 members. In 2022, after the Under 19 World Championship in Ireland he decided to retire.

In recognition of his contribution to World Lacrosse officiating, he was awarded the inaugural World Lacrosse International Officiating Award in 2022.



In terms of roles at Nedlands-Subiaco, Lindsay was on committee from 1970 -1973 and 1991-1994, served as secretary 1971-72, Club W.A.L.A. Delegate in 1972, director - junior lacrosse from 1990-1994, club referee (Juniors) from 1988 -1992, and statistician for the Under 17 team in 1995.

At state level Lindsay was Manager of the W.A. Under 15 team (1991), Co-Manager W.A. Under 17 team (1992), Assistant Manager - W.A. Under 17 team (1993), a member of the W.A. tribunal (1991-1995), Statistician W.A. Under 17 team (1995), a member of the WALA Junior Lacrosse Council (1993-94) and a member of the W.A.L.A. 2002 World Championship committee.



Lindsay has been a member of ALRA (W.A.) from 1976 to the present time, was awarded life membership of ALRA (W.A.) in 1992, acted as secretary of ALRA (W.A.) in 1980, a member of the W.A. allocations panel from 1980-1987, treasurer of ALRA (W.A.) 1983 - 1987 and 1999 - 2002, W.A. referee assessor 1986-1987, chief referee W.A. 1987 – 1991.

At the national level Lindsay was an assessor or referee in chief at national championships from 1986-2002. In terms of roles at the national level Lindsay has been ALC rules adjudicator (1988-91), was an inaugural member of the national technical committee (1992), ALC referee in chief (W.A.) (1992-95), and director of Lacrosse Australia - special projects and officiating (2001-03).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1. In 1985 as ALC national rules adjudicator Lindsay proposed the following to ALC which was finally adopted by in 1992:
 - The use of a national accreditation panel for appointment of referees at national and international championships. (Note this was finally endorsed by ALRA (National) in 1988 after being formally proposed by ALRA (WA) in 1987). This led to the establishment of the national technical committee in 1992.

- The need for all states to send at least one referee to each national carnival. (Note this was finally introduced by ALC for 1995)
- 2. Rewrote the Australian lacrosse rule book in 1985 which was adopted and used from 1986.
- 3. Developed and used the first quantitative referee assessments including formal peer and coach assessments.
- 4. Updated the ILF referees manual to incorporate the position of bench manager as well as bring it into line with current rules and procedures.

Over the journey, from his first world championship in 1988 until he retired in July 2022 Lindsay reflects - "I had the most incredible time and was so fortunate to be able to attend so many world championships. The worldwide group of lifelong lacrosse friends I made, most of them from the officiating fraternity, are the most amazing group of people you would ever want to meet. I believe I was truly blessed to be fortunate enough to be a part of it".

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

1992 Life Membership of ALRA (W.A.)
1995 Lacrosse Australia Certificate of Merit
2000 W.A. Team of the Millennium - Referee
2000 Australian Sports Medal
2012 FIL Spirit of Lacrosse Award
2022 World Lacrosse International Officiating Award

CONCLUSION

While many lacrosse people respond adversely to disappointment by abandoning our great game, Lindsay Scott saw flaws in the process and brought about change in a methodical and positive way. He didn't just bring about minor change, he installed systematic processes that led to a rigorous evaluation of the performances of referees along with feedback processes, and at the same time bringing former referees into the process rather than coaches or officials who frankly had no experience in this area.

Lindsay did a lot over 36 years, and what a lot of the modern era lacrosse enthusiasts may not appreciate is that up until the turn of the last century the referees and the assessors had to pay for their own airfares and accommodation for the privilege to participate in national and world championships. There aren't too many referees who get chaired off the ground or celebrated after these events!!!

What does amaze the writer when looking through his achievements at club, state, national and international levels, is that he only has one life membership, and that is from the Australian Lacrosse Referees Association, notwithstanding his service has been recognized by World Lacrosse.

Well done Lindsay Scott, you were not only enduring but very altruistic, you brought about substantial change, thinking of the game and how the refereeing aspect could be improved, ultimately contributing to a better competition and spectacle.

The Creator would be pleased.