



WHERE DOES LACROSSE COME FROM?

ANYONE WHO ENJOYS THE GAME OF LACROSSE IN CANADA OWES A DEBT OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE TO THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA. LACROSSE IS NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST TEAM SPORT AND DATES BACK TO 1100 A.D. THIS IS ALMOST FOUR HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS ARRIVED ON THIS CONTINENT!

AT THAT TIME, IT WASN'T EVEN CALLED LACROSSE. DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES HAD DIFFERENT NAMES LIKE BAGGATAWAY OR TEWAARRATHON. THE WORD LACROSSE CAME FROM EARLY FRENCH SETTLERS (1600S) WHO BELIEVED THE STICKS LOOKED LIKE STAFFS CARRIED BY BISHOPS (HENCE THE NAME "THE CROSS").

THE HAUDENOSAUNEE (PRONOUNCED HO-DI-NAH-SHOW-NEE), LOCATED IN THE UPPER NEW YORK AND SOUTHERN REGIONS OF CANADA, ARE CREDITED AS BEING THE FIRST PEOPLE TO PLAY THE GAME. THE NAME TRANSLATES TO PEOPLE OF THE LONGHOUSE, BUT THEY ARE KNOWN BY OTHER NAMES TOO. THE FRENCH CALLED THEM IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY. THE ENGLISH CALLED THEM FIVE NATIONS - THEY WERE FIVE UNIQUE TRIBES - THE MOHAWK, ONEIDA, ONONDAGA, CAYUGA AND SENECA. IN THE 1700S, THE TUSCARORA JOINED MAKING IT SIX NATIONS.

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BELIEVE THE GAME WAS GIVEN TO THEM BY THE CREATOR. IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE HEALING POWERS AND IS ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE MEDICINE GAME.

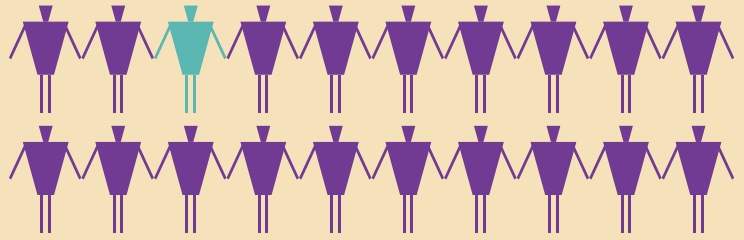
THE ORIGINAL FORMAT WAS PLAYED BETWEEN COMMUNITIES FOR SOCIAL PURPOSES OR TO SETTLE DISPUTES. ANYWHERE FROM 100 - 1000 PLAYERS, ACCOMPANIED BY WOODEN STICKS, NET BASKETS AND DEER HIDE-WRAPPED BALLS, PLAYED ON BORDERLESS FIELDS OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. SOMETIMES, THE FIELDS STRETCHED FOR MILES AND THE GAMES LASTED FOR DAYS!

THE MODERN GAME WE PLAY IS DIFFERENT. THERE ARE GOVERNING BODIES WHO SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF LACROSSE, INCLUDING WORLD LACROSSE ASSOCIATION, LACROSSE CANADA, USA LACROSSE AND U.S. BOX LACROSSE ASSOCIATION. PLAYERS WEAR PROTECTIVE GEAR AND EQUIPMENT. THE GAME IS PLAYED IN FIELD HOUSES, ARENAS, OUTDOOR STADIUMS AND TURF FIELDS. BUT, THESE MODIFICATIONS DON'T CHANGE THE HISTORY OF THE GAME.

TODAY, THE MONTRÉAL AREA IS HOME TO THE LARGEST AND MOST POPULOUS HAUDENOSAUNEE RESERVES IN CANADA. IN FACT, IT IS THE ONLY RESERVE IN NORTH AMERICA WHERE ALL SIX NATIONS LIVE TOGETHER.

IT IS UP TO ALL OF US, PLAYERS AND FANS, TO REMEMBER ITS ORIGIN, SHARE THE STORIES, RESPECT THE TRADITIONS, AND HONOR ITS INDIGENOUS ROOTS.

1/20



EVERY ONE OUT OF TWENTY CITIZENS IN CANADA IDENTIFIES AS AN INDIGENOUS PERSON.

3

THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION RECOGNIZES THREE GROUPS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES: INDIANS (MORE COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS FIRST NATIONS), INUIT AND METIS.

630

THERE ARE MORE THAN 630 FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES IN CANADA. THIS REPRESENTS MORE THAN 50 NATIONS AND 50 INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

133

THERE ARE 133 FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES IN ONTARIO, MAKING IT THE LARGEST INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN CANADA.

23%

23% OF FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE IN ONTARIO LIVE ON A RESERVE

