



WHERE DOES LACROSSE COME FROM?

ANYONE WHO ENJOYS THE GAME OF LACROSSE IN THE UNITED STATES 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.

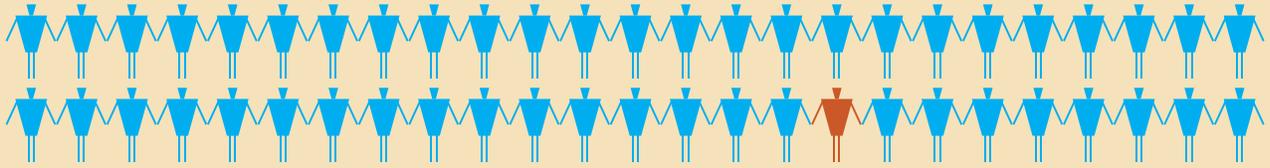
THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BELIEVE THE GAME WAS GIVEN TO THEM BY THE CREATOR. IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE HEALING POWERS AND IS ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE MEDICINE GAME.

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.



1/50

EVERY ONE OUT OF FIFTY AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES IDENTIFIES AS AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE. THAT'S ROUGHLY, 6 MILLION AMERICANS.

1M

ONE MILLION NATIVE AMERICANS IDENTIFY WITH THE CHEROKEE NATION, MAKING IT THE MOST COMMON TRIBAL AFFILIATION IN THE UNITED STATES. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR ROUGHLY 1/6 OF THE TOTAL NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION

20%

20% OF ALASKA'S POPULATION IDENTIFIES AS NATIVE AMERICAN, MAKING IT THE STATE WITH THE LARGEST SHARE OF NATIVE AMERICAN RESIDENTS.

574

THERE ARE 574 FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES IN THE UNITED STATES.

324

THERE ARE 324 FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED AMERICAN INDIAN RESERVATIONS, ACROSS 100 MILLION ACRES, IN THE UNITED STATES.

SOURCE: WWW.LIVINGFACTS.ORG

