



Annual Report 2020-2021 Nederlandse Lacrosse Bond (NLB)

This annual report of the NLB gives an overview of the activities of Netherland Lacrosse (Dutch Lacrosse Bond) for the lacrosse year 2020-2021, which runs from 1 August 2020 to 1 August 2021.

Lacrosse is now [Olympic](#), the biggest development in decades. This news alone has recharged energy and enthusiasm after COVID-19 forced us to a standstill. The new board has delivered lots of new initiatives to better support associations and the federation. It was a unique and momentous year despite the impact of COVID-19. We are extremely proud of the lacrosse community and how everyone rallied around each other.

COVID-19

- It impacted us tremendously, our entire season was cancelled, first ever for the NLB.
- We took the opportunity to focus on developing the administration, back office, and organizational aspects of the federation.
- We turned a hard situation into a positive one by shifting focus and organizing alternative activities. We are extremely proud of our associations and their members for their approach and attitude during these hard times.
- The NLB is in a strong position both financially and strategically despite COVID-19. Next season is poised for success.

Following

- The number of full members remain largely similar to last season, despite a cancelled season due to COVID-19. This indicates a high level of player loyalty and dedication for their associations and sport.
- Training members declined substantially. This was expected because of COVID-19. These members are typically new players. Without practice opportunities, motivation, and strong personal connections formed through playing, they lost interest.
- 60 youth members were registered for '20-'21, up from 24 the year prior.

Membership	'19-'20	'20-'21
Game	682	688
Training	285	183
Total	967	871

Board and organization of lacrosse in the Netherlands

- Large and sweeping changes for NLB this season. Chairman (Tom Thayer) brought in new, fresh ideas and ambitions.
- Stef Groen joined the board as Treasurer, replacing Cynthia Bousema after her two year term ended in June, 2021. Stef co-founded the Domstad Devils, is MDNT alumnus and former TNL secretaris. Lyle Worthington joined the Board as Program Director in the summer of 2020. He is a former US lacrosse player and Amsterdam Lions defender. Jorrit Duinck joined as Head of Strategic Partnerships, a former MDNT defender and Amsterdam Lion alumnus. He was appointed to the board in the fall of 2020. All three board members love the sport and bring a wealth of leadership and professional experience to their positions.
- A special note to Jasper van der Horst, our Vice-Voorzitter and interim Secretaris for many years now. Jasper continues to step up and support the federation in any/all tasks, even with interim status, he was gracious and enthusiastic to help. Jasper will continue to support lacrosse in a non-board function moving forward, which means this is the end of an era and a moment to celebrate and say thank you once more.
- Recruitment for the Secretary position is challenging. Encouraging more women to join NLB leadership positions is slow. Recruitment of women remains a priority for the board.
- The Executive Committee was created to better serve clubs and the federation's needs. It is a [leadership group](#) comprised of 22 individuals that focus on various aspects of the sport. Everyone is qualified in their function and the impact of this group was immediate.



- ALVs have shifted from twice a year to once a quarter. This season, we had five ALVs and implemented a remote voting and feedback system. These meetings are more engaging for associations and the board receives a constant flow of feedback.
- [WBTR](#) has been carefully reviewed and changes will soon be implemented with the board. We have informed our associations thanks to Claire Seijsener, our Chief Legal Counsel. Our Head of Strategic Partnerships, Jorrit Duinink also played a key role. The NLB now has a partnership with the [Instituut voor Verenigingen \(IVBB\)](#). The IVBB will help each association ensure compliance with new WBTR legislation. This was a great example of teamwork.
- As a part-time, volunteer organization, we face retention challenges for various board and committee positions. There are high levels of engagement periods, followed by lulls of inactivity that create challenges for larger, multi-month projects.
- [Box Lacrosse](#) Director Arttu Sesselaar has formally submitted interest to World Lacrosse for The Netherlands to host the 2024 World Box Lacrosse Championship in Tilburg.
- Box lacrosse has made good steps towards integration with the NLB for next season. Integration of administrative tasks related to membership payments, officials, and scheduling with the NLB's systems and processes will be built out and made ready next year.
- All NLB [committees](#) were individually reviewed and refreshed. Each one was discussed and re-approved by the ALV. A special thanks to Ercüment Unsurorlu, our Director of Operations for coordinating this big task.
- Membership Administration, led by Gijs de Bles has moved from an independent commission into the Executive Committee for better alignment.

Associations

- We welcomed [Ogers Lax](#) as a full association on June 2021, the club is expected to field a full men's 2nd division team and combination teams for women's and youth next season.
- [LoKust lacrosse](#) is our newest addition to the NLB, with aspirational member status. Lokust is focused on gathering enough players for a youth team. The association is in Zeeland and was founded by [Grassroots Lacrosse](#), a project aimed at expanding lacrosse in Zeeland, led by Daniël Sterenborg.
- [LLV Leicrosse](#), Leiden was awarded the 2021 [Club of the Year](#) for the city of Leiden. Their resilience, support and leadership throughout the pandemic helped them earn this distinction.
- Due to COVID-19, we were not able to invite the Ghent Gazelles Lacrosse Club to participate in the women's competition because of cross boarder restrictions and player safety concerns at the time.
- Volwaardige leden – 13
 - Amsterdam Lacrosse, Delft Lacrosse, Den Haag Lacrosse, Domstad Devils, Keizerstad Kannibalz, L.L.V. Lacrosse, Lacrosse Groningen, Maastricht Lacrosse, MH&LC Tempo - Ogers Lax - Bergen op Zoom, Phoenix Lacrosse Enschede, Rotterdam Jaguars, Wageningen Warriors, Were Di Lacrosse – Tilburg
- Aspirant leden – 2
 - LoKust Lacrosse, Amersfoort Alligators

Competition men and women

- Cancelled due to Corona
- Despite cancellation, Jorik van Baal, our competition coordinator planned and organized the entire season with the help of the planning committee. The committee itself graciously declined payment after COVID-19 cancelled everything, even though the work was done.
- We launched a central events calendar where players can download an iCal and stay up to date on the latest events for the sport. A key frustration point that was easily addressed.

Cup and other tournaments

- Jonas Heller, our Head of Events launched Summer League this season. This was the most successful tournament the NLB has ever done. Expectations were met way beyond what we could have imagined. We originally planned for 100 participants, but there were over 250 registrants (30% of members) signed up by the time it started. We will continue hosting summer leagues in the future. A huge thank you to Jonas.
- Dutch Lacrosse Cup (DLC), a Lax Academy initiative was cancelled due to corona. This was to be a tournament where teams mixed players from different associations. We expect the DLC to launch next season after tremendous reception, over 150 players registered for the event.



- Newcomers Tournament (NCT) occurred and we welcomed new players from across the country. There were 16 teams and roughly 200 players at the tournament, one of the biggest ever.

Jeugdcompetitie

- Cancelled due to Corona
- [Grassroots Lacrosse program](#) was active this season thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of its coordinator, Daniël Sterenborg. He was able to deliver clinics and workshops since restrictions were lifted earlier for young players.
- [Lacrosse Sixes](#), a new discipline for the Olympics was tested at a youth tournament in summer. It was well received and the roll-out of this new discipline is expected to occur next season.
- Our communication and overall strategy now includes parents, as they are important for a child's participation in a sport. We hosted webinars in the spring to explain rules and regulations.
- Our youth competition will follow the same scheduling and administrative approach as our adult league. Our Youth Director Friede Berendsen was instrumental in this, and for the roll-out of Sixes (and much more).

Referees

- [Lacrosse Academy](#) delivered training courses for the first part of the season. For the second half, the NLB decided to no longer outsource our officials training to Lacrosse Academy. We are in the process of launching the [Online Officials Portal \(OOP\)](#), which will serve as the key system for online training, administration, and certification for officials.
- Box lacrosse and youth will integrate into the OOP and in general, merge their administration into central committees for deeper alignment and collaboration.
- Internationally, officials did not travel or participate in tournaments due to COVID-19.
- The officials committee was instrumental in reviewing, drafting, and approving the Sixes rules for youth, a big thank you for Sanne Visser and Guido van de Lindeloof for their expert advice and work.

National Teams

- [National teams](#) were hit hard by COVID-19 and nearly all programs faced delays and adjustments to their tournament schedules.
- MDNT u20 (men's under 20) World Championship was postponed by a year (from June 2021 to August 2022). The age limit was moved up to u21 for this tournament to retain the eligibility of players before COVID-19.
- MDNT, the men's European championship was postponed for the second time, then cancelled outright. The senior men will now play in a modified tournament in April 2022. This tournament is to qualify for the World Championships in 2023.
- Men's Box Lacrosse will compete in the World Championships next summer (2022), after a one-year delay.
- WDNT, the senior women's team, will compete in the World Championships next summer (2022), after a one-year delay.
- WDNT u20 program has been launched and they are actively recruiting players and staff for the program.
- Topsport Nederland Lacrosse (TNL) continues to be managed by Roelof Vuurboom (Voorzitter) and Peter Boogers (Penningmeester). This is an umbrella federation to manage all finances for national teams.

Quality improvement and safe sports climate

- The NLB created a player development toolkit, which was rolled out to all associations with webinars. Other federations in Europe reviewed the toolkit and some are translating it to their local language. A special thanks for our heads of player development (Adam Grey for men, and Taylor Brown for women) on this momentous accomplishment and critical program.
- We hosted a faceoff webinar for men. It was run by Greg Gurenlian, a professional lacrosse player based in the US and founder of [The FaceOff Academy](#).
- We launched a new commission on Health, Wellness, and Inclusion. This committee will focus on all aspects described in the title as we look to build our "total athlete" program and ensure lacrosse remains open and available to everyone. Geerte Olthuis, our Chief Medical Officer will lead this committee.
- Two webinars were hosted by sports psychologist Marjolein Torenbeek, discussing motivation back in May as a pilot program. This was well received, and further roll-out plans are scheduled for next season.



- We launched [The Coaches Portal](#). This portal allows associations to request coaching support for specific topics/practices. Use of the portal was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- The NLB Executive Committee has hosted training camps at summer league, provided coaching support upon request and via the coaches portal, and delivered webinars and phone calls on various aspects of the game.
- We launched a weekly series on Instagram called, “[workout of the week](#)”, which was deployed to teach and sport specific exercises.
- Tom Thayer, Sander Palfenier and Geerte Olthuis met with Laila Spruijt and Wendy Schootemeijer to discuss anti-doping regulations, education, and training. Roll-out to national teams and associations was delayed, but it will be implemented next season and expanded to include more players beyond national team members.
- Parental consent forms for youth have been updated to better inform parents about the sport and associated risks. This ensures they are taking an informed decision about the child’s participation.
- Els Manders served as our vertrouwenspersoon and plans are underway to recruit a second person to expand the role and its reach. Her role, function, and contact details were shared during an ALV.
- We started the process of getting all coaches and leader positions VOG certified.

Promotion of the sport

- Our social media tripled in followers to 2K ([Instagram](#)) and our impact continues to expand. Influencers and other federations share our content. Head of Marketing, Thomas Haitzma was responsible for this, a big thank you for his efforts.
- We’ve created templates and best practices for associations to follow whenever they want to tag and promote their own lacrosse activities. The [#thisisnllax](#) has been trending well with over 1K posts and has enabled us to unify social media activity across multiple associations/members.
- The NLB purchased an AI sports camera from [VEO Technologies](#), a start-up company in Copenhagen. The camera automatically tracks games with professional quality and movement. The games and highlights will be shared on our newly revamped YouTube channel. Roll-out was delayed due to COVID-19.
- We launched a quarterly newsletter and [linktree website](#). The infrastructure was setup and designed by our Digital Marketing Director, Emilio Monaco.
- We are actively discussing partnerships with professional lacrosse organizations, players, and corporations. We officially partnered with four new companies: [Behind the Arc](#), [Alliance Lacrosse](#), [Nutrisense](#) and the [Instituut voor Verenigingen](#). Our Head of Strategic Partnerships, Jorrit Duinick is to thank for this and the many ongoing discussions with other organizations.
- Domstad Devils (Utrecht), launched a [virtual tutorial series](#) that introduced prospective players to lacrosse. It continues to receive views and was a great example of promoting the game in a fun, easy to understand way.
- [Behind the Arc](#) is a company that specializes in sports marketing in The Netherlands. We are working on a new, multi-year marketing strategy focused on brand identity and expanding the presence of our sport locally.
- The NLB has outsourced photography to various contractors so that each player has an action photo, a key objective for us. It was rolled out during Summer League. Players were posting and sharing their action shots online, it was great to see so much activity and buzz!
- Overall, with the NLB pushing more marketing, our associations followed and have been extremely active in this realm. Local media outlets are also picking up lacrosse and interviewing associations more frequently.

Association support

- Governance and strategy were a key focus since many of our associations are student run, with short appointment terms, and lots of attrition year over year.
- Every association met with board member Lyle Worthington, our Program Director. Associations presented their annual strategy to Lyle and discussed alignment, support, and improvement points. Some key takeaways from their meetings are: better documentation, more board positions to divide the work, and a proactive mentality. A big thank you to Lyle Worthington on the countless hours spent on this.
- [Phoenix Lacrosse Enschede](#) presented their annual strategic plan at an ALV to showcase best practices and inspire other associations to do the same, excellent work everyone.
- More ALVs and involvement from the NLB helped address back-office matters. As an example, Tilburg was facing challenges with lining their field and the NLB stepped in to discuss it directly with the KNHB and reach a nice solution.



- Subsidies are available for associations to apply for. Since most subsidies are linked to on-field activities, COVID-19 limited the opportunity for associations to apply this season.

Accommodations in Facilities

- Our current agreement with Amersfoort remains in place and we have tremendous local contacts that support us, Mike Chin specifically. Pricing for these fields doubled from previous seasons, but so did our use of the fields. We remain committed and appreciative of this partnership as it delivers great value to us.
- Box lacrosse will follow the same model we have for Amersfoort. The NLB will subsidize rink expenses for a “central box lacrosse location” in Utrecht. Planning is still underway.

Financial

- COVID-19 impacted us with membership revenue. We decided to provide a 50% discount to full members and waived the fees entirely for training and youth members.
- Our original budget assumed a competition, which was cancelled. We deviated substantially from our original plan, but COVID-19 created uncertainty everywhere.
- Despite a drop in membership revenue, our costs also were reduced at similar rates because of COVID-19.
- [World Lacrosse](#) granted the NLB with nearly 17K in funding. This was allocated to the [Grassroots Lacrosse](#) project, with an additional 3K in NLB funding for this project totalling 20K. Funding is one-off, but Grassroots Lacrosse will continue under the direction of Daniël Sterenborg, the project coordinator.
- Despite the impact of COVID-19 and adjustments to our membership fees, the NLB remains financially healthy with good savings. Our goal this coming season is to reduce these savings through careful investment and develop a more stable equilibrium between our revenues and expenses.
- Treasurer Cynthia Bousema was victim to a cybercrime. Someone fraudulently claimed to be Tom Thayer (Chairman) and asked for 5K in insurance and project management expenses. Cynthia unknowingly transferred this amount to the fake company. A police report has been filed and insurance claims made, but it is unlikely that we will recover this amount. A big loss and unfortunate situation that serves as a stark reminder to all members on the importance of being vigilant with payment requests.
- We saw healthy revenue diversification thanks to the Summer League. Costs were a bit higher due to one-time equipment purchases, but these items can be used for multiple seasons, making this a very worthwhile activity to support moving forward.

NOC*NSF

- Sander Palfenier served as our dedicated liaison for the NOC/NSF and the board is extremely grateful for his work. The contacts with NOC*NSF are good and informative.
- Our relationship with NOC*NSF remains strong and we continue to prioritize all compliance and requirements. Remaining in good standing with the NOC*NSF is one of the highest priorities for the board.
- We look forward to continuing our work together and expanding our presence within the NOC*NSF as our sport grows and Olympic aspirations are set.
- Furthermore, the board has worked to continue to meet the minimum quality requirements and to expand where necessary. As a guideline, the code 'Good Sports Governance' has been used.

International federations and developments

- NLB applied for a World Lacrosse grant in partnership with Germany and Belgium to create a joint membership and statistics database. This was the first joint European grant application ever awarded by World Lacrosse. An additional ~7K will be provided through the grant to develop [LeagueMasters](#), a new membership registration system that the NLB will use in the future after more functionality is introduced.
- The sport has become Olympic. It will follow a new discipline called Sixes. Sixes has a similar dynamic to handball and basketball. It is fast paced and intended to reach wider audiences through simplification of rules and consistency between men's and women's disciplines.
- We have formally partnered with the German federation ([DLAXV](#)) to support and promote their [European lacrosse convention](#), which will be held in Dresden Germany, May 2022. The Men's Box National Team will also compete in a high-profile exhibition scrimmage during the convention.



- Jasper van der Horst serves as the NLB's contact for [World Lacrosse](#) and [European Lacrosse Federation](#). Our relationships and contact remains strong. The Netherlands is well regarded internationally thanks to his efforts and leadership.

Evaluation good sports governance

- A full evaluation did not occur this season, it will be incorporated next season.
- The code 'Good Sports Governance' has been used as a guiding principle.

2019-2020 overall

- Despite the lack of league games, this has been a tremendous year for the NLB. We revamped nearly every aspect of our organization and continue to be financially strong. Our player base and commitment to the sport shows in the work we've accomplished in just one season. Even with a cancelled competition, we were able to build interest and bring smiles to players through SummerLeague. This momentum will carry us forward into next season with great energy and motivation to keep going. It's still too soon to tell how the Olympic status will impact the sport domestically, but it will certainly have a positive effect. We are extremely proud of our associations and members for how they handled COVID-19. They kept their composure, positive attitude and worked hard, especially during lockdown(s).
- As Chairman, I want to express my sincerest gratitude to everyone involved in the sport. To the Board and Executive Committee, a very special thanks for all that you've done and the work you continue to do. The sport's future is brighter than ever. This is truly a special community and this season showed me that it's the people that make it so special, thank you once more.