

## Lacrosse – A Quick Canadian Tidbit

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First played in either the 1300s or 1400s by the Huron, Algonquian or Iroquois, lacrosse is a fast paced sport requiring quick reflexes and skill at ball handling. Originally called baggataway in Algonquin (“they bump hips”) or Tewaathan in the Iroquois language (“little brother of war”) was played from dawn to dusk and in some cases a game could last for several days. The game was considered part tribal negotiation, religious rite and military training. Taking place on open ground the goals could be ½ a mile apart with teams of anywhere up to hundreds of players. The sticks were between 3 to 4 feet long and had a small net on the end to catch the ball of deerskin or stone.



The game received its modern name from the French Jesuit Missionary, Jean de Brébeuf, noticed that the sticks resembled the crozier or crosse carried by bishops. In the 1840s Europeans started to ‘modernize’ the game by standardizing the field to 125 yards in length with teams only able to field 12 players at a time. They also shortened the sticks and changed the ball from stuffed deerskin to hard rubber.

Today the senior amateur champions in Canada win the Mann Cup. It is a solid gold trophy and one of the most valuable trophies in sports. Junior Amateur teams compete for the Minto Cup.

### References

Canada’s History Magazine, Aug. Sept 2010

[http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacqi/nph-brs?s1=\(lacrosse.ANYP.\)+Or+\(lacrosse.ANYI.+And+null.B742.\)&l=20&d=STMP&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02011702\\_e.html&r=1&=G&Sect1=STMP](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacqi/nph-brs?s1=(lacrosse.ANYP.)+Or+(lacrosse.ANYI.+And+null.B742.)&l=20&d=STMP&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02011702_e.html&r=1&=G&Sect1=STMP)