

Making Everything Easier!™

2nd Edition

Lacrosse

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Understand the field, box, and women's games
- Get the proper equipment
- Improve your offensive and defensive skills
- Keep up with college and professional games

Jim Hinkson
Joe Lombardi



Lacrosse for Dummies[®] 2nd Edition

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by Jim Hinkson and Joe Lombardi



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About the Authors

Jim Hinkson: Jim has been involved in the game of lacrosse since he was 19. He played lacrosse for 11 years and was a member of six Canadian national minor championship teams. He has coached at every level of lacrosse, from house league to professional, participating in two Canadian junior championships, and winning one. He also coached teams in Toronto, Whitby, and St. Catharines, Ontario, as well as the New York Saints and New Jersey Storms, who competed in the National Lacrosse League. Hinkson, who grew up on a farm in Oshawa, Ontario, has authored five books on lacrosse and coaching. Hinkson was the primary author of the first edition of Lacrosse For Dummies, which focused mainly on box lacrosse.

Joe Lombardi: Joe is one of the most established, respected, and versatile multimedia journalists in the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut tri-state area. He has worked as an editor and reporter for daily and weekly newspapers; as a writer for national magazines; as a host, announcer, and analyst on television and radio; and as associate publisher and contributor for several sports-related Web sites, including Rivals.com, CBS MaxPreps (www.maxpreps.com), and LaxLessons.com.

One constant throughout Joe's career has been his work on the lacrosse scene. He was a fixture on the scene during the sport's rapid growth. A New York City native, Joe grew up in historic Irvington in New York's Hudson Valley region. In 2008, he was named Man of the Year by the Lacrosse Coaches Association of Section 1 (Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, and Dutchess counties in New York). A graduate of the University of Dayton in Ohio, Joe is the primary author of Lacrosse For Dummies, 2nd Edition.

Dedication

For Chuck Howard, a sports broadcasting pioneer, who taught me about lacrosse and broadcasting, and who would've loved to have seen the popularity the sport he loved now enjoys.

—Joe Lombardi



Authors' Acknowledgments

Jim Hinkson: Thanks to my former teammates, players, and friends in lacrosse who have touched my life as I journeyed along my whirlwind lacrosse path. From Oshawa to Brooklin to Detroit to Peterborough to Windsor to Philadelphia to Rexdale to Whitby to St. Catharines to New York to Toronto to New Jersey, it has been a great ride with lots of ups and downs.

Joe Lombardi: I've watched and covered hundreds of men's and women's lacrosse games, but writing this book allowed me to enjoy a true first: I became a student of the game. Many thanks to the countless coaches and players for all their invaluable insights and for their eagerness and openness to help. I am especially grateful to Joe Alberici, Ric Beardsley, Kristen Carano Bulkley, Paul Carcaterra, Roy Colsey, Tom Interlicchio, and Brian Logue for going above and beyond in sharing their knowledge with me. Special thanks to two former Loyola University

(Maryland) standouts, Jordan and Ryan Rabidou, for allowing me access to the valuable drills, practice plans, and plays that are now on display at LaxLessons.com. And finally, I'm indebted to my friend and colleague, Jim Stout, of CBS MaxPreps for generously providing photographs (taken by Stout and Ray Nelson) that are published in this new edition of Lacrosse For Dummies.

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Foreword

My first memory of lacrosse is from when I was an 11-year-old boy. My father and I walked down to the local high school to practice pitching on the baseball diamond. Before long, my attention wandered to the football field, where a game I had never seen before was being played. At first, I had trouble following the game. But soon I began to appreciate how the ball was passed from player to player with great speed and accuracy. Over and over, this same process was repeated until, finally, a player was close enough to the goal to take a shot.

That is the game of lacrosse, my father told me. Well, needless to say, baseball practice was over for me — not for the day, not for the summer, but forever. I had to play this game. And so it began — my love affair with North America's greatest and fastest game. I was hooked by the speed, the contact, the strategy. And I'm sure that a million lacrosse players the world over have experienced something similar. To see this game is to love it.

With its unique style, rules, and following, lacrosse is a truly amazing sport. It's a combination of many sports: You can see bits and pieces of football, hockey, soccer, and basketball in a lacrosse game — hard, physical contact; shooting on goal; running up and down the field at high speed; and offensive and defensive strategy.

Lacrosse is an amazing combination of some of the greatest team games in the world, and, as such, it has quickly become one of the fastest growing sports around. When I started playing, a handful of lacrosse hotbeds

existed in the United States: Maryland, upstate New York, and New York's Hudson Valley, where I'm from. Those hotbeds were where the game was played at its highest level among high school and youth teams. Today, lacrosse has exploded into a national phenomenon. Teams from Texas, Florida, California, and Colorado are among the many competing at the high school and youth level. Colleges are adding both men's and women's teams. Why has lacrosse grown so quickly? Watch one game, my friend — just watch one game. You'll be hooked, too.

Roy Colsey

Three-time first-team All-American and Division I Midfielder of the Year and member of two national championship teams at Syracuse University; four-time Major League Lacrosse All-Star, National Lacrosse League All-Star

Introduction

Lacrosse is the fastest growing sport in North America, with the record number of players and fans in field lacrosse now spearheading that growth. In this book, we explore the reasons for this surge in participation and fan interest, but if you've ever been to a game — or better yet, if you play or coach lacrosse — you already know the reasons.

In a nutshell, lacrosse features the physicality of football, the speed and quickness of hockey, and the passing and transitions of basketball. Anyone can play this sport — from shorter people with speed and quickness to bigger people with strength and power. And after you start, it's very tough to stop. Lacrosse is habit forming.

About This Book

The first edition of *Lacrosse For Dummies* emphasized box lacrosse. In this edition, we shift the focus to field lacrosse, but we still offer plenty of information and insights on box as well. Both editions have one important thing in common: Like the first edition, this book is for players, coaches, and fans at all levels of lacrosse.

The beauty of *For Dummies* books is that you can use them to find what you need to know, without having to wade through a bunch of stuff you don't care about. Just pick up the book and start reading anywhere you want. Sure, you can read it from front to back, but you don't have to — you can read each chapter on its own, without feeling like you're in the dark.

Conventions Used in This Book

We don't use many special conventions in this book, but be aware of the following:

When we introduce a new term, we put it in *italics* and define it shortly thereafter (often in parentheses).

When we give you a list of steps to take in a particular order, we put the actionable part of the step in **bold** so you can easily find what you're supposed to do.

When we mention Web addresses and e-mail addresses, we put those in monofont so they stand out from the surrounding text.

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that we haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So, when using one of these Web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.

Throughout the book, when we refer to *box lacrosse*, we're talking about the version of the game that is most popular in Canada and that is played exclusively indoors — with fewer players per team and a reduced playing surface. Field lacrosse can be played either outdoors or indoors, so, for that reason, we don't use the terms *indoor lacrosse* or *outdoor lacrosse*.

Finally, despite the male-oriented names of positions — such as attackman and defenseman — most of the information found in this book applies to all lacrosse players, male and female. When distinct differences exist between men's lacrosse and women's lacrosse, we make sure to note them.

What You're Not to Read

If you're short on time, you'll be glad to know that you don't have to read everything to get the information you need. You can safely skip sidebars (text in gray boxes); they're interesting, but not essential to your understanding of the topic at hand. You can also skip anything marked with the Technical Stuff icon (see "Icons Used in This Book," later, for more information).

Foolish Assumptions

When we wrote this book, we made a few assumptions about who you are. You probably fall into one of the following categories:

You know nothing about lacrosse, but you saw it being played somewhere and it piqued your interest. You want to know more.

You already play lacrosse, but you want to improve. You're looking for techniques and strategies you can use to up your game.

You're a parent whose son or daughter has started playing lacrosse. You want to know what to expect

from your kid's coach, and what exactly those kids are doing when they're out on the field.

You're a coach who wants to read about drills that other coaches run to improve their teams.

How This Book Is Organized

Lacrosse For Dummies, 2nd Edition, is presented in five parts, starting with the basics of the game — such as the ball and stick, the number of players, the equipment used, and the way the game is played. The rest of the book moves through how to watch the game, how to become a player, how to coach lacrosse, and how to follow the game. So this book can be whatever you want it to be — simple and basic or in depth.

Part I: Getting Started

This part gives you a good idea of what the basic game of lacrosse is all about, breaking the game down into simple terms and discussing the different player roles and positions, as well as some particulars about how the game is played. This part also discusses lacrosse equipment and how to get dressed so that you're well protected — a necessity in this sport. Finally, it gives you an overview of officiating, so you know what those guys in black-and-white stripes mean when they wave their arms around.

Part II: Playing Lacrosse

How do you score goals and prevent them from being scored? Those are the two most simple, yet most critical, aspects of lacrosse. In this part, we take an in-depth look at both — providing information that helps you develop offensive and defensive skills. We also take an up-close-and-personal look at what it takes to play goalie. We break down all the key components of two of the most important parts of lacrosse — the possession game and specialty teams. Finally, we tell you what you need to know to become a better player — both mentally and physically.

Part III: Coaching Lacrosse

Here, you discover the fundamentals of coaching lacrosse, including building a team and preparing for games and practices. We also tell you how a coach *game coaches*, from setting up an offensive system to establishing a defensive system and then applying these systems to certain situations in a game. We also look at specific offensive formations, as well as specific defensive sets.

Part IV: Following Lacrosse: The Fan's Point of View

Are you new to the game? In this part, we tell you what you should look for when watching lacrosse — offense, defense, you name it. We also cover how and where you can follow all levels of lacrosse on TV. Then we take an in-

depth look at “the surge,” which in this case, refers to the continuing growth in the popularity of the game. At many colleges and high schools, lacrosse’s popularity is hardly a new phenomenon, so we fill you in on the most tradition-rich high school and college programs. Finally, we tell you everything you need to know about the two pro leagues — Major League Lacrosse and the National Lacrosse League.

Part V: The Part of Tens

This essential part of every *For Dummies* book is fun because it includes our list of the top lacrosse players of all time. Now, considering the fact that this list includes men and women, field lacrosse players and box lacrosse players, you can look at this chapter as the starting point of discussions — and arguments. We also give you ten reasons to get excited about lacrosse (as if you needed them!), as well as ten interesting facts about the game.

In the back of this book, we include a couple of resources to share some of the nuts and bolts of lacrosse with you. To understand the game, you have to understand the language of lacrosse, so we include a glossary of lacrosse vocabulary. And the appendix offers some resources for more information on lacrosse, including magazines, Web sites, and organizations.

Icons Used in This Book

Every *For Dummies* book has icons in the margins, to draw attention to important tidbits and valuable advice. *Lacrosse For Dummies* uses the following icons: