

TORONTO ON – October 3, 2023 – The Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA, @ontariolacrosse) is saddened to share the passing of long time volunteer and friend Dean McLeod, on October 3, 2023. He was 76 years old.

From humble beginnings in 1967 as a game-day volunteer with the Brampton Excelsiors Lacrosse Club, to the position he is most widely known for as commissioner of the Ontario Junior “A” Lacrosse League for 38 seasons until his retirement in 2018, Dean’s tireless involvement at the club, league and provincial level was the most defining part of his character. Known throughout the lacrosse community for his knowledge and experience, he continued in service to the Ontario Junior Lacrosse League after his retirement as commissioner, transitioning to the role of league historian and volunteering with the 2022 Minto Cup host committee.

“Everyone loved Dean,” remarked Sean O’Callaghan, OLA President. “He remains one of the most influential and deeply-respected volunteers to the sport of lacrosse here in Ontario. We are so grateful for his many contributions to making the OLA and Junior ‘A’ Lacrosse what it is today. He will be missed.”

Dean earned numerous awards and accolades for his dedication to the game. Most notably, he was inducted into the Brampton Sports Hall of Fame as a Builder in 1997, the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame as a Builder in 1998 and the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame as a Builder in 1999. In 2012, he received the Diamond Jubilee Award by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, which was given to persons in recognition of significant contributions to Canada. In 2017, he received the OLA’s Golden Stick Award, commemorating 50 Years of Volunteer Service alongside good friend and fellow ambassador Ruby Lang, insisting that her name be called first out of admiration and respect. In 2021, Dean was named the Lacrosse Canada Lester B. Pearson Award recipient, in recognition of his unselfish dedication and outstanding contributions of sportsmanship and distinguished leadership to the game of lacrosse and to the physical and mental development of young Canadians. The Ontario Junior Lacrosse League’s Playoffs Most Valuable Player Award is officially named in his honour.

An announcement on a celebration of Dean’s life will be forthcoming.

