
- September 14, 2025 -

ONTARIO LACROSSE STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF FRANK LAWRENCE

The Ontario Lacrosse Association mourns the passing of legendary official Frank Lawrence, a man who was well-known as a tenacious advocate and mentor for officials throughout Ontario and beyond.

Frank Lawrence's commitment to developing referees for both box and field lacrosse was unparalleled, underscoring his legacy status as a builder and ambassador for the sport in the truest definitions. During his 35-year career, his extensive involvement spanned all facets, from on-floor game official to Official-in-Charge and Supervisor, shaping the standards and expectations of officiating not only in Ontario, but also throughout the national and international levels.

Best known to many as the face of the "A" Qualifiers Officiating Program, Frank (along with his lifelong friends Terry and Dale) kick-started the careers of over one hundred young officials along the pathway from minor to junior and senior box lacrosse divisions as graduates of the Qualifiers system. He spent considerable time influencing the lives and careers of many officials, meeting them where they were and helping them to reach their personal goals, all while reinforcing the fundamental lessons for success: attitude, reputation, passion, and respect for the game and its participants.

While he was relentlessly committed to the development and mentorship of other officials, Lawrence still led by example as an official himself in the thousands of box and field lacrosse games he worked, earning his reputation as one of the most reliable and respected referees in the sport, along with appearances at each of the four Lacrosse Canada National Championships, and multiple World Lacrosse Championships.

Over his illustrious career, Lawrence was recognized with numerous honours, including:

- 1999** Received the OLOA Jack Mann Award for commitment to officiating program development
- 2011** Recognized unanimously by the Ontario Lacrosse Officials Association with Life Membership
- 2011** Received the OLOA Gerry Ravary Award for dedication to the game of lacrosse
- 2012** Elected to Ontario Lacrosse Association Board of Directors as Vice President, Officiating
- 2015** Named as the first ever recipient of the Graham Lester Spirit of Lacrosse Award (World Lacrosse)
- 2018** Received the OLA's Thomas "Tip" Teather Award (*Mr. Lacrosse*)
- 2018** Received the OLOA President's Award for service and enduring commitment to the game
- 2022** Induction into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame in the Officials category (inaugural category)
- 2024** Induction into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame in the Officials category (inaugural category)

"Frank's love for the game was evident in everything he did. His career places him on the Mount Rushmore of Lacrosse Officiating, and his unwavering commitment to the game and its participants, coupled with his expertise and leadership, cemented his legacy as a respected figure in the lacrosse community and has inspired countless individuals along the way" stated Ontario Lacrosse Executive Director Jeramie Bailey. "We are profoundly impacted by Frank's loss; a trail-blazing ambassador for the sport at every step. We extend our sympathies to his beloved wife Linda, daughter Dolly, son Doug, grandchildren David, Julia, Jamie, Lacey and Kya, and his many friends and officiating partners throughout the Ontario Lacrosse community and around the world."

