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## **OLA PILOTS MAJOR-JUNIOR LACROSSE SERIES FOR THE 2022 SEASON**

TORONTO, ON – April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – The Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) is excited to announce the pilot of a provincial “Major Junior” lacrosse series in 2022. The event will feature 1998, 1999, and 2000 born players, and will build on the success of the 2021 Ontario Junior Lacrosse League (OJLL) modified season format, but will be scheduled over a longer period of time. Eligible players will be rostered based on residency, offering a meaningful lacrosse experience in 2022.

The pilot event comes on the heels of back-to-back canceled/limited seasons due to the Covid-19 pandemic that saw a combined total of 1246 players graduate from the OLA Junior “A”, “B” and “C” ranks, 248 of which came from the top tier OJLL. While more details on the format are yet to be published, the event will be a multi-team weekend showcase in which the top 22, 23, and 24-year-old players in Ontario will compete in lacrosse communities across the province to crown a champion.

The series—although open to current National Lacrosse League (NLL) players and draftees—will be the ultimate opportunity for draft-eligible players to showcase their ability ahead of the NLL Draft. Ontario Lacrosse has perennially provided top level talent to the NLL, and 2021 was no exception with 48% of all selections in the 2021 NLL Draft being developed by OLA leagues, including twelve of the first-round picks.

In addition to the opportunity for player growth and development, three officials were onboarded to the NLL Officiating Staff after demonstrating standout on-floor performances in the 2021 OJLL season. The combination environment of elite players and coaches participating with modified rules allowed for both prospective and veteran officials to develop and demonstrate their abilities in front of the top representatives of the sport.

Above all, this pilot event does not preclude players from simultaneously participating in established OLA-sanctioned Junior and Senior divisions with their resident clubs, and efforts will be made to avoid conflicts in scheduling. The OLA looks forward to supporting the return of regular Junior and Senior programs throughout the 2022 season. Team registration, proposed event dates and other series details will be published soon. For more information on this initiative, reach out to OLA Vice President, Promotions Colleen Grimes ([vppromotion@ontariolacrosse.com](mailto:vppromotion@ontariolacrosse.com)).

### **About Ontario Lacrosse Association:**

Since 1897, the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) has been recognized as the largest governing body of lacrosse in Canada, which exists to improve, foster, perpetuate and govern all levels and disciplines of lacrosse in the province of Ontario. In addition to coordinating the operation of the sport, the OLA provides technical development and certification programs, and additional resources for those interested in the “fastest game on two feet.” For more information, visit [ontariolacrosse.com](http://ontariolacrosse.com) and find @OntarioLacrosse on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.