



AL-TAZAJ
FAKIEH
BAR B.Q. CHICKEN

Sterling ستيرلنج

P6 Community
A large number of people benefit from two medical camps conducted on Thursday and Friday in Asian Town.



P16 Community
London's black cab drivers are being priced out by competition from cheaper alternatives such as Uber.



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Tuesday, February 7, 2017
Jumada I 10, 1438 AH

GULF TIMES

COMMUNITY



DOHA  12°C–22°C TODAY

LIFESTYLE/HOROSCOPE 11

PUZZLES 12 & 13

The lacrosse connect

QLA has been engaging with education, sport and community groups to introduce the sport into school physical education curriculum. **P4-5**





“The hard work that goes into this sport helps develop a strong character”

— David Heywood, Founder of QLA

By Anand Holla

As Qatar primes itself to offer and support a wide variety and high quality of sports, an intense, physical and relatively lesser-known game demanding speed, quickness, hand-eye co-ordination and a competitive instinct, is emerging to the fore.

Regarded as one of the fastest games on two feet, lacrosse is a contact team sport played between two teams using a small rubber ball and a long-handled stick called a crosse or lacrosse stick.

The Qatar Lacrosse Association (QLA) has been engaging with education, sport and community groups to facilitate the introduction of lacrosse into the school physical education curriculum. The QLA also facilitates the sport implementation in after-school activity sessions as well as sport and community organisations and their academy programme offering.

On Friday, the QLA will be hosting its inaugural Qatar Lacrosse Invitational Event at the Al Jazi Gardens in West Bay, from 11am to 2pm. This showdown will feature four teams — West Bay, Barwa City, Education City, and special guest team Dubai Lacrosse — to showcase lacrosse in its basic form, known as soft-lacrosse, to raise the profile of the sport here in Qatar, says the QLA.

Community caught up with David Heywood, Founder of QLA, to know more.

How can lacrosse strengthen bonding and break down barriers among school students in a way few other sports can?

Lacrosse is a powerful mechanism for engaging and inspiring young people to improve their leadership and other life skills. It is facilitated by the Qatar Lacrosse Association (QLA) through school Physical Education curriculum and after-school activities as well as sport and community academy programmes. The sport has a unique and rich history which sets it apart from other sports. Thus it goes a long way to strengthen bonds as an



INSPIRED: David Heywood, Founder, QLA.

inclusive sport for all students regardless of age, gender, or physical ability. Lacrosse is a fun and high energy sport that is growing quickly. Girls and boys alike are lining up to play lacrosse. The athleticism, skills and finesse needed are pulling kids from all over to engage in Lacrosse. The sport requires both a mental and physical approach that encourages the breakdown of barriers through its cohesive nature both on and off the field of play.

What are some of the key benefits that lacrosse offers to

those who start playing it from an early age?

Children who play lacrosse stand to gain benefits in both their mind and body. As we know, exercise releases endorphins, helps lose weight, and rids us off stress along with clearing the mind. Lacrosse offers an enjoyable workout. When these things come together, it shapes a happier kid who's more capable of handling the challenges of life. As for helping build endurance, lacrosse combines the skills of basketball, soccer and hockey into a fast-paced, high endurance test of

strength and agility. With a playing area roughly the size of a football field, there is a great demand for speed and strength. The training is rigorous and focused. Dedication is required to succeed. Struggling physically also helps build a person mentally. Pushing through and making a goal builds confidence and commitment. The hard work that goes into this sport helps develop a strong character, one that will benefit a person for years to come and help them endure other things in life unrelated to the game. One of the great things about team sports is that you are

part of a team. The players work, sweat, plan and play together. The time spent focused on a goal bonds the players together. Childhood and adolescence is a time for searching and learning to relate to peers and form friendships. Playing together allows for positive shared experiences with others and a setting to develop social skills. Children and teens who can be together and have a common purpose will have a greater chance at success in life, as much of what people do for work and community involves associating and working with others.

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— David Heywood

In what ways is QLA planning to tap into the strengths of lacrosse as a sport to better engage with the community?

We are making it easy to participate in lacrosse. This sounds like a no-brainer, however, the QLA has identified this as a critical factor to not only engage junior, youth and adults but also provide them with a pathway for development either on the field as a player or off the field as a coach, official or ambassador of the sport, thus encouraging our participants to become contributors to the sports and its sustainability in Qatar. Next is interacting with the community and being a leader. The QLA actively involves community participants in all areas of its growth and development as we believe they are the ones behind its content. It lets them know that someone is listening and allows them to help shape and advance the sport of lacrosse here in Qatar. Another way of engaging with the community is welcoming newcomers. It is not uncommon in other sports that when they become more established, newcomers might feel like intruders. The QLA recognises this and takes time out to welcome all our participants in a productive and organic fashion to encourage them to be inspired and get involved with something special here in Qatar. Also, by getting to know our communities, its members and their love for a new sport here in Qatar, the QLA has learned how to involve its participants as equals, which in turn has significantly helped to bring more volunteers into the fold. Since we offer participants a vested interest in the QLA story and its success, the community has become, by far, our biggest asset.



ENTHUSIASM: Stills from QLA events in Doha.



What activities and programmes has the QLA lined up in coming months to involve more children and youth in the sport?

Some of the activities include the upcoming Qatar Lacrosse Invitational Tournament on February 10. Then, there's the Open House Sports event on February 13 at Al Wakrah — from 5.30pm until 10pm — in which the QLA will be alongside SFQ Sports as they introduce a range of academy programmes available to juniors and youths of Qatar. There's also the soft-lacrosse sessions, which is every Saturday at multiple locations, from 11am until 1pm. This activity is a great introduction to the sport, and it's a real hit with our beginners. It enables junior, youth and adult participants to learn the skills and techniques required to enjoy lacrosse in a safe, fun and friendly way.

As for programmes, there's the First Stick Lacrosse as part of the Physical Education Curriculum, which provides a clear sequence of lesson plans that are appropriate for upper elementary, middle, and high school co-educational classes. It is designed to introduce and develop the tactical, technical, and cooperative skills needed to enjoy success, and the knowledge to continue participation for those who become interested in the sport of lacrosse.

There's also the Soft-Stick Lacrosse, an Education Group

after-school activity and Sport and Community Group academy programmes. The plan is also to start a team/league, like education groups and sport and community groups. It is the mission of the QLA to help hosts add this exciting sport to their community.

The QLA's New Start manual provides a step-by-step guide, through the process of establishing a new junior, youth, high school, college, and university or club team. The QLA also invites male athletes and sport enthusiasts (18+) to trial out for the Qatar Men's National Development Squad. The biggest event in the global lacrosse calendar, the Lacrosse World Championships will be played out in 2018. Hosted by the UK, this event will see more than 40 nations, 1000 athletes and over 30,000 spectators from around the world come together. For the first time in history, Qatar lacrosse looks to represent a national lacrosse team in a major tournament and will become the first Middle East region state to do so!

Personally, why do you connect so strongly with lacrosse?

Lacrosse holds a special place in my heart since its introduction to me through the Physical Education curriculum at school, in what seems a long time ago now. My passion for playing the game extended gradually into the sports



LEADING LIGHT: Gibran al-Bader, co-CEO, QLA.

development and wider community reaches. The opportunities and unique community lacrosse itself brings has been part of my life for over two decades. Personal involvement in the sport has ranged from Club and Regional, to National Player representing Wales Senior Men's team in the European Lacrosse Championships 2012.

Off the field, my involvement has ranged from Club Team Coach, Manager and Committee representation to grow and develop the sport of Lacrosse on a local and national level. As a guest in Qatar, I look forward to working with the QLA team, advancing the sport and ensuring its sustainability for the future.