

# Flower Mound Lacrosse 2021 Season Re-Cap

## Youth Girls' Programs

### 1/2/3/4 Team (Head Coach Sean Goldman)

Our 1/2/3/4 team this spring was younger than usual, and with so many newcomers, the development that usually happens in a fall season was also our priority this spring. We began in chilly, wet February and by the end of the month, we had the Bluebonnet Classic in the books. Our kids had barely begun learning the fundamentals of the game and then, they were already in tournament play! The coaches were extremely proud of the team's positive attitude and resilience learning a new game, learning how to come together as a team, and playing through less than ideal weather conditions.

There were 11 games between tournaments this year, and although there were slightly more 3/4 games on the schedule, 1/2 players often played up for more game experience and to give everyone as much playing opportunity as possible. As the season progressed, so did the team's lacrosse knowledge and skill, and the coaches could always point to improvements in the girls' skills from game to game. There were lots of individual and team highlights and successful moments to call-out along the way.

As luck would have it, our 3/4 team faced a team at the End of Year Tournament that they played at the beginning of the season and our girls came away knowing they were much more competitive in the rematch. To see their confidence grow, along with their lacrosse capabilities, was a fantastic cap to the season! Our 1/2 team had back-to-back games at the tournament, played well and had fun. There were plenty of smiles on the sidelines and after all of the cancellations and rescheduling that happened due to the weather, it was wonderful to end on a high note.

This season was special in many ways, including two important improvements that deserve mention:

- The high school girls showed up in force to our winter clinics. The positive impressions they made on our younger players is incredibly impactful and having so much help at the clinics significantly improved the quality of attention we can give to each newcomer.
- Our team had not one but TWO wonderful assistant coaches! Unlike in past seasons when we typically had to keep the team together during practice, multiple coaches gave us the ability to divide into skill areas, or by age group, or to occasionally pull-out individuals for additional help when needed.

We are so thankful for the time our high school players and the assistant coaches dedicated to the team's success this season. All of the help made a big difference in our play and more importantly, their dedication meant we could make the season more memorable and special for the kids. Thanks for a terrific spring!

### **5/6/7/8 Teams (Head Coach Lauren Maness):**

This season has been a unique season. COVID made things very different and Coach Lauren (Scott) and I are really proud of how the girls were able to push through and make the best of it. It's not always easy to balance school and lacrosse, but our athletes were able to do this. I know it was hard with the weather and having to miss so many games, but the girls were really resilient about it and made the best of every situation. It is hard to have new coaches and different coaching styles, but the girls were able to adjust and grew tremendously this year. We are proud of all of their accomplishments.

We saw so much growth in our players. Many of our "kiddo's" had never held a stick before and they are now catching and throwing like a pro. The teamwork that we saw this year was so great. Working together to make assists and learning how to effectively communicate what they needed on and off the field has been incredible to watch. Each one of our athletes learned something new this year and grew in their skills. We are so proud of everyone who scored their first goal, or played a new position for the first time. We put girls all over the field, both because we needed to, and to help them learn all of the positions. Our goal is to develop players that both understand and truly love the game. The girls handled this with grace and excitement. If they needed to know something, they had the confidence to ask, and we could see all of their lax IQ's growing over the course of the season.

This summer, we hope that our athletes will really focus on the things we talked about at the end of the spring season: ball control, cardio, and lacrosse IQ. Getting your hand on your stick several times a week, playing wall ball, passing with your friends, or parents. This is what is going to make each of them a stronger player and make the team more efficient and effective. We need the girls to work on their conditioning and their overall athleticism. Staying active over the summer will help them adjust back into practice quicker and we can spend less time focusing on endurance and stick skills; and more time understanding the game and working on more advanced skills. Overall, we are so proud of the girls and can't wait for next fall.

### **High School Girls Program – Head Coach Gabby Sinmaz**

The High School Girls team finished the regular season 6-1-0 and ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state (LaxNumbers.com). They beat Southlake and ESD during the regular season, with their only loss coming to the eventual state champion (Hockaday). They won their first game of the post-season against Greenhill, but lost to the eventual District Champion (ESD) in the semi-finals, which prevented them from being selected as a wild-card entry into the state tournament. Overall, the season was a success for our high school girls, finishing their spring season with a total record of 10-2-0 (*including the Coppell Winter Classic, where they went 3-0-0*) and ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the state of Texas following the post-season tournaments.

This was really an amazing team, with a lot of talented young ladies that worked hard all season. Although, it was difficult to not have made it into the state tournament, this team accomplished a great deal this year. A total of 12 girls on this year's team have either signed, or committed to play lacrosse in college at either the D1, D2 or D3 levels and there are more to come, as our upcoming juniors will soon enter their recruiting season.

The seniors that have signed to play in college are:

- Taylor Ambrosio – High Point University
- Anna Day – Flagler College
- Ava Kristynik – University of Notre Dame
- Kenzie McCormick – Furman University
- Nicole Phillips – Hamline University
- Mackenzie Smith – Florida Tech

Our juniors that have committed to date to play in college include:

- Brynn Belmont – George Mason University
- Erika Eggers – Kennesaw State University
- Brooke Leonard – Manhattan College
- Bailey McQuillen – Long Island University
- Avery Williams – Florida Southern University
- Hailey Zutic – George Mason University

We closed out the year with four young ladies being selected to the Div.1 Texas All State team:

- Taylor Ambrosio - Midfield
- Ava Kristynik – Attack
- Kenzie McCormick – Goalie
- Mackenzie Smith – Defense

We also placed four young ladies on the Div. 1 North Texas All-District Team:

- Anna Day - Attack
- Brynn Belmont – Attack
- Sophia Virani – Midfield
- Hailey Zutic – Defense

We are proud of all of our girls for what the team accomplished this year and are looking forward to kicking off the fall 2021 season this September. We wish our graduating seniors the best of luck in their future endeavors and hope they stay in contact with their coaches and high school teammates. We want to thank our coaches, as well as all of our parent volunteers for all the hard work they put in this year. We could not do it without you.

## **Youth Boys' Programs**

### **1/2 Boys (Head Coach Robby Sprotsy)**

The Flower Mound 1/2 team wrapped up a fantastic spring season! We had 12 rostered first and second graders! There were several new faces and a new coach – Robby Sprotsy! The team clicked quickly and worked extremely well together. Many friendships were made and the family support was incredible. On several occasions there were multiple parents that jumped in to help with practices. The more parents we have on the field during practice, the more we can work with the boys!

The boys played hard and by the end of the season, the results of their hard work started to pay dividends. Many of the parents and boys are coordinating to take part in camps and clinics

throughout the summer. It's great that this team is working together on and off the field to build a strong future for Flower Mound Lacrosse!

### **3/4 Boys (Coaches Damon Galose & Luke Guidroz)**

The 3/4 boys had several changes this season. New coaches Damon Galose and Luke Guidroz, along with returner Luis Sanchez put in a lot of time with the boys this year. We had 18 third and fourth grade boys on the roster this year. The theme for the season was "*Consistent Progress*". Every week the team played better as a group. Every week the boys had more fun and became more engaged. Each game the boys executed something that had been worked on during practices.

Every individual improved over the course of the season, and each player made any impact. Every boy did something great this season, resulting in an individual win. For some it was mastering the pass and catch, for others it was establishing confidence on the field, and still for others, it was learning to be a good teammate. In the end, all boys came away with a solid understanding of offensive and defensive fundamentals.

In their own way, each player gained something from the experience this season and every player gave their effort and commitment to the team. All of the coaches are very proud of what the team accomplished this year and look forward to seeing them continue to grow within the sport as they move forward.

### **5/6 Boys (Head Coach Whyett Benn)**

The 5/6 boys had 23 players on the roster this season. There were several returning players and many new boys on the team. Lead by Coaches Whyett Benn, Gary Elwert, and Steffan Crafton, the boys came together and finished the season with a 9-9-1 record. The season got off to a rough start with cold temperatures, cancelled practices, and cancelled games. The boys started the season with the gauntlet of ESD/Deuces/HP and came away 1-3. From there the boys knew where they needed to improve, and the improvements were incremental. One of the key wins this season came at Denton, where the boys played very disciplined and patient lacrosse to come away with a 2-1 victory against a very solid Denton Team. Another solid win came at home against Fort Worth, where the boys were tied late in the game, but ran a perfectly executed end-line play to take the lead with less than 1 minute remaining in the game! The ability to listen and execute continued throughout the remainder of the season.

Every player on this team has a bright future in the game of lacrosse. They all know that being a good teammate and working hard for each other is a requirement for this group. While several players will be transitioning to the 7/8 team in the fall, the rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders are very well equipped to lead the team in the fall!

### **7/8 Boys (Head Coach Mike Hirniak)**

The 7/8 boys team has a ton of individual talent. The season started with only 17 players on the roster, and then due to various departures and injuries, they went into the end of season tournament with 13 boys able to play. This team is tough. In several games this year, a player would sub off for about 2 minutes and then go back into the game, so another player could get a quick break and some water. Most games the team had 2-3 substitutes, but they never stopped fighting. After losing their starting goalie, several boys stepped up to man the cage. Another attribute of this team was their versatility. Middies and attack constantly rotated during games

to conserve energy. When things clicked for this team, the lacrosse on the field was amazing! The way this team played during the End of Season Tournament loss against the Deuces was a sign of how much potential this group has. A team that beat them 15-1 early in the season was barely clinging to a 2-goal lead with 5 minutes to play. The boys fought back from a 5-1 deficit, only to fall a little short, losing 7-4. The key to this team was keeping the boys playing lacrosse. While many are moving up to the high-school level in the fall, there is a strong core group of players that can make this team dangerous in the future!

### **High School Boys (New Head Coach Chris Dupree)**

With the spring season and banquet behind us, it's time to reflect on this past year. THANK YOU to all the board members, parents, volunteers, coaches, and players that helped make this a successful season on many levels. Our senior class has been a pleasure to coach over the last four years. Your future is bright and thank you for your dedication to FM Lacrosse over the many years! We saw great improvement over the course of the year with our JV team. Their stickwork, IQ, and teamwork improved dramatically from fall ball to the end of the season. Hats off to our JV coaches on the great work they did this year on the JV side. And with our Varsity team, they sure knew how to keep you on the edge of your seat all year long! We were hit with the injury bug for most of the season and I don't think we played with our entire roster since early March.

Our players worked hard for one another and as the season progressed really bought into our "*care, commit, compete*" values. Although we didn't reach our ultimate goal of making a run to the state championship, we were in contention just about every game. We were in the thick of the playoff race until the very last day of the THSLL season when HP and Plano East played. All three of us were tied for the final two playoff spots and the deciding tiebreaker that took place kept us out. For those that do not know how this unfolded, our head to head records were the same. This moved the selection process to the next tiebreaker, which was *goal differential*. Going into that last game we were 0, HP was -1, East was +1. We needed Plano East to beat HP by two goals in order to make it into the state tournament. If HP would have won by 1 goal, the final decision would have been determined by a coaches coin toss. That game played out with Plano East allowing HP to score a goal by pulling their goalie out of the cage, which allowed HP to score and ultimately win by 2 goals.

Our boys hard play was noticed across the league with us receiving several end of the year awards. We had Junior #25 Gage Kimmel named Class B North Honorable Mention. Our senior captains #11 Noah Anderson and #65 Preston Watkins were Class B North All District selections. Senior defenseman #24 Jackson Hicks and Junior Att/Mid #15 Drew Freeston both received Class B North All-State honors. We also received the Assistant Coach of the Year award as well. Outstanding job to you all. We finished the 2021 season with an overall record of 5-8 record and 2-4 in district play. Three of our district losses were by a combined 5 goals. We are looking forward to growing on our successes heading into the fall 2021 season!