

Inaugural Bull City All-Star Games -- - An Instant Classic!

The inaugural Bull City All-Star Games ~ Cullen Classic for Cancer were held on Saturday, June 3, in Koskinen Stadium at Duke University. The combination of beautiful weather and an exciting overtime finish to the men's all-star game made the event an instant classic. Organized by local high school coaches and Duke Lacrosse Alumni, the Bull City All-Star Games are the first all-star event to feature both women's and men's, high school graduating senior lacrosse players from across the state. The event not only provides recognition for these top players, but also serves as a dynamic way to honor the contributions Tony Cullen made to the sport of lacrosse: first as a player and a coach at Duke; then as an NCAA official. Tony impacted the trajectory of lacrosse in North Carolina for 25 years, before he lost his battle with cancer in 2002.

The inaugural charity event featured 88 of the top seniors from 58 different high school lacrosse programs. The three games played in Duke's Koskinen Stadium attracted over 600 players, parents, fans and organizers; and raised over \$5,000 for the Duke Cancer Institute and the NCHSAA Tony Cullen Memorial Scholarship Fund.

In the first game of the day, 34 women from 20 different high schools were split into Blue and White teams. The Blue team, coached by Patricia Alexander (Cardinal Gibbons), opened up an 8 goal lead in the first half over the White team, coached by Kaitlin Brown (Northwest Guilford). The high scoring game ended 20-9 in favor of Blue.

Leading scorer for the Blue Team was Madison Dunk (Durham Academy, 4 goals / 6 assists); while Kendall Goldblum (Hoggard, 5 goals / 2 assists) led the White team. Madison Dunk, who will play at Duke next year, was named the game Offensive MVP. Abbey Seagroves (Carrboro) was the game's Defensive MVP. Abbey will play at East Carolina.

In between the two all-star games, the Duke Gray Devils played a spirited intra-squad scrimmage, with blended rosters featuring both Duke Lacrosse Alumni and local Triangle-area post-graduate players. Most of the participating alumni played for Tony Cullen during his 9 seasons as head coach at Duke, from 1982-1990. The officials for the Gray Devil Game included Holt Anderson and Rick Wooten; who are both retired from active officiating. Like Cullen, they were both instrumental in helping grow the game in North Carolina in the 1970s and 1980s. The Blue side prevailed 12-7 over Gray.

The final game of the day proved to be the most exciting, as 54 men all-stars, representing 38 different schools, took the field for the final time in their high school careers. The Blue Team, coached by Evan Welchel (West Lake), took a 5-1 lead in the first quarter. But the White Team, coached by Ron Mitchell (Carrboro), came alive in the second quarter to pull within 1 goal at halftime. The second half of the men's game was a back-and-forth affair, played at a very high level both individually and collectively. The teams were tied 12-12 with 3:31 to play in regulation, and eventually the game headed into sudden death overtime. While both teams had numerous opportunities to win it in overtime, Jack Widman (Cedar Ridge) finally scored for the White team with 31.7 seconds remaining, off a nice assist by Ryan Caplis (Lake Norman). With White's come-from-behind 13-12 victory in overtime, the inaugural event certainly had a "classic" ending!

Leading scorer for the Blue Team was Bobby Padden (Athens Drive, 3 goals / 1 assist); while Cole Dinwiddie (Weddington, 4 goals / 1 assist) lead the White offense. Bobby Padden, who will play at Wingate next year, was named the game Offensive MVP. Scotty Crouthamel (Ravenscroft) had 13 saves for the Blue Team, and was named the Defensive MVP. Scotty will play goalie at CW Post.

The Bull City All-Star Staff would like to thank all the coaches, players, parents, officials, sponsors, Duke Lacrosse Alumni and the Duke Athletic Staff, who made this inaugural event possible. The staff is already planning to make next year's event bigger and better. The 2018 Bull City All Star Games are tentatively scheduled for Saturday, June 2 back in Koskinen Stadium.

Box Scores:

Women's All Star Game: Blue – 20 / White – 9

Blue Team, GOALS: Dunk 4, Argrabright 3, Petrusa 3, Carbuccia 2, Jackson 2, New 2, Boney, Drakulic, Leithead, Strong. ASSISTS – Dunk 6, Boney 3, Jackson, Leithead, New

White Team, GOALS: Goldblum 5, Chung 2, Seagroves, White. ASSISTS – Goldblum 2

Offensive MVP: Madison Dunk Defensive MVP: Abbey Seagroves

Gray Devils Game: Blue – 12 / Gray – 7

Men's All Star Game: White -13, Blue – 12 (OT)

White Team, GOALS: Dinwiddie 4, Holland 2, Baker, Byrd, Caplis, Frankeny, Goss, Meley Widman. ASSISTS – Byrd 2, Meley 2, Calderwood, Caplis

Blue Team, GOALS: Padden 3, Phillip 2, Baker, Brunick, Crowley, Dean, Fasanaro, Maginnes, Van Dyke. ASSISTS – Voelker 3, Maginnes 2, Fasanaro, Padden, Van Dyke

Offensive MVP: Bobby Padden Defensive MVP: Scotty Crouthamel