

Tom Abbott-Biography

Tom Abbott has a different view of lacrosse than most “average” fans of the game. In his 50+ years, his experiences have taken him through the entire spectrum of our sport. From his early years of being the “ball boy” at games his father was officiating, to being an All-America player in both high school and college, to youth coach, to highly respected referee, and finally, to parent of two sons, with multiple NCAA Championship rings. He has certainly seen most of what this sport has to offer.

Referee

For over 2 decades, Abbott has been considered to be one of the country’s top officials in the men’s game. His refereeing career began in 1980 and continues today. Abbott’s resume includes some lofty credentials, including being the head referee in last year’s NCAA Championship game between Duke and Notre Dame. In the past 21 years, Abbott has refereed in the NCAA Final Four an unprecedented 19 times. He has officiated a total of 13 National Championships during this span. These games include Division I National Championships in 2007 and 2010, Division II National Championships in 1998, 2008, 2009, Division III National Championships in 1990, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2002, and 2003, and Junior College National Championships in 1990 and 1996. In addition to the final games, he has also refereed 8-Division I semi-finals during this period, not to mention dozens of quarter-final and first round games on all levels of NCAA play.

Abbott’s career also covers Major League Lacrosse. Beginning in 2000, when the MLL was experimenting with the new league in their “Summer Showcase” until 2008. He has refereed 5 MLL semi-finals and 6 MLL Championship games. In addition to his college and MLL officiating, Abbott was selected as 1 of only 2 referees to represent the USA in the 1994 World Games in Manchester England, and refereed the Championship game between USA and Australia. He also has 7 New York State High School Championships on his resume, as well. Abbott has served as both President and Vice President of the Central New York High School Officials Association, and has served as the High School Interpreter for rules and mechanics for the past 7 years. He also served on the official’s selection committee for the 1998 World Games.

Player

Abbott’s playing career began in the early 1970’s without the use of plastic sticks. The innovation that “changed the game” came during his junior year at Fayetteville-Manlius HS, where he was a 2 time All League Player and HS All-America. At Syracuse University (1975-1978) Abbott became a 2 time All-America attackman, and helped turn a perennial losing program into a winner. He played in the annual North/South Classic in 1978. He is still 7th on Syracuse’s all-time career goals list and 15th in total points. His senior year he was one of 3 tri-captains, along with current Syracuse University coaches John Desko & Kevin Donahue.

Personal

Abbott was born, raised, and still lives in Syracuse, NY. He is married to Lorie Devoy and has 3 children, Mike, Matthew, and Melissa. Abbott’s 2 sons, Mike and Matt are both accomplished lacrosse players. They have both been awarded 1st Team All-America honors and both have 2 NCAA Championships rings over the past 8 years. Older brother, Mike, won titles with Virginia in 2003, as a freshman, and in 2006 at SUNY Cortland, as a senior. Mike is the current Assistant Coach at SUNY Cortland and also has a National Championship ring as a coach in 2009. Not to be outdone, younger brother Matt won National Titles with Syracuse in both 2008 and 2009. Matt was also a finalist for the Tewaarton Award in 2009, and recently won another Championship as a member of the Chesapeake Bayhawks (MLL). He also plays Pro Indoor Lacrosse for the Boston Blazers (NLL). Daughter, Melissa, does not have the same passion for lacrosse, and focuses her attention towards horse training and riding. Abbott’s father, Larry, was a lacrosse player at Syracuse University in the early 1950’s, and was a referee for 16 years. Both Larry and Tom Abbott have been inducted into the US Lacrosse - Upstate New York Chapter-Hall of Fame.