

## NLL 2021 Season FAQ

### **What is your message to the fans?**

While we are extremely disappointed, we are still in very challenging and uncertain times, and for reasons beyond our control we cannot pursue our 2021 season. We really appreciate all the support, and we will continue to grow when you have us back in the fall, in all our markets, it will be like we never left. Thank you.

### **Almost every league has found a way to play. What happened with the NLL?**

Our goal was to play, but, unfortunately, there were many factors that went against us.

The recent enhanced travel restrictions across the Canadian border made this challenged season not possible. When we analyzed the situation, including the calendar, the pandemic circumstances, and the resources required, there was too much uncertainty to make this happen. There are unique factors at play in the NLL, including that 70% of our players live in Canada and most of them have other work obligations there. Those factors are different from any other league. We could not find a way to have the quality of play that we would require and guarantee our players that their livelihood away from lacrosse would not be compromised should an issue like an extended quarantine arise.

Moreover, two-thirds of the league's revenue requires fans in the arena. You have seen other leagues talking about the millions and billions of dollars of losses as a result of this lost revenue stream. In our league the proportion of our revenue is even more dependent on being a live events business.

It is very disappointing, but there are many things beyond our control at this point.

### **We have seen the NHL deal with similar issues, was there thought about playing a Canadian and US division separately?**

While we share many things with the NHL, including fans, arenas and several ownership groups, there are many things which make our businesses vastly different.

The NHL's national media deal as well as the fact that their players live in-market make the circumstances completely different.

### **Was the plan for April to play in one place?**

Yes, based on the pandemic landscape, several months ago we shifted our focus to playing our 2021 season in a bubble. There were several scenarios and venues that were explored including with the Spectra team at the FirstOntario Centre in Hamilton. We believe that they would have been great partners and it would have been a great venue for this event. In the end it was apparent that was the best chance at playing a shortened season, which would have meant sacrificing all the efforts and enthusiasm in home markets, but we were close to taking that step. The plan included exciting innovations and technology that we intend to deploy and apply for next season.

**Was there talk of playing in the United States?**

There was, and we had several offers to host, including several of our team's home arenas and some neutral sites. In the end, the challenges in terms of travel and quarantine were insurmountable as well; 70% of our players live in Canada and therefore there was no way to avoid the need to cross the Canadian border.

**One of the stated goals was to play with fans in the building. Would that have not happened if you played in April?**

Although our business model requires fans in the building, in an effort to save the 2021 season we were contemplating playing in a bubble without fans. Other issues have now made that point moot.

**Would the NLL have lost money in a one venue scenario?**

Our goal was to provide a product our fans around the world would have enjoyed and we would have used that opportunity to introduce innovative and robust brand activations with new partners. We felt that we could have drawn revenue to have made this workable. The dollar figure was secondary to the experience. In the end, other factors made this not possible.

**This will be a 20-month gap, the longest of any league. Will the NLL survive?**

Not only will we survive but we will thrive and expand. You will be seeing franchise announcements, new partners, our betting platform launch and several other activations in the mix that we would have introduced in the 2021 season that will rollover into next season.

**How can the PLL have played two seasons while the NLL was idle?**

The difference between outdoor and indoor venues is massive, and the fact that we are a league with a significantly larger composition of Canadian players also presents a challenge the PLL doesn't have. We share players but only about 15-20% of our players play in the PLL.

It's a different business and a different pool of players.

**What has been the reaction of the players?**

The players have been informed every step of the way, they have been a part of the process and have supported us. They are just as disappointed as any of us and we are working together to bring success to the long term future of the NLL.

**Would all the teams have played in the shortened season?**

Yes, our plan contemplated full participation with as many players on the roster as possible and we were getting close to doing that. The recent changes made that untenable.

**Were all owners on board with the spring plan?**

We were in the final stages of that discussion, but there was great support. This decision to move to the fall has unanimous support from all.

**What will teams be doing with regard to tickets and local sponsors?**

Teams have been handling their own tickets and sponsors on an individual basis. They have been in constant communication with the league, and their fans and partners. We had and continue to have a passionate and growing fan base, and, although disappointed, we feel that the interest when we play in the fall will be even stronger than if we would have played a shortened season. When we were forced to cancel our 2020 season we learned how committed our fans are – only 6% of season tickets were refunded on a leaguwide basis, and less than 20% of all paid ticket revenues were refunded.

**How are you dealing with sponsor issues?**

We are in contact with all our brand and media partners and have been very transparent on our plans and challenges. All have been appreciative and have expressed their support. They see the value of what we are building as a solid business with a bright future, and we appreciate their input and confidence in the league.

**Are any franchises in danger of folding?**

No. The interest in our franchises far exceeds availability, and we will begin next fall with 14 teams as Fort Worth joins the league. We are also expecting to add our 15<sup>th</sup> franchise in 2021.

**Do you foresee additional business cuts to keep the league functioning?**

Everyone realizes the opportunities we now have to make the 2021-22 season our best season ever. The commitment has not waned, and we are now in full planning mode. The enthusiasm has never been higher or more unified at the ownership level.

**How confident are you that there will be another season come the fall?**

We are extremely confident that not only will we have a season, but the lessons learned and strategies developed in the context of planning our 2021 season have made us a better league and a better business.