



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

PRESS RELEASE

www.sfulacrosse.com

Countdown to Faceoff - 2011 Simon Fraser Men's Lacrosse Preview

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

By William Howard, *SFU Lacrosse Media Relations*
Simon Fraser University Men's Lacrosse

BURNABY, BC (February 24, 2011) – Despite an appearance in last year's MCLA Semi-finals, the loss of six players to graduation, including three All-Americans, and an additional seven players not returning this season, makes it easy to write the Clan off as young and inexperienced heading into 2011. Add to that a roster of only nineteen players, fourteen of whom are underclassmen and themes of rebuilding can only come to mind. Talk to SFU Co-Head Coaches Jeff Cathrea and Brent Hoskins (seventh season) however, and a different pursuit of reloading quickly overshadows any misconceptions of this season being focused solely on development.

"We can't deny the fact that we are young and have traditionally low numbers again this year, but coming out of what has been a very positive off-season, we have the feeling that our youthfulness has only made us hungrier in our preparation and more determined to maintain our spot amongst the MCLA's elite," commented Co-Head Coach Brent Hoskins.

"With such a small roster, there is a much greater sense of accountability that the guys have with each other," added Co-Head Coach Jeff Cathrea when talking about the Clan's low numbers. "We feel that we still have the athletes capable of making another run again this season. Everyone is expected to contribute to that success and, with that, no one wants to let the team down, so guys come to practice looking to push each other every day."

With only 118 total points back from last season, perhaps lost in the discussion is the return of ten players with MCLA Semi-Final experience, the majority of whom played regularly for the Clan last season and all of whom registered minutes inside of Dick's Sporting Goods Park Stadium. Of that ten, five players have played significant roles in multiple National Championship runs that resulted in Fraser reaching the MCLA Quarterfinals in 2008 and 2009, before advancing one-step closer to a National Championship in 2010.

As one of only six teams to reach the MCLA Semi-Finals in the last three years, Simon Fraser will enter their first weekend of Division I competition in 2011 ranked No. 10 in the first CollegeLAX – Prodigy MCLA Coaches Poll of the season and No. 8 in the MCLA Lax Mag – Adidas Top 23 Poll. Starting the season as a consensus Top 10 team for the third consecutive year, the Clan will look to win their ninth conference title in 2011 and earn an opportunity to compete in their eleventh National Championship tournament since 1996.

To stay at the top, Fraser will once again have to tackle one of the toughest schedules in the nation. Looking to build upon five top 15 wins last season that includes two upset wins at the MCLA National Championships, 2011 features eight games versus out-of-conference opponents, with all eight ranked in the Top 25, including six of the top ten and three teams ranked in the top five.

Below is a position-by-position look at the 2011 Clan.

ATTACK

With the graduation of All-Americans Adam Foss (Cochrane, AB / Cochrane High School) and Ben Towner (Port Coquitlam, BC / Terry Fox Secondary) Simon Fraser will have a completely new look at attack this season with freshman Calvin Craig (Coquitlam, BC / Gleneagle Secondary) expected to join sophomores Colton Dow (Coquitlam, BC / Heritage Woods Secondary) and Stu Mills (Campbell River, BC / Timberline Secondary) in the Clan's starting three. Senior captain



Senior Chris Tessarolo returns to lead SFU offensively after scoring 22 goals and 16 assists last season.



Sophomore Colton Dow totaled 24 goals and 9 assists last season.

Chris Tessarolo (New Westminster, BC / New Westminster Secondary), who has been a three-year starter at attack and was a PNCLL All-Conference Honorable Mention last season, will look to bolster a young SFU midfield in 2011, which Cathrea and Hoskins hope will cause match-up challenges for their opponents.

Dow, a PNCLL All-Conference Honorable Mention last season, finished fourth in team scoring with 24 goals and fifth in total points with 33. Dow will look to build upon a strong finish to the 2010 season with 25 of his 33 points coming past the mid-way point of the Clan's schedule, including a team-leading 4 goals in a 9-6 win over Florida State in the first round of the MCLA Tournament. Mills will look to have a breakout year in 2011 after registering 10 points on 8 goals and 2 assists as a midfielder last season.

MIDFIELD

Looking to fill the void left behind by 2010 graduating senior Russel Thomas (Nanoose Bay, BC / Ballenas Secondary), a three-time MCLA All-American, Tessarolo, the Clan's fourth leading scorer in 2010 with 38 points (22g, 16a) and highest returning point-getter, will be joined by junior Rick Bezuidenhout (Campbell River, BC / Timberline Secondary), sophomore Eric Ransom (Sherwood Park, AB / Bev Facey High School), and freshmen Brendan Farrell (Milton, ON / St. Michael's College School) and Cory Koesdibyo (Nanaimo, BC / Dover Bay Secondary). The five-man rotation is expected to provide a secondary scoring threat through the midfield and play an important role towards Simon Fraser's success this season.

Bezuidenhout (11g, 2a) and Ransom (9g, 6a) are both looking to build upon strong performances last season after combining for 28 points in 2010. Farrell and Koesdibyo both bring impressive lacrosse resume's and will be asked to contribute immediately during their freshman campaigns as they look to make a quick transition to the college game. All five players will all add to a versatile midfield that should include multiple scoring threats for the Clan.

LONG STICK MIDFIELD

With the loss of graduating senior Kevin Riley (Coquitlam, BC / Gleneagle Secondary), who became the Clan's starting LSM at the mid-point of last season on route to earning PNCLL 1st Team All-Conference recognition, Fraser will hand the keys to freshmen Riley Wanzer (Mukilteo, WA / Kamiak High School) at LSM heading into the 2011 season. Despite entering his first year of college lacrosse, Wanzer is considered by Cathrea and Hoskins as one of the West's top LSM's that the Class of 2010 had to offer and the coaches are confident that Wanzer's experience playing at an elite level in high school will help make for a relatively smooth transition as they face induction by fire at the important position this season.

Sophomore Mitch Frank (Burnaby, BC / St. Thomas More Collegiate) will provide the Clan with a capable back-up, who will also add size and athleticism to the Clan's back end at close defense when needed.

CLOSE DEFENSE

Fraser will look to returning starters and 2010 MCLA All-America Honorable Mentions Nathan Clare (Ladner, BC / Vancouver College) and Luke Genereux (Port Coquitlam, BC / Terry Fox Secondary) to anchor their starting corps of close defenders in 2011. Clare, a PNCLL All-Conference 2nd Team selection in 2010 after being named to the PNCLL All-Conference 1st Team in 2009, brings size and athleticism to add a dynamic presence to the Clan's back line; while Genereux, a two-time PNCLL All-Conference 1st Team selection (2007, 2010), is a quick, shut down defender who is also adept at taking away the ball. Clare (3g) and Genereux (3g, 3a) are also dangerous in transition combining for 9 points last season.

Both entering their senior year, Clare and Genereux will be joined by sophomore defender Sam Biagioni (Surrey, BC / Fraser Heights Secondary) and freshman Branden Bloom (Maple Ridge, BC / Samuel Robertson Technical) who should both work in as part of the Clan's starting rotation, while also contributing important minutes off the bench.



Senior Nathan Clare started all 18 games on defense last season.



Kyle Middleton will become the fifth true sophomore to start in goal for SFU since 1996.

GOALIE

Cathrea and Hoskins have named sophomore Kyle Middleton (Nanaimo, BC / Woodlands Secondary) as Simon Fraser's starting goaltender for 2011. Middleton made 20 saves with 9 goals against for a .690 save percentage in limited action over 7 games last season. Middleton will become the fifth true sophomore to start in goal for SFU since 1996.

Freshmen Darren Zwack (Sherwood Park, AB / Archbishop Jordan High School) will serve as the team's back-up and add depth in between the pipes.

FACE-OFFS / SHORT STICK MIDFIELD

A strong face-off percentage is always key to success and the Clan should once again feature one of the MCLA's top draw men in 2011. With last year's starter, Ryan Hodge (San Antonio, TX / Texas Military Institute) sitting out the season to do a semester abroad, Ben Johnson (Calgary, AB / Berkshire Preparatory) returns from being a medical redshirt in 2010 and will look to reclaim the form that saw him named an MCLA 2nd Team All-American as a Face-off Specialist during his junior year in 2009. Freshman Max Weselowski (Maple Ridge, BC / Meadowridge School) will provide the Clan with a solid second option, capable of winning valuable possessions.

Johnson will be joined by freshmen Tom Newton (Saskatoon, SK / Aden Bowman Collegiate) for the bulk of the minutes at short stick midfield, a combination that should help shore up the Clan's back end while providing a valuable one-two punch in transition.

ABOUT SIMON FRASER MEN'S LACROSSE

Simon Fraser University men's lacrosse is entering its sixteenth season in 2011 and competes in the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association (MCLA). The Clan have captured a record eight PNCLL Conference Titles (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2008 and 2009) and are tied for fifth all-time with ten MCLA National Championship tournament appearances, placing 2nd in 1999 and most recently playing in the 2010 MCLA Semi-Finals after reaching the Quarterfinals in 2008 and 2009. The Clan are proudly sponsored by Harrow Sports and Onyx Lacrosse / Riddell Helmets. For further information on Simon Fraser men's lacrosse please visit www.sfulacrosse.com or follow the Clan on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/fraserlacrosse>.

CONTACT: Co-Head Coach, Brent Hoskins +1 (604) 836-7748, bhoskins@alumni.sfu.ca