

Introduction

“Lacrosse is one of the great team games on the American sports scene. Nearly everyone who has played it or watched it as a spectator loves the game. Lacrosse gets in your blood because it is such a fast-moving and exciting sport.” My love of lacrosse remains as strong today as it was when I wrote those words almost 30 years ago. In the last three decades lacrosse’s popularity has grown by leaps and bounds, and though today’s players, whether male or female, are more skilled and better conditioned than ever before, the Game is still the Game.

The magic of lacrosse has captivated me—heart, mind, and soul for over 60 years. It is in *my* blood. The lessons the game has taught me have guided me all my life. The game has connected me with thousands of people who share a love for the game, resulting in lasting friendships with players, coaches, and their families.

Lacrosse, considered the oldest sport known to North America, is a game rich in tradition and history. Yet there is very little lacrosse literature. So it is with great pride that I introduce *The Spirit in the Stick*. This work is, to

the best of my knowledge, the first and only of its kind. Its story is so deep and powerful that it is sure to *enrich* everyone who reads it.

Neil Duffy has shared the incredible story of a boy, Robbie Jones, who joins an ageless fraternity when he is presented with an ancient Native American lacrosse stick by Navy's Jimmy Lewis, considered by many, myself included, to be one of the game's greatest players. The stick and its original custodian, an Indian boy named Red Hawk, lead Robbie on a journey to places and times and to meetings with people he could never have imagined. Robbie learns lessons of integrity, respect, and honor from each of the stick's previous custodians.

This story is a major contribution to the great game of lacrosse. Indeed, it *transcends* the game. The rich historical and spiritual roots of its main characters provide stories that will touch every reader, regardless of age, gender, or association with the game of lacrosse.

In much the way lacrosse does, *The Spirit in the Stick* will captivate your heart, mind, and soul. It will get into *your* blood. Prepare to embark on a marvelous and special journey. I'm sure you will enjoy it!

Bob Scott

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