

Dear Robbie,

Greetings. I am William C. "Bill" Stutt, Naval Academy, Class of 1949. I write to you on behalf of my late teammate, classmate, and roommate, J.H.L. "Lee" Chambers, who received the Turnbull Award way back in 1949.

Lee graduated from the McDonogh School in Baltimore and then from the Naval Academy. He had a fantastic lacrosse career at Navy. I think he is still their all-time leading goal scorer (they didn't keep assists back then). He was part of two National Championship teams (1946, 1949) and was a four-time All-American. He is a member of the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame (inducted 1975). He served in the U.S. Navy upon graduation and later in the Marine Corps before resigning to assume leadership of a family design business headquartered in Baltimore.

Lee was super modest. He acknowledged his awards but never really talked about them. He also received the U.S. Naval Academy Athletic Association Trophy for being the most outstanding athlete in his class.

Lee played crease attack. His size, strength, and hair-trigger reflexes enabled him to be a prolific scorer. He was not a dodger. The head of his stick was the size of a defensive stick (back then—much bigger than a normal attack stick), with little or no pocket. He would often receive a pass and shoot all in one motion without cradling. Because of his success and the close quarters with defensemen around the crease, Lee endured a lot of illicit contact, which the referees didn't see. But he never complained.

We played with a rectangular crease back then. I am not sure how playing with a circular crease would have affected Lee's play—just interesting to note, I think. Our offensive philosophy was "pass and cut," with minimal dodging. This style fit Lee perfectly.

I should also say that our sticks back then were very unique. Today they are much more uniform. We would spend hours at the Bacharach and Rasin store loft in Baltimore selecting three or four sticks that we thought had the best balance and feel.

Our coach, Dinty Moore (an all-time legend), had the annual challenge of developing part of his team from athletes who had never played before coming to the Naval Academy. Typically,

they were defensemen of athletic talent who also played football. Those of us who had some stick skills from high school played midfield and attack. During our preseason, we had endless stick drills before starting scrimmages. Unlike the plebe coach (and later highly successful varsity coach, and another legend, Willis Bilderback), Dinty never had set “plays.” The closest we got to “plays” were extra man drills. Interestingly, the Navy football coach, recognizing Lee’s athletic abilities tried unsuccessfully to recruit him to play tight end in football, much to Dinty’s chagrin, fearing his “Leecham” might get injured.

One of Lee’s highlights would have been his play in the 1946 North-South All-Star game at Hopkins’ Homewood Field in Baltimore when he scored seven goals in a 14-14 tie. Lee scored two goals in the last three minutes to tie the game and then scored again with 48 seconds to go in overtime after the North had gone up once more!

Our games with Army were always special. Both coaches, Dinty and Morris Touchstone at Army, always had Frenchy Julian as referee. I believe Frenchy was from Canada. He was fair and tolerated heavy contact.

Playing with Lee and the rest of my teammates at Navy was a very special time for me. We worked very hard but we also had a great time playing the game. A few of those friendships remain with me today—some sixty-five years later.

Lee played the game hard and fairly. He was a model of what we should all aspire to be as a player and teammate. It was a joy to play with him. In the really close games we could usually count on Lee for a goal or two that would make the difference ... I suspect Lee would encourage you to perfect your talents through lots of practice.

On behalf of J.H.L. Chambers,

Bill Stutt

USNA 1949

Hi Robbie,

I am glad to hear of your connection to the history of the game of lacrosse. I am Joe High–Salisbury State University Class of 2000, where we won the national championship my junior year and I received the Turnbull Award as a senior.

Lacrosse has been a part of my entire life! I started playing at Cockeysville Rec in Maryland when I was five years old. I played at Dulaney High School and then went on to Salisbury. I still play today and love the game as much as I did as a kid under the lights at County Home Park. I got my first job through lacrosse, traveled the world through lacrosse, and even met my wife through lacrosse (she was an All-American at Salisbury, as well!).

Lacrosse is played by people with pride and dignity and that becomes more and more evident when you play at higher levels. It is similar to golf in that sense. There is a respect for the game and for others that play the game. That creates a community that takes care of each other through life.

I think if I could offer one piece of advice it would be to remember that you get out what you put in—whether in sports or your life in general. I think my coaches were always fair with me. I don't think you can ask for anything else. But as a player, I always felt it was my job to make myself better—not theirs.

Most people like to recommend books as a form of encouragement and spiritual drive. That isn't me. I recommend finding something you love doing and attack it at full speed. You don't need a book to tell you if you love the game of lacrosse. If you are exhausted at the end of a tough practice and look forward to getting after it the next day, you already know you love it; and putting the effort in will make you great at it. You can apply that to just about anything. Having said that, if you really love reading then I recommend *The Little Engine That Could*.

Keep working hard and enjoy the game. Make sure to thank all of the people who are making your lacrosse

experience possible—the people who played before you, parents, coaches, officials, people who set up leagues, etc. You will never forget them.

As I said before, I owe nearly everything I have today to those people in my life: Coach Berkman and Hasbrouck (Salisbury), Coach Schreiber (Dulaney), Coach Davis and Miller (Cockeysville), Jason Coffman, Chris McQueeney, Erik Miller, Jayme Block, Jake Bergey, Jay Owen and the rest of the Seagull family that came before me and most importantly, my mom and dad. They all have something else they could be doing and very few of them are paid for the dedication they provide. Every one of them will make you a better player and a better person.

My very best, Robbie,

Joe High

Salisbury State University 1997–2000
Turnbull Award 2000

Dear Robbie,

Hi! I am Rob Pannell of the New York Lizards and I understand that you have the good fortune to be connected to some of the great players in history. Wow! I hope you get to enjoy it. Coach Scott asked me to share a few thoughts with you and I am very glad to do so.

My lacrosse experience has been all I could hope for and more. I have worked extremely hard and through a number of challenges (getting cut from my high school team as a freshman, breaking my foot at Cornell, not being “recruited” earlier in my career, among others) to get where I am today, but have been rewarded for it. Lacrosse has allowed me to give back to the sport I have come to love as well. I remember sitting in front of the TV as a child and watching players like Connor Gill of Virginia and admiring his playing style and wanting to be him, wanting to be playing on Final-Four weekend and my first year in college I found myself starting at attack in the National Championship game for Cornell. I remember these days so when given the chance to speak to a kid or make his day, I take it because I remember being in their position once. That is my favorite part of playing the game! It is very rewarding giving back to the sport which you have come to love and teaching those learning the game at a young age.

Receiving the Turnbull Award (twice) was an incredible honor, especially knowing the three people who received it prior to me at Cornell; Mike French, Eamon McEneaney, and Tim Goldstein. I have a tremendous amount of respect for these three individuals and aspire to be as good as them one day. I have had the privilege of meeting Mike and Tim but never Eamon (he passed away on September 11, 2001 in the World Trade Center), but being compared to him is the biggest compliment anyone could ever give me. I have heard he was an incredible lacrosse player but and even more incredible individual. To be a Turnbull award recipient—named for

someone who is considered the greatest player ever and, more importantly, a man who gave his life for his country in World War II—and mentioned in the same sentence as some of the greatest players ever is truly an honor.

One piece of advice I would offer would be to never be satisfied with the player you are, for you will be passed by someone that is working harder than you each and every day. There is always something in your game that you can be working on no matter how good you think you are or whatever awards you have received. I still have that attitude today—even after winning two Jack Turnbull Awards, the Tewaaron Award, playing professional lacrosse, and still being a member of the United States training team (I haven't made the final roster yet!).

I'd also say to do your best to live a well-balanced life that includes family first, religion, education, and lacrosse. The people in your family are those most important to you and those closest to you and you would not be where you are today without them. Lacrosse is important but your family relationships are more important along with religion. Receiving a great education is also important and getting the most out of the institution where you are receiving that education.

Our approach at Cornell was to outwork our opponents in every facet of the game which includes weight sessions, conditioning, practices, etc. and getting the very best out of every individual of the team to reach a common goal! Well done is better than well said!

Stepping out onto the field for the National Championship in 2009 was one of the more memorable moments of my career. Having dreamed about playing in the Final-Four my whole life, I couldn't believe it was actually happening and still haven't. It will finally hit me one day down the road what Cornell had accomplished in my time there!

It has also been an amazing experience being a part of the Cornell Lacrosse family in just the few years I have been a

member myself. Every game, every event, every gathering among the Cornell Lacrosse Family is unlike anything I have seen with any other team. It is truly an amazing thing to be a part of, having alumni who care so much about their former team who haven't played for in 5, 10, 20, 30 years, but still come back to support and celebrate their success. I wouldn't want to have played for any other school out there!

So many people have helped me in my career. I mentioned my family—but also Coaches Kevin Huff and Sean Keenan (Smithtown West) Chip Davis (Deerfield Academy) and Jeff Tambroni and Ben DeLuca (Cornell) as well as my all the teams I was a part of at Cornell were particularly supportive, helpful, and influential.

My book recommendation is *Training Camp: What the Best do Better than Everyone Else* by Jon Gordon!

I wish you all the best and hope that we will be able to meet in person at some point—I'd love to hear about your special stick.

Good Luck!

Go Big Red!

Rob Pannell

Turnbull Award 2010, 2011
Cornell University

Hi Robbie,

Hello from Upstate, New York—Homer to be exact. I am Matt Riter and am very glad to connect with you. I began playing lacrosse in a friend's backyard when I was in 5th grade. The minute I started playing, I was hooked! It has been a part of my life ever since. I played at Homer High School and then Syracuse University. I received the Turnbull Award after the 1993 season and was quite thrilled and honored. My teammate, Greg Burns, received it my freshman year and former Syracuse great John Zulberti had won it shortly before Greg. So I knew what a special award it was at the time. Looking back now, I think it means even more to me. I think I was lucky to be part of a team that made me look good. We had a bunch of excellent players but not the real “superstars” for which Syracuse had become known. We also won the national championship that year. That was pretty special, obviously, and also means more to me each year.

I have been coaching some very young players for the last few years and I'll share with you some things I usually say to them. First—keep your stick in your hands as much as possible. You have probably heard this a million times—but work on the wall. I used to use a basketball backboard since I didn't really have a good wall nearby out in the country. You can (and must) do all of this without other people. Use two hands. We start our little guys by simply flipping the ball up in the air to themselves. Be a smart player. Know what the play will look like a few steps ahead. Study the game. If you can't throw and catch then you can't play. You would be amazed at what second graders can do when they are coached well and practice. So get the work done so that you can get to your highest level.

I hope you realize, Robbie, what the game can do for you. You'll meet new people and you are very likely to make friendships playing the game that will last your whole life.

Among my most special memories in the game was a trip that our Syracuse team took to Lockerbie, Scotland in 1989 after a terrorist attack took down a plane carrying thirty-five of our students (and a total of 259 people on board and eleven people on the ground) back to Syracuse University after studying abroad. Coach Simmons thought it would helpful for our team to offer our support to the families—on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean—that suffered those terrible losses. It was my first time flying—so I was terrified. But we were welcomed with open arms by both England and Scotland. I remember that the fields were nice with short grass like putting greens, the weather in England was very gray and cloudy, and Scotland was beautiful with rolling, grassy hills with no trees. We did some clinics and exhibitions—it was the first time I had played international rules. We visited the memorial area, which was very symbolic of why we were there. I can still picture it in my mind today. It was an incredible trip.

Lacrosse has been very good to me. I hope you'll get to enjoy our great game as much as I have and that you'll be inclined, like so many of us who have had a great experience in the game, to give some of it back to younger players.

A book I would recommend you read is *The Boys of Winter: The Untold Story of a Coach, a Dream, and the 1980 U.S. Olympic Hockey Team* by Wayne Coffey because it shows that good coaching and hard work/perseverance pay off, and it stresses how rivals can come together and play as one to represent your country.

Good luck, Robbie,

Matt Riter

Syracuse University 1993
Turnbull Award 1993

Hi Robbie,

I am Bill Tanton writing to you on behalf of the late Emil A. "Buzzy" Budnitz Jr., in regard to the Turnbull Award he received in 1953. Coach Scott has briefed me on your relationship with Jack's family! Coach Scott, Buzzy, and I were teammates at Johns Hopkins.

Let me begin by saying that Buzzy Budnitz was a great lacrosse player. There's no doubt about that. That's why he's in the Lacrosse Hall of Fame. At the same time, he was one of the most unusual players I've ever seen in more than a half century in lacrosse. In fact, I can't think of a single player in any decade to compare with Buzzy—and I played with him on the Johns Hopkins teams in the early 1950's. What made him unique was that, while he was a great attackman all his career, at Baltimore City College, at Hopkins and then for a decade with the mighty Mt. Washington Club teams, he was deceiving. He was not big. He was basically slim, he was knock-kneed, and he was not fast afoot. But he was a masterful stick handler and when he had the ball in his stick—and he loved to carry the ball—something magic happened. He may have been the most accurate passer I've ever seen. I never saw him make a bad pass. And he obviously saw the field extraordinarily well.

I still remember one moment at practice, the team scrimmaging, Budnitz with ball behind the goal, me at crease attack, and Buzzy saw me open—he was uncanny at seeing things like that—and he fed the ball to me—a perfect pass into the sweet spot of my stick—and because I was slow at getting the shot off, a defenseman named Brooke Sheehan checked my stick, sending the ball to the ground. There was no goal—and this was just practice, remember—because I could not get the shot off. I remember this mere instant to this day because I remember saying to myself at the time, I'll never get a more perfect feed in my life than that one and I still couldn't do anything with it.

I know Buzzy as a competitor so well that I even played intramural basketball against him at Hopkins—and often guarded him in those games. Buzzy was an outstanding soccer player at Hopkins but in the winter he played basketball. I had been a high school basketball player. I don't think Budnitz played that sport at City and when we went head-to-head in the Homewood gym in December and January I thought I could eat him up. Hey, he was only this skinny, knock kneed guy who hadn't played basketball in high school. To my shock and annoyance, he got the better of me more often than the reverse. I guess you'd say he was sneaky quick as an athlete, because he excelled at taking the ball away from you. And when he drove to the basket he was past his opponent before the guy knew it. Basket by Budnitz.

I've often thought Buzzy's lacrosse opponents may have underrated him because he didn't look like a great athlete. But he sure was one. A lot of actual great athletes were surprised when they paid a price when they made the mistake of underrating the attackman behind the goal at Hopkins and at the Mount in those days.

I hope you will enjoy playing the game as much—and as well and for as long—as Buzzy did and that you will be able to have a similar effect on it after it is all said and done. My very best wishes, Robbie.

Bill Tanton

JHU '53

[RHS Note: Bill has been a sports writer for over sixty years—about forty at the Baltimore *Evening Sun* and more recently as a columnist for *Lacrosse Magazine*, published by US Lacrosse.]

Dear Robbie,

I have been playing lacrosse as long as I can remember. I grew up in Baltimore, played at Loyola Blakefield High School, and just graduated from Dickinson College. Baltimore is a huge lacrosse town and growing up there really inspired my love for the game. To me, lacrosse is fun, plain and simple. I received the Turnbull Award last spring (2013) at Dickinson. I consider it a tremendous honor to be recognized in the name of one of the greatest players in the history of the game, and an admirable and intelligent leader. Since receiving the award, I have learned quite a bit more about Jack and he is now one of my role models because his talents and efforts went way beyond the sport of lacrosse, which is something I strive for, as well. Having a great team played a huge part of my recognition and my teammates made my job easy.

I would recommend that you work hard on your academics. I really cracked down the last couple of years and it has really helped me with my focus on and off the field. Coach Webster at Dickinson (and my high school coach, Jack Crawford) really emphasizes excellence in all areas—they genuinely want the best for each of us and that always starts with academics.

In terms of lacrosse, don't over-think the game. Just have a great time playing with all of your friends and you'll realize how fortunate we all are to compete together. I learned during an injury a few years ago how much I enjoyed the game. Watching while I healed was very difficult but also gave me a better appreciation for actually playing.

As you move along, you'll probably encounter a number of challenges. When things get tough, think 24 hours into the future and determine if persevering was worth it (it usually is).

I hope you enjoy learning more about the game, Robbie. It has been a true gift for me and so many others. I think if you treat the game well, it will treat you well in return. Keep working hard. I'd love to hear how things are going for you.

A book I would recommend to you is *Born to Run* by Christopher McDougall. The Superathletes in this book inspired me because they ran simply for enjoyment. I learned to embrace the struggle (of exercise, shooting, stickwork, schoolwork, etc.) and how rewarding it is to overcome it. I know that you would enjoy reading this book, as well.

All the best,

Brian Cannon

Turnbull Award 2013
Dickinson College 2014

Dear Robbie,

Thanks for letting me accompany you on your journey with your special stick. I am Mark Douglas, University of Maryland and Turnbull Award recipient in 1991. I grew up in Baltimore and learned to play lacrosse through the local recreation league. After high school, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps (I needed to do some growing up—so I thought that would be the best way) and served for four years. From there I went to the University of Maryland.

My father played professional hockey for the Toronto Maple Leafs. He was the first Defensive player ever to win Rookie of the Year in the NHL, and was on four Stanley Cup winning teams. He spent many years playing and coaching for the Baltimore Clippers, which is why I got introduced into lacrosse. I learned how to skate when I was 13 months old! As a kid, of course, I played hockey, but my mother pulled me off my hockey team because my grades weren't good enough. I hope you don't make the same mistake!

I attended a private boys' high school, Calvert Hall College High School, near Baltimore. My recreation coach Scott Calvert taught me to shoot to the open net and this was a great beginning. Scott became a great friend to me over the years, and still to this day. He also taught me to not be afraid to take chances, and reminded us that lacrosse was just a start point—that win or lose, enjoy everything about it and in your life.

After spending four years in the USMC, I was fortunate that Mike Thomas convinced Dick Edell to recruit me to the University of Maryland on lacrosse scholarship.

Receiving the Turnbull Award was a huge surprise. I remember that I almost fell off my chair when my name was announced at the banquet. To be in such great company is pretty overwhelming. I certainly would not have received the award without my teammates, parents, and coaches.

I could rattle off a long list of great memories of the game—which would include playing with and against the greatest

players ever at Calvert Hall, Maryland, and for Team Canada, scoring five goals in a game against Johns Hopkins, and on and on. But what I take away from the game at this point is the fact that I was so fortunate to make the friendships that I did.

After I received the Turnbull Award I presented it to my rec coach Scott Calvert for all he had done for and meant to me! Don't ever forget the people who help you grow in life.

Dick Edell was my coach at Maryland. Anyone who has ever played for Coach Edell will tell you what a great experience it was and what an incredible mentor he is. He was a commanding presence (he's about 6'5"!) and we all considered him a second father. We never wanted to disappoint him. Dave Slafkosky, our assistant coach, was held in similarly high regard.

I would encourage you to remember that lacrosse is a team game. To do well in lacrosse (and just about anything), you need to learn to work with people and find ways to help other people succeed.

Robbie, I think what separates people is their love for the game. You can tell when people love what they are doing—it shows.

I try to give back to the game today by coaching some young players, and keeping in touch with my lacrosse team to support lacrosse events.

I would love to meet you in person, Robbie, so that I could share more of my passion for the game! Please let me know if I can help you.

If you get a chance and like to read, I would recommend *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter.

Good luck, Robbie,

Mark Douglas

University of Maryland 1991
Turnbull Award 1991

Hi Robbie,

I write to you on behalf of my late brother and teammate, Jeff Cook, Johns Hopkins '82. Jeff was a fantastic player—a three-time All-American, two-time Turnbull Award recipient (outstanding attackman), Enners Award recipient (player of the year), Team USA player (world champion), and is enshrined in the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame. I think his teammates (myself included!) considered him the epitome of what the game should be about—skilled, tough, hard-working, team-oriented.

Jeff began his career in the first grade at St. Paul's School and then went on to the McDonogh School in Baltimore and then to Hopkins. He benefited immensely from great coaching during his entire career. He had at least four or five Hall of Fame coaches along the way (as well a number of teammates now enshrined).

Receiving the Turnbull Award meant a great deal to Jeff. I think he would say that he was gratified (as with all of his many awards) to be recognized by the various coaches and committees. He knew that the hard work he put into playing the game he truly loved to the best of his ability was recognized and appreciated. He was shocked that he received the MVP in the '81 championship even though his team lost. He certainly would have traded that recognition for a win.

As a player Jeff would tell you to work hard and play to the best of your ability at all times. He would encourage you to go to the goal (can't score unless you do). And, mostly, no "dancing," as he used to say.

Jeff was remarkably humble. He always credited his teammates—even when he was clearly a central part of his team's success. He always told people he had great midfielders to play with. As all attackmen know—you can't score if you don't have the ball. So it was always nice to hear Jeff express that sentiment as a thank you to his teammates.

Jeff had osteomyelitis as a child and, after several surgeries, had to have hip replacement surgery at age forty. He battled through all of his injuries along the way in the same warrior-like fashion.

My mother would be happy if I told you a quick story about Jeff's rehabilitation from his hip surgery. When she took him to therapy one day—she noticed a (now famous) poster that STX Lacrosse had printed back in the '80s—of Jeff playing for Hopkins vs. North Carolina—hanging on the wall of the waiting room. She related to me, “When the nurse came back from taking Jeff to another room, I asked her if she knew who that was on the poster. Meanwhile, there were just two of us in the waiting room. The other person said, “That’s my son!” The person was the father of John Haus—the North Carolina defenseman playing against Jeff. I, of course, said, “That’s my son!” What a coincidence since neither of us knew one another.” It is a small world, Robbie.

Jeff was one of the greatest to play the game, Robbie. I know that he would be thrilled to hear of your association with him through Jack Turnbull—another of the all-time greats.

Keep working hard. Please let me know if I can share any more with you in regard to our great game or my brother.

Good luck, Robbie,

Craig Cook for

My brother and teammate Jeff Cook

Johns Hopkins University 1982

Turnbull Award 1981, 1982

Enners Award 1981

Team USA 1982

National Lacrosse Hall of Fame, Class of 2006