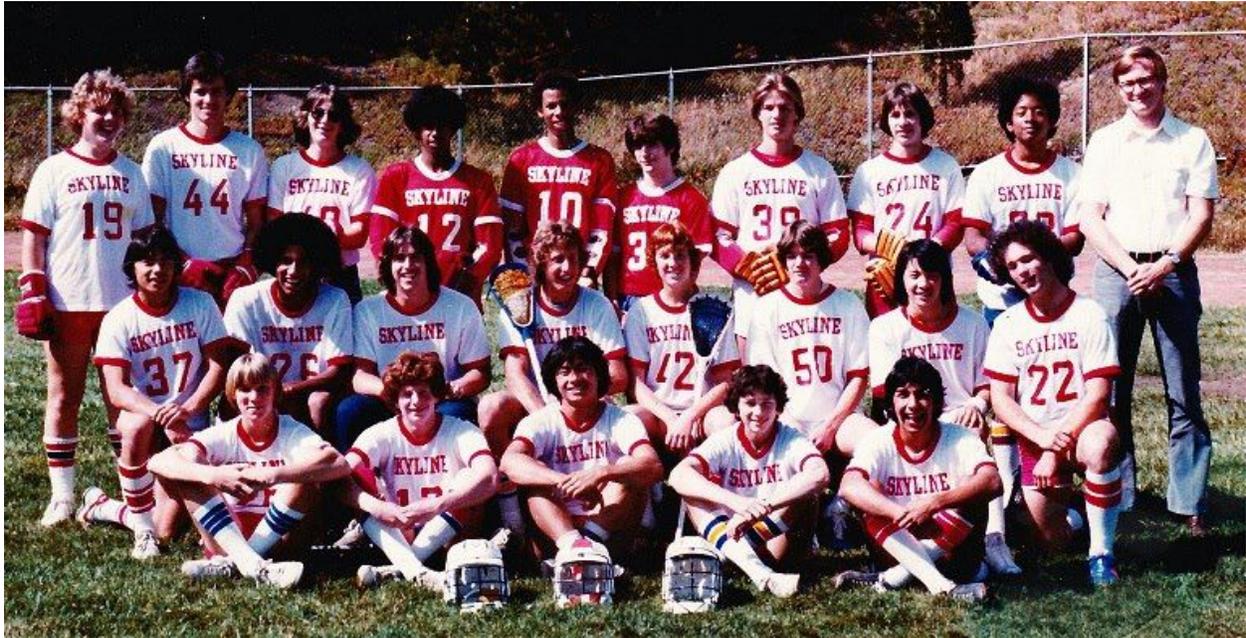


The History of Skyline
By Ben Sparks, President 2008-2013



In 1976 a dad from the east coast who worked market hours in SF named Bruce Nelson introduced the game to his sons Chris & Eric and their friends. The Skyline Lacrosse Team was formed. Early players in the 70's also included Andy Still, Robert Au, Ted Tagami, etc. They scrimmaged the colleges and the men's clubs as well as playing against SI, University HS, and The Branson School.

1979 brought league expansion, adding Novato HS, San Marin HS, and a combination Mt Tam/Terra Linda/San Rafael team to the league. Skyline started winning championships, finishing in the mid-80's after something like 5 in a row. Rem Paul became head coach somewhere in here.

[Sidebar: there were no stores that sold lacrosse equipment in California at this time. Rem kept a couple dozen new sticks behind his sofa and new players went to his house to buy one. If you liked it, and wanted to play, you'd call 1-800-Lacrosse, which rang somewhere in Baltimore, and ask to be mailed a catalog. Once it arrived, you'd tear out the back page, fill out the form, attach a check, and mail it back. In 4-6 weeks, your box of equipment would arrive. So to get a new pair of gloves basically took about 3 months.]

1981 Skyline formed a JV team at Montera (Junior high schools in Oakland at that time were grades 7-8-9). Players included Peter Krawiec, Hugh Ditzler, and Phil Tagami. Montera

practiced and had games on the baseball field; Skyline practiced and played games at Merritt College.

1984 Skyline & Montera, now incorporated as Oakland Youth Lacrosse, added a 3rd club team at Bishop O'Dowd with Pete Krawiec pushing things and Scott Stein as coach. Phil Tagami and Dan Sasaki started the Berkeley HS club at the same time. Montera was coached by Jose Munoz who also owned the sandwich shop inside the 19th St BART station that eventually became Subway.

[Scott, Tim Tuttle, and Dan Nourse were the primary goal-scorers of the Golden Gate men's club, which at this time was winning about 10 straight California state Championships. Dan eventually became head coach at Cal, just retiring a year ago.]

1985 O'Dowd and BHS are both taken in by their schools' athletic departments, becoming varsity teams. Skyline continues as a Club. There was no CIF section recognizing lacrosse at this time, and no NCJLA either, so clubs played varsity teams. Teams continued to scrimmage against Cal, SF & Golden Gate mens' clubs, etc. Montera spins off as a youth (Jr High) team, and no longer plays as Skyline's JV. They wear light blue.

1988 Acalanes forms a club. Prior to that, players from Orinda also played for Skyline. Piedmont & Head Royce players (including Vince Saunders) played for Skyline still.

1992, the year before the O'Dowd boys team wins the state championship, O'Dowd starts the first girls' high school team in Northern Calif. In 1993 Berkeley High starts a girls team, and SI a year or so later. Girls' lacrosse in NorCal got started out of that same late 80s early 90s Skyline enthusiasm.

1993-ish NCJLA forms and all teams, Club and Varsity, join the league. Skyline HS is coached by Andy Still, Phil Tagami, Alan Wang, Robert Au, and other alums. Pete Krawiec's O'Dowd team wins a state championship.

2001 Lacrosse is recognized by CIF as an official sport. Unfortunately, this begins the division between Club & Varsity programs, who are no longer allowed to play one another. The 'State Championship' only exists in the Club system, which really represents less than 20% of the state's HS teams. The Bay Area's teams are divided into North Coast & Central Coast Sections. Many schools, recognizing they have students who play, officially form teams. These include Piedmont, Head-Royce, College Prep... unfortunately leaving Skyline HS with too few students

to maintain a HS team. Skyline/Oakland Youth Lacrosse lives on, mainly with the Montera group, as a youth lacrosse club.

[Interestingly, this drastic increase in teams led to huge demand for Coaches... and the men's league (the NCLA) was the casualty, dropping from 14 teams to 7, and eventually 6, within just 1-2 years. The NCLA is only now beginning to recover, as those players we coached as high-schoolers from 2001-on are now playing Club. The NCLA is now at 9 teams, with a 10th in probationary status]

2006 College Prep team folds, unable to sustain enough players.

2006 Skyline consists of about 60 boys, in PeeWee (grades 2-3-4), Pups (5-6), and Juniors (7-8) divisions in the NCJLA. There is also a group of ~20 girls from grades 5-8, who practice & scrimmage as Skyline but don't play official games.

2009 NCJLA reorganizes into U9, U11, U13, U15. Skyline fields 1-2 teams in every division, boys & girls. Head-Royce HS team folds. Now that HRS and CP students can no longer play for their schools, Skyline HS Club team re-forms, coached by Matt Clark.

2011 Skyline helps Oakland Tech form a HS Club team, which for the first year, is run as part of the Skyline club and plays in the NCJLA. Skyline also sponsors Alameda Club into the NCJLA.

2013 Skyline sponsors Head Royce and Oakland Lacrosse Club into the NCJLA.

Overall, the Skyline/Bruce Nelson lacrosse family tree is like the Bill Walsh of Bay Area Lacrosse. **Players & Coaches who started with Skyline, since 1976, have been direct founders of:**

- Bishop O'Dowd Lacrosse (1984)
- Berkeley HS Lacrosse (1984)
- Montera Lacrosse (1985)
- St Mary's College Lacrosse (1986)
- Acalanes Lacrosse (1988)
- Piedmont HS Lacrosse (2001)
- Head Royce HS Lacrosse (2001)
- College Prep HS Lacrosse (2001)
- Oakland Tech Lacrosse (2011)
- Alameda Attack LC (2011)

- Oakland Lacrosse Club (2013)
- Head Royce youth lacrosse club (2013)