

Coach returns to guide Pioneers

Ross Frehlick will be back behind bench in coming Senior "B" lacrosse season

[Mark Booth](#) / Delta Optimist

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The Ladner Pioneers have reached into their past as they look to return to glory in the future.

The West Coast Senior Lacrosse Association club has welcomed back Ross Frehlick as head coach. He will be joined by assistants Derek Murrell, Thomas Haydon and Greg Rennie. All four are alumni players.

Frehlick's 25-year run with the club as a player and coach ended in 2010 when the Pioneers fell in the WCLSA semi-finals to the Tri-City Bandits.

Ladner had loaded up on short term talent by bringing in NLL players Kyle Goundrey, Gary Bining and Kevin Hansen.

However, it wasn't enough to take out a Bandit team that also had its share of star players as Burnaby hosted the President's Cup that year.

Frehlick has still been very active with the club alumni over the last five years and also has served as an assistant coach with the Delta Intermediate "A" Islanders. He will continue that role this coming season.

Bob Taylor and Sam Thauli oversaw a complete youth movement since Frehlick's departure, loading up mainly on local talent from Delta's two junior teams.

Ladner remained competitive but a league championship has remained elusive over that stretch.

The Pioneers were 15-1-0 at one point last season but stumbled late and were eventually swept in the finals by Nanaimo.

It's been nine years since Ladner last won the WCSLA championship and it's Frehlick's mandate to get the club back to nationals.

"Visiting teams use to dread coming to Ladner and from what I have heard that's not really the case anymore," said Frehlick. "Intimidation was a big part of this club's past success. I'm not saying we should be playing dirty lacrosse but certainly more intimidating."

Frehlick will also make it clear he wants a 100 percent commitment from his players right through the entire schedule. Player availability has been an issue in recent years, including post-season games.

"I just don't get how guys can be there from the start and then miss playoff games. That never happened when I was playing and I intend on making that pretty clear," he said. "Maybe it's a different era now. It's one of those

things we are going to figure out starting Thursday night (at the team's first practice)."

Frehlick's first move was welcoming back Rob Cook. The standout goaltender retired last season but is here for more year at the age of 47. He will share the crease duties with Matt Moorehouse.

"We are bringing 'Cookie' back for one more season then giving him a proper send off," added Frehlick. "He is probably the greatest goalie to ever play in this league."

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