



2005 HOF Induction Speech

Paul Gait - Inductee

I would like to thank all of the people at US Lacrosse and the voting members of the lacrosse hall of fame committee for presenting me with this honor. It is a great privilege for me to be inducted along side my brother.

I would like to start by thanking all of my coaches, general managers, trainers, owners, and especially the team doctors.

I would like to thank my wife Cathleen for supporting me during my long career. I have spent the better part of 15 years traveling the world to play this sport and she has been very patient with me during that time.

I would like to single out a few people that have contributed greatly to my success. I would like to thank Bob Pepper for convincing my parents to start Gary and I in the sport at the early age of four. I would like to thank my parents, Fred and Dianne, for their time and commitment during my younger years. My father made it possible for us to compete at the highest level by organizing programs, teams and leagues for us to play in. In fact he was wise enough to replace himself as our coach with Ron MacNeil and Tej Dillon, who taught me the skills and knowledge of lacrosse that I relied on throughout my career.

I would also like to thank Roy Simmons and John Desko, my coaches at Syracuse University. I was lucky that Roy took the advice of the then Canadian Team National coach, Bobby Allen, and invited Gary and myself to come and play for his program without even seeing us play. When we arrived at Syracuse things didn't look good for us. It was a different game than we were used too. Kirk Pratt, a former teammate, later admitted that our fellow teammates thought Roy was crazy bringing in two guys who couldn't even pass or catch with their right hand. I'm just glad we were able to prove them wrong and help Roy and John win some championships during our tenure.

I would also like to recognize some key people who have contributed to my success in post collegiate and pro lacrosse. Russ Kline and Chris Fritz had the vision to reinvent the professional indoor game and start the MILL. I am proud to have been involved with Howard Dolgan, Steve Donor and Gary Gait, who all helped start the existing NLL professional league. I would also like to thank Jay and Dave Picc who have contributed greatly to the advancement of post collegiate and professional field lacrosse in the U.S.

I would like to thank close friends who I have played and worked with over the years. Tom Marechek, Steve Comisky, Mike French, Steve Govett, Greg and Grant Pepper, Kevin Alexander and especially the late Jim Muhlfelder.

Lastly I would like to thank my brother Gary, the greatest player and friend of them all. Without him I would not have been the player I was. The competitive nature of our relationship drove me to continually try and get better, as well as out do him. When I look back at my career I can say that I played, and won championships, with the greatest player of all-time and one very good looking fellow.