



ERIN  
HARREL

of Cape Coral has a Ph.D. in education and is the mother of three children.

## Lacrosse hits home

Kids — and dad — are hooked on fastest **game** on two feet

**A**s I sat and waited for my son to finish practice, I made a few friendly phone calls. I was talking with a dear friend who asked why my car was so quiet. I explained the girls were playing on the sidelines of the field while Jude, 12, finished lacrosse practice. What's lacrosse, she asked. I struggled to answer.

I later found that few people born and raised in the South are familiar with the game. Hence, I asked my husband, Greg, long-time lacrosse player and coach, to fill you in:

"For Southwest Florida and Florida in general, lacrosse is a fairly new sport. However, lacrosse, or 'lax,' as it is known by those who play, is anything but new to North America with origins dating back to the 1600s. Native American Indians started the sport. They often competed in games over several days on fields stretching miles and miles with the game, at times, ending in death.

"Although a physical sport, modern lacrosse has come a long way to become a game of speed, fitness and physical endurance (which was my initial attraction to the sport). While in college at the Univer-

sity of Toledo, I played all four years and went on to play an additional two years with a local lacrosse club. When I moved to Florida, I was disappointed to find out lacrosse's popularity was dismal, if not non-existent.

"Then several years ago, I learned that the Southwest Florida Youth Lacrosse League had been established and was looking for players and coaches. No longer being a youth myself, I encouraged my son to play and I offered to coach (I would have to relive my playing days vicariously through my son)."






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After coaching for the last three years, Greg noticed one common factor in the kids who play, they LOVE it.

The sport of lacrosse, although physical in nature, focuses on teaching kids good sportsmanship, teamwork and camaraderie. In the off-season, kids and families are chomping at the bit for fall ball to begin, followed by the regular season in February. The local youth league has a great core of parents and volunteers who not only keep the league going, but truly love the game.

If interested in playing, coaching or just plain interested in finding out more, go to [swflacrosse.com](http://swflacrosse.com). The league is open to students in grades 1 through 8 of all experience levels.

For more information on the sport of lacrosse, visit [uslacrosse.com](http://uslacrosse.com).

Fall clinics started in November, but continue at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays through Dec. 16 at Villas Elementary School, off Beacon Boulevard in Fort Myers. No experience required. Come see the fastest game on two feet. 



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