



2018 Game Notes

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2018 SCHEDULE AND RESULTS

3-2 Overall

1-1 Home | 2-1 Away

APRIL

22	vs. Florida	2pm
28	vs. Boston	7:30pm

MAY

6	@ New York	5pm
12	@ Boston	6pm
19	@ Dallas	8pm

JUNE

2	vs. New York	7pm
9	vs. Charlotte	7pm
16	@ Chesapeake	7pm
23	vs. Dallas	7pm
30	@ Charlotte	7:30pm

JULY

21	@ Ohio	6pm
26	vs. Chesapeake	7:30pm
28	@ Florida	7pm

AUGUST

4	vs. Denver	7pm
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SETTING THE SCENE: ATLANTA BLAZE VS NEW YORK LIZARDS



GAME INFORMATION

DATE: Saturday, June 2nd, 2018

LOCATION: Kennesaw, GA

STADIUM: Fifth Third Bank Stadium

FACEOFF: 7 p.m. (EST)

BROADCAST: Lax Sports Network

All-Time Series: 2-2

2018 Series: 1-0

THE MATCHUP

Following a 15-14 overtime loss to Dallas on May 19, the Atlanta Blaze (3-2) hope to return to their winning ways, as the New York Lizards (2-3) invade the Inferno for the second meeting this season. In the first meeting between the two squads 27 days ago, Deemer Class had a nine-point night, leading the team to victory. Goalie Chris Madalon, who was Lizards' goalie Drew Adams' understudy for several seasons, made 22 saves against his former mates to earn the win in the first meeting. Madalon is second in the league in wins (3) and save percentage (.595). Former Lizards' attackman, Matt Gibson, who has 13 goals in five games for the Blaze, scored four times in his first game against his former team. Rob Pannell had four goals and four assists, while Will Manny scored four goals and had one assist to lead the Lizards in the first meeting. New York is exiting a 14-13 victory at Florida on May 19. Manny and Joe Walters had hat tricks, Paul Rabil, Joe LoCascio and Michael Bocklet had two goals each and Drew Adams made 19 saves in the cage against the Launch. Tommy Palasek, another former Lizards' player, has 10 goals and 4 assists for the Blaze this season. Middie Matt Mackrides has four goals and seven assists, while Daniel Eipp and John Uppgren have four goals each. Defensively, Scott Ratliff is second among MLL defenders with 25 ground balls and close defender Liam Byrnes is tied for second in the league with eight caused turnovers.

BROADCAST INFORMATION:

Stream: Lax Sports Network

PxP: Scott Sudikoff

Analyst: Brendan McDaniels

LOOKING AHEAD:

Atlanta Blaze vs Charlotte Hounds

When: Saturday, June 9th

Time: 7p.m. (EST)

Coaching Staff

Head coach Liam Banks moved to the Atlanta area about 10 years ago from Pennsylvania. He was a two-time lacrosse All-American for Syracuse and appeared in the Final Four each year during his college career. In 2000 as a sophomore, Banks and his teammates won the national title and he was named most outstanding player after scoring six goals in the final game against Princeton. Banks was a two-time honorable mention All-American in 2000 and 2001 and went on to play five MLL seasons for the New Jersey Pride, San Francisco Dragons and Chicago Machine from 2005-09. He scored a career-high 21 goals in 2007 for the Dragons. He was raised in the Setaukets on Long Island and played high school lacrosse at Stony Brook Academy and Ward Melville H.S.

Spencer Ford, assistant coach, and general manager was a standout player at Towson University. He had 53 assists in 13 games during the 1999 season for the Tigers, including 10 in one game against Gannon. Ford also had a 13-point game that season against Vermont, tallying five times while assisting on eight others. Ford still holds the MLL record for assists in a single season with 47. He established the record in just 12 games while playing for the Los Angeles Riptide in 2007. He was named the MLL's most improved player that season. Ford played two more MLL seasons before becoming G.M. for the Chesapeake Bayhawks in 2010. The Bayhawks won the Steinfeld Cup that season.

Jamie Hanford is an assistant coach specializing in defense for the Blaze. A three-time All-American defender at Loyola, Hanford was two-time National Lacrosse League (NLL) champion and MLL champion with the Bayhawks in 2002. He played 139 games in the NLL for five different teams, and 74 MLL games for four different teams. He also is the current head coach at Green Farms Academy in Westport, Conn.

MILESTONES

Tommy Palasek scored 4 goals in a single quarter in a heartbreaking loss to Dallas.

Kevin Rice faced the Boston Cannons and put away four goals, one two-point goal, and four assists for a total of ten points. He was named Coca Cola Player of the Game and Warrior Offensive Player of the Week. He leads the Blaze in points (23) and assists (13)

Chris Madalon is 3-1 in the cage and boasts a .595 save percentage, the second-highest in the league

Deemer Class had a MLL record-tying three 2-point goals against the New York Lizards. He also scored 3 single goals for a total of 9 goals which is a Blaze record. He was named Coca Cola Player of the Game and Warrior Offensive Player of the Week. He leads the Blaze in goals with 12

2017 GAME BY GAME RESULTS

GAME	DATE	OPP.	STRK.	RESULT	TOTAL PTS	HIGH (G)	HIGH (A)	ATTEND.
1	22-Apr	FLA	0	10-13	17	3	2	1,043
2	28-Apr	BOS	1	19-12	28	4	5	1,967
3	6-May	at NY	2	16-14	28	9	4	3,219
4	12-May	at BOS	3	17-14	26	6	4	4,210
5	19-May	at DAL	0	14-15	21	4	3	4,732
6	2-Jun	NY	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	9-Jun	CLT	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	16-Jun	at CHE	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	23-Jun	DAL	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	30-Jun	at CLT	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	21-Jul	at OH	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	26-Jul	CHE	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	28-Jul	at FLA	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	4-Aug	DEN	-	-	-	-	-	-

POINT LEADERS

#	PLAYERS	POS	GP	G	2ptG	A	PTS	PIM	PPG	PPA	SHG	SHA	GWG	GB	DC	TO	CTO	S	SPC
22	Rice, Kevin	A	5	11	1	16	28	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	13	0	29	.379
5	Class, Deemer	M	5	12	5	1	18	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	5	1	43	.279
66	Gibson, Matt	A	5	13	0	3	16	0	1	0	0	0	2	3	0	6	0	26	.500
84	Palasek, Tommy	A	5	10	0	4	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	7	0	12	0	26	.385
39	Mackrides, Matt	M	5	4	0	7	11	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	20	.200
3	Eipp, Daniel	A	4	4	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	13	.308
2	Ratliff, Scott	D	5	3	1	1	5	1	0	0	1	1	0	25	0	8	4	9	.333
63	Begley, Michael		5	2	0	3	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	5	0	11	.182
13	Uppgren, John	A	2	4	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	.444
6	Lewnes, Nathan	A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000
	X (TOTALS)		3	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	13	.231
	X Donahue, Dylan	A	3	2	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	8	.250
55	Byrnes, Liam	M	5	1	0	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	2	8	1	1.000
42	Sims, Austin	M	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1.000
21	Reynolds, Jeff	M	4	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	1	0	4	.250
14	Pennington, Justin	M	5	0	0	1	1	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	3	2	.000
80	Fahey, James		5	0	0	1	1	.5	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	1	.000
10	Robinson, Callum		5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	2	4	1	.000
30	Hiken, Brent	F	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	3	1	2	.000
24	Ianzito, Stephen	M	4	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	.000
41	Glazener, Edwin	D	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	2	0	.000
8	Ghitelman, Adam	G	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	.000
43	Evans, Erik	D	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	.000

ATLANTA BLAZE PLAYERS

Alphabetical Roster:

ACTIVE ROSTER							
NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	BIRTHDATE	COLLEGE	YEARS PRO
63	Begley, Michael	M	5' 11"	185	5/22/1993	Marist	2
55	Byrnes, Liam	D	6' 3"	195	4/19/1993	Marquette	2
5	Class, Deemer	M	5' 11"	200	6/24/1993	Duke	2
33	Cuccinello, Christian	A	6' 0"	210	5/26/1996	Villanova	0
3	Eipp, Daniel	A	5' 11"	180	9/18/1992	Harvard	1
43	Evans, Erik	D	6' 4"	203	-	Ohio State	0
80	Fahey, James	LSM	6' 2"	200	8/24/1991	UMass	2
8	Ghitelman, Adam	G	5' 9"	185	4/25/1989	UVA	7
66	Gibson, Matt	A	5' 10"	170	1/19/1990	Yale	6
41	Glazener, Eddy	D	6' 4"	215	9/1/1993	Notre Dame	1
1	Kelly, Connor	M	6' 0"	190	-	Maryland	0
6	Lewnes, Nate	A	5' 9"	180	5/2/1994	UMBC	1
39	Mackrides, Matt	M	5' 10"	185	2/24/1990	Penn State	7
11	Madalon, Chris	G	6' 3"	210	4/12/1988	UNC	2
40	McClancy, Kyle	Trans M	6' 1"	185	-	UAlbany	0
91	Joe Nardella	FO	5' 10"	205	5/11/1993	Rutgers	4
45	Noble, Jason	D	5' 10"	165	9/5/1991	Cornell	4
84	Palasek, Tom	A	5' 11"	185	1/23/1990	Syracuse	6
14	Pennington, Justin	Trans M	5' 11"	210	7/13/1988	Rutgers	8
2	Ratliff, Scott	LSM	5' 11"	190	7/26/1991	Loyola	5
21	Reynolds, Jeff	Trans M	6' 1"	190	2/10/1986	Maryland	9
22	Rice, Kevin	A	5' 9"	190	10/26/1992	Syracuse	3
10	Robinson, Callum	D	6' 4"	245	5/1/1991	Stevenson	3
42	Sims, Austin	M	6' 1"	185	12/29/1996	Princeton	0
13	Uppgren, John	A	5' 11"	190	2/23/1994	Tufts	2
PRACTICE SQUAD							
88	Bruckner, Jack	A	6' 1"	205	2/12/1995	Duke	1
19	Garziano, Matt	M	6' 2"	180	8/18/1993	UAlbany	0
24	Ianzito, Stephen	Trans M	6' 0"	215	9/8/1990	Syracuse	5
34	Kelly, Frankie	FO	5' 10"	170	10/31/1991	UNC	0
28	Kemp, TJ	M	6' 4"	220	8/17/1991	UNC	3
99	Massa, Colin	D	6' 4"	220	12/1/1984	Mercer	1
NLL INACTIVE							
18	Hossack, Graeme	D	6' 2"	225	7/22/1992	Lindenwood	2
COLLEGE INACTIVE							
	Feiner, Griffin	A	6' 2"	200	-	Hartford	
	Forbes, Hunter	FO	5' 6"	170	-	Jacksonville	
	Korzelius, Jack	M	6' 3"	215	-	Dartmouth	
	McBride, Will	D	6' 1"	190	1/2/96	UNC	
PUP/IR							
30	Hiken, Brent	FO	5' 10"	205	2/5/1992	Stevenson	4
35	Noble, Jeremy	M	5' 10"	165	9/5/1991	Denver	5

Numerical Roster

1	Connor Kelly
2	Scott Ratliff
3	Daniel Eipp
5	Deemer Class
6	Nate Lewnes
8	Adam Ghitelman
10	Callum Robinson
11	Chris Madalon
13	John Uppgren
14	Justin Pennington
21	Jeff Reynolds
22	Kevin Rice
33	Christian Cuccinello
35	Jason Noble
39	Matt Mackrides
40	Kyle McClancy
41	Eddy Glazener
42	Austin Sims
43	Erik Evans
55	Liam Byrnes
63	Mike Begley
66	Matt Gibson
80	James Fahey
84	Tom Palasek
91	Joe Nardella

Expansion Draft:

Scott Ratliff, from Boston 2016
 Adam Ghitelman, from Boston 2016
 Justin Pennington, from Denver 2016
 Jeremy Noble, from Denver 2016

Supplemental Draft:

Callum Robinson, 1st round, 2nd overall, 2017
 Michael Begley, from Boston 2018
 Jeff Reynolds, from Florida 2017
 Jason Noble, from Chesapeake 2018
 Jack Bruckner, from Boston 2018
 Chris Madalon, from New York, 2018
 Stephen Ianzito, from Charlotte, 2018

2018 College Draft:

Connor Kelly, 1st round, Maryland
 Kyle McClancy, 2nd round, UAlbany
 Austin Sims, 3rd round, Princeton
 Christian Cuccinello, 4th round, Villanova
 Erik Evans, 6th round, Ohio State

Player Pool:

Deemer Class
 Daniel Eipp

Player Movement:

Matt Gibson, from New York 2018
 Tom Palasek, from New York 2018

Trade:

Liam Byrnes, from Boston 2018
 James Fahey, from Boston 2017
 John Uppgren, from Boston 2017
 Eddy Glazener, from Denver 2018
 Brent Hiken, from Denver 2017
 Joe Nardella, from Boston 2018

Rookie Augmentation

The Atlanta Blaze is likely to welcome three additional collegiate players this week, including NCAA national semifinalists, Connor Kelly (Maryland) and Kyle McClancy (Albany), and Christian Cuccinello (Villanova) whose team was eliminated in the opening round by Duke. The trio will join rookies Austin Sims (Princeton) and Erik Evans (Ohio State) on the Blaze's 25-man roster.

Kelly, an offensively-focused midfielder, finished his senior campaign at Maryland with 46 goals and 36 assists. He is a two-time first-team USILA All-American and Tewaarton Award finalist. Kelly leaves College Park with 128 career goals, the fifth-best total in Terps' history.

McClancy is a versatile two-way middie that contributes at both ends of the field. The second-team USILA All-American scored 29 goals, added 19 assists and collected 36 ground balls in 19 games during his senior season for Albany. The Great Danes lost in the NCAA semifinals by eventual champion Yale.

Cuccinello, a two-time All-Big East first-team attackman, made 57 starts in 59 career games at Villanova and finished his career with 97 goals and 71 assists. The native of Mountain Lakes, N.J., was taken by the Blaze in the fourth round in the MLL Collegiate Draft with the 32nd overall pick. His brother Greg was a two-time captain for Towson University's lacrosse team and played in 65 career games as a midfielder from 2012-15.

Lessons from a Loss

As with any close game, one less mistake or one more ground ball captured might have made the difference. The 15-14 loss in overtime to the Dallas Rattlers (4-2) Saturday night couldn't have sat well with any of the Atlanta Blaze's 19 players and three coaches. The Blaze led 13-8 after Daniel Eipp's second goal of the game with 10:58 left in the fourth quarter.

Atlanta (3-2) was trying to extend a three-game win streak and looking forward to a sweep of a three-city, three-week road trip. Those might have seemed a pipe dream during the team's first two seasons, but this Blaze unit is different. Its attack is more balanced and dangerous. Its midfield is faster and more versatile. Its defense is sturdier and more capable of winning one-on-one battles, and the cage is guarded by two very capable Major League Lacrosse (MLL) goalies.

But Dallas (4-2) is a very capable team with playoff appearances in three of the last four seasons as evidence, and their move from Rochester, N.Y, to Jerry World (Frisco, Texas) has provided them with more enthusiasm. After strangling Jordan Wolf and the Rattlers' offense for more than 50 minutes, Dallas scored seven of the contest's final eight goals.

Ty Thompson initiated the Rattlers' comeback with two markers sandwiched around Ryan McNamara's second of three goals. John Uppgren's second tally of the evening seemed to restore order and gave the Blaze a 14-11 lead with 5:57 left in regulation, but former Blaze attackman, Randy Staats, who was making his first MLL appearance of the season had other ideas. Staats beat Blaze goalie Chris Madalon to make it 14-12 just less than a minute later. Dallas' Jordan MacIntosh scored with 1:21 left in the fourth quarter and John Ranagan tied the game at 14 with 56 seconds left in regulation. McNamara's game-winner, his third goal of the game, came just 30 seconds into the extra session over former Marquette teammate, Liam Byrnes, and past Madalon.

Tommy Palasek paced the Atlanta attack scoring four times in the first quarter and added an assist on Uppgren's fourth-quarter goal. Kevin Rice had two goals and three assists to increase his team-leading point total to 28. Matt Gibson added two goals and an assist, while Scott Ratliff scored his third goal of the season. Rookie Austin Sims scored his second MLL goal in his second-ever game. Madalon suffered his first MLL loss after three straight wins, despite turning away 18-of-33 shots, including seven in the third quarter.

After the game, head coach Liam Banks took responsibility for his team's loss.

"I thought I could have managed the game better in the fourth quarter, getting guys on and off the field," Banks said. "But, live and learn as a coaching staff."

Banks cited his team's inability to cash in on scoring opportunities in the first half as one of the root causes for the loss.

"I think we lost the game in the first half. I felt like we should have put 14 to 16 goals up on the board versus the 10 that we did. John Galloway made some big saves for them. We were only up by four at the half and in the MLL four is a pretty easy number to come back from. Dallas was an exceptional team in the second half. They showed why they are normally in the playoffs," Banks said.

With the Blaze up by five goals just before the half, Galloway saved Rice's shot with 15 seconds remaining and Dallas' Jack Near took advantage. He scored his second goal of the first half with just one second left to cut the Blaze lead to 10-6. In the second half, particularly in the game's final 10 minutes, Atlanta struggled to maintain its momentum. Atlanta managed just nine shots on goal in the second half compared to 20 in the first.

"Their offense made some plays. Their faceoff guy [Drew Simoneau] gave them a lot of possessions in the second half. I thought our defense played really well for three of the four quarters, but Dallas had more possessions and wore our defense down," Banks stated. "Thompson began to get some inside looks and Staats, who is an all-star, got some looks too and they made us pay. At the end of the day, we'll learn from it."

The team has a full two weeks to prepare for its next game. Being aggressive throughout the entire game is something Banks hopes his team will take into the team's four games in June, three of which will be played at Fifth Third Bank Stadium. The New York Lizards visit The Inferno Saturday, June 2 at 7 p.m.

"We're 3-2 going into the break and that's an over .500 record. We really like the way that the guys fought but we must put pressure on our opponents and limit our mistakes. Our mistakes added up in this loss. We'll try to limit our mental errors against New York," Banks said.

Bonus Points

- For the first time in team history, Atlanta went the entire game without being whistled for a penalty, and Dallas was called for just one.
- Palasek's four goals in the first quarter marked the second time this season that a Blaze player scored four times in a quarter. Deemer Class had four versus New York in the third quarter, May 6.
- Uppgren has scored two goals in each of the three games in which he has played for Atlanta.
- James Fahey picked up his first MLL assist and first point of the season with a clever dish to Kevin Rice.
- Gibson's two tallies give him a team-leading 13 goals for the season

Atlanta Blaze Welcome New Owner

Major League Lacrosse (MLL) and the Atlanta Blaze announced today an agreement to sell ownership of the Blaze franchise to Andre Gudger, Founder and CEO of the technology investment company, Eccalon.

“We are thrilled to have an entrepreneur as accomplished as Andre as a new owner in MLL,” said Alexander Brown, MLL Commissioner. “He combines an extremely successful technology background with a passion for our sport and a genuine commitment to the Atlanta community that will only help to advance our league and the game of lacrosse.”

Prior to founding Eccalon, Gudger served under President Barack Obama from 2011 to 2017 as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Defense for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy and the Director of the Office of Small Business Programs.

Gudger was also Founder and CEO of Solvern Innovations, a cybersecurity firm that provided communication and technology services to the Department of Defense. He also previously worked with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Union Bank of Switzerland and AT&T.

Gudger credited his eldest daughter for providing the impetus to becoming an active participant in the world of lacrosse.

“My motivation is simply based on the love that my daughter showed for the game. I wanted to get more involved so that I can help bring this sport to the world,” said Gudger, a graduate of the University of Maryland – Baltimore County and Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina.

“Based on the conversations I have had with front office personnel and the coaching staff during the past few months, I am certain that the Blaze have all of the right guys in those key positions,” Gudger said. “They have put together one heck of a roster and we will continue to build on that. I have been proud of what I have witnessed at training camp and look forward to the 2018 season.”

The Blaze have played two seasons in MLL since Atlanta was granted an expansion team in August 2015. They have called Fifth Third Bank Stadium, on the campus of Kennesaw State University, their home stadium since the franchise’s inception. Atlanta went 4-10 in its inaugural season and followed that with a 6-8 record in 2017.

“This represents a defining moment in the history of the Atlanta Blaze. Passionate ownership is integral for a franchise to be successful and Andre is committed to making the Blaze an elite MLL team,” said Team President Jim Pfeifer. “We have discussed working in concert with the entire Atlanta community to provide opportunities to grow the game across a wider demographic sphere, and I could not be more excited.”

Liam Banks Tapped as New Head Coach

Atlanta resident and Syracuse lacrosse legend, Liam Banks has signed on as Head Coach of the Atlanta Blaze, effective immediately. As one of Atlanta's most prominent lacrosse ambassadors, Coach Banks currently serves as a Thunder LB3 Partner and President of Lacrosse Operations. Liam was the original promoter of the first professional lacrosse game in Georgia in 2013 and was active in bringing the Major League Lacrosse Championships to Atlanta in 2014 and 2015.

"This is an incredible opportunity for me to challenge myself professionally at the highest level of coaching with many of the best players in the world. We hope to field a team for the Atlanta Blaze that embodies the same principles we strive to cultivate each day at Thunder LB3 with the goal of bringing home a Major League Lacrosse Championship in 2018. I love the city of Atlanta and I am humbled with the opportunity to be the Head Coach of the Atlanta Blaze," said Liam Banks.

Atlanta Blaze Team President, Jim Pfeifer stated, "Our top two objectives for the 2018 MLL season are to compete for the Steinfeld Trophy and to build the Blaze fan base throughout Georgia, and Liam's extensive lacrosse knowledge and experience, familiarity of the Atlanta market and boundless energy and drive make him the perfect head coach to lead the Blaze."

As a collegiate player, Banks was a two-time All-American at Syracuse and helped lead the Orange to four consecutive Final Four appearances including three Finals appearances, and a National Championship and MVP in 2000. In international competition, Banks played for the Under 19 USA World Team in 1999 and was named to the All-World Team and led Team USA to the gold medal. Banks continued his lacrosse in the Major League Lacrosse for five seasons. During his five years in the league he was a five-time Bud Light Game MVP and ranked in the Top 10 in scoring four of five years. Recently Coach Banks was inducted into the Long Island Hall of Fame for the Class of 2018.

"I have known Liam as a friend and a contributor to the sport for a long time," said General Manager Spencer Ford. "His knowledge of the sport is unlike others in that he's working in lacrosse 24/7. He has a great love for the game, and his ability to develop players at a young age and preparing them to play at a high level is fascinating. I'm excited to see how his IQ translates and how he can take that amazing knowledge and put it to use with our current Atlanta Blaze players. Liam lives and works in Atlanta, and the excitement around bringing a local person into the organization will help us grow in an amazing way. He knows everybody in lacrosse, has familiarity with the surrounding areas, and we have a great feeling that he's going to be an extremely important part of bringing in the community to watch the sport, something that is needed in MLL."