

Youth Hockey: All About Community





**Thank
You!!**

My Background

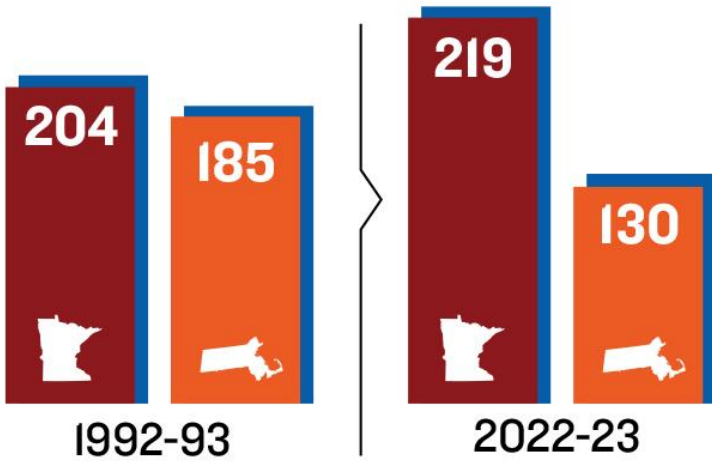
- Played at Cornell University
- Coached at Miami (OH), Cornell, Michigan
- Youth Hockey Director in NY & Chicago
- Founder of the Hockey Think Tank



MINN. OR MASS.?

▶ Where do the most players hail from?

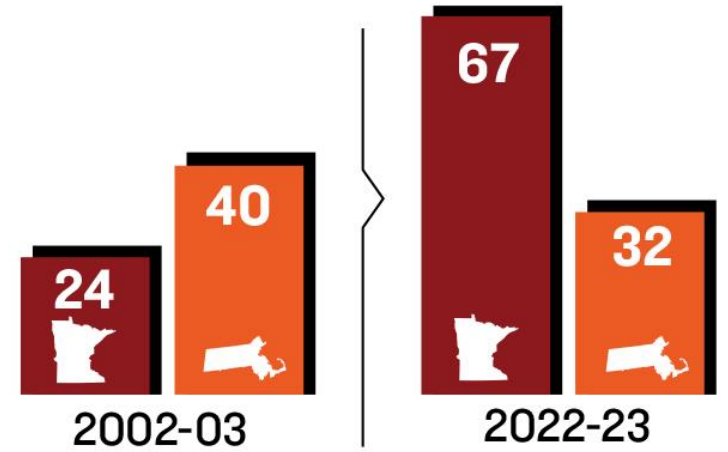
NCAA
DIVISION I MEN



MINN. OR MASS.?

▶ Where do the most players hail from?

NHL
PLAYERS



Where are we at?

1. Culture of Youth Hockey
2. Growing the Game
3. Developing “Elite” Players
4. Youth Organization Cohesiveness



1-10

Culture of Youth Hockey

- “MORE is Better + FASTER is Better”
- Narrowing of the Talent Pyramid Earlier and Earlier
- Early Professionalization = INSANE costs



Culture of Youth Hockey

- The logo on the front of the jersey has to mean something
- The immense value of playing for something bigger than yourself
- Player and personal development go hand in hand





Leadership



Coaches



Parents



Players



Player Development

- There's a lot of skill, not a lot of hockey sense
- Play for something bigger than yourself
- Life skills make you a better player



Player Development

If you were to give me your top 3 tips to give to youth coaches about planning a team practice - what would they be?

1. Clear objectives and appropriate challenge point. What are we working on & how can we make it challenging enough for the players in front of us to stimulate learning.
2. Create drills / games where Players are making decisions that they'll have to make in games. Keep the game read and action connected.
3. Gamify to enhance engagement and encourage competitiveness.

Player Development

What are 4-6 environmental factors that are crucial for players to develop? Answer at any time it's convenient

1. It starts with the relationship, especially involving them in the planning of the process of them getting better. Don't just give them a development plan, work with them to create it together. Talk to them about things outside of hockey, SHOW them you care and they will buy into what you are teaching them. Create an environment that is collaborative in nature full of curiosity and openness.

2. Create an environment where vulnerability is welcomed. It starts with the coach. Tell them you're not going to be perfect and don't expect them to be. If there's something they don't like or want to challenge you on, tell them you welcome that and that we're in this together. When you make mistakes, own it. It will give them the grace to make mistakes too. Failure and mistakes is a big part of growth.

3. Be prepared but flexible. The player has to know you have a plan and you are putting in the effort but also that you're not too stubborn to change it if things aren't clicking.

4. Competition breeds excellence. Anytime you can gamify or create a competitive aspect to drills or practices the intensity and intentionality raises. Competition breeds FUN too, which keeps them engaged in the monotony that can be the development process.

5. The environment has to be AUTHENTIC, especially with the coach. Being the best version of you gives the player the permission to be the best version of themselves. Create an environment that welcomes authenticity that helps to create identity. When the players are themselves and the environment is fun/positive it creates a camaraderie within the group that brings out the best in people.

6. The environment has to be one where resilience is emphasized. You have to push the players outside of their comfort zone and understand the nuance of challenge points during a practice or session. Growth happens outside the comfort zone but only with a resilient mindset.

7. Bonus that I love from Vechs: Set the standard high WITH the player and then when you need to hold that player accountable for not hitting that standard remind them this is the standard they created. If they have big dreams, the size of their effort has to match or exceed the size of their dreams. They have to own their development, this is a great way to help them do that.

Parents

- FOMO is REAL
- Preseason Parent Meeting
- Parent Culture takes work



Coach Development

- Coach Camaraderie is HUGE
- They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care
- Minnesota vs. Everywhere Else



Coach Development

Hey dude- I actually stepped away after the season

Kind of ruined my year, honestly.

Problem is they have made it a business.

Everyone is looking to profit from the money associated with the hope of getting their kid to the next level.

Agents at every game. Parents away from the rink giving kids more coaching advice than what they were getting. Made it tough on the bench to hold a standard or culture based on values

Coach Development



“It’s all about the coaching”



PLAYER ADVANCEMENT

“Syracuse Nationals”

Last 11 years, 8 Players went to NTDP

Alex Tuch | Luke Kirwan | David Farrance | Joel Farabee | Johnny Beecher
Eamon Powell | Luke Tuch | Seamus Powell

Last 11 years, 23 Players Playing/Committed to D1 Schools

Alex Brink | Boo Nieves | Dalton Izyk | Greg Burmaster | Jeff Taylor
Alex Tuch | Anthony Angello | Kevin O’Neil | Gabe Vinal | David Farrance
Kevin Wall | Joel Farabee | Johnny Beecher | Jimmy Rayhill | Zach Bookman
Ryan Kirwan | Luke Tuch | Isaac Novak | Hunter McDonald | Eamon Powell
Blake Humphrey | Ben Ritter | Drew DellaDonna

Last 11 years, 32 Players Playing/Committed to D3 Schools

Mitch Beyer | Shawn Patry | Shawn Morrow | Nick Petrella | Nick Gullo
Marc Cibelli | Kevin Franschelli | Josh Sova | Jake Farabee | Carlos Ross
Anthony Bird | Jeff Kirkwood | Joe Rutkowski | Matt Schneider
Nate Skidmore | Nate Zweig | Jesse Farabee | Mateo Capriotti | Tyler Omara
Matt Siegel | Stu Harley | Adam Tretowicz | Braden Doust | Jaxon Rutkowski
Kyle Anderson | Kyle Cronin | Michael Paterson Jones | Mike Sciore
Noah Williams | Tim Decker | Tyler Dorval | Emmett Powell

Most of the players above were coached by 4 coaches in program

**By-Product of
COACHING & DEVELOPMENT**

Organizational Development

- Are you an organization or do you wear the same jersey?
- Create it, overcommunicate it, **LIVE IT.**
- Board Continuity and organization clarity **MATTER**



THANK YOU!!!

REACH OUT OR FOLLOW ME AT:



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The Hockey Think Tank Podcast



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