



Townshend Hockey

Dear Players and Parents:

With the implementation of *New Rule Standards*, the National Hockey League has ushered in a new era of hockey that has taken hold at all levels of play throughout North America. This new brand of hockey has proven to be the most exciting and entertaining style of hockey that we have witnessed since the great Edmonton Oilers and Pittsburgh Penguin teams of the 80's and 90's.

All of the major governing bodies for hockey in North America are following suit. Indeed, USA Hockey has incorporated the same rule standards into its youth hockey programs, Hockey Canada has long been known to mirror the NHL in cooperating with the long-term vision of the world's best league and the NCAA is rumored to be following suit with the rest of the hockey world.

As a result of this new focus on eliminating the “clutching and grabbing” style of play, skating and skill development have become paramount in determining the success of today's player. It has long been known in the world of pro hockey that the best skaters are the most coveted draft picks.

Everyone can name players who were prolific scorers as youth or college players, but who were passed over when it came time to move-on to the next level of play. The unspoken truth that the “higher-ups” in the hockey world don't tell them is that their skating is what prevented them from taking their game to the next level.

Throughout my career, I have been continuously surprised at the lack of attention that has been given to proper skating and footwork fundamentals. Indeed, I often have to correct major flaws in our players' skating and footwork that they tell me have never been addressed throughout their entire hockey experiences; from youth hockey and even into their college and junior hockey careers.

Any player that neglects this aspect of their training is committing career suicide, and will find themselves out of the game (or marginalized) before they want to be – and this goes for youth players especially, considering that a typical youth player has few options when they get cut from their community team.

It is with this in mind, that I highly recommend that every player start to, or continues to work diligently on their skating skills to ensure that they continue to enjoy playing this wonderful sport. I feel strongly that in order to thrive in this new environment, all players will need to have as a foundation the proper skating and footwork techniques that will ensure their continued success.

In order to adapt to these changes, I have developed a skating and skill development curriculum that is designed to prepare our young athletes for playing under the new rules now in place at nearly all levels. Please contact me directly and we can discuss how to begin the process of improving your (or your child's) skating and skill development.

Kindest Regards,

*Graeme Townshend*