



Rex Tucker discusses a drill with the young players during his Christmas camp in Springdale.

LITTLE BAY ISLANDS -In 1978 when Rex Tucker graduated from Island View Academy in Little Bay Islands, one of three students, he had his full life ahead of him. There were so many choices open to him and the decisions were hard to make.

In September of 1978 he headed off to Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's, a shy young man, dropped off in front of Doyle House, arriving in the big city which was so different from his little Island home.

Today he jokes with his driver from home, "You said to call you if I wanted anything, but I was too shy to do so."

This is far from the image of Rex Tucker, hockey player, coach, businessman, that one gets as he skates around the rink, giving instructions to his students as they practice drills.

"When I grew up I had no coaching and no rink," Mr. Tucker said. "What I did have was a great love for playing hockey. Whenever there was a sheet of ice I was usually the first one there, sometimes the only one there, and I could stay there all day. I didn't realize how much time passed or if I was hungry, as long as I could play on the ice."

Entering MUN it was a toss up between Commerce or Physical Education. At the time he chose a Business Degree and graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1983. During this time at MUN he was involved with the intramural hockey team.

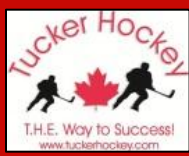
After getting his degree, he moved to Toronto where he worked with Trans Canada Pipelines for seven years. Even though he was in a 57 story office building, his heart was still on the ice, wherever he could find it. When Trans Canada Pipeline decided to move their operations to Calgary, Mr. Tucker decided to cut his ties and stay in Toronto and pursue his hockey interest.

"I got into hockey and I've been playing and coaching for the last 12 years."

Shortly after leaving Trans Canada Pipelines, he too, moved to Calgary but not for an office job, it was to pursue his love of Hockey. Mr. Tucker has had on ice training as a player with pro, semi-pro and Major Junior A players. He attended the Wally Kozak Calgary Elite Conditioning Camps for three years; and

Garth Marlarchuk Conditioning for Excellence camp in 1995. In 1993 and 1995 he was involved with Player Evaluations and in 1994 he was Assistant Coach with the Hockey Alberta Under 16 Program. In 1996 he became an Advanced 1 Certified Coach with the National Coaching Certification Program as well being a Coach Level 1 Instructor with the Hockey Alberta NCCP. Also, in 1996, he was a Calgary Area Scout for the Langley Thunder Jr. A Hockey Club. From 1997 - 1999 he was again involved with Player Evaluations and was a Calgary Area scout for the Bow Valley Eagles Jr. A Hockey Club.

Mr. Tucker has spent six summers in the Czech Republic, dedicating in excess of 800 hours conducting hockey camps. He was the Head Instructor for teaching Power Skating and Player Development Skills to Czech, German, and Austrian Minor Hockey Players and conducting Tucker Hockey Programs in Calgary for minor and adult recreational players. "My youngest student has been five years old and the eldest was 62."



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During the summer of 2002 he coached Under 18 teams in five European Countries: the Czech Republic, Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

In 1997, he decided to start his own hockey business; Tucker Hockey Enterprises. In the early days it was part time but since August of 2002, his childhood love of hockey has become his full time business.

Mr. Tucker stated, "Skating is to hockey, what running is to soccer. Skating is the foundation upon which all other skills are built. It is the most important skill of ice hockey. The level of performance attained by a player' in passing, shooting, checking and puck control are directly' related to one's skating ability, the time spent importing a player's skating is a worthwhile investment due to the carry over value to all the other aspects of the game.

Becoming a strong skater depends on a number of factors, the most important is skating technique. Other factors include leg strength, leg quickness, leg flexibility, balance and trunk stability."

The Tucker Hockey Player Program is an on ice program' designed to improve on the basic fundamentals of the game, namely skills such as skating, puck control, passing and shooting.

During the Christmas break of 2002 ran a hockey school in Springdale. Registration was very low and was disappointed in this fact as earlier indications had suggested that there was quite a bit of interest in the area. Only 13 children between the ages of 5 and 15 attended.

Postive reaction

Emily (age 5) and her sister Alisha Edison (age 10) attended and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Emily said, "It was a lot of fun. I enjoyed going around the markers on the ice Mr. Tucker was fun. I learned a lot about stick handling.., but I would like to see more girls in hockey."

Alisha stated, "I really enjoyed the hockey school. The best thing I liked was learning to skate backwards. We had fun... I would like to go to Mr. Tucker's school again."

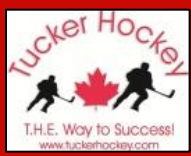
Lisa Edison, the girls Mom said, "The girls learned a lot their skills improved. I was impressed with the time they had and the children really enjoyed (Mr. Tucker)."

Barry Rolfe, whose two sons, Chris (age 15) and Michael (age 11) also attended, said, "The boys had a great time. I've seen several hockey schools but he (Tucker) really knew his stuff. It was certainly worthwhile and yes I would be interested in the boys being involved again, and I know they would, if he came back."

Brad Wiseman from Roberts Arm, had his son Brian registered. Mr. Wiseman said," It was worth driving from Robert's Arm to Springdale for the four days. The sessions were 11/2 hours long and were really worthwhile. It was the first time he offered a school in this area and I would like it see him come back again. My son, Brian was really interested."

Jae Ryan from Green Bay South was also one of the young people to benefit from the skills taught during the hockey school. He said, "I have attended other schools but this one was definitely the best. We worked hard, but it was fun... I would be really interested in attending another of his hockey schools." When asked in what area he felt he improved the most, Jae stated, "It would have to be backwards skating and taking shots."

When asked if he has plans on coming back, Mr. Tucker said, "My father once told me that 'you have to cast your nets where there's fish.' In order to come back to Springdale or this area I would need some sort of guarantee from the



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Minor Hockey Association regarding membership in order to make it worthwhile. This was not a paying trip, however, it did provide me with the chance to spend the holidays with my family.”

“I am looking into the possibility of having a hockey school in St. John’s in August if we can arrange ice time, etc.”

“I’m not in this business for the money. For me it offers freedom for my own business, an opportunity to help kids and have fun on the ice myself at the same time. I would like to see the business grow. I’d like to be able to have a permanent program in Newfoundland each summer.”

When asked what were some of the highlights of the school, he replied, “The kids enjoyed it and they got something out of it. One of the biggest thrills for me was seeing this little five year old (Emily), who had quite a few falls on the ice, but each time she fell she got up with a smile on her face and the determination to keep going as I taught her how to get up using her stick. I hope she, and all the kids, keep their determination and stay with the hockey, and that their love of the sport continues to grow.”

Each of the young people enrolled in the school receives a practice jersey and a certificate from Tucker Hockey Enterprise. In addition to his Hockey School, is also a writer for the weekly, “Hockey Talk” Newsletter.

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