



## Tucker Hockey Profile

### Meet the Instructor - David Mahoney

**When did you begin on ice instruction for Tucker Hockey?**

During the Spring of 2003 I began to assist Coach Rex on the ice with various Adult and Minor hockey programs. Later in 2005, after two years of helping out and getting familiar with; the skating demos, various drills, teaching points, practice plans and curriculums I started to run programs on my own as a head instructor.

**What do you enjoy most about instructing on the ice?**

It takes me out of my world; it's an escape from the dog eat dog - carve your heart out with a spoon stressful world and pressures of the commercial mortgage lending business. Also, I enjoy the preparation that goes into putting a practice plan together, thinking through the details to be ready prior to stepping on the ice. Also, thinking of, and having contingencies; depending on the skill level and motivation of the different groups, provides an extra challenge.

**What have you learned from doing hockey instruction?**

What have I learned? Teaching is a continuous learning process. "I teach to learn". Also in that learning process the participants have helped me learn with their questions and made me think about the technical aspects of skating. I get enormous satisfaction from passing on knowledge to players, especially to those that never played the game before. As well, the friendships developed and cultivating because of the shared love of the game has been a bonus.

**What is the most challenging part of instructing?**

Keeping things fresh – it's more mental than physical. As well, working with kids, who may not want to be there, treating them fairly and, not robbing the others of what they deserve. Also, the range of skill levels in a group program can be challenging to teach at times.

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*Editor's Note:*

*Recently, I had a good chat with David Mahoney, Head Instructor for Tucker Hockey. David has been a valuable member of the Tucker Hockey team for the past 7 years. He has taught power skating and hockey skills to minor groups and minor teams as well as various adult groups and teams. Here is a summary of our conversation.*

**David, tell us about yourself ?**

I was born in Saskatoon and raised in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Played all of my minor hockey in Prince Albert up to the Junior B level. I am 55 years of age and a proud young grandfather. I have been married to Pauline for 18 years and I work in the commercial mortgage lending industry.

**David, when did you get involved with Tucker Hockey?**

I started during the 2001 – 2002 hockey season. I was playing adult recreational hockey and decided to enroll in a Tucker Hockey adult program work on my weaknesses. I had not been in a structured practice in over 25 years. I felt I always was a good skater but was losing a step and wanted to get that step back! Tucker Hockey helped get the rust off and I eliminated many bad habits that I acquired over past 25 years from not having the benefits of a coach.

**“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”**

**~William Arthur Ward**

# David Mahoney Interview (Cont'd from 7)

## What have you learned over the years teaching power skating?

I understand skating better now than then before becoming an instructor. I now know how important good body posture is....a good hockey stance is critical. If a player doesn't have proper form, he or she, will not be a good skater. I enjoy talking to students about the mechanics of skating. Many years ago in my late twenties I taught swimming, so I had a skill set for teaching, but it was dormant for many years. Now it's alive again and I enjoy the leadership role, being active, skating, analyzing a player's skating skills and giving advice. As I get older, I have lost some leg strength and quickness but I find I use less effort now in my skating for equal results.

## How has your experience with Tucker Hockey changed your life?

I have learned the virtue of patience in dealing with different people of all ages, skill levels and learning abilities. Everyone does things differently at different speeds. I had knowledge that was dormant for years and have acquired new knowledge over my time with Tucker Hockey. My wife, Pauline, notices a difference in me and she feels it has enriched my life.

## What other interests do you have besides hockey?

I'm an avid golfer and downhill skier plus Pauline and I love to travel. Also, I read a lot; history, human nature etc – guess I have a curiosity of why things are the way they are.

## Any favorite skating drills that come to mind?

For adults it's falling. Too many adults are intimidated by falling and it inhibits their progress when they hold back because of the fear to fall. For minor hockey players the basic skating drills of balance and edge control. In all cases, getting players to be confident with their inside and outside edges; especially, the weaker outside edge.

## What is your favorite age group and skill level?

The adult beginners are my favorite. The adults are so keen to learn and they challenge me with questions; they can be a curious lot. My favorite questions are why and how. On the minor hockey side; I enjoy teaching the boys ages 9 to 10 and girls 11 to 13.

## What can be the most discouraging thing about instructing on the ice?

There may be one or two kids who act up and distract you and everyone else. As well, being the babysitter for the kids that just don't want to be there.

## What areas of instructing would you like to branch off into in the foreseeable future?

I feel there's a need to help minor hockey coaches. At the Novice and Atom levels coaches need a better understanding of the mechanics of skating and how to teach this specialized skill to their players. I would love to run power skating clinics for minor hockey coaches. I feel minor hockey associations should be more open to helping their coaches develop their power skating knowledge. We could provide them with the basic knowledge, drills, and teaching points and show them how to effectively teach skating to their players. Skating is the most important hockey skill.

## Editor's Note:

*Thanks David for taking the time out of your busy work schedule to share your thoughts and insights about yourself and about being a Head Instructor within the Tucker Hockey programs.*

*Folks, I often joke with David by telling him that he's the second best skater to ever participate in a Tucker Hockey Adult program! I saw in David the abilities to be a top – notch instructor after he completed his first Tucker Hockey program. David had participated and understood the Tucker Hockey programs and philosophy over the years, was a good skater to demo the drills, had strong communication and leadership skills and was keen to learn the dynamics of skating. He seemed to be a good fit to get involved in Tucker Hockey instruction.*

*I am very glad that I invested the time and energy to groom him into a head instructor. It's one of the best decisions I have made while operating my hockey business!*

*David, my friend I have valued your contributions to Tucker Hockey over the years...much appreciated! I look forward to many fun times on the ice in the years ahead!*

**“Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.”**

**~ John Cotton Dana**