

Coaches Corner

Today's Topic:

The Ice Hockey Myth "inline hockey will ruin a players skating stride".

We have all heard this over and over by the ice hockey coach who has probably never seen an inline hockey game. These are the same guys that think the only way to become a good ice hockey player is to play ice hockey 11-12 month a year. Most of this ice hockey is being played under incredible competitive pressure, where if you make a mistake it becomes a "nightmare".

First of all even competitive inline hockey provides tremendous opportunity for players to become creative as an individual player and as a team player. As a NCCP certified Advanced Level Coach in the ice hockey world, I have seen what the NCCP and CHA have tried to do with getting back to teaching skills and creativity that have been lost over the years with the dump and chase and system teaching of many coaches. But, as someone around the inline world for the past six years I know one thing the best skill development program (individual or team) for any ice hockey player or coach is without a doubt Inline Hockey!

Inline Hockey is the new era of "Pond Hockey" that you hear some guy named Wayne Gretzky always talking about!

But back to the skating stride of inline hockey! If a player has good technical skills regarding his skating stride then it will carry over from ice to inline. But if he has bad technique then it will also carry over to inline from ice -- don't blame inline for this.

Is there a transition period? Of course there is and it is usually more difficult going from inline to ice then ice to inline. But give these young players a couple of sessions and they adapt without a hitch. Just ask guys like Mike Van Ryn, of London, Ontario (St. Louis Blues, University of Michigan, and Sarnia Sting) who has played inline hockey over ice since he was about 13 years old. Mike has played inline everywhere (National Team, PanAm Games, Narch, CHI Nationals and Qualifiers, FIRS Jr. Worlds and many other top inline events). He will tell you today that inline hockey helped him become a better player by learning to be more patient with the puck, seeing the ice better and learning to play a team possession game. His skating stride has never been affected by playing inline hockey!

Next time you hear these ice hockey coaches throwing out these myths ... challenge them and invite them out to see some games and become involved.

See ya next time! And keep on Roll'n!