



## **Skill Development**

USCHO

Coach Tim Taylor

USCHO.com has recently published an interview with Tim Taylor, Head Coach at Yale for the past 27 seasons and former head coach of the 1994 Olympic Team.

The following is an excerpt from that interview for your reading. The entire interview and also discussions with other College coaches can be found on the USCHO.com site. Enjoy

**USCHO:** What message would you send to youth coaches and parents regarding their approach with young players?

**TIM TAYLOR:** I think the strongest message I can send to youth hockey players and a parent is that the amount of time spent on skill development and overall athleticism development during the younger and more formative physiological years is key to the improvement of hockey in this country.

Unfortunately, our society and our culture is geared far too much to playing competitive games and these young ages, where there is a high emphasis on winning and losing. I know I sound like a coach preaching about how the old times were different and better, but certainly, when youngsters were playing shinny in fun games on the pond when they were young, and spending countless hours doing so as compared to long hours traveling to competitive games between the ages of 8 and 12, it certainly was a different time and a different era.

I think a better path for development when we look at the amazing resources we now have in this country, in terms of ice facilities and well trained, knowledgeable coaches, I think now all that remains is that we get our priorities straight in the value of skill development at the young ages.

Kids can still have a great deal of fun playing hockey without playing an inordinate number of games. I constantly scan the NHL's scoring leader board and I guess I feel deep down in my heart that there should be more US born players on that list given the number of kids we have playing hockey and the resources we have in this country.