

Mike Lebarre

Builders' Category



Mike Lebarre started playing hockey in 1965 at Michael Kirby Park, an outdoor rink on South Loomis Avenue. He spent his youth playing in ice rinks around the Chicago area; Oak Park, Glenwood, Saints Spectrum, and Willow Springs. As a senior in high school, Mike, his brother Joe, and several friends started the first ever hockey team at Bogan High School.

After starting a family, Mike returned to hockey in the 1980's, back to Saints Spectrum in Bridgeview. He started as a referee, and then turned to coaching a Squirt House League Team for the Chicago Hawks. It was there that he met Bob Arturo, the Learn to Skate director. Bob was quick to recruit Mike as a coach for the Hawks Learn to Skate program. Soon after, Mike was appointed to the Chicago Hawks Board of Directors and was elected President. Under Mike's direction, the Hawks became one of the largest hockey clubs in Illinois.

Mike's leadership efforts did not go unnoticed outside of the Hawks organization. Mike was a board member of the Northern Illinois Hockey League and served on the executive committee. He became one of the instructors for Learn to Skate Coaches.

In 1995, Norm Speigel asked Mike to fill a vacancy on the AHAI Board. Mike would go on to represent AHAI in many capacities; Suspension Committee; State Tournament Chairman, InLine Hockey Committee, and volunteer coordinator for NHL Breakout InLine Tournaments.

As AHAI President 1998-2001, Mike was successful in bringing new programs to Illinois hockey. The Diversity Hockey Program, Tomahawks, and the Central States Hockey League were created in addition to the Roller Hawk Program in partnership with the Chicago Blackhawks. Mandatory screening for coaches and referees was also instituted.

Mike was appointed in 1998 as the first InLine Section Director for USA Hockey. He served as Team Leader for the USA InLine National Team that traveled to the Czech Republic in 2000 to participate in the International Ice Hockey Federation, InLine World Championship.

Mike spent several years coaching the Tomahawks special needs hockey team until it was time turn over the on-ice coaching over to a much younger person.

In recent years, Mike has spent his spare time with political positions in his community. He was elected to the local School Board, and now serves as Trustee for Palos Township. Mike looks back on his time with AHAI not for what he contributed, but he has been rewarded. He is thankful for life-long friendships, lasting memories and many lessons learned along the way. Amateur hockey programs are not only for the development of boys to play in the NHL or girls to play on the Olympic Team. Hockey is for everyone.

Mike would like to thank those who came before him and laid the foundation of AHAI. In addition, he'd like to encourage the youth players of today to give back and become the volunteers of tomorrow.