

Joe Olson

Builders' Category



Joe Olson has been involved with Central Illinois hockey for the past 27 years. Joe has been a youth hockey coach, board member, organization officer, team manager, learn to skate/play instructor, and hockey director.

In 2006, Joe was asked to start an amateur hockey program in Bloomington, IL. Bloomington had not had an ice rink for the previous 22 years. As the Assistant Manager in charge of Hockey at the Pepsi Ice Center in Bloomington, Joe has helped amateur hockey grow to 313 house league players, 8 travel teams, 3 high school teams, and 72 adult league teams per year. Currently for the 2013-14 season, Bloomington Recreational Hockey (Pepsi Ice Center) has 622 players and coaches registered with Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois and USA Hockey.

Prior to being in Bloomington, Joe was involved in Peoria Youth Hockey. In 1987, he began coaching youth hockey, became a board member, and served as Vice President of Travel. Joe was instrumental in developing players in Central Illinois to allow Peoria to compete in the Northern Illinois Hockey League. He served twice as Peoria Youth Hockey's Director of their 6 and under (Mini-Mites) program. Both times he grew the Mini-Mite program to over 100 players. Joe accepted the AHAI Coaching Achievement Award on behalf of Peoria Youth Hockey for the 1993-94 season.

After volunteering as youth hockey coach for 5 years, in 1992, Joe was asked by the Peoria Park District rink, Owens Center to teach their Learn to Skate classes part time. Eventually, in 1997 Joe became a full time employee as the Peoria rink's Hockey Director. At Owens Center, Joe developed comprehensive spring and summer programs that helped local players to play at the state, national, and professional levels.

Joe is part of a great hockey family. His family includes 1960 Olympic gold medal and 1956 Olympic silver medal winner, Weldon Olson (uncle), USA Hockey Hall of Fame member Eddie Olson (uncle), Michigan Tech University Hall of Fame, Illinois Hockey Hall of Fame member, and member of four other Hall of Fames, Mark Olson (father), and Mike and Ric Olson (brothers) who both played Division One College hockey at Michigan State University. Overall, Joe has relatives in 17 Hall of Fames for their involvement with hockey. Joe also has three great sisters, Sue, Jane, and Patti.

Joe is most proud of his son Joey, who is first an excellent young man that is currently coaching youth hockey in Peoria. Second, he had a great hockey career. Joey played Division One College hockey at Robert Morris University (Pittsburgh, Pa) and three years of professional hockey in the ECHL, Central Hockey League, and Southern Professional Hockey League.

Hockey has been great to Joe. It has allowed him to spend time with his family and provided the opportunity to teach thousands of kids how to skate and play hockey. But more importantly, he has been able to make numerous lifelong friends including Norm and Holly Spiegel, the Bittles, the Salmis and the Weiserts.