

Home Again: Welcome (Back) Bobby Acri

I am thrilled and honored to be taking over as the Director of Player Development for the Winnetka Hockey Club. Before I get into anything else, I want to thank the Winnetka Hockey Club and its board members for giving me this opportunity. It's crazy for me to think that after all this time, I am able to show up to work every day and continue to be around the game I grew up loving to play. I grew up in Winnetka, where I played for the Warriors, CYA and New Trier. After a successful career at New Trier, I decided to continue playing hockey at the University of Iowa.

Hockey has been a part of my life ever since I can remember. It has taught me valuable lessons such as leadership, teamwork, and even how to lose. Some of the best memories from my life have been from hockey, and not because we won a game, or I scored a goal but because of the relationships and friendships that were created and the experiences we shared.

So, what does any of this have to do with coaching and my new job here at the Winnetka Hockey Club? Well, it's important to understand my love for the game to understand why I have such a passion for coaching and creating a positive experience for the kids.

I got into coaching the summer after my freshman year of college. I was given the opportunity to help coach at a summer program, Impact Hockey, and jumped all over it. I had been coaching baseball for the past couple summers and thought it would be even better to coach the game for which I truly had a passion. Immediately, I realized that coaching hockey was something I didn't want to stop doing. However, I had to figure out how to make it work because there aren't a lot of people who can make coaching their full-time job.

With some good advice from the director of Impact at the time, I stuck with coaching after graduating college and decided to give it a try. I was lucky enough to jump right in and be an assistant coach on the New Trier Green and White teams, the Mite 1 team at Winnetka and a skills coach with Wayne at Winnetka. The experience and knowledge I gained from everyone I worked with was incredible. I thought I knew hockey well but when you have to go back and actually teach something that comes so naturally to yourself, it took a little bit of learning and help from the veterans.

When it comes to my new position at Winnetka, I am looking forward to helping create a program that gives your child the best opportunity to succeed. Everyone has different goals for their child, anywhere from playing in high school, college or even professionally. I am going to do my best to create an atmosphere where they can reach their goals. Coaches will be given drills, practice plans, videos and whatever else they may need to help make them as successful as they can be. I'd like the club to have a positive culture where we teach teamwork, leadership, hard work and dedication. By creating a positive culture, our teams will continue to be successful.

I look forward to becoming a part of such an amazing youth hockey program. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out. Enjoy the rest of your summer and Go Warriors!