

Coach strives to teach skills but still have fun

As a former Junior level player, Shelburne Wolves Atom LL1 team coach Tony Fernandes knows what hockey is all about.

At the same time, he knows that it is just a game and the best thing about it is leaving the ice with a good feeling about what you have accomplished.

?The biggest strength on the ice for these players is going out and having fun and to enjoy themselves,? he said of the young players he coaches.

While the LL division is mostly for players who enjoy the game but don't necessarily want to move up, Fernandes also teaches skills that help players who might be interested in moving to a rep team.

?One of those things we teach to kids who want to move to a higher level is positioning ? positioning is a big thing. Also shooting and being aggressive ? instead of waiting for the puck we teach them to go for the puck.?

Learning to skate properly is a big part of the game Fernandes explained.

?A lot of it has to do with the skate you buy for ankle support. Your stride, and how you push with your skates, there's so many different skill they need, that's why we teach them in practice.?

As a player, Fernandes played in Brantford and Elmira.

His Atom team is doing well this year and is currently tied for third place in the league.

Most of the players are ten years old in Atom division and while they like to win, at this level, taking a loss really isn't that much of a disappointment.

But as he said, ?having fun and enjoying themselves? is the biggest part of what he like to have the kids experience on the ice.

By Brian Lockhart