

Elite celebrates 35 years of development, the Crowe way

By Phil Shore

Everywhere George Crowe went, hockey success followed.

After helping the Oswego program transition from club to Division 2 (and going 55-23-3 in his tenure), Crowe started the hockey program at Phillips Exeter Academy and went 94-44-1 in his seven years as head coach.

In 1975, George Crowe was hired as the head men's ice hockey coach at Dartmouth College. The team had won only five games the year prior, but within four years, he helped the program win two Ivy League championships and go to consecutive national semifinal appearances, finishing third both years.

He resigned after the 1983-84 season only to take over as the Dartmouth women's head coach three years later. He remained in that position for 12 seasons,



finishing with a winning record every year (winning 20 games on two different occasions) and four Ivy League championships.

Crowe won multiple Coach of the Year awards coaching both the men's and women's teams at Dartmouth, but he also made a lasting impact on the hockey world in the time between his coaching stints. In 1985, Crowe established Elite Hockey Camps, which, in 2020, is now celebrating its 35th anniversary.

Crowe's daughter, Patti, is the executive director, and she makes sure that, although George passed away in 2019, his legacy lives on through the camps.

"My father has always been my idol, the person I admire the most," she said. "Many people say we're two peas in a pod. He has always taught me to stick to the basics. We've never wavered to try and be trendy."

"He said the most important thing was to totally develop the kids while at camp," she added. "I feel like I still have the exact same mission he started in 1985."

Elite Hockey Camps offer four different programs for different players. There is the boys' boarding program, the girls' boarding program, and an adult women's clinic for players 21 and older (with three groupings based on experience at the women's clinic).

While each camp comes with highly respected on-ice training, the boarding camps also focus on developing the person off the ice, from cross-training activities like soccer and swimming to education prep and socialization. At the boarding camps, campers are not allowed to have technology with them.

"We've always valued not only developing the kid's skill but the development off the ice," Crowe said. "We don't allow any technology at camp. It's amazing to see the connections they meet face to face. It's amazing to see the games that



'We've always valued not only developing the kid's skill but the development off the ice.'

— Patti Crowe, right, Elite Hockey Camps executive director



the process now, handling all registration online, which she said has been a huge positive.

Over the 35 years, Crowe has faced other challenges as well. She said when the camps started, there weren't many boarding camps, but now, the camp faces competition not only with only clinics but also with summer tournaments and travel teams. Additionally, she notices there is an additional struggle with staffing camps because so many players now choose to train over the summer rather than work. This is where Crowe feels lucky, as she said about 80 percent of her staff — or as she calls them, her Elite family — returns each summer. It makes the first day of camp her favorite part of the experience.

"We have a great time together," she said. "I look forward to camp starting every year because I miss people I haven't worked with throughout the year. I feel I'd do anything for them. A lot of the kids, I'm their first reference when they

go to get a teaching or coaching job. I like to be as involved in their family lives when they're not at camp. I think many of us on the staff have that same feeling. We really care about each other and our campers.

"It's not just the coaching staff," she added. "That's our trainers, people who help drive the Zamboni and help clean the rink and serve us food in the dining hall."

As the camp celebrates its milestone birthday, Crowe was very thankful for everybody who has ever been involved with the company her father founded. "I want to thank everybody that's been so supportive of our camp over the last 35 years, from parents, coaching staff and all the players we've touched along the way," she said. "To me, the camp wouldn't be as successful if it wasn't for the Elite family and all their support."

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REGISTRATION OPENS NOVEMBER 1, 2019

BOYS SESSIONS

ONE WEEK SESSIONS:

- June 28 - July 3 BOYS ages 9-16
- July 5 - July 10 BOYS ages 9-16
- July 12 - July 17 BOYS ages 9-16

TWO WEEK SESSIONS:

- June 28 - July 10 BOYS ages 9-16 (includes weekend)
- July 5 - July 17 BOYS ages 9-16 (includes weekend)

THREE WEEK SESSION:

- June 28 - July 17 BOYS ages 9-16 (includes 2 weekends)

GIRLS SESSIONS

ONE WEEK SESSIONS:

- July 19 - July 24 GIRLS ages 9-16
- July 26 - July 31 GIRLS ages 9-16

TWO WEEK SESSIONS:

- July 19 - July 31 GIRLS ages 9-16 (includes weekend)

located at: **New Hampton School, New Hampton, NH**



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