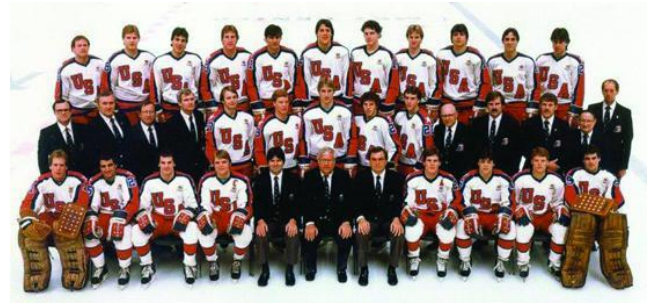


About Coach Lou Vairo:



Arriving in Austin, MN in 1975 as the new Head Coach of the Austin Mavericks Junior hockey team, Coach Lou Vairo had no idea that his knowledge would revolutionize the way the game is played in the United States. His approach would also prove to be highly inspiring and motivational, as he always created authentic relationships with his players grounded in personal ownership and honesty. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Vairo developed a passion for hockey playing with steel wheel skates on asphalt, and watching the New York Rangers. Coaching neighborhood players in his twenties, he wrote the famed Russian Red Army coach Anatoly Tarasov asking for an opportunity to come to Russia and learn. Tarasov replied with an invitation to Moscow and Vairo went, setting in motion the eventual transformation of the American game.

Bringing new concepts of off-ice training and an emphasis on puck possession from Tarasov to the Mavericks, Vairo led a previously losing team to a national championship in year-one. Two years later (in 1978) he was selected as the Head Coach for the USA (Under-20) World Junior Championship team, and named the first Hockey Director for USA Hockey. In 1980, he was celebrating a gold medal as the advanced scout to Herb Brooks with the Miracle on Ice Team. In 1984 Vairo was honored to serve as the Head Coach of the USA Olympic team in Sarajevo. Following the Olympics, he spent time as an assistant Coach of the New Jersey Devils, and Head Coach of teams in the Netherlands and Italy.

In 1999, Vairo returned to USA Hockey as the head coach of the World Championship team. He served in this role until he reunited with Herb Brooks to coach Team USA in the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City. Coaching the American born NHL all-stars against the world's best, Vairo added a silver medal to his Olympic collection. In 2014, he was inducted into the USA Hockey Hall of Fame. In 2022, Lou Vairo's career coaching youth hockey in Brooklyn came full circle when he joined the Colorado Rampage staff working with young players on the fundamentals needed to improve and succeed.

His expertise has quickly help lift an already impressive USA Hockey ADM Model Club to new heights. Vairo has also been instrumental helping to develop the curriculum for 10U-14U players, which aligns with the age-appropriate approach to youth development that he implemented for USA Hockey in the late 70's. These core concepts were ultimately adopted formally in 2009 and funded by the NHL as the American Development Model. Vairo's input and leadership in the ongoing Rampage coaching education program, and simply his smile and humble but electric presence at all the rinks is invaluable. He continues to build authentic relationships with players and coaches, and reminds everybody that every player must leave the rink with a smile.

Written by Shaun Hathaway