



# TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA HOCKEY GUIDE





**CARTER SANDERSON**  
**PAST TEAM SD PLAYER**  
**& NATIONAL CHAMPION.**  
**NORTH DAKOTA COMMIT**



# **TEAM SD TRYOUTS**

**WHEN: MAY 30TH-JUNE 1ST**

**WHERE: SCHEEL ICE PLEX.  
SIOUX FALLS, SD**

**REGISTRATION OPENS: MARCH  
19TH!! SIGN UP NOW!**

**AGE LEVELS AND TEAMS:  
NEXT SLIDE**

**MORE INFO TO COME ON  
SDAHA WEBSITE SOON!**



# PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE



**TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA PURPOSE:** THE PURPOSE OF TSD IS TO ESTABLISH A COMPETITIVE HOCKEY PROGRAM SUPPLEMENTING THE SDAHA LEAGUE PRE- AND POST-SEASON, PROVIDING TOP-TIER PLAYERS AND COACHES OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EXPOSURE AT HIGHER LEVELS, INCLUDING USA HOCKEY NATIONAL TOURNAMENTS.

**TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA OBJECTIVE:** THE OBJECTIVE OF TSD IS TO ATTRACT TOP-TIER PLAYERS AND COACHES AT THE DETERMINED AGE GROUPS WITHIN SDAHA TO PARTICIPATE IN TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA (TSD). TSD WILL PROVIDE A COMPETITIVE SCHEDULE THAT FOSTERS DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUDES EXPOSURE TO A HIGHER LEVEL OF HOCKEY, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE USA HOCKEY NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

## TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA PROJECTED TEAMS:

### YOUTH/BOYS

18U – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
16U – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
14U – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
13U – PLAYER DEVELOPMENT TEAM  
12U – PLAYER DEVELOPMENT TEAM

### GIRLS HOCKEY

19U/HS – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
16U – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
14U – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND  
12U – PLAYER DEVELOPMENT TEAM

## TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA SEASON LENGTH:

THE SEASON FOR TSD WILL BE A PRE-SEASON AND A POST-SEASON FROM THE SDAHA LEAGUE. TEAM TRYOUTS WILL BE HELD EACH YEAR IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE. ONCE THE TEAMS ARE DECIDED, PRACTICES WILL BEGIN IN JULY OR AUGUST, WITH COMPETITIVE GAMES STARTING IN AUGUST AND RUNNING THROUGH MID-OCTOBER. AT THAT TIME, THE PLAYERS ARE RELEASED TO JOIN THEIR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR SDAHA LEAGUE PLAY.

FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF THE VARSITY SDAHA STATE TOURNAMENTS, THE PLAYERS WILL REJOIN THEIR RESPECTIVE TSD TEAMS. PRACTICES AND/OR GAMES WILL BE SCHEDULED TO PREPARE THE TEAMS FOR THE USA HOCKEY NATIONAL TOURNAMENT FOR THOSE TEAMS THAT ARE NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND. FOR THOSE TEAMS THAT ARE NOT NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND, PRACTICES AND GAMES MAY BE SCHEDULED FOR DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES.





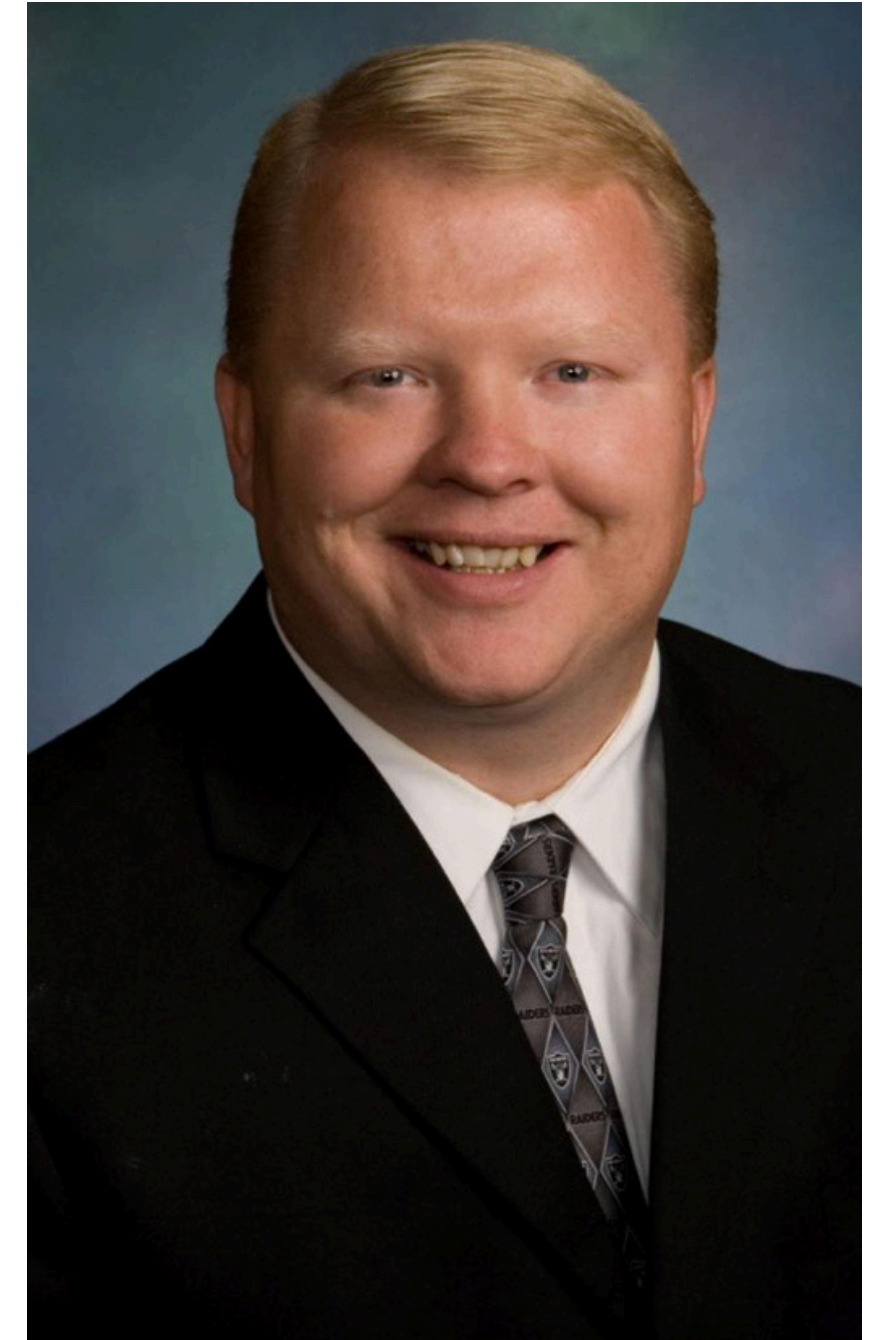
**TEAM  
MEMBERS:** GOVERNING COMMITTEE  
COACHING COMMITTEE



# DUKE WITTE

**COMMITTEE CHAIR.  
ABERDEEN HOCKEY PRESIDENT.**

Duke is a seasoned leader in South Dakota's hockey community and has been elected as the Chair of the Governing Committee. With a strong background in leadership roles, he has been actively involved with Aberdeen Hockey, as the current President, and the South Dakota Amateur Hockey Association (SDAHA) since 2008. Duke has served as a Team South Dakota team manager and parent on multiple teams and has been entrusted to lead key committees focused on Growth & Retention and Player Development. His dedication to expanding and enhancing hockey in South Dakota reflects his passion for fostering the sport's growth at all levels. Anybody that has come across Duke's path, knows how dedicated he is to respecting past efforts while creating opportunities that adapt to the constant evolution in the landscape of hockey. Aberdeen and Team South Dakota are beyond grateful to have an individual with decades of involvement within SDAHA to be leading the charge into the next chapter of success.







# SCOTT LANGER



Scott Langer is the Aberdeen Wings (NAHL) Head Coach and General Manager. He has previously been at the helm of some great teams, but the most notable was an extended stay as the Head Coach and GM for the Topeka RoadRunners (advanced to Robertson Cup finals twice). Langer has solidified his spot as one of the most successful junior hockey coaches in the United States. He has amassed over 700 wins in the NAHL (1st All-time) and accomplished that with an unbelievable winning percentage of over .700 in the top divisions in the North American Hockey League!

After Topeka, Scott was named Head Coach of the Wings from 2016-2021. In his first season as coach, he was named Central Division Coach of the Year and lead the organization to its first Division Championship and Robertson Cup appearance. In the 2021-22 season he jumped up to the Fargo Force of the USHL. His time there was short lived as he quickly figured out that Aberdeen was his home base. He transitioned back to the Wings ahead of the 2022-2023 season and has been developing top tier players ever since.

Over his 25-year coaching career, Langer has accumulated a number of awards and records, including NAHL GM of the Year (2009-10, 2020-21) and NAHL Coach of the Year (2010-11, 2020-21). He also led the Aberdeen Wings to a Robertson Cup National Championship in 2019, and a Presidents Cup (Regular Season) Championship in 2020-21. In addition to being the NAHL's all-time winningest head coach, he's also helped over 300 junior hockey players reach collegiate hockey ranks!

Team South Dakota and SDAHA are unbelievably appreciative of having Coach Langer's presence on the Governing Committee to help facilitate growth and development in the region.



Casey Kirley is the inaugural head coach and general manager of the Watertown Shamrocks in the North American Hockey League (NAHL).

As a player, the Hayward, Wisconsin native played for a handful of teams in the NAHL over two seasons with the Kenai River Brown Bears, Springfield Jr. Blues, Janesville Jets, and Alexandria Blizzard. Following his junior career, he went on to play for University of Wisconsin-Stout at the DIII level before joining the coaching ranks.

Kirley has a bevy of coaching experience in the league, most recently with the Wisconsin Windigo where he served as the Associate Head Coach (2023-24) and as an assistant (2022-23). He was pivotal to the success of the Windigo, helping lead them to a Midwest best 39 wins in 2022-23 and their first playoff series win in franchise history.

His resume features a winning pedigree and a proven track record of moving players on to top collegiate programs. He helped the Shreveport Mudbugs to a 2018 Robertson Cup National Championship in his first year in the league as an assistant. With his coaching stock high, Kirley ascended up the ladder quickly after Shreveport with stops at Trine University (DIII) and the Minnesota Magicians before the Wisconsin Windigo successes.

Kirley has made an immediate impact for the Shamrocks, Watertown Hockey Association, and the city of Watertown with the team’s volunteering and commitment to being positive role models in the community. We are very fortunate to have his extensive knowledge of youth, junior, and college hockey on the Team South Dakota Governing Committee!

# CASEY KIRLEY



**WATERTOWN SHAMROCKS**



# DAN HOUCK

**SIOUX FALLS DIRECTOR  
OF HOCKEY**



Dan is currently the Director of Hockey for the Sioux Falls Youth Hockey Association. Originally from Maryland, Coach Houck played NCAA hockey at Williams College in Massachusetts where he was Captain his Senior year. Houck moved directly into coaching after his playing days and now has been in a full-time Director role for 20 years. His time out east was highlighted by a lengthy role as a Tier 1 Head Coach while also serving as the Hockey Director of Team Maryland and DC Selects. Dan's various roles and experiences range from working alongside Wendy Marco (Skating Coach of the Washington Capitals) to instructing players that would develop into All-Stars such as William Nylander. Houck's time in Sioux Falls is riddled with State Championships since his arrival in 2015 and he will be a key piece in molding the vision of Team South Dakota as a member of the Governing Committee.



Dave Tronnes is a household name that everyone involved in South Dakota hockey is very familiar with. When he and his family moved to Mitchell from Minnesota in 1990, very few knew about the impact he would have in bringing hockey to the area. From fundraisers and sponsors, the Mitchell Skating and Hockey Association (MSHA) was able to build the first of two sheets of ice in Mitchell with his help and guidance.

Dave served as the president of MSHA from 1994-2000, as well as the president of the South Dakota Amateur Hockey Association from 2001-07. On top of that, he served on the board of directors for USA Hockey for six years. His wife (Maxine) was also a huge asset to SDAHA, as a scheduling and administrator from 2001-2018. His family remains heavily involved in hockey, too, which he is what he's really proud of today. His son, Ben, is the Associate General Counsel for USA Hockey. His son, Chris, is the Head Coach of the Marlins Girls Varsity team and his daughter, Lisa, is heavily involved in all aspects for Yankton. Dave also started the Sam Tronnes Memorial Foundation, which gives a scholarship each year in memory of his late son.

It doesn't end there, Mr. Tronnes was the Director for the Northern Plains District (NPD) for six years, Director Emeritus (NPD), Growth Coordinator (NPD), and member of the Youth Council for USA Hockey. He is currently still involved in SDAHA as a member of the Governance Committee for SDAHA Hall of Fame and most recently, Team South Dakota.

Dave and Maxine were inducted into inaugural SDAHA Hall of Fame class for their contributions to hockey in South Dakota and their impact on hockey is one that's still felt today, and one that will be felt, and remembered, for years to come. His passion for hockey and superior knowledge of growing the game will be invaluable to the committee for Team SD.

# DAVE TRONNES

**COMMITTEE MEMBER.  
SDAHA HALL OF FAME:  
BUILDER**





# JUSTIN KIRCHHEVEL

**BROOKINGS HOCKEY  
DIRECTOR**



Kirchhevel started skating at the age of 8 on the outdoor rink near his childhood home and never looked back. He joined BISA the following year and won a League and State Championship every year he played in SDAHA. Justin led his team in points and to back to back Varsity State Championships when he was in 8th and 9th grade. After his freshman year, he moved to Colorado to start chasing his goal of playing Division I hockey. During his sophomore year, Kirchhevel was drafted in the USHL Futures draft by the Sioux Falls Stampede and again his senior year by the Omaha Lancers. He was the first South Dakotan drafted and the first skater to play in the USHL. His path brought him to three different Junior A teams while he was still in highschool (Springfield Jr. Blues-NAHL, Fargo Jets-NAHL, Omaha Lancers-USHL) before winning a Robertson Cup with the St. Louis Bandits and finishing runner-up with Fairbanks the following year. With injuries stacking up, he played one year for Alaska-Anchorage (WCHA) before transferring to Penn State to set the foundation in their first years of Division I hockey.

Following his playing career, Justin moved on to be the first full-time Hockey Director in Fargo, ND before taking the same position back in Brookings in 2018. Kirchhevel coached the Brookings Rangers Varsity to three League Championships, four State Championships, and four USA Hockey National Tournament appearances (2023 Runner-Up) in his first six years in SDAHA. He is also a member of the Brookings and SDAHA Hall of Fame. All of this wouldn't have been possible without the never ending support of the entire BISA organization, coaches, and his family (Lindsie, Riggins, Mauer, Riya). The Coaching Committee will use his rare experience representing SDAHA on a national level, both playing and coaching, to help mentor the next generation on their hockey journey.



Jacolby is from Brookings, has 5 children with his wife Jen, and is currently the Girls Varsity Head Coach for the Rangers. He has been involved with BISA for more than 25 years playing and coaching. During his playing days Anderson logged over 3,500 minutes in net, an overall record of 67-12-2, and backstopped the Rangers to 3 consecutive Varsity State Championships. He was offered a spot on the USA Deaf Olympic hockey team shortly after, but passed as he was a key contributor on the baseball team at Augustana University during that time.

Not only did he excel as a player at multiple sports, the coaching side hasn't been much different. He won the JV State Championship his first year coaching in Brookings before taking the Willmar Girls Varsity Head Coach position. In 2017, Jacolby moved back to Brookings to be closer to family and took over as the Boys Varsity Head Coach where he coached the second half of back to back State Championships. Since 2021 his attention has been on the girls program for Brookings, who most recently won a Varsity State Championship in 2023 under his leadership.

Coach Anderson has coached college baseball, high school football, and both boys and girls hockey at several levels including Team South Dakota. He has already been inducted to the Brookings Rangers, SDAHA, and SD Baseball Hall of Fame at the age of 38.

The Coaching Committee is lucky to be able to utilize Jacolby's versatility and diverse coaching experiences to help foster a rewarding experience for everybody involved in Team South Dakota.

# JACOLBY ANDERSON

**BROOKINGS GIRLS VARSITY  
HEAD COACH**





# STEVE STEELE

HEAD COACH PIERRE  
FOOTBALL



Steve is the CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of the Capital Area and Head Coach of the Pierre Governor Football program and currently coaches his children in the Mites & Mini-Mites levels for the Oahe Hockey Association.

His football program won 7 Consecutive State Championships winning over 80% of their games in his tenure leading to being selected to coach with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in their 2024 Rookie Camp.

He also served as the Hockey Director & Boys Varsity Head Coach for the Oahe Caps for 5 years, amassing a 102-42-2-9 record, making the State semifinals all 5 seasons, and was named the SDAHA Coach of the Year in 2022.

Steve and his wife Audrey have 4 kids and reside in Pierre. We appreciate Coach Steele once again making SDAHA hockey a priority with his busy schedule! The Coaching Committee will use his decorated coaching resume in multiple sports to identify, evaluate, and place top players and coaches.



Lucas is currently the Director of Hockey Operations for the Watertown Hockey Association (WHA). He was born and raised in Watertown, playing for eight years and starting his coaching journey for the organization in 2005.

Coach Deutsch jumped straight to coaching at the Bantam level until 2013 when he moved up to direct the Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. Little did he or his new wife, Nicole, know that hockey was going to take precedent for the foreseeable future as he accepted the Team South Dakota Boys 16U coaching position. He would continue working with the Watertown JV/Varsity teams until he was offered a newly formed Director of Hockey Operations role for WHA in 2018. Lucas also continued with various roles with Team SD as an evaluator and most recently as the Boys 14U Head Coach in 2024 where the team had a runner-up finish at Nationals.

His dedication and passion for the game has been evident since that day as he has taken on the challenge of developing programming for all levels, creating consistency within coaching staff, and facilitating growth within the organization. When he is not catering to the demands of having a second full time job, Lucas attempts to help his wife run around his three children (two daughters, one son) from event to event. Deutsch has also been the WHA voting delegate, WHA discipline representative, and on countless committees dedicated to the betterment of South Dakota hockey.

His past history in Watertown and Team South Dakota will be invaluable to the Coaching Committee as we continue to evolve the game of hockey within SDAHA.

# LUCAS DEUTSCH

**WATERTOWN DIRECTOR OF  
HOCKEY OPERATIONS**





Brady began his playing days in Huron in 1989 before moving to Brookings, back to Huron, down to Sioux Falls, and ultimately to Rapid City for his senior year. His dedication to the game was clear to everyone that he encountered, which propelled him into the coaching world immediately after high school.

Coach Pinney joined the young Rushmore Hockey Association as part of the Boys Varsity staff before jumping to his long term coaching gig with the Girls Varsity from 2007-2019. In 2019, he made the difficult decision to leave the area and RHA program for another opportunity for him and his family on the opposite side of the state. That decision led to Brady joining the Sioux Falls Flyers organization at the Girls Varsity level and for Team South Dakota with the Girls 14U team.

Fast forward to present day, Coach Pinney is the Girls Varsity Head Coach of the Flyers and for the Team SD Girls 16U. In that short period of time, he has captured two SDAHA Girls Varsity Coach of the Year Awards, USA Hockey Nationals Bronze medal finish with Team SD, and most recently the 2025 SDAHA Girls Varsity State Championship.

Brady's experience with multiple organizations within SDAHA will give the committee crucial insight needed to foster development of players and coaches from every organization regardless of size.

# BRADY PINNEY

**SIOUX FALLS GIRLS VARSITY  
HEAD COACH**

