

Real Hockey - NewsFlash !

**our 7U & 8U AAU 2018 North American Championships
will be hosted at Trenton, Michigan on February 17-19, 2018
(the Presidents Day holiday weekend in the US)**

Of course, it seems like the 2017 North American Championships were only just completed. Well, that's because they were (on March 24-26, 2017). Yet planning for the 2018 premiere AAU tournament is already well underway.

Each year, AAU Hockey conducts a review of the season and of the national level tournament. Asking ourselves and our members questions like:

- ⇒ What worked ?
- ⇒ What didn't work ?
- ⇒ How can we do things better ?
- ⇒ How can we make our program even more fun for the kids and their families ?



Real Hockey - benefits of AAU within the Real World

During recent decades there has been a continuous movement towards the professionalization of youth sports. Not merely within our own sport of hockey, but this has occurred within most if not all youth sports. We've seen our youth sports becoming more specialized, many becoming year-round ventures. And we've seen more micromanagement from many of the governing bodies.

This author believes that these trends actually began when the US Congress created the Amateur Sports Act. The Act created a sports scheme with the United States Olympic Committee overseeing a group of National Governing Bodies for each specific sport that competes within the Olympic Games. Prior to the Act, there was more of a free-market approach to youth sports. There were National Governing Bodies, which formed and administered the US National Teams. Yet there was also competition within the marketplace. Frankly competition tends to produce innovation and keep us all honest. Yet the new system under the Act tended to create individual little kingdoms within each sport, effectively squashing competition and innovation.

A rhetorical question that it seems someone should have asked ***"is it wise to place an organization whose primary purpose is to field teams composed of elite players to occasionally represent our nation to also oversee youth sports. Are these not entirely separate concerns?"***