



Kanata Minor Hockey Association

Creating a Stronger Community Through Minor Hockey



Welcome to the 2016-2017 season of the Minor Pee wee A Kanata Blazers!

My name is Mike Craven and I'm extremely excited to be the Head Coach for the upcoming season. I'm passionate about the game of hockey and consider it a privilege to be given the opportunity to share my enthusiasm with your kids, teach them about the game, and show them my version of what it means to be part of a team.

I have been a KMHA volunteer in both the House and Competitive programs for several years and have held the roles of Head Coach, Assistant Coach, and Coach Mentor. This will be my 7th season as a Head Coach. Nonetheless, I keep an open mind to new ideas, make regular updates to my coaching certifications, take every available opportunity to attend coaching clinics, and learn by osmosis from my fellow coaches. I'm a firm believer in the concept of "continuous improvement" which means the **learning never stops** and will be laced with a healthy dose of "What did we learn here?" and/or "What's next to allow another step forward?". My personal goal is to do my very best to **always be positive** with my coaching and player feedback.

As mentioned, my coaching philosophy is rooted in "continuous improvement" but, as a Head Coach, I believe my role goes further than simply teaching the skills/rules/strategies of the game. Beyond the hockey, I have always gotten tremendous enjoyment from spending quality time with the players and their families and I aim to make hockey something my players will enjoy now and well into the future.

I have 4 basic, **non-negotiable** rules:

SHOW RESPECT; PLAY SAFE; WORK HARD; HAVE FUN

With these in mind, players on my team will receive fair ice time, be exposed to all situations, and be given opportunities to play in and learn from those situations. I also believe that some of the most important parts of the season happen off the ice and, often, away from the rink. I'm a competitive, passionate person and, unsurprisingly, I'd prefer a win over a loss. That said, **winning is NOT the fundamental measure of success** for a game, a tournament, or the season. My goal is to emphasize the development of individual skills and bolster confidence while building a team that will look forward to coming to the rink and team events, compete for every puck, and dig deep every shift of every game.

Immediately after the team is formed, a list of 'Team Rules' will be introduced to set expectations surrounding items such as arrival times, dress code, and behavior. Should issues arise, these rules will include clearly defined consequences which will start with a warning and escalate to include a loss of ice time (e.g. asked to leave practice ice, a missed shift, sitting out a period, etc).

The season will start mid-August with tryouts and will run to the conclusion of the playoffs which start early in the month of February. Families should expect an average of 4-5 team events per week. In addition to on-ice activities such as games and practices, this average will include off-ice commitments such as dry land training, meetings, fund raising endeavors, and team bonding events. **All team events will be mandatory.**

The team will be participating in 4-5 tournaments. Applications have been submitted to those listed below but this list may change based on acceptance of our application and a review of the registered teams to ensure an appropriate level of competition.

- Capital Gold Rush – Local – Sept 23-25
- Belleville Pre-Season Tilt – Belleville, ON – Sept 30-Oct 2
- Capital Fall Classic – Local – Oct 21-23
- Green Mountain Avalanche – Jay Peak, VT – Nov 4-6
- Capital Winter Classic – Local – Jan 20-22

A team dress code will be in effect:

- For players:
 - tournament games: good pants (no jeans), collared shirt, tie, and Blazers jacket
 - home/away games: Blazers track suit
- For bench staff: Dress pants, collared shirt, tie, and Blazers jacket for all games
- For trainer: Blazers track suit

Financially, beyond KMHA registration/tryout fees, families can expect a team fee of \$1500 per player. These fees will be payable over 3 installments, if desired. The preliminary budget includes a modest amount from fundraising and sponsorship but it should go without saying that creativity and success in these areas will contribute directly to lowering the final cost to the families.

The team will be selected by me with detailed input from experienced, independent evaluators pulled from both inside and outside of the KMHA. Beyond the obvious fundamental hockey skills, I am looking for players that are eager to learn and open to being challenged. I place special emphasis on those players that are developing an understanding of the play unfolding around them and where they fit into that picture. At this level, it is key that players are willing to engage physically, compete all-out in both game and practice situations, and are fully committed being a good teammate both on and off the ice.

Now that the nicer weather is finally here, I hope that everybody is having a great spring/summer and I look forward to seeing everybody late in August for tryouts. If, after reading this letter, you have any questions or concerns about the upcoming season, please feel free to contact me.



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