

Welcome to the 2016/17 hockey season. My name is Greg Sharpe and I am honoured to be the coach for the Major Midget AA team. I want to take an opportunity to introduce myself and highlight a few important items for the upcoming season.

I have been coaching youth sports since 2005 and I began my competitive coaching career in 2011 with the Ottawa Sting. Last season, I was the Head Coach for the Ottawa Jr. 67's Major Peewee AAA team. As a younger, non-parent coach I bring an energy and level of intensity to the bench. I'm a student of the game, continually learning and evolving both my approach to coaching and my team's style of play.

My coaching philosophy focuses on a team-first approach, founded on the pillars of respect and communication. I believe that a team can accomplish far more together than they can as a collection of individuals. The team approach extends beyond just the players to include the entire staff (coaches, trainers, managers, etc.) as well as the parents. There will be emotional ups and downs throughout the year and the team will inevitably face some form of adversity. Consistent messaging and support from every member of the team can make navigating difficult periods much easier. To build this team mentality, you need buy-in from each participant; respect and communication will set a strong foundation.

Players can expect to be training five times per week. This will include both on-ice and off-ice sessions. The off-ice sessions will be a mix of physical training (cardio, strength, flexibility), theory-based information (nutrition, leadership, team building) and video analysis. Players are expected to be able to manage their time effectively, balancing team commitments with school, family, and part-time jobs.

In addition to the time commitment, the financial commitment is expected to be approximately \$2500 in excess of the KHMA registration fees.

The team is registered for three tournaments:

- September 23-25, Capital Gold Rush (Gloucester, ON)
- October TBD (Ottawa, ON)
- January 6-8, Capital Winter Classic (Kanata, ON)

This year's tryout schedule has not been set. The dates are normally posted on the KMHA website in late July or early August so please check the site regularly to confirm when the tryouts will be held. For tryouts, I will be using independent evaluators to assist me in selecting the team. Players will be evaluated in intra-squad games, exhibition games, fitness testing, and player interviews. We will be carrying two goalies and 16 or 17 skaters for the 2016-17 season.

I don't believe in selecting players to fit a predetermined system. Rather, I prefer to select the system that best suits the strengths and weaknesses of the team. That said, there will be a few key attributes heavily weighted in try-out evaluations.

First, your understanding of the game and your decision-making ability will be assessed. Can you create time and space, both for yourself and your teammates? Are you continually aware of your options in each situation – and do you select the correct one? Do you make players around you better?

We will also be looking for players who play the game with tempo. Certainly, individual speed is important. Additionally, we're looking for players who are comfortable in a fast-paced game, can move the puck quickly, are calm under pressure, and can execute at full speed.

Finally, we will be assessing your attention to detail. Are you in the shooting lane to block shots? Do you create traffic in front of the net? Are you providing pressure on the backcheck, do you make smart line-changes, are you communicating on the ice? Attention to small details and avoiding shortcuts will stand out to myself and the other evaluators.

I will hold a meeting for players and parents before the first tryout to reiterate expectations.

I look forward to meeting you in September. Enjoy your summer.

Greg Sharpe

Head Coach
Major Midget AA
Kanata Blazers