

Hello my name is James McGee and I am honoured to have been named the head coach of the 2023-24 U14 AA Kanata Blazers. I love hockey and if you're reading this letter then I am sure that you and your child have a passion for our great Canadian game as well.

This will be my first year as the head coach. I have been involved with this 2010 born age group as an assistant coach for several seasons. I look forward to another great year for all involved. My goal is to provide a really fun team environment that engages the players and keeps them motivated to continue their development both as hockey players and members of our community.

Our team identity will be built with an emphasis on individual accountability and a team first attitude from each player throughout the season. Individual ice time will be fair and consistent with KMHA policy. All players will be provided the opportunity to contribute to special teams (power play and penalty kill).

Continuous advancement of individual player skills will be critical to team success. Practices will be organized such that the players develop skating, shooting, passing, puck handling and checking skills. Players will be challenged to work on weaknesses and new skills. A consistent commitment to off ice training and fitness will be a team expectation. Mandatory team video sessions will also be part of the learning process.

Level appropriate team tactics will be taught such that players learn positioning in each zone. This will include D zone coverage, various breakouts as well as O zone entries and cycles. It will also include instruction on effective fore checking and back checking. Specific power play and penalty kill strategy will be implemented.

Tryouts begin in late August. This will be a competitive and fair selection process including independent evaluators. All players will be given an honest chance to earn their place on the team. The formal evaluation process begins at the first tryout ice time. I expect each player will be fully prepared to compete to the best of their ability. I am seeking intelligent and determined players that consistently demonstrate skilled hockey at a high pace.

This will be the first year of full body contact for the 2010 age group. There will be a mandatory body contact clinic prior to tryout. This session will instruct players how to provide and receive body contact in a safe and effective manner. Proficient body contact skills will be an important selection criteria.

Competitive hockey includes a significant commitment from each family. Expect 4-5 team activities on a weekly basis. The team fee will be approximately \$2000. This amount is over and above the KMHA registration fee. A detailed team budget will be shared with parents prior to the season.

We will compete in several tournaments including:

- Belleville Pre-Season Tilt (Sept 29 - Oct 1)
- Sensplex Capital Fall Classic (Oct 20 - 22)
- Northumberland Regional Silver Stick (Dec 1 - 3)
- Sensplex Capital Winter Classic (Jan 5 - 7)

Best regards,

James McGee
jammcgee@hotmail.com