

Dear players and parents,

My name is Michael Robichaud and I'm very excited for the opportunity to coach the Kanata Blazers U18AA Rep team for the upcoming 2025-26 hockey season. I'm a father of four kids, all of whom play/played within the KMHA and KGHA hockey communities. In addition to playing high-level competitive hockey and basketball growing up, I've gained extensive experience coaching hockey, basketball, and baseball over the past 13 years (at both the competitive and house league levels). I have experience in various team roles including head coach, assistant coach, on-ice helper, and treasurer. Most recently, I was the head coach for the U16B rep team who won the Stittsville Mid-Season classic tournament and the league's consolation Championship.

My team philosophy is to provide a safe, positive, and structured environment that supports not only the development of hockey skills, but also crucial life skills. As head coach, my primary objective will be to reinforce the importance of playing as a team as I believe teams that play as a team will always have more success than teams that play as individuals. Accordingly, our focus will be on structure, team tactics and teamplay. I will look to challenge the players to try new things and encourage them not to be afraid of making mistakes. Finally, I hope to put together a tight-knit family of players/parents who will be there to support each other on-and-off the ice to ensure the season is a positive experience for all.

As with all competitive sports, there is more of a commitment required from both parents and players. As such, my expectation is that players will be present for both practices and games. You can expect to be on the ice a minimum of 3-4 times a week. In addition, I anticipate having off-ice training sessions once a week. Team fees are expected to approximate \$2,700-\$2,900 (TBD) which will be used to fund league/referee fees, ice time, tournaments, development sessions, social events and other miscellaneous costs. Our budget will also include dedicated professional skill sessions for both players and goalies to enhance their development throughout the season.

Although it is too early to register for tournaments, I anticipate attending the following:

- 2 away tournaments – travel required
- 2 local tournaments.

As this year will be the last for many of the kids, I really want to make this as memorable as possible. As such, I'm hoping to coordinate lots of social activities for the players which will include: (i) chartered buses to certain away games (including a coach bus for 1 away tournament), (ii) paintball, (iii) a golf day, (iv) Sens game(s) and (iv) a poker evening (non-cash prizes).

Although the U18AA tryout schedule is not currently available, you can plan on tryouts starting in September (please refer to the announcement which will be posted on www.kmha.ca later this Summer). The tryout process will involve intra-squad games, exhibition games against teams from other associations and/or on-ice practice(s). To ensure a fair assessment of players, my evaluators will consist of non-parent evaluators that have extensive hockey/coaching experience. In addition to individual skill, these evaluators will be looking for players that work hard on both ends of the ice, have strong hockey IQ and *willing to play a team game*.

I will also be assessing intangible behaviours with preference being given to players who are: coachable, respectful, positive, supportive to their teammates, disciplined, unselfish, able to follow instruction, show potential and have an eagerness to continue their development.

I hope everyone has a fantastic Summer and look forward to seeing everyone back in the rinks!

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Robichaud". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Robichaud" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Robichaud

Head Coach – Kanata Blazers U18AA

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