**Derek Bayford U18BB 23-24**

**Players and Families,**

My name is Derek Bayford and I look forward to coaching the U18BB team next season. I’ve coached in the KGHA and KMHA for several years and look forward to being back behind the bench as head coach.

**My Coaching Philosophy**

As a coach at the U18 level, the goal is to provide a positive environment where players continued to be challenged to improve their overall individual skill and knowledge of the game, as well as their team play. It’s never too late to learn.

When it comes to our team, the coaches and I will quickly look to define our ‘identity’, impress this on the players and work to become a very difficult team to play against every single game. Throughout the year, we will work on a combination of systems, individual skill development at each position, focus, and overall effort. Much emphasis will be placed on what players roles are in each of the three major zones, specifically when without the puck.

If we do our job right, when teams see Kanata on their schedule, they will know they will need to bring their best effort to compete with us, period.

**Commitment:**

Players and families should plan to commit to 4 on ice hockey events per week. We will discuss our off ice and fitness philosophy once the team is assembled.

The KGHA has worked to provide sufficient scheduling notice for all ice times, and so it is expected that players attend. I understand that at U18 there are a lot of competing priorities (jobs, exams, social lives etc..). Family, health and school should continue to come first, but hockey at this level should be next on the list. I will ask that planned family vacations are communicated well in advance, to ensure we have our full roster for games – specifically as we run into playoffs and playdowns.

Finally, it is important players come to hockey fully committed to bringing their best effort and understand that they are part of a 17-player team, where no single player is more important than another. I am looking for players who are positive towards each other, encourage each other to be better, are accountable for their own effort and understand their role.

**Tournaments:**

We will plan on playing in four to five tournaments over the stretch of the season, with Provincials being a hopeful add on next spring. Three of these are likely to be outside of Ottawa with one potentially in New York.

**Team Fees:**

We are expecting team fees to be roughly $1800-$2000 per player. We will of course look for and welcome team sponsorships and discuss fundraising once the roster is finalized. Our team manager will provide an overview of the team budget in a meeting in September.

**Tryouts and Team Selection:**

Please review the KGHA website for tryout information. Every player will have the same opportunity to earn a spot on this team. Evaluators will be looking for a combination of performance, skill, effort, body language, bench behavior and potential.

I’m looking forward to seeing all players at tryouts and having a terrific season.

Derek

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