

Welcome Players and Parents,

My name is Owen Bourns, and I am excited to be coaching the U11AA Kanata Rangers for the 2026-2027 season. I grew up playing competitive hockey in Ottawa, and I currently have two daughters playing within the KGHA. Over the past three years, I have been part of the coaching staff for both the U13AA and U11AA programs with the 2013s.

### **Coaching Philosophy & Team Culture**

U11AA represents the highest level of competitive hockey for this age group and, with that, comes a heightened standard for effort, dedication, and teamwork.

Our primary objectives this season are player development, fostering a genuine passion for hockey, and establishing the foundational habits required for high performance. A key priority this season is cultivating a positive and inclusive atmosphere where every player feels valued. The foundation of our team will be built on players developing into exceptional and inclusive teammates who actively support one another. While we expect to be a highly competitive team, building these long-term habits and prioritizing a positive team culture takes precedence over winning.

### **Tryouts & Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluations begin when players arrive at the rink; possessing a positive attitude and being a supportive teammate are just as critical as on-ice ability. On the ice, tryouts will feature some drills to demonstrate expected skills capability (skating, shooting, passing etc.) but will then quickly move on to battle drills, small-area games, and games. We are specifically looking to evaluate speed, effort, perseverance, attitude, hockey IQ, and coachability. For our goaltenders, evaluations will specifically focus on crease mobility, puck tracking, positional awareness, and overall attitude and compete level, ensuring they are assessed on the unique technical athletic demands of the position.

We want players who bring a positive attitude to the rink, work hard consistently, compete fiercely for the puck, and demonstrate a willingness to learn.

### **Commitment, Schedule & Accountability**

Families should expect a time commitment of 4 to 5 days per week. This includes practices, games, and off-ice development. We expect hockey to be the players' top commitment after family and school. Unexplained or unexcused absences from team events will result in a forfeiture of ice time in games.

While our full schedule will commence after Labour Day, families should anticipate picking up some preliminary ice times in the second half of August to prepare for the season. Our schedule will incorporate two breaks (one in December and one in March).

### **Positions & Ice Time**

At the U11 level, player positions are not locked. Players may be encouraged, and required, to try different positions throughout the year.

### **Tournaments, Travel & Call-Ups**

The team will participate in 5 tournaments throughout the season (excluding Provincials). At least 3 of these will require out-of-town travel, including Pink the Rink. Our ultimate goal is, of course, to also compete at the OWSA Provincials tournament in April.

## **Team Fees**

Team fees for the season are projected to be between \$2,400 and \$2,600 per player, in addition to standard KGHA registration fees. A finalized budget will be presented at our first parent meeting.

## **Coaching Staff & Volunteers**

A successful season requires dedicated parent volunteers. We will be looking to fill several crucial roles, a Team Manager to handle off-ice organization, assistant coaches, team trainers, den moms, and on ice helpers. We will discuss these roles in detail at the first parent meeting.

The remaining coaching staff will be selected only after the final roster is formed. Assistant coaches will be chosen based on their ability to bring a positive attitude, strong hockey knowledge, and a total commitment to working cohesively as a unified staff.

I look forward to an outstanding season of growth, hard work, and high-performance hockey. Good luck to all players during the tryout process.

Sincerely,

Owen Bourns

Head Coach, U11AA Kanata Rangers

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