

My name is Chris Fleck, and I am thrilled and honoured to be the coach of the 2025-2026 Kanata Rangers U11 AA team.

I have been involved with the game for well over 30 years in some capacity, be it playing, coaching, analysing video, opening bench doors, or being an on-ice helper. I look forward to leveraging that experience this coming season to ensure the kids have a year filled with positivity, fun, excitement, opportunity, learning and growth both on and off the ice as players and as people.

Tryouts:

Tryout evaluations begin the moment players arrive at the facility. Their attitude towards their parents, each other, the den moms, and the bench staff will be just as important as their on-ice abilities.

On the ice, we will be looking for skilled and hardworking individuals who will not give up by making second, third and fourth efforts, who are physical, willing to go the dirty areas, who are relentless on the puck, and who show a willingness to play as a team.

Goals and Objectives:

Here are a few primary goals for the upcoming season.

1. Being a positive and inclusive teammate – The game of hockey is played as a team. To ensure success, we will be creating an environment that is safe and values respect, support and collaboration. This includes having a supportive mindset, respecting everyone, communicating openly, promoting inclusivity, and leading by example. At the end of the day, we will win as a team, lose as a team and grow as a team.
2. Developing hockey abilities/sense – We will work non-stop on developing our hockey abilities and understanding of the game. This includes skills, and both player and team play development. We will also have specialized development sessions with outside (yet to be determined) vendors. I believe that consistently working on improving our skills is key for both personal and team growth. I am dedicated to delivering high-quality coaching through structured, engaging, and fast-paced practice sessions that help players enhance their fundamental skills, tactical understanding, and learn new team strategies. While focusing on each player's individual progress, I will also highlight the importance of working together for the success of the team.
3. Having fun – We want kids to enjoy the game and the experience of being part of a team. It's about the excitement of competition, the camaraderie with teammates, and the shared moments of success or learning. When you're having fun, it makes the hard work feel more rewarding and keeps you motivated, even during tough practices or games. It's important to foster a positive atmosphere where everyone can laugh, enjoy the game, and build lifelong friendships along the way.

4. Working hard – We will want kids putting in the effort to improve, whether it's in practices, games, individual skill development or off-ice training. Working hard means giving your best effort, staying focused, and always striving to improve. It also means being disciplined, pushing through challenges, and supporting your teammates to do the same. Hard work on and off the ice leads to growth and success, both for the individual and the team.

Commitments/Fees:

Players (and parents) can expect four-to-five (4-5) activities/events per week. This includes practices, games, off-ice training and fundraising. Family, health and school are the exceptions to missing events. Aside from March break, we will need full commitment throughout February, March and April as teams cannot use call-ups/affiliated players during playdowns and playoffs.

Team fees will range from \$2,000 to \$2,500, depending on how prices move over the course of the season. These fees are in addition to the KGHA registration fees.

To offset these fees, we will be doing a minimum of two (2) in-season fundraising events along with one (1) preseason event. More information and the team budget will be discussed at a parent meeting that will take place once the team has been formed.

Tournaments:

The plan is to attend a minimum of four (4) tournaments, not including Provincials. We may attend a fifth tournament, but that would remain local. Below is a very early list of tournament plans: Etobicoke's – Pink the Rink, Kanata's Annual Competitive Tournament, two (possibly three) additional tournaments to be decided at a later date. The OWHA Provincials will be in addition to this.

Communication/Motivation:

To me, great communication and motivation start with a positive working environment. My goal and the goal of the future staff will be to get to know each player individually to tailor our approach to ensure positive communication and learning for all. While I will expect a lot from each kid when it comes to attitude and effort, I firmly believe in positive reinforcement at this age. Using the sandwich method in delivering a message is my typical approach.

Parent/Player Expectations

Expectations will be set up front. Parents and players will be given a handbook with all the information and expectations for the season. Periodically we may need to reset the expectations, to ensure everyone remembers and adheres to the team's code, but all expectations from players and parents will be made known before we begin. Having everyone on the same page is a great place to start. I

want to be approachable should there be any concerns from parents but ask that the 24-hour rule is respected. Knowing that going to the coach may be uncomfortable for some, I plan to have a neutral parent team representative who can anonymously bring any issues from concerned parents to me and the staff. Each situation/case is different and will be treated as such, on a case-to-case basis.

Again, I really want to emphasize having a positive culture, with open communication. The happier the team, the stronger the team.

The try-out schedule can be found at KGHA.ca. Good luck to all players trying out.

All the best,
Chris Fleck