



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Kanata Blazers U11AA 2025/26 season. My name is John Ostapyk and I am excited to be coaching the team this year. I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to myself, my philosophy, and my plan for the upcoming season.

I grew up playing in the KMHA system and this will be my 7th year as a head coach within KMHA. Previously and over the years I have coached a number of teams, including my 3 kids within KMHA & KGHA. I've taught shooting and power skating programs, worked numerous hockey camps, and in the past I was in charge of all on ice youth development programming for the Ottawa Sens. I feel I have a good understanding of hockey skill development and more importantly I believe I understand how to work with children in hockey. Hockey has been a big part of my life and identity. I truly enjoy being part of the hockey community and want to share my knowledge and passion for the game.

My coaching philosophy is focused on development, culture, and fun. I place a large emphasis on developing skating and basic fundamentals. I believe in creating a team culture of respect, good sportsmanship, inclusiveness, hard work, accountability, and team work. I believe there is an amazing opportunity to coach these kids beyond on ice development and hopefully introduce life skills & lessons. Lastly and most important there has to be an element of fun to keep everyone engaged and make the experience positive for all players & families.

We will be following the Hockey Canada U11 Pathway program. [hc-atom-pathway-resource-guide-e.pdf \(hockeycanada.ca\)](https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/hc-atom-pathway-resource-guide-e.pdf) Players will have 4 pre-skates before evaluations begin. Full and updated schedule can be found at [Competitive Tryout Schedule Spring 2025 – Kanata Minor Hockey Association](#). I will have a group of non-parent evaluators that will assist me in selecting the team. Winning and short term success will not be my sole focus. I'm looking for the most well rounded 15 skaters and 2 goalies that will fit into the long term development and team goals. Practices will be fun, challenging, well organized and efficiently run. Practices will have a large focus on skating development, refining fundamental individual skills, compete skills and safety, and begin to introduce age appropriate team concepts.

As with all competitive sports there is a commitment both financially and time that is expected. This year you can expect on average 4.5 ice times per week, 2 local (TBD) & 2 away tournaments (Peterborough Oct.23-26th & TBD). Families can expect team fees of approximately \$2000-2200 before fundraising. Team fees are in addition to KMHA registration fees and a detailed budget will be reviewed with parents at the start of the season.

I look forward to seeing everyone back at the rinks!

John Ostapyk
Kanata Blazers U11AA Head Coach
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