



2025-26 U18 AA Player and Parent Information

Welcome to the 2025-26 U18 AA North Bay Jr Lakers. This outline will provide players and parents with an understanding of the primary competitive U18 AA girls' hockey program in terms of what they can expect during the 2025-26 season, and level of commitment required from families to support their daughter through the season. Competitive hockey at the U18 AA level represents a full commitment from players and families. Above all, the importance of providing a positive experience to ensure players continue to develop their hockey skills to play at the highest level in their age category.

A summer training program comprised of both weekly team training and individual training at home will begin in June. With families enjoying summer vacations, players will be expected to participate in 75% of weekly team activities.

The 2025-26 season will begin July 2025 and be comprised of:

- Fitness testing and weekly Off Ice Training sessions through the spring, summer and remainder of season,
- Once a week practices beginning in July for the summer,
- Two to three practices per week beginning last week of August,
- League games in the U18 AA division of Ontario Women's Hockey League,
- Exhibition games against girls' teams from various locations across the province,

It should be noted that play in the Ontario Women's Hockey League means the team plays away games in southern Ontario. Home games will be played in the North Bay area.

Criteria for a successful season include: the players developing a life-long love of the game of hockey, developing a work ethic to compete at the highest level, creating friendships and a bond with teammates that go beyond the arena, the development of players' core skills to meet their potential, and learning to use team strategies in various areas of the game.

Coaching Philosophy

My coaching experience includes over ten years from the U7 to U18 levels in both house league and competitive, with both boys and girls teams. Over that timeframe my coaching philosophy has not wavered as I attempt to provide children with an opportunity to:

1. Enjoy the game of hockey,
2. Develop their hockey skills to meet their potential, and
3. Excel at being a great teammate.

Players must be provided with an environment where they are offered opportunities to develop and be held accountable through positive reinforcement while demonstrating the utmost of sportsmanship. I believe experiences such as: work ethic and team play gained through hockey will translate into strong life skills.

Practices

An emphasis will be placed on skill development, positional play and team strategies during practices. Drills will be delivered through various group centres, half ice and full ice formats. Successful practices will rely heavily on players being well rested and prepared to learn. The goal will be to keep players as involved as possible while minimizing down time and maintaining a high tempo.

Games

At the U18 AA level specialized plays such as designed faceoff plays, power play and penalty kill become part of the coaching strategy and will result in increased play for certain players. Players at the U18 AA level will learn that they play a role on a team and certain games and situations may require some players to play more than others. There will be instances in games where the coaching staff may play some players more than others. These decisions will be made based on the best interests of the team.

Feedback to Players

Team staff will provide players with feedback on their play during games and effort in practices in a positive fashion. Encouragement and positive reinforcement will be used when team staff communicate with players. Players will be held accountable for their effort in games and practices through feedback from team staff. There may be times when the coaching staff feel a firm tone is required with a player to effectively communicate. For example, if a member of the staff feels that a player is not putting forth an effort that they are capable of, staff will challenge the player to improve their effort to meet their potential in an encouraging and/or firm conversation. Players are expected to respectfully listen to all members of coaching staff when receiving feedback.

Team Staff

A successful competitive program requires a strong group of volunteers. There is a role for every family on the team, and a successful season requires every family to contribute in one way or another. Once the team has been chosen after tryouts, the team staff will be identified. The following roles will require volunteers:

- Room monitors, (Mothers to supervise the girls in the dressing room before practices and games.),
- Purchase and bring snacks for games,
- Organize team fundraiser,
- Trainer,
- Manager, and
- 2 or 3 Assistant Coaches.

Any help a parent can provide is always welcomed.

Player Expectations

Players are expected to treat their teammates, staff, team families, game officials and opposition teams with respect and displaying the utmost in friendship and sportsmanship. Players will be reminded they are representing North Bay and NBDGHA in arenas, hotels, during fundraising activities or any other team function. Staff will treat players with respect and in a positive fashion, it is expected that players treat staff and their teammates with the same respect. Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated and will be addressed with the player and their parents with the head coach and another member of the team staff. Players will be directed to speak positively to each other. **Negative comments, mistreatment or bullying of any type will not be tolerated, including both face to**

face conversations and electronic. Many negative comments stem from children over hearing adult conversations, please keep your conversations positive when speaking about the team.

Players are expected to arrive at the arena 30 minutes before practices and be ready to go on the ice 10 minutes before practice to allow team staff to explain the practice plan.

Prior to games, players are expected to arrive at the arena one hour before the game and be ready to go on the ice 10 minutes before the game at which point the staff will provide pre-game instructions.

A 10:30 PM curfew will be in place for the night before game day. Players are expected to be at home before 10:00 PM the nights before games.

Players will be provided with an at-home training program in addition to team workouts. Fitness testing throughout the season will reveal if players are completing their at-home training programs.

As part of team building activities, players will be provided with a book they will have to read as the book will be referenced during the sessions.

Players are expected to be wearing the team approved clothing standard to all games. Players will be expected to wear the team's approved warmup and cool down apparel at games. A Jr Lakers coat will be identified by the team and require purchase by all players to be worn to games. The players will collaborate to establish specific apparel that will be worn for games and submit their request to the coach for approval. Players at this level recognize the importance of looking professional and deserve the opportunity to recommend their preferred look for off-ice apparel. Jr Lakers apparel can be purchased at Skaters North Source for Sports. A team order will not be placed for apparel.

Attendance at all games, practices, workouts and team functions is a requirement. Competitive hockey requires this level of commitment. Team staff understand families have a life outside of hockey and events (funerals or illness) do occur that may prevent your daughter from making a game, practice, workout or function. In these rare instances, players must notify the head coach at least 24 hours before the game or practice if the player is unable to attend. Missing practices, workouts or games for reasons like work or volunteering are not valid reasons. Playing on a AA team requires 100% commitment. Playing other sport is permitted however if there is a conflict we expect that hockey will be the priority. (September to April). Players must be well rested and focussed for all team activities. Missing 3 practices will result in having to sit out for 1 period of a game. Missing 5 practices will result in having to sit out for 1 full game at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Players are not permitted to use cell phones or mobile devices at the rink, or during team activities such as team meals, except in cases of emergency. At the rink phones are to be handed over to the room monitors unless that player's phone is being used for music in the dressing room.

The consumption of alcohol, smoking, illicit drug use and vaping are prohibited at any time for players on this team.

Not meeting these expectations may result in disciplinary action such as missing playing time during games, or being removed for the team.

During tournaments, exhibition games, or league playoffs, curfews may be put in place to ensure players are well rested to play to their potential. Other rules such as swimming in hotel pools may be put in place during tournaments. Players will be expected to participate in all team building activities and meals during tournaments.

Information on healthy nutrition will be shared with players during the season. Players will be expected to eat healthy prior to games and practices. At the U18 AA level players are recognized to be at the High Performance

level and should not be eating junk food of any sort. We are placing our athletes in the best possible position to compete at their highest level.

Discipline

Disrespectful or unsportsmanlike behaviour will not be tolerated by players before, after or during games, practices, workouts, tournaments or team events. Such behaviour during a game, practice or workout could result in a loss of ice time or the player being asked to leave the activity. Instances of disrespectful or unacceptable behaviour will be discussed between the player, their parent or guardian, and two members of the coaching staff at which point a plan will be put in place to move forward. Disrespectful or harassing behaviour toward other players or families on the team, at any time, will not be tolerated and will result in discipline. A reminder that players must follow the rules of the OWHHA Handbook which also cover: harassment, abuse, bullying and misconduct.

Parent Expectations

Similar to players, parents are expected to treat fellow families, players, team staff, game officials, and opposition players and families with respect in arenas, hotels, during fundraising activities or any other team functions. It is expected that parents have players at arenas on time, with proper equipment, and have eaten a nutritious meal in preparation for the game, workout or practice. Team staff will strive to place players in the best position for them to be successful. It is expected that families also strive to meet this goal.

Having appropriately sized and functional equipment for your daughter is a must. When considering the time and money invested into your daughter's hockey, spending the money on properly fitting equipment only makes sense. Should your daughter be injured due to equipment that no longer fits or is worn out hinders her development and the team's progress.

The 24-hour cool down period will be in effect for parents who wish to voice concerns about their daughter with the head coach. For example, if a parent has a concern about their daughter's ice time during a game, the parent will be asked to wait 24 hours before contacting the head coach to talk about the situation or complaint.

Similar to player expectations, parents speaking negatively about anyone on the team (a player, member of the staff or another parent) will not be tolerated.

Game Jerseys

Game jerseys with name bars are to be purchased by players through the NBDGHA's apparel provider, Skaters North Source for Sports.

Communication

The team will use the team's website, located on nbgha.com, to post all scheduled games, off-ice training, practices, team events and tournaments. Emails will also be distributed for all team communication from members of the team staff.

Dressing Room Management

The U18 AA Jr Lakers will follow the NBDGHA Change Room Monitor Policy. Only Dressing Room Monitors with Speak Out and original Police checks on file are permitted to enter the dressing room. Only females are permitted in the dressing room while the players are changing. At no time is there to be one adult alone in the

dressing room. There must always be two female room monitors present in the dressing room or a member of the coaching staff just outside the dressing room door, until such time that all players are dressed for practice or game.

Tentative Tournaments

Tournaments offer a great opportunity to play challenging games against similar girls' teams from across the province. Of course tournaments are also great opportunities for girls to develop their friendships with teammates. The 2025-2026 Jr Lakers will participate in these showcase tournaments:

- September – Oshawa Fall Classic
- December – Brampton Rush Canada USA Showcase
- January- Mississauga Tournament
- March- Toronto Leaside Tournament
- April – Provincials

Injuries

Team staff will handle all injuries with the utmost of caution. Please remember that we are keeping your daughter's health and well being the priority. Depending on the injury, the head coach may require a note from a medical professional for return to play. The team will follow the Hockey Canada Concussion Card (Appendix 1) for head injuries. Players who are returning from injury must FULLY participate in one practice prior to playing in a game to ensure that the player has fully recovered and will be capable of playing in a game situation and help avoid further injuries.

Financial Commitments

To operate a competitive hockey team, a team budget is required to cover expenses such as: tournament fees, ice time for practices, off-ice training, team equipment, team wear for staff, and access to specialized coaches. Funds to cover these costs come from three potential sources: fundraising, sponsors and team fees.

Team fees will not be specifically determined until the team has been chosen. The estimated team fee per player is \$2,500, however the number of players, the amount of fundraising and number of sponsors will determine the specific cost per player. Team fees can be paid in three installments, the first \$500 by June 30, 2025 and the second \$1,000 by October 31, 2025, and the third \$1,000 by November 30, 2025. If a player secures a sponsor, a portion of that sponsorship will be deducted from the player's \$2,500. One of the responsibilities of the team Manager is to provide all parents and the NBDGHA with detailed statements of the team budget. If there are funds left over at year-end, families will be reimbursed the remainder evenly.

Proposed Budget

Proposed Income

Player Fees	18 players x \$2,500	\$45,000
Fund Raising & Sponsors		\$15,000
Total		\$60,000

Expenses

Ice Time Practices	75 x \$300	\$22,500
Exhibition & Playdown games		\$2,000
Tournaments	4 x \$2,000	\$8,000
Provincials		\$1,400
Off-Ice Training		\$3,000
Skills and Goalie Training		\$3,500
Bus Trips		\$7,500
Female Coach Accommodation Meal Allowance		\$6,000
Team Building Material		\$1,000
DJ for Home games	12 x \$120	\$1,500
Video Streaming, Play-by-Play Home Games		\$1,500
Miscellaneous	(team events, food for dressing room, equipment, registration fees, etc.)	\$2,100
Total		\$60,000

Competitive hockey is a big commitment for entire families. The rewards of a season where girls enjoy themselves, improve their skills to meet their potential, become good teammates, work well with others, learn about off ice development, time management and continue to develop a life-long love for the game of hockey at the highest level are priceless and worth every minute. Should you have any questions or concerns about the 2025-26 U18 AA Jr Lakers program, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dave Dugas

Hockey Canada Concussion Card

CONCUSSION EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAM

Concussion in Sport

All players who are suspected of having a concussion must be seen by a physician as soon as possible. A concussion is a brain injury.

A concussion most often occurs without loss of consciousness. However, a concussion may involve loss of consciousness.

How Concussions Happen

Any impact to the head, face or neck or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jolting of the head and results in the brain moving inside the skull may cause a concussion.

Common Symptoms and Signs of a Concussion

Symptoms and signs may have a delayed onset (may be worse later that day or even the next morning), so players should continue to be observed even after the initial symptoms and signs have returned to normal.

***A player may show any one or more of these symptoms or signs.**

Symptoms

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Feeling dazed
- Seeing stars
- Sensitivity to light
- Ringing in ears
- Tiredness
- Nausea, vomiting
- Irritability
- Confusion, disorientation

Signs

- Poor balance or coordination
- Slow or slurred speech
- Poor concentration
- Delayed responses to questions
- Vacant stare
- Decreased playing ability
- Unusual emotions, personality change, and inappropriate behaviour
- Sleep disturbance

For a complete list of symptoms and signs, visit parachute.ca/concussion

RED FLAGS – If any of the following are observed or complaints reported following an injury, the player should be removed from play safely and immediately and your Emergency Action Plan initiated. Immediate assessment by a physician is required.

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Severe or increasing headache
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Double vision
- Seizure or convulsion
- Vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Increasingly restless, agitated or combative
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs

Concussion – Key Steps

- Recognize and remove the player from the current game or practice.
- Do not leave the player alone, monitor symptoms and signs.
- Do not administer medication.
- Inform the coach, parent or guardian about the injury.
- The player should be evaluated by a medical doctor as soon as possible.
- The player must not return to play in that game or practice, and must follow the 6-step return to play strategy and receive medical clearance by a physician.

6-Step Return to Play

The return to play strategy is gradual, and begins after a doctor has given the player clearance to return to activity. If any symptoms/signs return during this process, the player must be re-evaluated by a physician. No return to play if any symptoms or signs persist. Remember, symptoms may return later that day or the next, not necessarily when exercising!

IMPORTANT – CONSULT WITH THE TREATING PHYSICIAN ON RETURN TO LEARN PROTOCOLS. PLAYERS SHOULD HAVE THE ABILITY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL FULL TIME PRIOR TO PROCEEDING THROUGH STEPS 5 AND 6 OF THE RETURN TO PLAY STRATEGY.

IMPORTANT – FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION AND PRIOR TO STEP 1 A BRIEF PERIOD OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL REST IS RECOMMENDED.

- STEP 1** Light activities of daily living which do not aggravate symptoms or make symptoms worse. Once tolerating step 1 without symptoms and signs, proceed to step 2 as directed by your physician.
- STEP 2** Light aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting.
- STEP 3** Sport specific activities and training (e.g. skating).
- STEP 4** Drills without body contact. May add light resistance training and progress to heavier weights.
The time needed to progress from non-contact to contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and the player. **Go to step 5 after medical clearance** (reassessment and written note).
- STEP 5** Begin drills with body contact.
- STEP 6** Game play. (The earliest a concussed athlete should return to play is one week.)

Note: Players should proceed through the return to play steps only when they do not experience symptoms or signs and the physician has given clearance. Each step should be a minimum of one day (but could last longer depending on the player and the situation). If symptoms or signs return, the player should return to step 2 and be re-evaluated by a physician.

IMPORTANT – Young players and some adults will require a more conservative treatment. Return to play guidelines should be guided by the treating physician.

Prevention Tips

Players

- Make sure your helmet fits snugly and that the strap is fastened
- Get a custom fitted mouthguard
- Respect other players
- No hits to the head
- No hits from behind
- Strong skill development

Coach/Trainer/Safety Person/Referee

- Eliminate all checks to the head
- Eliminate all hits from behind
- Recognize symptoms and signs of concussion
- Inform and educate players about the risks of concussion



Education Tips

HOCKEY CANADA CONCUSSION RESOURCES
hockeycanada.ca/concussion

PARACHUTE CANADA
parachute.ca/concussion

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