

Hello parents,

My name is Mark Phelps and I'm excited to be leading our U10 Golden Knights program for the upcoming 2026-27 season. I've been coaching with the West End Hockey League for the last few seasons at the U7 and U9 levels and look forward to leading the development of our talented 2017 cohort.

At this age group, my coaching philosophy is simple: player and skill development in a fun, positive, and competitive environment. As a coach, my responsibility is to develop each player on the roster, build their self-confidence, unlock new levels of maximum effort, establish a commitment to improvement, and fuel their love of the game. Success will not be measured by wins and losses rather by how hard we work and how we improve as a team and as individuals.

Ice Time

Players will have the opportunity to play in all on-ice situations so that each player can contribute to the team's success. Our two selected goalies will share the crease evenly through rotation and play in an even number of high-impact situations (tournament finals, playoffs, etc).

Team Expectations

Players will also be expected to come to the rink focused, ready to work, and with a positive team-first attitude. Building a team of great teammates is a shared responsibility, with players, parents, and coaches all playing an important role in shaping our team's culture. My goal is to create a culture where players support one another, celebrate each other's accomplishments, and understand the importance of contributing to the team.

Time Commitment

Over the course of the season, players will be expected to participate in 3-5 team activities per week through a mix of practices, games, and dryland training sessions. We understand that occasional absences will happen over the course of the season; however, players are expected to attend the vast majority of practices, games, and team events. We'll have a handful of affiliate players join our team this year which will ensure a full bench for games, so timely notification of those infrequent absences will be required.

Players will be expected to arrive 45 minutes before game time to allow for a 15-minute pre-game warm-up and give players enough time to get completely dressed 10 minutes prior to puck drop. For practice, please arrive at the rink 30 minutes prior to the start of the session.

Tournaments

The team will participate in four tournaments this season. The tournament schedule below is set and deposits have been paid.

- Oct 2-4 (Kingston Canadiens Tournament)
- Nov 13-15 (Oshawa General Challenge)
- Dec 27-31 (Bell Capital Cup - Ottawa)
- Jan 22-24 (Capital Winter Classic - Kanata Blazers)

Team Fees

I expect team fees will fall within the \$850-\$1000 range (no more than \$1000). These are in addition to WEHL association/registration fees and the purchase of a Golden Knights track suit.

Dress Code

The Ottawa West Golden Knights require each team to have a dress code. Our team will wear Knights' tracksuits and hats to all games. Further details will be available once the team is selected, but the cost will be approximately \$150-\$200.

Conditioning and Tryouts

The Knights offer pre-tryout conditioning prior to the tryouts. Once the dates are finalized, they will be posted on the Ottawa West Golden Knights' website: <https://www.owgkhockey.org/>.

I'll lead the evaluations and will be supported by a team of experienced, independent evaluators that will assess players across several areas, including skating, effort, puck skills, competitiveness, and attitude. I understand that tryouts are a stressful experience for everyone involved and I'll do my best to communicate effectively and efficiently.

Parents and Volunteers

I like to keep communication lines open amongst the parent group. With that said, I'll need your help to proactively flag concerns and issues in private and will work with you to discuss what options may be available. Please also do your best to ensure that your player arrives prepared at all team events: on time, well fed, rested, hydrated, and ready to work hard.

Following the selection of the team, I'll also need to fill many parent volunteer positions that will contribute to our team's success: Assistant Coaches, Manager, Treasurer, and Trainers, as well as other roles like social coordinator and timekeepers. Our volunteers will help make the season experience great for everyone.

Thank you for your interest in the Golden Knights program. I can't wait to get back to the rink in the fall and get started on another season of development, competition, and fun. Enjoy your summer and I look forward to seeing everyone at the rink in September.

Mark Phelps
Head Coach - U10 B