

Ottawa West Golden Knight U11 'B'

Dear Players and Families,

My name is **Sven Baltare**, and I am incredibly honoured to introduce myself as the Head Coach of the Ottawa West Golden Knights U11 team for the 2026-2027 season.

This will be my first season as a head coach, and I couldn't be more excited for the opportunity to lead this group.



Over the past several years, I've had the privilege of coaching, assistant coaching and as an on-ice instructor / volunteer with the Ottawa West Golden Knights, West End Wolverines, and the Lumber Barons spring program. Those experiences have reinforced why I love coaching—not simply because of the game itself, but because of what hockey teaches young people about commitment, teamwork, resilience and confidence.

This year's team will bring together players from a variety of hockey backgrounds and experiences, including several who will be wearing a Golden Knights jersey for the first time. My goal is to build an environment where every player feels welcomed, supported and connected from day one.

Coaching Philosophy

My philosophy is simple:

Develop better hockey players, better teammates, and better people.

My goal is to prepare players for whatever level of hockey they choose to pursue next. Whether that's competitive hockey in future years or simply a lifelong love of the game, every practice should help players grow in both skill and confidence.

Players can expect a strong focus on:

- Individual skill development
- Positional play
- Hockey IQ, decision making and game strategy
- Team play and systems
- **Skating. Skating. Skating.**

While skills matter, two things will always matter more:

Effort and attitude.

Those are the two things every player controls every single day.

Expectations

Players

- Come prepared to work hard every practice and every game.
- Be coachable and embrace learning through mistakes.
- Support your teammates and celebrate each other's success.
- Treat teammates, coaches, officials and opponents with respect.
- Bring a positive attitude and enjoy the game.

Families

Parents play a huge role in creating a positive experience for our players and helping build a strong team culture.

We ask families to:

- Help players arrive prepared, rested and ready to compete.
- Encourage effort, learning and teamwork above wins and losses.
- Support a positive environment at the rink for players, coaches, officials and other families.

Once the team is finalized, we'll be looking for volunteers to help throughout the season, including:

- Team Manager
- Two Assistant Coaches
- On-Ice Support

We also encourage and welcome parents who would like to help with team building activities, fundraising, sponsorship opportunities, or any other way they can contribute. Every role - big or small - helps create a memorable experience for our players.

Team Fees

We anticipate team fees to be approximately **\$1,000-\$1,500** (in addition to Ottawa West Golden Knights registration fees).

Our goal is to keep fees toward the lower end of that range while investing in experiences that provide the greatest value for our players, including:

- Tournament registrations
- Power skating and skills development
- Team-building activities

Players will also require the **Ottawa West Golden Knights team-branded tracksuit**, which is an additional cost beyond registration and team fees. More information will be shared once the team is finalized, and hand-me-down or gently used tracksuits are absolutely welcome.

What the Golden Knights Mean to Me

The Golden Knights have always been more than just a hockey organization to me.

I grew up playing my minor hockey with the Ottawa West Golden Knights before continuing into the Junior B program. The coaches, teammates and families I met along the way helped shape who I became - not only as a hockey player, but as a person.

That experience is a big part of why I'm standing behind the bench today.

The Golden Knights have always represented community, development and pride. They showed me the power of a team that believes in one another and the impact a positive hockey environment can have on a young athlete.

It's an honour to now give back to the organization that gave so much to me, and my hope is that every player leaves this season not only as a better hockey player, but with memories and friendships that fuel a lifelong love of the game.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for considering the Ottawa West Golden Knights for the upcoming season. I look forward to meeting each player and family during tryouts and beginning what I hope will be a memorable season of growth, competition and fun.

Good luck and see you at the rink!

Sven Baltare

Head Coach

Ottawa West Golden Knights U11