



Ottawa West Golden Knights U12B 2026-2027 Season **Coach's Letter**

Hi Knights Families,

My name is Cameron Hopgood, and I'm excited to be coaching the U12B Golden Knights for the 2026-2027 season.

I have had the opportunity to work with many players in the 2015 age group through house league, competitive hockey and spring hockey, including as an assistant coach last season.

My goal is to create a season where players work hard, improve their skills, build confidence, and enjoy coming to the rink.

The best seasons happen when players, coaches and families work together to create a strong team experience. This letter outlines our approach to the season, what players and families can expect, and how the tryout process will work.

Everything we do this season will come back to three things:

Culture - Commitment - Compete

At the U12 level, our focus is on development. We want players to improve, build good habits and enjoy being part of the team. When we do those things consistently, the results tend to follow.

CULTURE

Culture starts with putting the team first.

Hockey is a team game. Every player has an important role, and every role matters. We succeed by working together and supporting one another.

Be a good teammate. Move the puck. Get open. Make the right pass.
Change hard. Cheer from the bench. Celebrate your teammates' success.

COMMITMENT

Commitment starts with preparation.

Show up on time. Bring all your gear. Be ready when it's your turn. Listen.
Ask questions. Put feedback into action.

Small habits add up over the course of a season. Preparation builds confidence.

COMPETE

Compete starts with max effort and determination.

Give 100% of what you have each time you step on the ice. Play fast.
Skate hard. Push yourself. Race for loose pucks. Win battles. Backcheck hard. Never quit on a play.

Competing does not mean being perfect. Mistakes will happen. Learn from them. Don't worry about the last shift. Get ready for the next one.

SEASON INFORMATION

Team Fees

The team fee will be about \$1,000 and will cover tournament registrations, specialty coaching sessions, team supplies, and team events. We will be doing fundraising and exploring sponsorship opportunities to keep costs as low as possible.

Time Commitment

Families can expect 4 to 5 team activities per week. This includes practices, games, weekly off-ice sessions and team events.

I understand families balance hockey alongside school and other commitments. Family and school come first. When players commit to the team, I ask that they make every effort to attend team activities and

communicate early if conflicts arise. Being dependable is part of being a great teammate.

No team activities are being planned during the Christmas holiday period or March Break. The only exception may be a practice on the final weekend before returning to games or playoffs.

Tournaments & Activities

The team is planning to attend the following tournaments:

- Ottawa Capital Volunteer Cup | October 23-25, 2026
- Kingston Canadians Hockey Tournament | November 6-8, 2026
- Rockland Coco Lemay Tournament (planned) | December 4-6, 2026
- Peterborough Melanie Clancy Memorial Tournament | January 29-31, 2027

We also want our players to understand the importance of giving back. We are planning to participate in the CIBC Run for the Cure on October 4 and other community initiatives throughout the season.

EXPECTATIONS

Player & Family Commitment

A successful season takes a team effort from players, coaches and families. Communication, preparation and support help create the best possible experience for everyone.

Players are expected to:

- Arrive on time and ready to go.
- Pack and carry their own equipment whenever possible.
- Check that they have everything they need before leaving for the rink.
- Take responsibility for their preparation.

Families are expected to:

- Help players arrive on time, well rested, well fed.
- Communicate schedule conflicts as early as possible.
- Help players focus on effort, learning and enjoying the game.
- Support a positive team environment.

Attendance

Players are expected to arrive 60 minutes before games and 30 minutes before practices. This allows time for preparation, warm-up and team instruction before taking the ice.

Dress Code

The Knights require a team dress code. Our dress code will generally be a team tracksuit, which is not included in the team fees. More details will be provided once the team is selected.

Families are encouraged to reuse existing gear. Second-hand items and hand-me-downs are welcomed.

TRYOUTS

Every season is a fresh start. Players will be evaluated based on what they demonstrate throughout the tryout process. Independent evaluators and coaches will assess players across multiple sessions, including skills, small area games and scrimmages.

Tryouts can be exciting and a little nerve-racking. They are also a great opportunity for players to challenge themselves and show what they can do. Evaluations help ensure players are placed at the level that best supports their development and enjoyment of the game.

The exact tryout schedule has not yet been finalized. Additional details will be shared as they become available. The season is scheduled to begin in mid-October.

If anyone has questions or would like to discuss the season ahead, please reach out at cameron.hopgood@gmail.com. Enjoy your summer, and I look forward to seeing everyone at the rink soon.

Go Knights!

Cameron