



August 18, 2009

Ottawa Sting Minor Hockey Association **Major Atom A**

Dear Players and Parents,

Please find below some of the initial team context and hockey schedule details for the 2009-2010 Ottawa Sting Major Atom A team. I would recommend reading Doug Lavallee's ('AA' coach) letter to players and parents also. As well, on the Major Atom schedule, you will find a link to a letter describing, in lots of details, the tryout approach and plan Doug and I have put together in order to select the 'AA' and 'A' teams.

Note that the tryout plan is subject to change, and therefore I highly recommend you consult the Sting website daily throughout the tryout process - from Saturday August 22nd until Sunday, August 30th.

Introduction

My name is Christian Bonin. I am a father of 4 great kids under the age of 10, one of whom I hope to be coaching this season. I have been involved with minor hockey for the last 6 years, all with IP, Novice and Atom level teams and players. I work for IBM as a management consultant and my wife and I own, with other partners, a retail business in Ottawa. I love the game of hockey, and I love coaching even more. I hope to share this enthusiasm with you, the players and parents.

Coaching philosophy

While winning is not the single focus for me, it's an important one. Not necessarily as an imperative, nor even as a regular outcome, but rather as a state of mind. I want to coach players, through concepts such as practice, pride, responsibility and accountability, that in competitive 'A' hockey we will approach all games and practices with a WINNING ATTITUDE.

We will PLAY LIKE WE PRACTICE... so I expect dedication, attention, effort and a desire to learn during practices. I want you to think independently and be creative during games, as well as execute what has been conveyed to you during practice to the best of your abilities.

What you can expect

- 1) Fair tryouts, with all players given an equal opportunity, as time permits, to make what I hope to be a competitive Major Atom A hockey team.
- 2) I have set myself the goal of making you a more skilled and competitive hockey player, not by the end of the season, but after every practice and game. I also hope to contribute to making you a better person on and off the ice.
- 3) Team play and team discipline will be emphasized.
- 4) I will relate and treat you the player (and the parents of course!) with respect and dignity, as I would like to be treated. I will entrust every player and each of their team mates with responsibilities and goals: up to each of you to hold yourselves accountable to each other and as a team.

What do I look for in a player?

Besides the basic skills required to play at the 'A' level, I'm looking for players who

- a) Practice and play with equal or more enthusiasm than me.
- b) Practice as hard, if not harder, than they compete in games.
- c) Push themselves and their team mates to deliver their best effort every practice or game and care about its outcome.
- d) Treat their coaches, game officials, team mates and their parents, and the game of hockey, with the utmost respect.
- e) Know when it is time to focus and be self-disciplined, as well as aptly choose the moments to have fun and goof around (I'm still learning how to do this!)
- f) Want to learn, win and have fun, both on and off the ice.

Parents involvement

I WANT parents to be involved, whether they take a formal role like manager, team financial officer, fundraising coordinator, tournament coordinator, game statistician, or whether to simply provide me with comments and suggestions throughout the season.

Hockey Schedule

I will be working towards getting you all on the ice between 3 and 4 times a week (practices and games combined). In the early weeks of the season (in September especially), you will be practicing a lot, with some sporadic exhibition games, which may result in 4-5 ice times/week. I will also work towards getting us some off-ice training and instruction sessions, whether they be in a local gymnasium or park field.

While the Sting Association will provide the majority of practice ice times for the season, I will need to secure extra ice times with the City. To date, most ice times available (and the ones I've secured) are at 5:00pm or 5:30pm weekdays. I hope to give you sufficient notice to allow for proper planning and scheduling. The City has conveyed to me that "better" ice times should be made available throughout the season. Lets hope!

Tournaments:

- Canadian Thanksgiving – Whitby ON
- Late October / early November – TBC (most likely in Toronto area)
- USA Thanksgiving – Syracuse NY (note to parents: players and parents will need passports.)
- Late December – Bell Capital Cup
- Late January – Verdun PQ

I hope this letter has provided you with the information you need. In the event that it didn't, please do not hesitate to contact me at (613) 730-1207.

Yours in hockey,

Coach Christian
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