

Dear Parents & Players,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 hockey season! My name is Brendan Spooner and I am excited to be the coach for this year's U10 Crusaders team. I have a deep passion for the game, have played at various competitive levels throughout minor hockey, continue to play recreationally, and have been actively involved in coaching across various minor hockey associations since 2005. Starting as a non-parent coach with AA and A teams, I have been involved with multiple age levels from IP to U16, competitive and house, in various coaching capacities. I have had the privilege to be part of some great teams, have learned from many great coaches, and continue to be a student of the game.

My primary goal for any team is to develop players to their maximum potential both on and off the ice. In addition to developing technical skills and game play, life skills of teamwork, responsibility, communication and respect will be stressed. Knowing that the game is a journey and just as much about friendships, embracing adversity, teamwork, success and failure...it's all a part of life, even when we exit the game. The combination of these attributes will lead to building self-confidence and having fun, both as a group and individually.

### **Coaching Philosophy**

My approach to coaching is built around four pillars:

*Defence* - I believe in building from the net out and establishing a team commitment to defence

*Dedication* - I believe in commitment to hard work, respect and always giving your full effort

*Desire* - We need to want the puck and want to compete every time we step on the ice

*Development* - All players and coaches will make mistakes, it's part of the learning process. It is how we learn from these mistakes that will define our season.

### **About The Season**

While all new seasons offer a set of challenges and opportunities, being the first chance for many to play competitively, along with the transition to the full ice game, the potential for player and team growth this year is immense. To that end, I encourage all players playing in WCMHA at the U10 level to register for tryouts.

To make this season as successful as possible, there will be a heavy emphasis on skill development, especially early on in the year - skating, passing and shooting will be the foundation for our success. As we progress through the season, positional play, tactics and initial strategy will be worked in and built upon.

### **Tournaments**

The team is looking to enter 3 tournaments this year:

- Collingwood, Oct 25-27
- Northumberland Silver Stick, Nov 22-24
- Capital Winter Classic (Sensplex), Jan 17-19

I hope you all have a great summer and will see you at the rink soon enough!

Coach Brendan