

Parents Guide to

Western 14U A



Some information for the upcoming season
2026 - 2027

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Western Parent,

I am very excited to get this season underway. I look forward to seeing our returning families soon and meeting new families while we begin building our team for the season. Please understand that some of the information I will share may change or be adjusted based on certain circumstances, but every effort will be made to mitigate disruption and a lack of information at the start of our season.

As always, the best place to find information, schedules, and all things Western will be the team's [Crossbar App](#). If you haven't already done so, please download the app and log in to the site today.

The season schedule is being built and entered now by Jenn Marchese. After this is a little more complete, we can talk about additional activities and programming for the players. Included in this packet is my **"parents make the difference"** information, our grievance policy, and other material related to the team this season. I will go into this season with the hope that we will work together to mold the best young players that we can, and I anticipate and trust that you, as a parent, will help me achieve that goal.

In the coming weeks, you will receive:

1. Practice and Training Schedule
2. Preliminary Game and Tournament Schedule
3. Team Building program schedule
4. Access to the video and technology platforms used by me

It isn't long before this group of players will set their sights on their "next level" of hockey, and we want to do everything in our power to prepare and motivate them to achieve their goals.

Policy is included here, but it is good practice to always follow Western's and USA Hockey's Code of Conduct. Questions regarding ice time, positions, lines, etc., will be reviewed. This is not an opportunity to change policy; it is for information only. At our opening weekend, I will ask you to turn in your "parent code of conduct," signed and dated with input from your player.

Thank you for choosing to place your player with our team and the Western program. I look forward to a great year of hockey and watching this group of players progress throughout the season.

Sincerely,

Coach Mike Bonelli

PARENTS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

IN THE STANDS

Parents can take the fun out of hockey by continually yelling or screaming from the stands. Parents should enjoy the game and applaud good plays. The stands are not a place from which parents should try to personally coach their kids. Kids often mirror the actions of their parents; if they see mom or dad losing their cool in the stands, they'll probably do the same on the ice.

CAR AND HOME

Some parents not only spoil the fun for their kids at the ice rink but also in the car, believing this is the perfect place for instruction. Parents should try to keep things in perspective. There's more to life than hockey, and the car and home are not places to coach. Parents are responsible for supporting and respecting the coach's decisions and abilities. It is unfair to put children in a position of having to decide who to listen to – their parents or their coach.

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

Many benefits are derived from playing youth hockey. Players learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. They learn to work together, how to sacrifice for the good of the team, how to enjoy winning and how to handle defeat. In the process, they also learn important lessons about physical fitness and personal health. The degree to which your child benefits from this hockey experience is as much your responsibility as it is theirs. For your child to get the most out of our program, you need to show support and offer encouragement while maintaining a genuine interest in the team.

ALWAYS BE POSITIVE

Parents serve as role models for their children, who often look to adults for advice, direction, and approval. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a role model and strive to be positive. parent, one of the most important things you can do is show good sportsmanship at all times to coaches, referees, opponents, and teammates. Remember that your children are PLAYING hockey. It is important to allow them to establish their own goals and play the game for themselves. Be careful not to impose your own standards or objectives.

LET THE COACH COACH

Avoid placing an exaggerated emphasis on winning. The most important aspect of your child's hockey experience is for them to have fun while developing physical and emotional skills that will serve them in life. A healthy, risk-free environment that emphasizes the importance of fair play, sportsmanship, teamwork and, most importantly, fun will be invaluable for your child as he continues to develop a positive self-image.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

The best way to help players achieve goals and reduce their natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one feels good after making mistakes. If your child does make a mistake – and they will (remember, they're just kids) – keep in mind that mistakes are an important part of the overall learning process. Strive to be supportive and point out the things they do well. Make sure your child knows that, regardless of the outcome of a game, he is a winner.

For the past 5 seasons, I have had the great pleasure and privilege of hosting a youth hockey podcast that addresses lots of parental and player issues and subjects that come up. Feel free to give a follow and listen. You can search by subject as well if you're interested in the perspective of any of the outlined difference makers above.



OUR KIDS PLAY HOCKEY

Grievance policy

The hockey program will implement a “grievance policy” for issuing complaints and disagreements on ice time, player policy, and discipline. Unfortunately, this policy needs to be implemented. The following are the criteria you must use to issue any dissatisfaction with your child's playing time, role on the team, position, etc.

1. The player in question must meet with a member of the coaching staff.
2. If there is no satisfactory result from that meeting, a player may meet with the entire coaching staff together in a predetermined meeting.
3. If the player still has an unresolved issue, he may request a meeting with the coaching staff and a parent by requesting that meeting in email form to the coach.
4. If no satisfactory result has been made, the player, coach, and a parent can request to meet with the organizational leadership to look into the grievance.

At no time will a parent be permitted to call, email, or confront a member of the coaching staff about a player. The player must institute all correspondence between player and coach. Thank you for adhering to this policy.

This policy by no means supersedes the involvement of a parent when it involves personnel matters, mental and physical health concerns or academic matters. Please understand that your player is this coaching staff's primary concern and anything you can do to help us better understand and interact with your child is much appreciated.

What Western 14U A includes

We will discuss in-depth the benefits offered this season for our team

The Program

- 2 team and 1 skills practice each week (goalie skills separate)
- Team uniform/socks for practice & games - Player bag and workout wear available at ProShop
- League and independent games and tournament opportunities
- Professional, year-round coaching staff
- Video access for skills development work, player advancement and feedback
- Consistent pre-game scouting and game preparation. Players can take this to the next level.
- Complex coaching and teaching techniques and education for the modern game
- **Prosharp Skate Sharpening program IF requested** - Coordinated sharpening and discounts
- **Player assessment program.** Evaluations and daily metrics to track development
- **Reactview access** and membership for video feedback and teaching program
- Station-based and SAG program training and development structure included
- **The KNPS (Kurt Nichols Power Skating)** 20-week stride development program **IF joined.**
- LTAD philosophy ties in with nutritional, developmental and educational milestone expectations.

Let's make the best team experience and player development path that we can . . . together

We will be looking to build our team concept and program build right from the start of team selection.

Please let me know what YOU can offer our team to help us develop relationships, respect, and team-first attitudes as we build the foundation of player development and individual success. How can you help?

- Host a team function; pool party, movie night, attend a baseball game, etc..
- Host a "player advancement night"; this includes a night with college and prep coaches and recruiters, skill development experts, mental strength trainers, nutritionists, and more.
- Host a parent social; the success of a team at the youth level can be directly linked to the respect and relationships that the parents of players have for each other. Hosting a parent social will help in accomplishing this goal.
- Tournament and Road Game Coordinator; someone to help with team activities, local site trips on overnights, prep and college tour coordination, team meals and bulk discount opportunities.

Communication

I take great pride in my open and accessible communication with parents and players. All Western 14U A team members will be included in our weekly updates and feedback. Game additions, practice changes, and Western news will all be communicated regularly. In addition, I am always available through email and by mobile phone to discuss any concerns or issues involving your player this season.

Prosharp Skate Sharpening and Profiling Opportunities

For OUR team I will pick up, service and drop off all steel during the season

\$350 includes 2 fully profiled sets of steel and 30 sharpenings throughout the season

(Player steel sold separately)

\$500 value

\$150 Subscription Sharpening - 10 sharpenings per subscription.

Average player will use 2 subscriptions per season. More on Pond use.

Convenience and quality value

KNPS 20 Week Stride Development and Strength Program

Order Slipboard by July 27. Classes begin mid August. Program will be added to team calendar

\$295 program fee.

20 + sessions

Tuesday Night Class as a team

Includes custom 6 foot slide board.

\$950 value
