

U11B – Mike Sementilli

A little about me

As we draw the curtains on the 2024/25 hockey season, and begin preparations for the upcoming 2025/26 season, I am very excited to introduce myself as the head coach of the WMHA U11B team.

My name is Mike Sementilli, and I am 45 years old. My wife Erin and I have 3 children, Ryan (15), Kaitlyn (13), and Evan (8). All of which play competitive sports. We are a very active family, and are always engaged in sports, and physical activities. We believe that competitive sports are a great way to teach children responsibility, hard work, dedication, teamwork, and discipline. These are qualities that will help children become strong, confident upstanding adults in their communities.

I was raised with a very strong work ethic from a young age and have always believed that hard work whether in youth sports or life in general, will always pay off. There is a saying that I will use in the dressing room from time to time, and that is “Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard”. This is one of the main reasons why hockey is such an amazing sport. If the player puts in the time, dedication, and determination, they themselves will see the results of those efforts.

I played hockey all through my childhood (as a goalie) from house league to the AA level and have had the opportunity to play hockey in many different areas in Ontario, including Northern Ontario.

I have had so many experiences and interactions with different coaches growing up, and when I think back on my youth hockey career, all of those



different coaches had one common message, and that was to always work hard, never ever give up, and always put in 100% effort.

I have been coaching in Windsor Minor Hockey Association for 10 + years. I have been a head coach for many house league teams, a head coach of the U9 Select team, and an assistant coach in numerous travel divisions all the way up to U14 AA/A. I have had the opportunity, and pleasure to work with many different coaches, all of which had their own different styles and approaches to coaching. These experiences have given me a vast amount of knowledge and tools to form my own coaching style and philosophy.

A good coach will do everything he or she can to develop EVERY single player on that team. With that said, there is a crucial balance between individual player development with what is good for the team. For me, cultivating a positive team atmosphere, and ensuring that every player bonds together is the recipe for success. There is no such thing as a perfect hockey player, and every player will make mistakes. It is so important that the coach is there to teach that player where they made the mistake, and how to correct it.

However, it is also just as important for that player's teammates to be positive peers, and to pick them up when they are feeling down on themselves. This type of culture builds confidence, and strong self-esteem in every player, which leads to team success.

My approach to the U11B season

At this age level the players will have the basic fundamentals of skating, shooting, passing, and team play. My goal as coach of the U11B team is to hone in on those fundamental skills, along with expanding on the tactical play of the sport. This season's focus will be on gaining possession of the puck, and moving the puck out of the defensive zone, managing the puck through the neutral zone, and proper set-up and attack in the offensive zone. There will also be focus on teaching every player how to work the power play and penalty kill aspects of the game. I believe that every player needs to learn how special teams work, as every player is different. While a player may be great

on the power play, that same player may not understand the penalty kill as well as others.

Windsor Minor Hockey offers excellent opportunities for their travel teams to take advantage of professional goalie training that is offered during the teams regular scheduled practices. I intend to take full advantage of this training, as I believe that goaltenders are the most important player on the team and often get overlooked especially in practices. Goaltending is a very mentally demanding position in hockey and having a professional goalie instructor that can help support these two players is an important piece of the teams puzzle and can be a large contributor to the teams success.

During their young hockey journey, players should enjoy the thrill of competition, going out there, trying hard, taking the bumps that the game dishes out and then going back for more, all of this while gaining a healthy competitive attitude, and having fun playing the game they love.

Enjoy winning, learn from losing, love the game!

Mike Sementilli
Head Coach
WMHA U11B

JUNIOR

SPITFIRES