

# THE HOCKEY EDMONTON ADVANTAGE

*THE PROVEN PATH TO ELITE'S NEXT LEVEL*



HOCKEY EDMONTON GRADUATE, NOLAN STEWART | VICTORIA ROYALS (WHL)



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In the competitive landscape of minor hockey, Hockey Edmonton, through its four-member elite sanctioned Athletic Clubs—the Canadian Athletic Club (CAC), Knights of Columbus Athletic Club (KC), Maple Leaf Athletic Club (MLAC), and South Side Athletic Club (SSAC)—and the Junior Oilers U18 AAA program, stand as the **premier choices for AA and AAA players in Edmonton**. This document outlines the numerous advantages these sanctioned Athletic Clubs and programs offer to Edmonton resident players and their families. Building on Edmonton's rich minor hockey history, these programs consistently deliver comprehensive benefits to players and families alike. The following sections detail why **Hockey Edmonton's Athletic Clubs and the Junior Oilers U18 AAA program are the optimal program of choice for AAA and AA levels across U11 to U18 divisions**.



**HOCKEY EDMONTON GRADUATES: ZACH COUTU, MAX ALGAJER, GARRETT THOM  
TEAM CANADA BRONZE MEDALLISTS**





## ELITE STREAM HOCKEY PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

Hockey Edmonton's Elite Stream Hockey Program Framework provides a foundational guide for developing players and programs within the capital region's elite Athletic Clubs, specifically for AAA and AA levels across U11 to U18 divisions. **This framework prioritizes athlete needs, offering cutting-edge guidelines to enhance their physical, mental, technical, and life skills.** Athletic Clubs must implement high performance standards, engaging qualified professionals to deliver a comprehensive development model. Designed around [Hockey Canada's Four Pillars of Player Development](#), the framework aims to simulate CHL, U Sports, and NCAA programs, preparing athletes for success in both hockey and life.

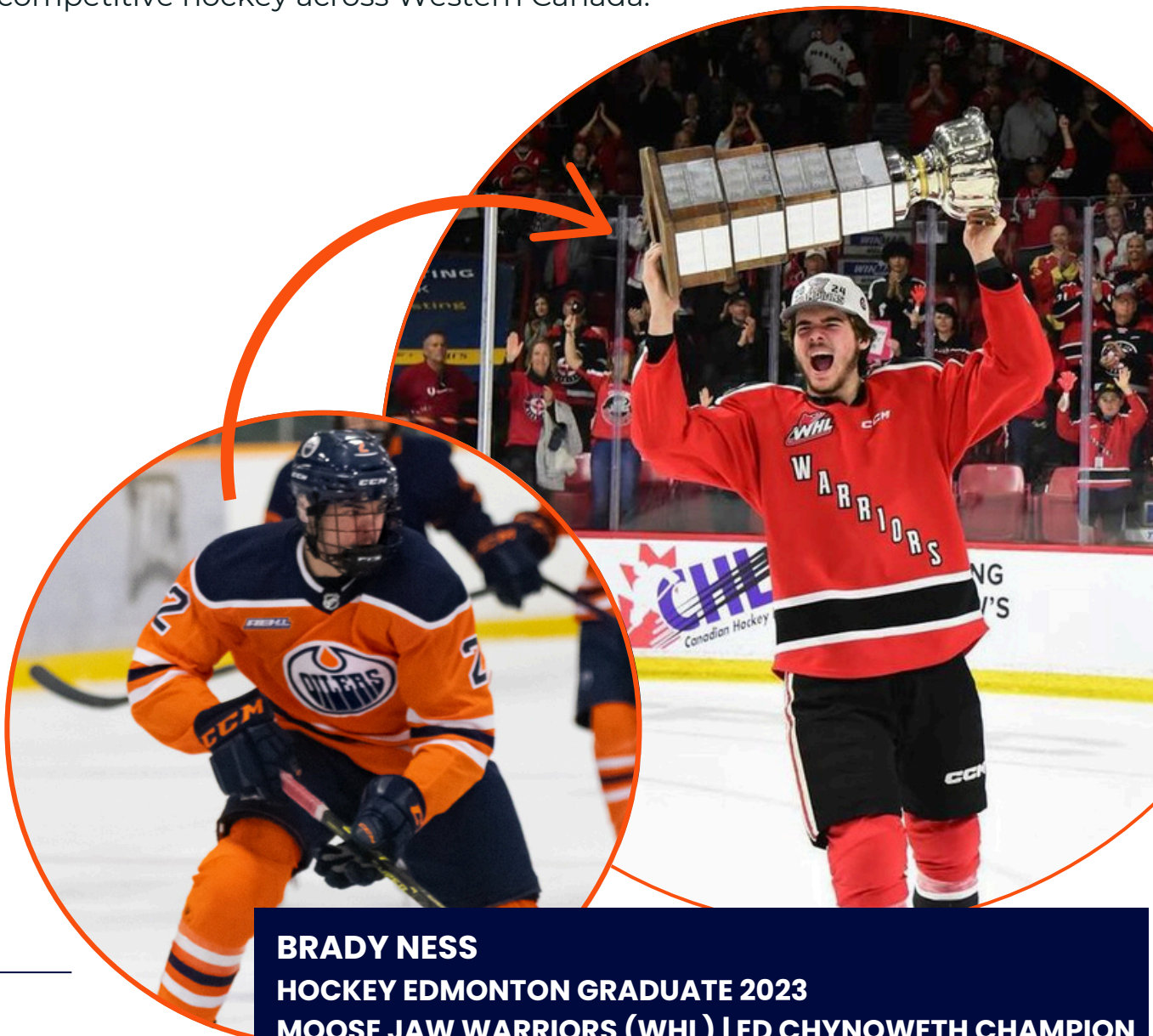


## ELITE HOCKEY WITHOUT THE ELITE PRICE TAG

Choosing to play hockey with an Athletic Club offers a significant financial advantage for aspiring hockey players. **Players gain access to top-tier competition and development while avoiding the integrated, high-cost school tuition often found in other leagues.** Playing in the local community with a Hockey Edmonton Athletic Club means a family can also save substantially by avoiding expensive billeting fees. It's the smart financial choice for a serious hockey career.

## THE NEXT LEVEL CONNECTION

The **AEHL is the recognized primary feeder league for the WHL and various Junior A leagues**, including the AJHL, BCHL, SJHL, and MJHL, offering the most direct route for players aspiring to these levels. With the added benefits of the new [Western Canadian Junior Hockey Pilot Project](#), the AEHL provides sanctioned athletes with more choices and flexibility for their development within the established minor hockey system, **enabling sanctioned minor hockey players to affiliate with WHL and Junior A** teams/programs. Choosing the AEHL means aligning with a proven pathway that prioritizes player advancement and offers strong connections to the next level of competitive hockey across Western Canada.



**BRADY NESS**

**HOCKEY EDMONTON GRADUATE 2023**

**MOOSE JAW WARRIORS (WHL) | ED CHYNOWETH CHAMPION**





## SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND FLEXIBLE EDUCATION CHOICES

Forge meaningful and lasting friendships with staff, coaches, and players right within the community. Become an integral part of an organization with a rich history, strong traditions, and deep community pride. As players advance through a minor hockey career, they'll have the unique opportunity to **play alongside familiar faces, including classmates and local peers, fostering a truly supportive and connected experience.** Playing with an Athletic Club also helps players attend the school of choice while still pursuing other hobbies, talents, and academic interests. Many players enhance their skills through daytime skill academies provided by some of Edmonton's top schools. These academy programs offer a substantial increase in dedicated development time (on-ice and off-ice) for each player and permit these players to earn academic credits for playing the sport they love.



**JOSH BANINI**  
**MOOSE JAW WARRIORS (WHL)**

## OPTIMIZED SCHEDULING

Athletic Club development, practice, and league game schedules **mirror those of higher-level leagues, ensuring a seamless transition for athletes** balancing academics. While not the primary focus, showcases and tournaments are thoughtfully integrated into the seasonal plans to provide diverse experiences. The use of series-based playoff formats prepares athletes for the rigorous demands of post-season play.

## SANCTIONED SHOWCASES AND PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL TEAM PATHWAYS

Choose an AEHL sanctioned program for **unparalleled development and exposure, offering direct pathways to higher levels of hockey**. Players benefit from exclusive access to divisional showcases, ensuring maximum visibility to scouts, and prime opportunities to participate in prestigious national and provincial programming like the Prospects Cup, Alberta Cup, Hockey Alberta U16 team (WHL Cup), and Hockey Canada U17/U18 teams. This comprehensive pathway provides the ultimate platform for aspiring athletes to elevate their game and achieve their hockey dreams.



**BEN HARVEY**  
**TEAM ALBERTA CAPTAIN, WHL CUP**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> OVERALL PICK 2024 WHL PROSPECTS DRAFT**

## PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY OF EDMONTON

Hockey Edmonton's formalized partnership with the City of Edmonton, primarily through annual license agreements, is crucial for securing and managing arena ice time, a process influenced by the Arena Users Advisory Committee. **This collaboration ensures Hockey Edmonton benefits from equitable access to facilities, often at reduced rates**, enabling them to effectively deliver comprehensive minor hockey programs to almost 10,000 players and support the overall development of hockey in the community.

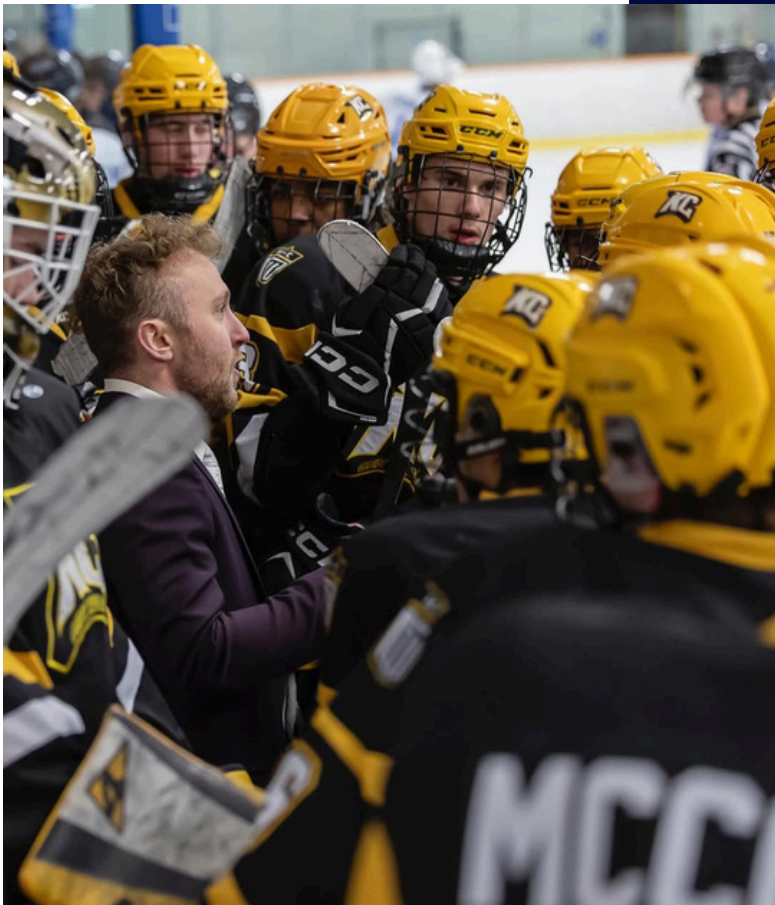
## PROVINCIAL & NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PATHWAYS

Choosing the AEHL **offers aspiring hockey players a clear pathway to compete for provincial championships across all levels**, from U11 AA to U18 AAA, providing structured development and challenging competition. Athletes develop their skills within a league designed to foster growth, culminating in exciting playoff series at each age division. Ultimately, success in the AEHL, particularly at the U18 AAA level, can lead to the unparalleled opportunity to contend for the prestigious national TELUS Cup, **showcasing talent on a national stage**.



## VOLUNTEER-POWERED SUPPORT

Hockey Edmonton's Athletic Clubs offer a distinct advantage through their foundation of dedicated volunteer staff. These individuals are **deeply committed to supporting the community and giving back to players**, ensuring seamless operations without the burden of large salaries.



## ADVANCED COACHING

Players benefit from advanced coaching delivered by highly qualified professionals. All AEHL coaches undergo rigorous background checks and training and certification programs from the Canadian Association of Coaches, Hockey Canada, and Hockey Alberta. This includes essential certifications like the NCCP High Performance 1 program for head coaches at AAA levels, **guaranteeing in-depth knowledge of player development, advanced strategy, and ethical coaching practices.** Many Athletic Club coaches also bring significant playing or coaching experience from higher levels, **providing invaluable mentorship.**



## THE SANCTIONED HOCKEY ADVANTAGE

Sanctioned hockey provides specific benefits including **comprehensive insurance coverage, standardized rules for player safety, certified coaches and officials with background checks, clear pathways for player promotion/affiliation to higher levels, and formal processes for addressing maltreatment and abuse.**

While non-sanctioned hockey might offer more flexibility or niche opportunities, it generally comes with a significant trade-off in terms of established safeguards, comprehensive insurance, and formalized development pathways.

## RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR PLAYERS

The AEHL supports its athletes through comprehensive resources including partnerships with FloHockey and Hudl/InStat Sport for **advanced video analysis and scout exposure, and a Scholarship Program that has awarded over \$500,000 to more than 300 U18 AAA players for post-secondary education.** Additionally, players receive Hockey Canada insurance coverage, benefit from a holistic development approach focusing on on-ice, mental, and physical skills, and are assured a safe environment with strict policies against maltreatment.





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