

Parent Communication

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ALL-STAR/SELECT SELECTION

(AKA – How do they select the All-Star/Select Team and why isn't my child on it?)

Other than team selection, there are very few things as controversial as the selection of an All-Star/Select team to represent a league. Why is that? Well in most cases, only 12 or 14 players are chosen to represent an entire league. At least half of the parents believe that their child belongs on the All-Star/Select team. Now, they may not believe that their child is an All-Star/Select, yet they know that their son or daughter is at least as good as one of the players selected to the team.

The following should be considered when selecting a player to the All-Star/Select team:

A player may be a strong pitcher but only the two or three best pitchers in the league pitch in All-Star/Select. Can the player who is strong as a pitcher hit or catch? If not, he/she probably will not be able to contribute to the All-Star/Select team.

A hitter that hits .400 but is slow or strikes out a lot may not be selected or may be passed over for a faster .300 hitter who seldom strikes out. In All-Star/Select games speed is essential. Often a player who puts the ball in play is preferred over a player who strikes out often.

Can he/she hit fast "All-Star/Select type" pitching or can he/she hit curveball pitching? The player might have a long looping swing and may be able to hit slower house league pitching but he/she is unlikely to hit the faster pitching he/she will see in the All-Star/Select tournaments.

In particular, areas which are considered are: Does he/she **get along** with other players? **Is he/she a leader on and off the field?** Does he/she **rally** the players on his team when they are losing? Does he/she make **other players around him play better** because of his/her play? If he/she has played infield all season can he/she, or is he/she willing, to play in the outfield **for the sake of the team?** Will he/she **bunt** to advance a runner? These factors are often missed from the spectator stands, yet are factors of which team Managers are extremely aware.

Another part of the controversy is that it seems that the managers' or coaches' kids always seem to be selected. That perception is probably true. The managers are the ones that select the All-Star/Select teams so they probably just vote for each other's kids - right? The league frowns on any conspiracy among managers to "fix" the All-Star/Select selection. It is probably true that some managers vote for other manager's kids because they know the other manager. Quite often, just the opposite probably happens, too. On-the-field rivalries can cause bias against another manager's child. The league tries to see that neither of these scenarios occurs but that the best players are chosen regardless of who their parents are. Additionally, whether it is cause or affect, some of the best players are usually sons or daughters of managers and coaches. This could be due to the managers and coaches putting in more time with their own children or they got into coaching because they saw some ability in their child. It is a criticism that we are aware of, yet an end result which we feel in most cases has justification.

Usually the Manager uses their last few votes to choose players who may not have had the best statistics or power or pitching ability but rather were good TEAM players who hustled and had good attitudes. A team of All-Star/Selects is not easy to coach and a couple of kids who hustle and have good team spirit can be instrumental in having fun during those long hot July practices and in winning tournament games.

It is important that all of our parents understand the focus of the process is to field a roster of 12-14 players who it is felt will result with the best team effort. If your son/daughter is successful in being chosen to represent OLL at the All-Star/Select level, please understand that they will be given equal opportunity to develop their skills. However, during the season, players will be put into positions that best suit their skills. This may not be a player's favorite, or even a glamorous position, but it will be the one best suited to the player and to the needs and requirements of the team.

Please remember that we are trying to field the most competitive team we can to represent all the players of Oakville Little League. It is not an easy process.