

2023 Whitecaps T-Ball Information Session

What is the Whitecaps Program?

The Whitecaps Program is a Select program that provides an opportunity to play at a higher, more competitive level and to benefit from additional field time/rep, tournament experience and more advanced development programs. The Whitecaps mission is to maintain a comprehensive, sustainable competitive baseball program focused on player and personal development to represent our League and the Town of Oakville with distinction. The program teaches the value of teamwork, dedication, a positive attitude and hard work in producing results. Many players spend years in the program and develop strong friendships with their teammates and share fun experiences that last a lifetime.

How do I participate?

Only players registered in the OLL House League Program are eligible to play Whitecaps. Interested players participate in a series of evaluation sessions (“tryouts”) and successful candidates are selected for the various teams by the respective Managers, on-field evaluators and then final team rosters are approved by the OLL Selection Committee. The number of players on the team is decided by the Manager but a roster size of 14-15 is typical as we field 11 players in T-Ball.

The “Nitty-Gritty”

The Whitecaps program complements, but is separate from, our House League program and is funded separately. Each team will have a budget to cover tournament registration costs (\$400-\$500 per tournament), the cost of fields for practices (\$750), the Whitecaps program fee (\$350) and any incidentals the Manager includes (year-end team party, umpire costs for exhibition games etc.). The total cost is divided by the number of players to determine the individual assessment. Uniform costs are also separate – game uniform, practice uniform, helmet etc. – first time players having to purchase all mandatory items will spend ~\$300 for uniforms.

We field two T-Ball Whitecaps teams – an 8U (age 8 on Aug. 31) team for kids playing Rookieball this season and a 7U team for those playing House League T-Ball. The teams practice twice a week on Wednesdays and Sundays and players are also expected to attend their regular House Leagues games/practices. The 7U team will play 3 tournaments over the season and the 8U team will play 4, all within our Little League district boundaries. The Managers may also arrange some exhibition games with other leagues.

Whitecaps T-Ball is focused on fun, development and new experiences. It is meant to be an introduction to competitive baseball – always within a structure of good sportsmanship and good conduct. We establish and introduce the framework for what is expected from a commitment standpoint in later years as kids get older and move through the program, but T-Ball is focused on development and getting kids introduced to, and excited about, the program, not on over-burdening parents/players with heavy commitments. Managers at the T-Ball age are free to establish reasonable commitment expectations – for example, they may set a minimum threshold number of practices players are expected to attend, they may allow each player to miss one tournament a season, or schedule a week off mid-season etc. Managers are also free to accommodate special situations – vacations, family events etc. – provided the player’s commitment level and attendance remains reasonable. A player who will be away for half the summer, unable to attend a lot of practices etc. should not try out for Whitecaps – doing so is unfair to their teammates as they won’t be developing alongside and at the same pace and it denies another child the opportunity to participate and benefit from the extra experience.

Unlike House League, fair play/equal playing time is not a requirement for Whitecaps teams, though this also evolves as the players get older. At the T-Ball age, Managers will take a well-balanced approach that is typically very similar to an equal time/fair play model but may adjust in critical situations to do what is best for the team overall. We firmly believe that you can’t determine who the “best” future players are at this age, so the focus is on developing all the kids and exposing them to as many positions and different skills as possible. Being on the team this year is also no guarantee you’ll be on the team next year. Players must try-out and be selected for the team each year and no bias/favoritism is shown. Each year the Manager selects the roster that they feel will allow them to field the best team competitively and provide the best development opportunities to move forward – full stop.

Whitecaps T-Ball is meant to be the spark that lights a fire within those players that want to develop as a player, to compete and try hard to win, and to learn about teamwork, good sportsmanship and what it means to represent their League and their Town. We’ve had great success with our program and are proud of it. We’ve had many alumni comment about their years on the Whitecaps and how it was a key part of their childhood and their development as a person and as a player and we want all players that go through the program to look back and feel the same way.

7U Whitecaps

Manager: Rich Luren
Assistant Coach: John Mooney

Practices: Twice weekly on Wednesdays and Sundays. (HL practices are typically Saturdays, with games on Tues or Thurs)

Tournaments:

June 23-25: MYKE T-Ball Tournament in Dundas
July 21-23: T-Ball Tournament in Erindale
Aug 04-07: World T-Ball Tournament in Ancaster

8U Whitecaps

Manager: TBA
Assistant Coach: TBA

Practices: Twice weekly on Wednesdays and Sundays. (HL practices Saturdays or Sunday, games Tues or Thurs)

Tournaments:

June 23-25: MYKE T-Ball Tournament in Dundas
June 30-03: T-Ball Tournament in Stoney Creek
July 21-23: T-Ball Tournament in Erindale
Aug 04-07: World T-Ball Tournament in Ancaster