

## Ocee Park Select Softball Program 2008 Program Offering



**Program Description:** Ocee Park Athletic Association will again offer in various age groups a Select program in softball for the 2008 season. The inaugural 2007 Select program offering was both highly successful and popular. The Select program will be geared toward players looking for a more challenging softball experience but at the same time are not interested in the rigors or expense of a traditional travel team program. The Select program will offer an opportunity for players in a variety of age groups to be part of a highly competitive team that will practice together throughout the year and participate in several invitational tournaments both locally and throughout the state. Participants in the Select program will still participate in the Ocee Park recreational program but will be able to advance their skills and test themselves against other select and travel teams at the local and state level.

**Season:** for 2008, select teams will be chosen in January and the season will conclude in late October or early November. The Select softball program is a calendar year program and features an extended break during the summer to give priority to the Babe Ruth softball tournament teams which may include some players from the Select program. Participation in the Fall portion of the Select program is optional and players may be added to a Select team in an age group at the discretion of the team manager to ensure sufficient players for the Fall.

**Select Program Teams:** 1 team will be offered in the 8U division, 1 team in the 10U division, 2 teams in the 12U division and currently plans for a 16U team are in place. In the 12U division, which is our largest and most popular age group, we will field Orange and Black teams and the Black team will have a minimum quota of league age 11-year old players in an effort to provide a Select program offering for those players.

**2008 Tryouts:** TBD, Ocee Park (details to be announced)

**Participation Fee:** there will be a standard participation fee required of each select team player. This fee is in addition to the fee assessed for the Ocee Park recreational program. The participation fee is collected by OPAA to pay for uniforms, trophies, and miscellaneous expenses associated with each team. If a select team player is also chosen for one of the summer Babe Ruth tournament teams, an additional fee for participation on that team will be required. The participation fee for 2008 has not yet been determined by the Board of Directors but will be set prior to the Select program tryouts.

This fee would not include entry fees or travel expenses for the team to participate in any tournament. General funds collected for the OPAA

recreation program will not be used to fund the select teams. As a result, participants on the select teams will be required to contribute or raise the funds necessary for all select team specific functions.

**Select Program Age Determination:** 12/31/2007 (the same date used for the recreational program)

**Playing Up/Down:** players are restricted to their own age group based on their league age as determined using the above date. Players will not be permitted to play down or up in age group. The only exception to this rule is that 10U candidates expected to play in the Majors division recreation program for the upcoming spring season may be considered for the 12U team(s) by manager invitation only.

**Team Composition:** each team will consist of 11 to 14 players. Any player that withdraws from a team or is removed from a team may at the discretion of the team manager be replaced.

**Manager/Coach Selection Process:** the managers and coaches for all select teams will be nominated by the Select Softball Program Coordinator and the Vice President of Softball Operations based on a variety of criteria. Board of Director (or appropriate Subcommittee) approval for each nomination is required. Each team will have 1 manager and 2 coaches. The following is a list of some of the primary criteria that will be used for manager and coach selection:

- Previous managerial or coaching experience
- Feedback from prior seasons in recreation program and All Stars
- Certification and/or participation in coaching clinics
- Assessment scores for their daughter (previous seasons)
- Assessment scores from select tryouts (for coaches only)

Managers and coaches must have been a manager or coach at Ocee Park during the previous summer or fall seasons. Managers and coaches will be required to have current volunteer applications on file and will be subjected to and must pass a background check. Further, all managers and coaches will be expected to be certified under the Babe Ruth ASEP Coach Certification Program. If a manager or coach has received certification under a comparable program, at the recommendation of the Select Program Coordinator, that coach will be considered certified. All select team managers will be identified prior to the tryouts. Coaches may be selected prior to tryouts but in some cases the selection of coaches will not be done until the completion of the tryout process. Interested select team manager and coach candidates should contact via email Rob Latzsch, the Select Program Coordinator for softball, at [selectsoftballcoordinator@oceepark.com](mailto:selectsoftballcoordinator@oceepark.com).

**Team Selection Process:** teams will be selected following one or more extensive player assessment sessions. Players will be assessed based on

infield and outfield fundamentals such as arm strength, throwing range and accuracy, fly balls, ground balls, thrown balls, hitting fundamentals (bat speed, power, bunting, contact), and speed/base running skills. Additionally, players will be evaluated for pitching and catching.

**Eligible Participants:** to be eligible to tryout for a select team, a player must have registered for, participated in, and completed the prior spring season at Ocee Park as a member of a team in the recreational program. Any player that did not complete the previous spring season (unless withdrawn due to injury) will not be eligible under any circumstance. Players that are chosen for a select team must continue to play in the spring as part of the recreational program (see detailed requirements). Players must also meet the age requirement for a select team based on their league age for the season in which they will play. The league age for the select team will be the same as the league age for the spring recreation program season. At the discretion of the Vice President of Softball Operations, a player new to the Spring 2008 program that has successfully registered (is not wait listed) may be permitted to assess for a spot on a Select team.

**Practices, Games, and Tournaments:** the select teams will conduct practices throughout the course of the year as determined by the team manager. Most practices will be on Sundays in an effort to minimize conflicts with the Ocee Park recreation team schedules. It is anticipated that each select team will participate in a minimum of 2-3 tournaments during the Spring season (February – June time frame). The recreational program schedule has priority over Select program games and tournaments but all efforts will be made to accommodate Select tournament participation even during the regular season. In 2007, Ocee Park hosted an invitational tournament in the 8U, 10U, and 12U age groups and would like to do so again in 2008.

**Requirements for Participation:** participation on a select team is an honor and a privilege and is not an entitlement. Select team players that do not adhere to the requirements may be removed from the team at the discretion of the team manager, the Select Softball Program Coordinator, or the Board of Directors. Once a team is selected, the team manager has full authority over the players on that team but all select teams remain under the oversight of the Select Softball Program Coordinator and the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of OPAA has the ultimate authority over each select team player, manager, and coach and will be the final determining body for any issue pertaining to a select team member. Players removed from a select team for cause will not be entitled to a refund. Each player, once selected to a team, will be required to execute a Letter of Commitment for their team. The letter will detail the expectations and requirements for the player as well as a code of conduct the player and parents are expected to follow. The specific requirements for a player to be eligible and to remain eligible for participation on a select include but are not limited to the following:

- The player must have participated as part of the recreation program in the prior spring season at Ocee Park in order to attend tryouts
- The player must register for and participate as part of the recreation program for the current season in which the player participates on a select team. Any player withdrawing from the spring recreation program will be immediately dismissed from the select program
- A select team player is required to attend a minimum of 80% of all of their recreation team practices and games
- All financial obligations incurred by a select program player must be paid in a timely manner
- Select team players are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times since they are representatives of our program. Failure to maintain the high standards expected by the Select Program Coordinator and the Board of Directors will be grounds for immediate dismissal
- Select team managers may impose other requirements on select team players that will be addressed in the letter of commitment

**Relationship to In-Park All Stars:** the select program participants are fully eligible to be selected to their In-Park All Star teams at the conclusion of the regular season for the recreational program. Being a member of a select team does not increase nor decrease the likelihood of selection to the In-Park All Star team.

**Relationship to Babe Ruth Softball Tournament Teams:** the select program participants are fully eligible for selection to the summer Babe Ruth and Cal Ripken tournament teams to represent Ocee Park in district, state, and regional competition. Note that select team players are required to participate in at least 80% of their recreation program team practices and games which exceeds the Babe Ruth minimum of 50% for tournament team eligibility. Being a member of a select team does not increase nor decrease the likelihood of selection to a tournament team. Select team players are not guaranteed a spot on any tournament team nor are any of the Select team managers or coaches given preference during the selection process for tournament team managers/coaches.

More Information: email [selectsoftballcoordinator@oceepark.com](mailto:selectsoftballcoordinator@oceepark.com)