

West Hill Softball

Annual Association Meeting
October 25, 2023



Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- President's Report: 2023 Year in Review
- Coach of the Year Award
- Volunteer of the Year Award
- Coordinator & Treasurer Reports
- New Business
 - New West Hill Administrative Coordinator (WHAC)
 - Volunteer Recruitment
 - New Expenditures
 - CMSA & WHS 2024 Planning Updates
- Open Floor / Q&A
- Adjournment

WHS 2023 Board Members



Brian Antaya

President, Communications
U15 & U19 Coach

**Reducing role*

✉ director@westhillsoftball.ca



Jennifer Kirby

Vice President & Secretary
Alumni Team Coach

**Retiring*

✉ vp@westhillsoftball.ca



Rory Brownell

Treasurer
U15 Coach

✉ treasurer@westhillsoftball.ca



Rachel Sawyer

Registrar
U15 Coach

**Retiring*

✉ registration@westhillsoftball.ca



Shireen Bond

Conflict Resolution Coordinator
U15 Coach

✉ appeals@westhillsoftball.ca



Craig McDowell

Equipment/Lockbox Coordinator
U17 Coach

**Retiring*

✉ equipment@westhillsoftball.ca



Nicole Genereux

Fields & Gym Coordinator

✉ fields@westhillsoftball.ca



Kevin Church

Timbits Program Coordinator
U13 Coach

✉ timbits@westhillsoftball.ca

2023 Year in Review

President's Report



2023 Year In review - West Hill Registrations held steady

401

Players

36

Teams

75%

6 Year Growth



103

Coach Volunteers

2023 Year in Review - Categories



Age Category	Total Players (401)	Teams (36)	Division Levels	Provincial Teams
High School (U17/U19)	64 (+25)	5 (+2)	1 Div.1 2 Div.2 (+1) 2 Div.3 (+1)	u17C - McKenna u19C - Keller (cancelled)
U15	87 (+9)	7 (+1)	1 Div.1 3 Div.2 3 Div.3 (+1)	u15B - Antaya
U13	89 (-)	7 (-)	1 Div.1 3 Div.2 (+1) 3 Div.3 (-1)	u13B - Scott* u13B - Church*
U11	71 (-27)	6 (-2)	1 Div.1 (-1) 2 Div.2 3 Div.3 (-1)	u11 - Leier u11 - Ghazar
U9	54 (-7)	6 (-1)	2 Senior 4 Junior	n/a
U7 Timbits	36 (-4)	5 (-)	No levels	n/a



* Lost in Qualifier

2023 Year In Review - Training Programs



LAST SEASON

- **Winter Clinics** (Oct '22 - Jan '23 - 117 reg.)
 - Junior Clinics w/ SAIT; Junior Pitching w/ Meghan A.
 - Selects Camps (u13, u15, HS)
 - Pitching/Catching w/ Lance & Chris
- **Rustbusters** (2 weekends in Jan, 1 in February - 148 reg.)
- **Try Softball Intros** (Jan. 22, Feb. 19 - 83 reg.)
- **Preseason Clinics - Skills, Pitching** (March - 61 reg.)
- **Pitching Clinic Series** w/ Lance (April - 36 reg.)
- **Coach Skills Clinic** (Apr), **Parent Umpire Clinic** (Apr)
- **Friday Night Clinics** w/ U of C players (May-June)

THIS OFF-SEASON

- **Fall Outdoor Programs** (Sep '23)
 - Selects Sundays (u11, u13, u15, HS) - 90 reg.
 - Division 1 ID Camps (u11, u13, u15, HS) - 83 reg.
- **Winter Clinics** (Oct-Dec '23 - 104 reg.)
 - Junior Camps w/ SAIT (new partnership) - 22 reg.
 - Selects Camps (u15 & HS) - 36 reg. (HS full)
 - Senior Pitching w/ Lance Block - 24 reg. (full)
 - Junior Pitching w/ Maddie Belden - 22 reg. (full)



Some learnings / feedback:

- Tough sell for younger age groups in Oct-Dec
- **Might need a break after Fall programs**
- Consider a single weekend camp (or during school breaks)
- Pitching clinics sometimes need more dedicated instruction vs. just repetitions
- Friday night in-season clinics were tough to sustain attendance
- Coach Skills clinic was good, but need more sessions throughout year
- Softball Intros were well received with the community, and effective for registrations

Opportunity for training questions/feedback in Q&A

2023 Year In Review - Season Event Highlights



WHS Tournament ([Recap](#))

- Biggest tournament yet! Expanded to 40 teams, 425 players, across 8 Divisions
- Added a U9 Senior Gold Challenge!
- Estimated \$6-8k net revenue to our organization
- Huge thank you to our Volunteer Planning Committee:
Brian/Cathy Antaya, Sandy Blair, Marnie Doig, Amanda Giffen, Andrea Whiteley, Nadine Griffith, Lisa Dornan, Ward Conacher, Cherie Peterson, Jennifer Reti
- Huge thank you to our best-in-class Grounds Crew, led by:
Craig McDowell, Mike Semenzin, Steve Downing, Mike Forbes
- Arguably the best tournament in Calgary!



Photo Night

- April 21, 2023 at Strathcona Community Centre
- Had to move dates twice (conflicts w/ other sports weekends & new CMSA opening weekend Friday games)

Division 1 ID Camps

- Indoors in January - helpful but limited
- Moved outdoor in September (aligned with other clubs across Calgary)

- **Junior Coach Program (formerly Mentor Program)**

- 26 players signed up, assigned to 20 teams
- Significantly improved dynamic having player(s) stay with the same team
- Great connections made, less administration work
- Thank you Jen Semenzin for the idea on how to run it this season!

- **New Skill Shark Evaluation Software**

- Learning curve and some bugs to work through, but overall very positive feedback (evaluators)
- Saved time (no more entering data & managing in spreadsheet)
- Proved difficult to use during outdoor ID camps
- Coach player evaluations still done old methodology

- **Porta-Potties**

- New supplier (Rhino) was a huge improvement over previous season
- Still issues with missing locks
- Kudos and thank you to Rob & Laura Mah for their support this season!

- **Timbits Opening Day**

- Huge positive to start the season as an entire group - set teams off on the right foot
- Great support by multiple experienced & Junior coaches to lead skill development



Survey Results Highlights



Good Results, but down 0.1 to 0.2 pts

55

Responses

9.1

Recommend

8.6

Value for Money

8.8

Likely to Return



Survey Winners:

(\$50)

Rachel Gill

Holly Monster

Season End Dates

- Div 3 families were happy with end of June
- Div 2 families like the early July completion
- Div 1 split (50% prefer earlier July completion)

House league vs. CMSA (at u9/u11 levels)

- A shift of respondents prefer to play in a WHS-only league (65%)

Offseason Programs

- No overwhelming preferences for day of week & time of day
- Pitching is preference (less for catching)
- Prefer split between Competitive & Junior; and multi-week sessions
- Fall programs - if couldn't participate, it was more due to scheduling conflicts

CMSA Feedback

- Positive towards schedule, game times
- Dislike field locations / distance

Optimal #:

- Everyone prefers 2 games per week
- u11 & u13 prefer increase to 2 practices/wk (u9 & u15/HS prefer 1)
- u13+ prefers at least 1 out-of-town tournament per year
- u9/u11 prefer 1 In-town tournament; u13+ prefer 1 to 2 in-town tournaments

Others:

- Very positive response for the amount of **communications** by WHS
- Overwhelming majority approval to keep **Porta-Potties**
- Significant vote of approval for our **new logo**

2023 Year In Review - Challenges



● Evaluation Process

- New documentation was created in 2023 for WHS evaluation policies (on website)
- Perceived biases felt in some age categories, concerns on how and who makes decisions
- Inexperience in our evaluator volunteers
- However, 88% felt results were accurate (and 75% rated evals 8+ out of 10).

● Gaps with many Coach Skill levels

- Start of year orientation (virtual) & fundamental skills training (in person) is limited
- Limited centralized training at Calgary Minor Softball level
- WHS Resources a work in progress; coaches not committed enough to spend time reviewing

● Coach Volunteers

- West Hill coaches at more than one age category had disagreements with other WHS teams
- Availability gap at some levels (Div 3)

● Team Formation / Division 2A Level Teams

- West Hill unsuccessful at pushing CMSA for tiered Division 2 groupings to align skills
- U13 Skillset is not varied enough to split this group
- HS Division splits / skill range at lower level

● Umpires

- Not enough coverage by CMSUA umpires (limited coverage outside HS & U15 Div 1)
- Recruiting new umpires has proven difficulty; shortage could be more problematic in 2024

● Coach/Player Recruiting

- 8 players from WHS transitioned to Adrenaline u11 level; Softball AB loose on rules
- This fall, 6 players from the same team were recruited by Adrenaline u17



Initial Plans

- Continued refinement of our eval policies
- Evaluators from other age groups
- Attempt to increase evaluator skill knowledge
- Calgary Minor centralized coach training
- Host Community Softball course in spring
- Coach Resource Committee
- Look for better fit amongst co-coaches
- More active coach support by age category
- Scrap the in-division levels (unless CMSA adds 4th level)
- Support CMSUA recruiting plans
- Push more WHS teams to play at higher Div level
- Explore strategic alliances

Our Recommendations for Calgary Minor Softball in 2024



1. **Season Length for Division 1**

- Recommend reduction to mid-July
- Shorten playoffs - complete all in one week

2. **Reduction in the number of games / more practices**

- For u9/u13: 1 bye night every two weeks;
- less games on Opening weekend for Div 3

3. **Division Structures & Realignments during year**

- Larger groupings to start year (u11+)
- Redo division alignments on May long weekend
- Consultation with districts & coaches for changes

4. **Modified Division 3 rules for u11/u13**

- Promote more game play (vs. walks)

5. **Remove Open Inning for Division 1**

- 7 run max for all Div 1 & 2 (align with Softball AB rules)

6. **Rethink Division 1 All-star Game**

- Current format does not have value (1 hour game in September)

Recommendations
same as 2023;
will continue to push
with Calgary Minor



Volunteer Bond Summary



- Collected bonds at team level for first time in 2023
- \$150 Volunteer Bond + \$50 Jersey Bond
- 32 families opted out (highest at u13 & u15 levels)
- Overall success, increased participation at league events
- **Thank you to: Misty Johnson, Tara Barker, Jocelyn Lalonde, Kathy Davies Murphy, and all Team Mgrs!**



PAINS:

Work hours to track all participation
Some teams left short-handed (multiple opted out)
Confusion with team vs. association level credits and
multi-level requirement tracking
Reliance on Team Manager to be the gatekeeper,
dealing with non-payments

SOME IDEAS FOR 2024:

- * Increase Bond Fee (e.g. \$300)
- * Collect Bond Fees at Evaluations (remove from Team Manager responsibility)
- * Remove team component (all parents assigned roles at team level)

YOUR THOUGHTS?

2023 AWARDS

Coach of the Year
Volunteer of the Year



COACH OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS



- **Andrew Morton - U15 Division 3 Coach**

First year with WHS as he moved from Okotoks. Andrew stepped in right away helping with our evaluations and then took a rag-tag group of girls from multiple organizations to play together under the West Hill umbrella.

"Our coaches were excellent and were so engaging. This was our daughter's first year in the sport and the coaches were one of the main reasons she has decided to continue." "Created a wonderful environment for all the girls on the team. Really looked forward to each game/practice which then made all the girls excited."

- **Chad Leier - U11 Div 1 and U9 Senior Coach**

With the drain of our U11 Division 1 players leaving the organization, it was a difficult year for Chad's team for wins/losses. However Chad kept things fun!

"Coaching staff struck just the right balance between competition and having fun. They were also able to keep positive attitudes around the team despite the persistent losing. The team showed a lot of improvement between the start of the season and the end."

- **Gena Bratz - WHS alumnus U13 Div 1 Assistant Coach and first year coach**

A former West Hill player, and daughter of former Coach of the Year (Al Bratz), Gena showed that coaching runs in the family. Brought in to help coach and mentor our U13 Division 1 team, she was a significant positive presence for the team!

- **Paul Ghazar - U11 Div 2 Coach**

A previous winner with his older daughter, Paul returned in 2023 to coach his younger daughter with success!

"He was engaged and positive and really helped the girls bond and have fun." "Very Positive guy. Great with kids"

AND THE WINNER IS



ANDREW MORTON
“Morty”

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS



- **Marnie Doig - Assistant Registrar and Team Manager**

At the organization level, Marnie was instrumental in reducing the burden on our Registrar duties. She has stepped up to help us through various busy times this year, dealing with roster submissions, refunds, and registration interactions, which was always done with a positive vibe!

"She was an amazing team manager, nobody can top this superstar! She also does so much for the association. A true rock star!"

"Amazing team manager! Always there and so enthusiastic!" "Marnie was the backbone of the team"

- **Sandy Blair - Tournament Coordinator and Team Manager**

When it comes to organizing events, Sandy is an expert! She was a saviour for ensuring we put on our best ever tournament in 2023. She took over much of the final stages of planning, setting up, and running the information tent over the weekend. All while being a stellar Team Manager for our u15 Div 2 team! We could not have done it without her - thank you!

"Our fantastic manager, ran team game changer app ... and made our season run so smoothly, the best!"

- **Sean McLeod - Assistant Coach and "Equipment Manager" for WHS Clinics**

A special nomination from the WH Board, Sean has been integral through our offseason programs in the past year. He is always willing to step up and get equipment from one place to the next for our younger age groups. He is always willing to help ... Thank you!

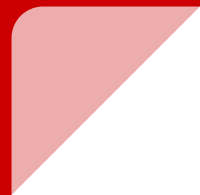
AND THE WINNER IS



MARNIE DOIG

COORDINATOR REPORTS

WHS Board Members





- **Registrar (Rachel Sawyer, Marnie Doig, Nadine Griffith)**
 - We continue to see increased registrations year over year.
 - A big thank-you to Marnie Doig for stepping in to help with registration questions and team roster submissions!
 - Team Snap continues to be an effective tool to manage registrations for regular season, clinics and the tourney.
- **Field & Gym Coordinator (Nicole Genereux)**
 - 200 home games played on WH diamonds this season with only one schedule conflict.
 - Continuing to request more fields from the City (positive conversation between city & CMSA).
 - Planning to make use of new Webber facility this winter
 - Balance using turf fields (Absolute, Coyote Den) and local school gyms to keep costs down.
- **Equipment Coordinator (Craig McDowell)**
 - All supply chain issues were resolved in 2023.
 - Second JUGS Lite Flite Pitching machine was purchased for indoor use and a second outdoor JUGS pitching machine (with battery charger) to be purchased before the Spring'24 season.
 - Most common items that got lost were fielding masks, indicators/brushes and home run cones.
 - Most common broken items were tees, line marker rods and hitting net bags.
 - Reminder that chalk is located in the yellow bin at Patterson and green bin at Glenbrook 3 (lots of confusion).

- **Jersey Coordinator (Cathy Antaya)**
 - Kept jerseys in “teams” after ‘23 season worked well last year.
 - Tried a number of jersey suppliers for 2023 unsuccessfully.
 - Exploring new jerseys with Play It Again Sports and purchase of new jerseys for 2024.
- **Conflict Resolution Coordinator (Shireen Bond)**
 - 2023 season was an overall improvement from the previous season in terms of number of complaints, however, we continue to have issues and concerns that arise, with the bulk coming in during or right after evaluations.
 - Concerns around the evaluation process, team formation and coach qualifications still remain the major themes.
 - Significant feedback and concern regarding the 2A Divisions in U15 and U13. Board will make necessary adjustments for upcoming season.
- **Volunteer Coordinator Update (Misty Johnson)**
 - Inaugural season thank you to Misty Johnson, Tara Barker (manager liaison) and Jocelyn Lalonde (credit tracking). Over 375 volunteer tasks that families signed up for.
 - 12 volunteer bond cheques retained. The season was generally a success, but Misty has put forth several recommendations for 2024 which will be discussed at the Board level.
- **Coach Resource Committee**
- **Treasurer (Rory Brownell):** See following pages

Treasurer's Report



	2022		2023		% Chg
Spring Season Registration Fees	\$105,902		\$117,428		11%
Clinic Fees	\$14,161		\$24,832		75%
Tournament Revenue	\$17,590		\$21,542		22%
Total Revenue	\$137,653		\$163,802		19%
CMSA Registration Fees	\$34,873	25%	\$35,587	26%	2%
Equipment & Field Costs	\$40,386	29%	\$40,901	29%	1%
Uniform Expenses	\$9,332	7%	\$6,975	5%	-25%
Season Expenses	\$12,426	9%	\$20,225	15%	63%
Rental Fees	\$25,211	18%	\$32,648	23%	29%
Tournament Expenses	\$12,285	9%	\$11,191	8%	-9%
Administration and Other Fees	\$4,912	4%	\$1,876	1%	-62%
Total Expenses	\$139,425		\$149,402		7%
Net (Loss)/Income - Change in Cash	-\$1,771		\$14,400		-
	2022		2023		
Cash on Hand - October 1	\$50,379		\$48,608		
Net Change in Cash Position	-\$1,771		\$14,400		-
Cash on Hand - September 30	\$48,608		\$63,008		30%

Cost Differences from 2022:

Decrease

- - \$3500 Equipment Fees
'22 had over-purchases used in '23
- - \$3700 Jersey fees
Purchased delayed to '24
- - \$1650 One time TeamSnap & Logo Design fees

Increases

- + \$5000 Honorarium
Added start of year
- + \$4000 Diamond Fees
City raised fees 40% w/ limited warning
- + \$2000 Provincials / Coach Fees
Covered more coach course fees in '23
- +\$9000 Gym Rentals
Increased usage for Clinics, ID Camps, and Evaluations

NEW BUSINESS

WHS Administrative Coordinator (new posting)

Volunteer Recruitment

New Expenditures

CMSA 2024 Planning Updates

WHS 2024 Planning Updates



NEW West Hill Administrative Coordinator (WHAC!)



- **What:** Paid role with an hourly rate open to anyone; varying from 5-20 hours per week (peak periods being Jan-May)
- **Potential Cost impact:** \$15-20K (9-12% of our total annual revenue)
- **Comparable:** SBR also has a paid position (emulated from this one)
- **Benefits:** Ease strain on volunteer roles (President, Registrar, etc.); provide more timely responses to members; increase ability to recruit new volunteers, etc.
- **Responsibilities:**
 - **Registration activities**
(set-up forms, answer questions, roster creations, data entry, apply fees and refunds to participants, tournament registrations, etc.)
 - **Communications**
(emails to participants, website updates, social media, for all WHS events, preseason meeting invites, google surveys, etc.)
 - **Offseason Clinic & Spring Evaluation support**
(general logistics, create volunteer sign-up forms, etc.)
 - **Board Activities**
(prepare agenda, calendar invites, and secretary role at board meetings once a month & AGM, maintain action register)
 - **Field & Gym Coordination**
(secure diamond and indoor gym bookings with city / facilities, coordinate field schedules with Calgary Minor, ensure permits are available)
 - **Other administrative tasks** as assigned
- Full details of the position requirements will be posted on our website shortly. Interviews expected in November.

What does everyone think - Approve? Disapprove? Questions?

Many hands make light work.
We need you!

Current Reality:

All Board members have players in u15 and above (including 2 whose players are now in university). Board will see significant turnover in the next year.

Many hands make light work. We need you!



ROLES AVAILABLE:

- Registrar (Nadine Griffith?)
- Equipment Manager (Ryan Jorden)
- Website Coordinator (Vadim Kazakov)
- Volunteer Bond Coordinator
- Jersey Coordinator
- Evaluation Coordinators / Admin
- Age Category Season Coordinators
- Tournament & Event Coordinators



BOARD SUCCESSORS REQUIRED:

- WHS President
- Vice President
- Field & Gym Coordinator *
- Conflict Resolution Coordinator *
- Offseason Program Coordinator *

** These roles (plus those on left) can be reconsidered whether included within Board.*

<https://www.westhillsoftball.ca/about-us/league-volunteers/>

**WHS has accumulated additional funds in the past year.
Some programs in consideration for 2023/24:**

- Administration Role (Salary)
- Jersey Replacements
- JUGS Pitching Machine(s)
- Additional Field Rentals (Storage boxes)
- ? Other Ideas ?



Question for ALL: What do you think we should spend in 2024?



- Limited information from Calgary Minor to date
(October Board meeting cancelled, September Softball AB Zone meeting cancelled)
- **Schedule** has been [posted](#) for 2024. CMSA has kept the Tiered Division scheduling (e.g. staggered end dates)
- **AGM** scheduled for March 12, 2024
- **All-Star Game** - will be reimagined in 2024 (did not work well in '23)
- Removed "If Necessary" final game from playoff format
- Seeking Volunteer **Category Chairs** at Calgary Minor level
- **Police Check Process** is changing (CPS has changed system process)
- **Coach Training Programs** being developed (led by Kyle Osterman)
(recognize that it is our biggest gap right now .. well second to lack of umpires)



- Offseason programs
 - Initial programs Oct-Dec (Pitch clinic Nov-Feb)
 - Rustbusters will occur in January (Registration in December)
 - Evaluation period (Feb-Mar)
- Annual Association Meeting & Coach / Volunteer Appreciation: October 25
- WHS Board Meetings monthly (Nov 20 & Dec 18; 2024 dates TBD)
- Budget & Season fees developed by mid-December; New expenditures under review
- Spring registrations open by first week of January
- New jerseys underway with PIAS with hopes for sample team created & larger order early '24

Speak up!
Share your thoughts and questions for the Board

- 1. Your Ideas for 2024?**
- 2. Questions?**

Ideas for the Board/Discussion



- Encourage more female coaches
- More WHS banners for teams
- Consider Coach Haley Acton from U of C for our pitching clinics (Morty)
- Porta Potty on both fields for Glenbrook?
- Porta Potty placement at Signal Hill
- Accessible Sea-Can / storage box for our pitching machines and other shared league equipment
- Evaluations - have skill-based training sessions, and evaluate through learning drills (include instruction at the same time and gauge coachability of players)
- Request experienced coaches at WHS to commit to evaluations for a specific age group and not in the age group they are coaching to remove potential biases. Additional transparency with player placements and evaluations
- Mandate the use of masks in the outfield (in addition to infield)
- Provide more volunteer opportunities at the association level during the season
- Link volunteer bond with umpiring (there will be another shortage of umpires next season)

Thank you!

Contact us:

West Hill Softball

info@westhillsoftball.ca

www.westhillsoftball.ca

