

WINNETKA HOCKEY CLUB



TRAVEL PROGRAM

2025 – 2026



ABOUT



The Winnetka Hockey Club Travel program is designed for the child and family that desires a more competitive experience and greater level of commitment. The goal is to provide all skilled players with an opportunity to develop their skills and compete while receiving high level coaching and instruction.

OUR MISSION

The Winnetka Hockey Club develops outstanding young people and players tied to their community through hockey.

OUR VALUES

Community, Family, Fun, Competitiveness and Sportsmanship

OUR VISION

By providing exceptional membership value, WHC is the club of choice for families from the local community, where players come to learn life and hockey skills, and build lasting friendships through involvement in the sport.

CHARACTERISTICS

Our goal is to create consistent player character traits across our program; traits represented in our "Green Line." Practices and skills sessions will be designed to strengthen these competencies, games will be used to reinforce them, and players will be assessed based on them. When we do this, kids will develop into better hockey players and teammates and enjoy the game.

1. SKATING

- **Strong Skaters:** stride, edges, balance, and transitions. Includes goaltenders.
- **Heads up hockey** players with and without the puck with heads up to see/read the play.

2. DECISION MAKING

- **Read and React** according to information presented during play. Be Creative!
- **Value Puck Possession:** Keep it when you have it and get it when you don't.

3. COMPETE LEVEL

- **Win races** to the puck & **battles** for the puck.
- **Never give up.**

4. TEAM PLAYERS

- Positive **attitude** and **supportive** teammate. **Trust** our teammates and **play as a team.**
- Value an assist, a backcheck, a save and a blocked shot as much as a goal.
- **Coachable** players who want to improve.





PROGRAM

LEAGUE PARTICIPATION

We plan to field 17 travel hockey teams this fall season that will compete in the following leagues:



CHICAGO UNITED HOCKEY LEAGUE (AAU)

www.chicagounitedhockey.com

- Mite 1, Mite 2, Mite 3, Mite 4, and Mite 5



CENTRAL STATES DEVELOPMENTAL HOCKEY LEAGUE (USA HOCKEY)

www.csdhl.org

- Squirt Major (2015), Squirt Minor (2016), Squirt 1, Squirt 2, and Squirt 3
- Pee Wee Major team (2013), Pee Wee Minor team, Pee Wee 1, and Pee Wee 2
- Bantam 1, Bantam 2, and Bantam 3

PRACTICES & GAMES

All practices and home games are held at Winnetka Ice Arena, North Shore Ice Arena (Northbrook, IL) or Watts Ice Center (Glencoe, IL, weather permitting).

Locations vary for away games and will depend on what division/league teams are playing in.

Teams will have 2-3 skates per week, including a 3x per month skills clinic and two weekly team practices. Times vary by team and schedules will be released once team rosters are set.

Our teams typically play 40-50 games. Each team will participate in at least one local tournament over Thanksgiving and one out-of-town tournament.



TRYOUTS



The Warriors hold tryouts at each age division (Mite, Squirt, Pee Wee, and Bantam) for each of our Central States Development Hockey League (CSDHL) and Chicago United Hockey League (CUHL) teams. Players for each team are selected based on the assessments of the Hockey Director, Jimmy Warrick and Assistant Hockey Director Charlie Widmar with direct input from level coaches. They determine both the player's ability and the players "fit" for a particular role on the team being selected.

USA HOCKEY/AAU REGISTRATION

Before you register for WHC tryouts, you must complete your player's 2025–2026 USA Hockey Registration (for Squirts, Pee Wees, Bantams) or AAU Hockey Registration (for Mites).

1. Go to <https://membership.usahockey.com/> or <https://www.aauicehockey.org/> (note AAU registration does not open until August 15th)
2. Click through to register and pay the fees.
3. Use the USA Hockey Registration Number or the AAU Registration Number when you register online for tryouts with the Winnetka Warriors.
4. All Mite should register for AAU beginning 8/15. Email player's AAU number to Charlie Widmar at cwid57@gmail.com by 8/25 (Day 1 tryouts)

KEY DATES

AUGUST 16–21

Pre-Tryout
Clinics (4)

AUGUST 22–27

Tryout schedules will include multiple sessions. The exact number may vary by age level, team needs, and coaching evaluations.

STRUCTURE

Pre-Tryout Clinics: Pre-Tryout Clinics will be offered in the days leading up to tryouts. These sessions are intended to help players warm up and get conditioned. They are not used for evaluation or player assessment.

DAILY STRUCTURE PER LEVEL

Two (2) 60 min split sessions

- Warmup & Drills
- Structured Full Ice 5v5

Day 1

Session 1: Birth Year Skills/Scrimmage
Session 2: Birth Year Skills/Scrimmage

Day 2

Session 1: Birth Year Scrimmage
Session 2: Birth Year Scrimmage

Day 3

Session 1: Green Group
Session 2: Gold Group/CS

- Day 1 and 2 will be segmented by birth year.
- The remaining tryout days will be divided up by ability into Green/Gold or specific Central States Team callbacks.
- Players may switch between groups throughout tryouts at the coaches' discretion. This provides an opportunity to best evaluate bubble players.
- Squirts may require 2 days of birth year tryouts before breaking into gold/green groups.



DEVELOPMENT

PLAYERS DEVELOP BEST IN PRACTICE: 2-3 SKATES A WEEK

Development Approach: Skill of the Week

Monday sessions will introduce a new skill or build upon existing skill. The physical execution of a skill is often less important than the decision of when and how to use that skill in a game situation, so team practices will often incorporate the skill of the week. A key focus will be on skating skills and game situation drills. Players can expect high temp practices with players constantly moving.

Our professional coaches are committed to developing each player's individual skills and hockey sense, while incorporating team concepts to ensure collective success on the ice.

Weekly Rhythm Sample

Skills Session:

- Players will have weekly skills sessions (3 sessions per month) working on in game situations.
- Building confidence in each player is the club's goal.
- Focus on high-speed skills where decisions have to be made quickly.
- 2-3 teams together.
- 5-6 skills + team coaches.
- Goaltenders will have dedicated skill or session.

Skills build on each other from week to week, are based on ADM/USA Hockey model and challenge players appropriately.

Quality Practice Components

- Fun
- High Reps & Lots of Puck Touches
- Constant Decision Making
- Game-Like Scenarios
- Challenges Players



MITE EMPHASIS = SKATING & DECISION MAKING

POWER SKATING

Posture

- Eyes Up, Shoulder Square, Knees Pushed Out
- Balance & ability to maintain good posture

Cross Over Work

- Extension & Form

Edge Work

- Edges, Tight Turns, Escapes, Quick Cuts

Races

Skating w/ Puck Possession & Head Up

- Scan for information with the puck

SMALL AREA GAMES / CONSTRAINT BASED GAMES

- Protect the puck, moving the puck and movement away from the puck
- Create game like scenarios at a high compete level
- Add constraints to these game like scenarios to pull certain skills / emphasis

COACHES



COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

Our coaches will be educated on our Green Line characteristics, skills focus, and practice structure expectations and offered the flexibility to adapt to individual player and team needs. Video review will be expected from each coach throughout the season.

Team Coach

Each team will have 2–3 coaches.

- One Head Coach.
- 1–2 Assistant Coaches.
- Utilize qualified parent coach when appropriate.

Goaltending

- Good as Gould instruction for all goalies at all levels.
- In house goalie instruction to support goalies at select practices.
- Goaltending sessions for Mite players interested in learning the position.

Player Development & Skills Coaches

Leads Weekly Skills sessions and coordinate with head coaches to support skills needed per group and incorporate Skill of the Week



COACHING STAFF

Our coaching staff for the 2025–2026 season is a group of experienced and dedicated coaches. This group of coaches is committed to developing our players and bringing out their best.

WINNETKA

Bantam 1: Jeremy Ellis, John Naanep

Bantam 2: Nick Brummitt

Bantam 3: Steve Chelios

PeeWee: Jimmy Davis, Nick Schaefer, Mike Vail, Steve Chelios

Squirts: Jimmy Warrick, Nick Clark, Devin McMurray, Luke Picek, Conor Dranfield

Mites: Charlie Widmar, Craig Johnson, Owen Johnson

Above are fully committed coaches, 2–3 additional coaches will be added, at which point specific team assignments will be made for each coach.





CODE OF CONDUCT

RULES & ETHICS

The board has a committee to review any incidents (players or parents) that go beyond the coach's ability to enforce our code of conduct.

1. I will **respect** my parents, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials (referees), and rink.
2. I will **not bully** my teammates or opponents.
3. I will be **coachable**. I will look my coaches in the eye and listen to what they have to say. I know I can improve, and I want to improve so I can have more success on the ice.
4. I will **not be afraid to make mistakes!** Mistakes are a part of learning and developing.
5. I will **work hard in school**.
6. I will **not use social media to intimidate** my teammates or opponents.
7. I will **not curse or use profanity** at the rink. I will choose to broaden my vocabulary to express how I'm feeling.
8. I will **have fun and give my best effort** at every practice and in games.
9. I will ask questions and never make fun of teammates who ask questions. I realize **knowledge is power!**
10. Through hard work, I will **push myself** and my teammates out of our comfort zones.
11. I will do **extra work**, on and off the ice, to get ahead of my opponents.
12. I will **support teammates** who aren't playing their best. And I'll take ownership of my mistakes instead of pointing fingers.
13. I acknowledge that **playing hockey is a privilege, not a right**. I'm grateful to my parents for the opportunity to play travel hockey.
14. **I play for the logo on the front** of the jersey not just the name on the back.
15. We will be the **hardest working team** in Illinois!

“ I played for Winnetka growing up.
I want my child to have the same
experience.”



“ It's important to me to have access
to a qualified coach who has the
proper tools and resources to aid in
my kid's development.”



“ Involvement in a team sport is
important for my kid's development
and sense of well-being.”



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