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BH-BL JV & Varsity Tennis Guidelines & Expectations for athletes and parents

This packet has been designed to assist players and parents with most of the information that will be needed for the season. Included, you will find information on match schedules, practice times, team expectations and consequences for infractions. Please take time to read this packet and contact your coach if you have any questions. You should also be familiar with the school's Athletic Philosophy and Code of Conduct, which was given to you on the first day of practice. Your coaches are looking forward to a fun and successful season!

5 Pillars of BH-BL Tennis

Being Coachable

- Loves feedback and takes correction as a compliment.
- Makes an effort to connect with their coach.
- Demonstrates great body language, eye contact and mental state while being coached.
- Is a great communicator and listener.
- Demonstrates a level of gratitude for their coaches knowledge, time and efforts.

Being an Outstanding Teammate

- Understands that the team comes first and they are there to support a team-first culture always.
- Always brings positive energy to the athletic arena.
- Makes a strong effort to connect with each teammate and coach in some way.
- Is at most, if not all, team bonding events.
- Is completely comfortable praising their teammates.
- Finishes their match and finds their coach immediately to report scores, understanding that they are still in a team match situation. They will ask how others have done and whom they should support. They will encourage others who do not yet understand this to help support.

Having and showing Gratitude

- Is truly thankful for this team tennis experience.
- Recognize those who aren't in the spotlight or those who help our program that typically go unnoticed.
- Recognize and respect excellence in their opponent. One... because they are thankful that their rival will ultimately bring out the best in their own performance. Two, because their joy is not dependent on winning, they are able to appreciate and look forward to the competition itself. Grateful athletes have a unique ability to want to beat their opponent while at the same time appreciating the intensity that is about to ensue.
- Demonstrates with words and actions that they are thankful for their sport, teammates and coaches.

- Demonstrates respect to their parents and family for all of their support and sacrifices made throughout their athletic careers.
- ALWAYS gives more positive energy and effort than they take.
- Resists entitlement... they know everything is worked for. They embrace that fact of life.
- Is coachable and always look for the positives in every situation.

Demonstrating Sportsmanship

- LOVES the sport of tennis!
- Always follow the rules of our sport, even when it doesn't benefit them.
- Never fears his opponent but treats them and the opposing coach with respect.
- Gives their opponent the benefit of the doubt on line calls AND understands that a ball that is 99% out is still 100% in!
- Keeps an accurate score and announces the score and line calls at an appropriate volume.
- Realizes the honor in winning or losing fairly and will always shake hands at the end of a match.

Being Fearless

- Plays THEIR game, no matter the score.
- Leaves it all on the court.
- Knows that making mistakes at full speed is encouraged in this program and that this leads to rapid improvement.
- Are fearless in points, not foolish.
- Goes after every ball.
- Never, EVER gives up! Is a competitor to the end!
- Takes pride in knowing that they gave everything, every match. They have no regrets.

Team Placement

Team Placement on both JV and Varsity is determined by the following:

1. Coachable Spirit: Willingness to listen, learn, and improve
2. Attitude: Both a positive attitude and a competitive mentality
3. Effort: 100% daily effort is expected.
4. Ability: Talent, skill and head-to-head (challenge) matches.
5. Fitness level: Strength, agility, speed, endurance, explosiveness
6. Attendance: Being at all training sessions and matches is mandatory
7. Athletic Placement Process (NYSPHSAA): fitness standards must be passed for 7th and 8th graders to be considered to be a fully-rostered player. Coaches will share this info with players.

JV-Specific Goals

- Develop proper understanding of the rules and etiquette of tennis
- Begin to develop proper technique for all strokes
- Begin to understand when to use each stroke and basic tennis strategy
- Gain an understanding of what it means to be an athlete in this program and the commitment level and expectations that go with it
- Gain match experience
- Begin the development of mental toughness on and off the court

Varsity-Specific Goals

- Further develop your coachable spirit during both training and match play

- Deepen tactical concepts
- Learn to work smarter by playing to your strengths more often
- Strengthen weaknesses
- Develop a deeper understanding of mental toughness and body language and how it aids in your success on the court and in life
- Develop the love of competition and performance under pressure
- Learn to compete fearlessly!

Athlete Standards/Expectations

Academics

- A. Academic Guidelines for Participation (read and understand the handout given at tryouts)
- B. Athletes should know that academic responsibilities come first. We have been a NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete team since 2008. This is a proud tradition that current athletes must carry on!
- C. Work to the best of your abilities. Be present at all classes and ask questions.
- D. AAP/Activity Period: Utilize this valuable time with your teachers to increase your knowledge and performance. Plan accordingly, as staying during AAP is not an option for away match days.

Conduct/General

- A. Be a teammate: readily acknowledge and connect with teammates and coaches in and out of tennis and school. Participate in all planned team social functions, fundraisers and the end-of-season banquet.
- B. Be in attendance and on time/prepared: to all matches, practices and team events with required attire/uniform, equipment and nutrition/hydration. Players who are not prepared for a match may not play.
- C. During a match: respect opposing players and coach. Take correction as a compliment and be coachable at the fence. Give 100% effort. If you are not playing that day, play a support role for your teammates and your coach.
- D. During a practice: put 100% effort into understanding what is being asked of you (drills, concepts, strategy, etc.). Be safe and respectful of teammates and coaches. Do what is asked of you and more.
- E. Cell phones should be away and not in use during practices and matches. Parents who have an emergency may contact the coach.
- F. Help: Set up, break down and put away equipment for your coach and your team for all practices and matches.
- G. Stay: Plan to stay and support teammates still competing in matches. Do not ask to leave when anyone on our team is still in the competitive arena. Just like any other sport requires, we need to support teammates to the end.
- H. Promote our program: Be a positive voice for our tennis program. Recruit friends/family to come and watch matches. Encourage friends to join our program!

Absences

- A. Legal Absences, per the student handbook are:
 - Personal illness or death in the family
 - Approved college visitations – Grades 11 and 12 only, limit of three days – administrative approval required for additional days

- Obligatory religious observance
 - School activities (always tell your coach way in advance)
- A. Illegal Absences, per the student handbook are “all other absences”. Any athlete illegally absent from school may not participate in a practice or match that day. If an athlete misses a match due to an illegal absence, they will not play in the next match. Additionally, if an athlete misses the practice prior to a match, they will not be in the lineup for that match. Illegal absences include, but are not limited to: work, family commitment or event, lack of transportation (coaches can usually help if asked), club/travel sport game/practice/tournament, etc.
 - B. Club Teams/Alternate activities: While a high school sport is in season, athletes should understand that any club teams or alternate activities they are involved in come second. It is rare to find a club team coach who doesn’t agree with this. Most of the time, a simple conversation with the club coach about your current participation in a school sport is all that is necessary. Tennis practices, matches and events should not be missed due to club team participation. Our season schedule is intense but it is also over quickly.

Times/Schedule

- A. Preseason/Practices: Training times will vary depending on location and weather. Once we are consistently outdoors, training will be on the high school courts and times will remain the same. Mondays and Fridays will be from 2:45-4:45 and Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays will be from 3:30-5:30. There may be days that practice is shortened. Coaches will communicate that with their teams.
- B. Online Calendar: You can always find the most up-to-date schedule of training and matches at www.spartantennis.com for both the JV and Varsity teams. Much care has been taken to provide an accurate listing of all times. However, situations generally dictate that some training and/or match times will change or be cancelled. Information about changes will be given to players the same day they are received. Notification of schedule changes will be communicated with the players via text message and school announcements. It is the responsibility of the athlete to inform their parents of the changes.
- C. On home match days, players are expected to be in uniform and on-court by 3pm. For away matches, players should meet at the flagpole in the back of the high school to catch the bus by 2:45, unless otherwise discussed. The bus will not wait for tardy players. Players will be expected to ride the bus to all away matches. It is a school rule that a player may only go home with their own parent(s) unless a signed note from a parent is presented to the coach stating otherwise.

Seeding

- A. Coaching Decision: Head to head challenge matches, along with technical and tactical ability combined with fitness, dedication, attitude and effort will all go into determining a player’s seed on the team. The determination of a player’s seed is a coaching staff decision. If players have questions about seeding, the player should speak to the coach before or after practice. Coaches will do their best to help players understand what they need to do to play at a higher level and possibly earn a higher seed. Before, during, or after a match is not a time for discussion with players or parents.
- B. JV Level Seeding: At the JV level, especially 5th and 6th singles, along with all doubles seeds may vary from match to match in order for all players to gain match experience.

Parent Roles/Expectations

- A. Trust your child's coaches: Please trust that while coaches must always put the team ahead of individuals, we care about each athlete and their experience. We love tennis and we love coaching kids! If any issues (seeding, team placement, difficulties with teammates, etc.) arise, please trust us to communicate with our athletes. Athletics is a safe place for your child to face bumps in the road. Resist the urge to take care of it yourself and encourage your child to have a conversation with their coach. Resist the urge to prepare the PATH for your child and instead, prepare your CHILD for the path. We know this can be an awkward moment for them but we love to see kids step up in this area and we will treat them with respect and grace. These moments build their confidence and communication skills and usually lead to some very constructive conversations and a strengthening of the coach-athlete relationship.
- B. Behaviors to avoid during matches:
- Displaying negative body language when they make a mistake (there are LOTS of mistakes in tennis!)
 - Telling your child's coach how and what they should be doing and what should be said to them during a match.
 - Coaching them: players can and will be penalized if they are coached by anyone else other than their head coach. This is an interscholastic rule in tennis.
 - Standing/sitting close to the fence. Spectators should be several feet back.
 - Correcting line calls or scores. They will get better and better at this. Keeping accurate score and calling lines accurately is their responsibility. Players always know their coach is available to assist in the event of disagreements that can't be worked out.
 - Getting into verbal disagreements with opposing spectators.
 - Making the car ride home a bad experience. "I love to watch you play" should be about all that is said unless they want to talk about it.
- C. Instead, be a positive, calming influence when we compete. Our athletes should NOT be thinking about how their parents are feeling while they are in a match situation. Put yourself in their shoes and let them compete at their best. **If you are affecting your child's match, you've overstepped the line as a spectator and you will be asked to leave.**
- D. Support your child's coaches: When you support your child's coaches with your words and your actions, coaches feel even more confident to dive in and really coach your child in both their tennis development as well as their character development.
- E. Cheer!: At matches, please cheer your child (AND their teammates) on! Please only cheer for GOOD tennis. If your child's opponent makes an obvious mistake to lose the point, refrain from applause and instead encourage them for the next point about to be played. If your child hits a great shot for a winner, cheer like crazy! Other schools may have other cultures when it comes to this but these are the league rules.
- F. Support our Booster Club: Join our Tennis Booster Club and offer to help in any area you can. Our Booster Club offers so much support to our teams and makes the season even more special with events and get togethers.
- G. Host a "pasta party" (or taco, pizza, etc... you get the idea): the more time the team spends together, they tighter they become!

Parents, please embrace your role in this experience and enjoy your time watching your child learn and play the lifetime sport of tennis! This time in their lives passes quickly so sit back, relax and enjoy watching and cheering them on!



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BURNT HILLS JV AND VARSITY TENNIS

EXPECTATIONS & GUIDELINES

These expectations and guidelines are designed to give every player and parent a very clear understanding of what it means to play in the BH-BL Tennis program and what will be expected of athletes and parents. By signing and returning the portion below, athletes and parents have acknowledged that they have read and understand these expectations and guidelines. Please sign and return this page to your coach on day one of tryouts.

Player's Name: _____

Grade: _____

Player's Signature

Date

Parents' Signatures

Date