

Tennis Team Policies & Procedures

We have certain expectations to let you know what to expect from the Pine Tree High School Tennis Program.

What is the difference between junior varsity and varsity? The varsity is made up of the top players who play the majority of the tennis matches. The top seven boys and girls are considered varsity in the Fall. The top eight boys and girls are considered varsity in the Spring. Junior varsity players are ranked 8-14 in the Fall and 9-16 in the Spring.

As tennis pro's, coaches, and parents we cannot "give" a player a backhand. A player must work hard and long to develop their backhand (or any stroke) no matter from whom he/she takes lessons. Some learn faster than others because of natural talent, but there is no substitution for hard work and many hours on a tennis court. Tennis takes up a great deal of a player's time. Bad habits are hard to break.

Players need to be good students because by UIL rules a student cannot compete if all classes are not passed. Also, we play some weekends in the fall and miss many Fridays and Saturdays in the Spring. Students should go see teachers and get their work before a class is missed for a tennis match. Varsity practice usually lasts until 4:45, but it may last longer because of challenge matches. If we have an after-school match, we may not be through until 8:00 P.M., and out-of-town trips might put us home around 10:00 P.M. We usually play 10 matches in the Fall. We usually play 8 tournaments and a few dual matches in the Spring. The school will pay for out of town meals. Students will be expected to pack a lunch for in town tournaments and also for out of town tournaments where several sites are being used. In the Fall we play **Team Tennis**. In the Spring we play **Individual Tennis**.

Team Tennis, which is played in the first semester, is similar to football or volleyball in that we play a round robin with every other school in our district. We

win or lose as a team. A team tennis match consists of three girls doubles, three boys doubles, six girls singles, six boys singles, and a mixed doubles match. The victor must win the majority of the matches (10 or more). It takes 7 boys and 7 girls to play a match. Sometimes players are better at singles or doubles. The two school teams which win first and second by winning the most team tennis district matches advance to the regional tournament as a team. The number one player may never win a match, but if the team wins everyone on the team wins. The number 6 player is therefore just as important as the number 1 player. This is the great aspect of team tennis. This round robin must be completed in the early Fall, usually in the second or third week in October. It is important that all players be available to participate. If your number 2 player is out, then your number 3 player competes against the other team's number 2 player and it puts the whole team at a disadvantage. Matches go onto the court according to rank with doubles played first. Sometimes the match will be officially over before a number 6 singles player might go on. All tennis players must stay until all 19 matches are complete unless coach gives permission to leave. If the score is 9-9 we will need everyone to chip in for support. Students who leave before the match is over will be considered unexcused. It takes over three hours to finish a team tennis match. Players must wear school uniform for all matches and tournaments. Students without uniform will not play and this will be equal to an unexcused absence. All players must try out to be on the tennis team. Tryouts will require an essay and all necessary paperwork.

Players who have trouble staying academically eligible will be dropped at the coaches' discretion to spend more time on their studies.

Unlike other sports there is no substitution in tennis once a match has started. A player who is injured or is playing poorly either defaults or tries to win the match. Coaching is only allowed during the 90 second break between change of ends or the ten minute break between split sets. No one, but the school coach, may coach a player in a UIL tennis match and no one may coach in a USTA match. Relatives or friends are not allowed to coach. We try to do most of our coaching

during the week and to keep our match play short and simple. There will be a time, when playing at multiple locations, the distances from one court to another, or taking some members of the team to eat while others play, that I might see any part of a player's match. I try to watch part of everyone's match sometime during the tournament. I try to watch the most competitive matches first because I can learn more just as a player can learn, from a hard fought match.

In the spring, tennis switches to individual tennis. Players may play singles or doubles in an individual tournament but not both. They may qualify to move on to regionals as an individual by winning either first or second at the district championships. A girl's team championship and a boys team championship is declared based on the points accumulated by the individuals on the team. A school may enter two singles players, two doubles teams and two mixed doubles teams in the boys and girls district championships, a total of 8 boys and 8 girls. The same number can be entered for junior varsity competition the springs. There is no junior varsity team championship. JV players do not progress past the district level. Two varsity players or doubles teams qualify state by winning first or second at regionals.

I would like for parents and players to know what the school does and does not provide, and the reasoning behind it. We charge no fee to play or to come to the matches. I feel compared to other schools we are given a decent budget. The school pays for all entry fees to school tournaments, transports the players to those tournaments, feeds them necessary meals, and pays for motel rooms for the players. The school pays for expenses of going to Regional and State Tournaments. The Team has an allotment for equipment, We spend most of our budget on tennis balls which unlike football, basketball, or volleyball are easily lost or become unusable. Players at all matches will be responsible for picking up tennis balls after class, practice or matches. We use about 14 cases of tennis balls a year for tournaments, team matches, challenge matches and drills. This is a major expense, however is essential to a good program. Over 30 players use these balls daily. The reason we do not buy rackets and shoes is because these

are determined by personal preference and last different players a different length of time. Many players go through a set of strings or shoes every month, and some may use the same strings or shoes for a year or more. This would make it very hard to allocate these items in a fair and equal manner. I have purchased these items in the past and because of personal preference, the players did not use them. Tennis can be an expense sport for those who seek excellence because there is a need for entry fees, shoes, rackets, lessons, and USTA membership outside of the school program.

Discipline Management

We have high expectations for our school tennis team participants. Our program can reach a higher level for both team and individual goals. Think in terms of Attitude, Fitness, Safety, Skills and Winning. Think TEAM! Your actions will affect your teammates and your membership on the team. During the summer, players should work on their individual games by taking lessons, attending camps, drilling, and playing USTA summer tournaments. If they do not work on tennis in the summer, they will fall behind other players on their team or other teams who are engaging in these activities. This is one of the areas where players (in order to get a championship level) need to get more involved with summer tournaments.

Players who make varsity are expected to play for the tennis team whenever they are asked to play in a tournament or team match. That means that tennis is

expected to become priority and some personal sacrifice might be needed. No job should interfere with practice/matches. We expect players to be at practice every day and to be on time. Practice starts at 3:00 and drills will end at 4:45.

Challenge matches will sometimes last longer. Students that do not practice will not play. I would prefer dentist or doctor appointments not be made during practice time. Students who have an unexcused absence from practice or a match will run to make it up. Unexcused for half of practice is 1 mile. Drivers

Education should be taken at a time when it does not interfere with team practice. Church and family trips and outings should not interfere with tennis. This is the same requirement which would be asked in other varsity sport. We will follow the discipline management program for absences. The star football player is expected to be playing on Friday night, not on vacation with his family. (Other UIL conflicts would be an exception) All athletes must allow at least one week notice for missing a tournament due to another UIL conflict. We have well rounded people on our team who have a great like outside of tennis. Players who decide not to play a scheduled tournament are unexcused. We will try to cooperate and get players back as early as possible for dances or other school functions. A student is allowed to leave a home match after it is over, however; if we are in a close match all players must stay until the match is complete. When we travel, we travel as a team. Players must ride the bus with the team to the matches unless there is some unusual circumstance not to do so. Players may ride home with their parents if there is an unusual circumstance, but I need written permission and 24 hours advanced notice. Plan homework and other activities around matches and practice. Players are expected to be on time for early morning departures. While it is sometimes hard to get to the bus early for a tournament, I will not hold the bus for late players and risk having those players who arrived on time defaulted from a tournament because we waited for one late player. Missing the bus on tournament day is unexcused. I know problems sometimes show up at the last moment but call someone on the team or me, if you need a ride. If you know you have an early morning ride problem, let's work on it the day before. We will follow the Pine Tree Discipline Management Program.

Tennis Class: This is a class. Abide by dress codes. Wear shirt, shorts, and tennis shoes. No one will be allowed to wear jeans. Work to improve skills. This requires repetition. Often means weeks of work on a certain skill before noticeable progress. Work to improve your game or help someone improve theirs. Take care of the courts and equipment. Carry out duties assigned to you. These may include: balls, water, marking roll, scouting, concession help, video, supporting teammates, setting up gym, etc. Bring your own water bottle for

practice each day. Suit out daily. Rain or shine. Sleet or snow. When in doubt suit out. Keep an extra pair of shoes and clothes in your locker at all times, just in case something happens. Get a lock for your locker. Be on the courts before 3:00 (my watch). Unexcused tardies will result in 2 laps. Begin warm-up laps and stretching/warming up. Players tardy for practice will be counted tardy. Students not at practice will be counted absent. Running will take place during practice to help improve conditioning and fitness skills in match play. Students who decide not to participate in the conditioning will not play in tournaments. Get dressed and go to the restroom in the 15 minute period before practice starts. If tennis gets rained out we will meet in the gym.

What does it take to letter on Varsity?

To letter a student must play in 5 Varsity meets including District in the Spring. In the Fall, a student must play all District Team Tennis Matches. Freshmen can letter but may not receive a jacket until the end of their sophomore year. No seniors on Junior Varsity. Students who quit and want to come back must follow our athletic policy guidelines.

Grades: Everyone starts out with a 100. Five (5) points will be deducted each time a player forgets their clothes and does not dress out or participate. In other words, 5 points can be deducted in one day for not dressing out and not participating. Rainy days are no exception to the rules. If a student is sick a doctor's or parent's note must be given to Coach Tomberlain.

Disrespect, cursing, ball or racquet abuse, and disruptive behavior during tournaments or team play will not be tolerated. Tournament infractions will be handled according to UIL guidelines. Disrespect, cursing, ball or racquet abuse, and disruptive behavior and any other kind of misbehavior during practice will result in enforcement of the discipline guidelines. Punishment will be doubled for incidents that happen involving match or tournament play. Example, 4 miles running or 2 docked tournaments. Insubordination, violent action, or other severe behavior will result in an automatic dismissal from the team.

Tennis is also unusual because it is a coed sport. Players are expected to behave as a sports team while traveling together. We want our players to be friends and to be friendly, but not over friendly. We may occasionally have overnight trips, and I want players to enjoy those trips. We are there to play matches, not to take a vacation. Normally I will chaperon by myself; and when I tell students it is time to go to their rooms and go to bed, that is exactly what I mean. Go to YOUR room and go to bed. If a player is caught outside of their room after being told to go inside that is a serious offense and will be dealt with in a serious manner. On any trip be at your best. At restaurants even better. Boarding time is when you get in the bus. Departure time is when the bus leaves with or without you. On the bus remain seated, no horseplay, keep communications to people on our bus only and keep the bus clean. At tournaments, remain on site. No defaults. Check in periodically to know when you play. Students are not allowed to leave a tournament unless Coach gives permission.

There is a problem at schools with some students who abuse alcohol and drugs. I would like to think our players and your children are not involved. As coaches we certainly hope our players will abstain from any activity which might harm them, their reputation, or the reputation of the tennis team. Anyone caught with anything which is prohibited in the School Policy will put their membership on the team in jeopardy. We are trying to discourage drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse. Refer to Pine Tree ISD Athletic Department Policies Packet.

Everyone in athletics must have a physical and paperwork when they participate with a school team.

We encourage our players to work on qualifying for USTA rankings and allow them to miss some tournaments, if we know ahead of time.

Potential, effort, attitude, conditioning, outside tournament playing experience, on court demeanor, and self control are very important in determining who gets to play. Players who quit trying and give up, whether in practice or varsity match play, will not be placed in a position of trust.

Tennis Team Ladder Rules

1. Students are placed on the ladder in the order they finished the previous season.
2. New players are placed on the ladder in the order of round robin finish below letter winners.
3. Players may only challenge one position higher on the ladder.
4. Once match season begins, challenge matches involving varsity and JV members must be cleared through the coach and played at practice.
5. Players must accept a challenge from players below them on the ladder or forfeit their position. The Coach tries to work around unexpected circumstances but you must challenge on your designated day.
6. A challenge match will be conducted like a tournament. If you are not present for the match you lose your position. No Exceptions!!
7. New players coming from another sport whose season have just concluded or new students coming to the school will challenge wherever coach places them.
8. Even challenges one day, odd the next.
9. If you are late for a challenge you will be docked two games.
10. 8 game pro-set will be used for challenge matches.
11. Challenge match will be treated with the same rules as UIL tournament play.
12. Challenge matches need be completed on the day they begin.

13. Bottom 3 spots must try out for the team at the end of the year.

14. If both players are responsible for not completing a match then both players will be moved down 2 spots on the ladder.

Parents are not allowed to be on the courts during matches. Also, parents are not allowed to talk to students during a match (UIL).

We feel tennis is a worthwhile activity that takes time to learn. We feel that those who finish our program are well suited for success. People face a lifetime of competition of all kinds. Just as everyone who applies for employment is not hired, all who try out for an athletic team will not necessarily make that team. The good is in the effort. Players who make the team will have earned it. No one will give it to them. They will have a strong self image, a dedication to a task, and realize the importance of cooperatively working toward a common goal. They will be strong individuals with a sense of fair play and the ability to overcome obstacles.

I have attempted to answer most of the questions about the Tennis Program that I have heard over the last several years. If you have any other questions, I would be glad to answer them. Feel free to call 903-445-8105.

Pat Tomberlain
Biology
Tennis
Pine Tree High School

Students Name _____

I/We have read the expectations involving tennis at Pine Tree High School.

I understand that if I am selected to be on the Junior Varsity or Varsity Tennis team, I will be expected to have tennis in my schedule as a daily class and when asked I will go to the tournaments or team tennis matches.

If I am issued equipment, I will keep it in good condition and return it at the end of year. If I lose it or damage it, I will pay for it or replace it.

I understand that the normal mode of transportation will be by bus, but my child may ride from the school to the tournament site to another with an adult licensed driver or on another school's bus driven by a licensed bus driver.

Parent or Guardian

Player

Parent signature _____

Student signature _____

