

# Hempfield Tennis Handbook



**Hempfield High School  
200 Stanley Avenue  
Landisville, PA 17538  
(717) 898-5500**

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	Page 4
Philosophy.....	Page 4
Other Important Information (general).....	Page 4
<b>Try-Out Information</b>	
Requirements.....	Page 5
What to bring.....	Page 5
Evaluations.....	Pages 5-6
In case of rain.....	Page 6
Expectations.....	Page 6
<b>Hempfield Team Policies</b>	
Practice Times.....	Page 7
Match Times.....	Page 7
Travel/Bus expectations.....	Page 7
Challenge matches.....	Page 7
Line-ups.....	Page 7
Court etiquette.....	Page 7-8
School attendance.....	Page 8
Academics/In-School behavior.....	Page 8
Drug/Alcohol policy.....	Page 8
Length of season.....	Page 8
Lettering.....	Page 8
Excused v. Unexcused absences.....	Page 8
<b>Tennis specific information</b>	
Ways to set yourself up for success.....	Page 9
Doubles Principles.....	Page 10
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	
Captains'.....	Page 11
Team Manager.....	Page 12
Spectators'.....	Page 12
Booster Club.....	Page 13
<b>Important Contact Information</b>	
Coaches.....	Page 14
Local Racket Clubs.....	Page 14

**Goal Setting**

Types of Goals.....Page 15

Individual vs. Team Goals.....Page 15

SMART Goals.....Page 15

Examples of Individual Goals.....Page 15

Examples of Team Goals.....Page 15

**Other**

Positive Team Pledge.....Page 16

## Hempfield Tennis



### **Introduction:**

Playing a sport at Hempfield High School is a big-time investment, which requires significant time management skills. Remember, you are a STUDENT-athlete; tennis supplements your education. Your first priority is your family, then school, then tennis.

### **Philosophy:**

Participation in the Hempfield High School tennis program is a privilege, not a right. Dedication, a solid work ethic, self-discipline, and a positive attitude are the foundation of a successful team. Working hard in school, in practice as well as placing team goals ahead of personal goals are priorities. All student-athletes, coaches, parents and spectators are expected to display good sportsmanship and respect for the entire team as well as our opponents.

### **Other Important Information:**

1. During the season we will emphasize tactics and strategies while focusing on effort, attitude, fitness, motivation, mental toughness, and sportsmanship. Winning is a by-product of these efforts and winning should never be placed first.
2. Student-athletes are expected to win and lose gracefully.
3. Give everything you've got when practicing and conditioning. Remember you play how you practice!
4. Develop positive relationships with your teammates as well as your opponents.
5. Focus on realistic goals throughout the season—embrace the challenge!

## Hempfield Try-out Information



### **Requirements:**

- All paperwork (CIPPE physical form, CIPPE recertification form, hazing form, extracurricular form, etc.) need to be uploaded on the ATS site by the deadline!!
- Missing try-outs will impact your ability to be selected as a member of the team.  
*You must be at try-outs every day!*

### **What to bring:**

- Each player should bring at least 1 racket to try-outs
- Players should be dressed in proper athletic attire, including sneakers or court shoes.
- All players should be prepared for all conditions.
  - In the fall, players should be ready for heat and bring sunscreen, water bottles, visors/sun glasses, etc.
  - In the spring, players should be ready for cold weather and bring sunscreen, multiple layers of clothing, water bottles, etc.

### **Evaluations:**

- Coaches will conduct a skill assessment which evaluates:
  - Groundstrokes
  - Serves
  - Volleys
  - Footwork
  - Attitude/Hustle/Coachability
- Players will also be evaluated while playing challenge matches (pro-sets).
  - This includes head-to-head scores
  - Proficiency in singles and doubles play (both technical, tactical and mental skills)
- Sportsmanship/attitude/coachability
  - Players should have a positive attitude and be respectful of all teammates and coaches.
  - Players should have a desire to improve and listen to coaches in order to get better.
- Commitment/responsibility
  - Players need to be on time for try-outs and prepared every day
- **Seniors:** Based on head-to-head scores and skill assessments, any senior who would fall below #12 on our line-up, will be cut from the team.
- 16-18 players will make the team

**In case of rain:**

- Players should Schoology prior to try-outs because in the case of rain, try-outs may be moved indoors to Hempfield Area Rec Center.

**Expectations:**

- Players are expected to come prepared to play outside or inside every day.
- All players must be on time and work hard the entire practice/try-out. *Previous standings on the team will not impact any decisions for this year, just because you were on the team last year does not automatically mean you will be on this year. Everyone has an equal chance.*

## Hempfield Tennis Team Policies



### **Practice Times:**

- Monday-Friday from 3:10-5:15 (on school days) Saturdays will be used for challenge matches and practices as needed
- All players are expected to be at all practices. If you are going to miss a practice, you must notify Coach Bell at least one (1) day prior to that practice for a planned absence

### **Match Times:**

- Matches begin at 4:00pm- if both teams are ready, we often begin closer to 3:45pm.
  - There are occasionally Saturday matches throughout the season
- All team members are required to stay with the team until the match has concluded. Match duration can vary; therefore, all players must plan accordingly.
- Any requests to leave a match early must be submitted in writing at least two (2) days prior to the match date. Only emergency/VERY important situations will be approved for an athlete to leave a match early.

### **Travel/Bus expectations:**

- Players must travel with the team to and from all matches
- All players are to remain seated while the bus is in motion
- Players are permitted to play music out loud on the bus as long as it is clean (no profanity or offensive/inappropriate content)
- Individual travel arrangements will only be considered on an emergency basis and must be submitted in writing at least one (1) day prior to the day of the match.

### **Challenge Matches:**

- Challenge matches are used to determine each player's position on the team
- Challenges will be held based on position on team. Even number spots will challenge one week, followed by odd spots the following week. Players will only play one challenge match per week.
- Challenge matches will be held on weekends
- A player has 3 chances to take the spot of the person ahead of them. If they do not win any of their 3 challenges, they will not be allowed to challenge that person again.
- In order to "win" a challenge match, the challenging player must defeat the player directly ahead of them in a full, best of 3 sets match (varsity). JV will play 1 set.

### **Line-ups:**

- *Singles*: The singles line-up will be solely based on the team ladder.
- *Doubles*: Doubles combinations will be decided upon by the coaching staff throughout the season AND may change at any point. Skill level, experience, and compatibility will be considered when creating the doubles teams. The singles ladder does NOT dictate our doubles line-up.

### **Court Etiquette/match expectations:**

- All players are to follow the USTA and L-L-League guidelines for sportsmanship and court etiquette. Sportsmanship is a priority!
  - Behavior including, but not limited to, racket throwing/smashing, cursing, taunting opponents, etc. will result in point penalties and eventual removal

from the court, forfeiting the match. Player may also be dismissed from the team for continuous violations.

- Players are only allowed to discuss strategy and other match related items with HHS coaches during the matches/while on court, nobody else!
- Players who are not on the courts are expected to be spread out and cheering on the other members of the team who are currently playing. Cell phones should NOT be out!

**School Attendance:**

- All tennis players must be in school by 9:15 AM in order to be eligible to participate in practice or matches for that day! Make every effort to be in school every day!

**Academics/In school behavior:**

- All athletes are expected to maintain passing grades in all their classes.
- If any member of the team is assigned a detention or suspension, they will be suspended from the team for a time period determined by the coaching staff.

**Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

- Players are expected to not partake in any activities involving drugs and/or alcohol both in season and during the off-season.
- If a player violates the drug and alcohol policy, they will be immediately removed from the team.

**Length of Season:**

- The top 8 players continue with the team through the post-season.
- All JV players are *encouraged* to attend play-off matches during the post-season (especially championship matches), but it is not required.

**Lettering:**

- A player must compete in at least 2 varsity matches in order to receive a varsity letter.

**Excused v. Unexcused absences:**

An unexcused absence=1 match suspension, 2 unexcused absences=2 match suspension, 3 = removal from the team.

- *Excused absences:*
  - Religious Observations
  - Major Life Events (one-time occurrence events) (i.e., wedding, funeral, testing)
  - Illness/medical emergency
  - College Visits to College/University Campus for enrollment consideration (try to schedule this around matches though!!)
- Unexcused absences
  - Out of season sports/clubs sports
  - After-school jobs
  - Non-school activities
  - Forgetting/over-sleeping
  - Vacations
  - Personal activities
  - Lack of transportation
  - Homework



## Ways to set yourself up for success!

1. **Keep the ball in play!** 85% of high school tennis points are lost, not won.
  - a. **Patience is key!!**
2. Keep the majority of ground strokes cross-court.
  - a. Net is lower
  - b. More room for error
  - c. Court coverage
3. Do not change the direction of the ball when you are in a defensive or neutral position.
  - a. Only change directions on a short ball when you have plenty of time to prepare on a short ball.
4. **Play to your strengths.** Drop shots, touch volleys, and cut angles should never be relied on in a tight match. Play to your specific strengths.
  - a. Figure out what shots are reliable for you and use them!!
5. **Know when to play defense and lob.** This is the most underused shot in high school tennis. On a strong approach shot, lob the ball to get yourself back into the point. Always aim for the center of the court, or the backhand side.
6. Attack an opponent's weaknesses. 2<sup>nd</sup> serve, backhand, forehand, footwork, consistency, mental toughness...
  - a. Use warm-up to figure out weak areas of your opponent's game
  - b. Keep the ball away from your opponent's weapon
7. When the match is close and you are tired, move your feet and swing through the ball. Do not push the ball, and do not over hit. Concentrate on your breathing, your footwork, and swinging through each ball.
8. Rely on the fundamentals when hitting from the baseline:
  - a. Feet should be set and racquet should be back when ball bounces (early racket preparation)
  - b. Hit the ball at waist level
  - c. Hit the ball 4-5 feet over the net
9. **Use the elements to your advantage!**
  - a. Find the direction and pace of the wind during warm ups.
  - b. Drink lots of water, especially when it is hot.
10. **Compete, compete, and compete!!! Never, ever give up during a point! We run for every ball.** We must be emotionally, mentally, and physically balanced at all times.

## Doubles Principles

1. Target the weaker person!
2. **Must put the 1<sup>st</sup> serve into play.** 75% of points are won in doubles when the 1<sup>st</sup> serve is in play.
3. **Play as a team and communicate on service games.**
  - a. Use signals to coordinate play with teammate
  - b. Poach at least once a game
  - c. Lots of fakes to throw off opponents
  - d. Do not be predictable!
  - e. Fist bump/high five after each point
4. **Return of serve**
  - a. 2 options on a strong serve
    - i. Low and crosscourt
    - ii. Lob is an option-do not overuse
  - b. 2 options on a weak serve
    - i. Low and crosscourt
    - ii. Go after net person
5. **Must take the net as a team.** The team which is more **aggressive** and closer to the net will dominate doubles.
  - a. Attempt to take the net on a strong return also.
6. **When opposing team are both at the net, either lob or keep the ball down the middle.**
  - a. More room for error: lowest point of the net
  - b. Creates confusion
7. **Be Aggressive:** The most aggressive team in doubles will win.
8. **Always walk on and off the court as a team!**

## HEMPFIELD TENNIS EXPECTATIONS OF A CAPTAIN

A good sports team captain can lead his team to success and recognition; and can help a team play better; whereas, a weak captain with poor leadership skills can hinder a team's chances of competing and bonding successfully. Being a sports team captain isn't just about having the label, putting it on your college resume, or just cheering your friends on. It requires a number of things including:

- the desire to lead by example
- a passionate belief in team spirit
- the ability to handle the conflicts that invariably arise when a team is under pressure
- the ability to handle problems which may arise in a fair and expedient manner
- the ability to behave professionally and responsibly despite personal feelings of frustration and anger
- a thorough knowledge of the rules of the game
- a desire to build relationships with other members of the team, in good times and bad
- the ability to handle the burden of being captain while still playing in the team
- the ability to inspire and motivate and raise team moral.

Here are the main items I expect of the captains in our program:

- Take charge – don't just rely on the coaches. For example, start the practice on time, even if the coaches are still getting ready or temporarily occupied elsewhere.
- Always do more than is expected – stay longer, run farther, play harder.
- Always take responsibility for your actions – don't play the blame game. If you make a mistake, own up, face the consequences and move forward – you will be respected more than if you make up excuses.
- Lead your team by actions, not words. Anybody can talk – it is what they do that counts.
- Don't put yourself above the rest of the team – just because you have the captain title does not mean that you should have any preferential treatment. A sports team captain is subject to the same rules and consequences as the rest of the team. See yourself as one of the team, otherwise there will be a division between yourself and your teammates.
- Be dependable and prompt for games and practices (early is always better).
- Set the expected pre-game atmosphere in the locker room & on the court.
- Help lead practice and pre-game warm-up in a serious and appropriate manner
- Help set a focused and enthusiastic atmosphere during the game
- Display good sportsmanship before, during, and after the game.

## **The Team Manager**

Just like being a player on the team, the role of manager is a privilege, not a right. Managers are required to behave in the same way all members of the team are required to behave. All rules and expectations set forth for the tennis team members apply to the manager as well.

The role of manager includes:

1. Attendance at practices AND match (if a manager is to miss a practice or match, they MUST let Coach Bell know prior to the match)
  - a. A 3 strikes and you are out policy is in place for managers. Any manager that misses three practices or matches without notifying Coach Bell will be relieved of their role as manager.
2. Maintaining the scorebook and keeping an accurate record of match scores for each match
3. Serving as a role model for the team and encouraging each and every team member to perform their best and try their hardest.
4. Exhibiting good sportsmanship

Any manager that does not fulfill these requirements will be removed from their position as manager.

## **The Role of a Tennis Spectator**

As a tennis spectator you have an important role in setting a positive tone for the match. If you do not follow the guidelines below, you put the coaches, student-athletes and other spectators in an uncomfortable situation.

1. Do not clap or cheer an opponent's unforced error.
2. You cannot, in any way, assist the players with the match (including scoring, line calls, rules, coaching, etc.)
3. Realize that you are watching the match from angles that differ from the players'. Line calls are very different to make as a player as opposed to a spectator.
4. Good sportsmanship means respecting the abilities of all players involved. It also means giving credit to both sides—win or lose!
5. Please set a positive example for not only your child, but all student-athletes on the team!

## **The Role of the Booster Club**

Every year the Booster Club plays a key role in supporting the tennis team and helping the team achieve their goals. One or more parents serve in the role of Booster President BUT all parents are encouraged to participate in the Booster Club.

The role of the Booster Club includes (but is not limited to):

1. Spirit wear sale
2. Coordinating fundraising efforts
3. Being proactive in supporting acquisition of items for the teams
4. Scheduling spirit events at various members of the teams houses (by volunteer only)
5. Arrange candid photos to be taken for the team photo book
6. Organizing a snack schedule for each match
7. Organizing senior night
8. Organizing the team banquet

The Booster Club President is also in charge of the Tennis Booster Club funds/checking account.

In addition, the Booster President is guided by the bylaws and Coach Bell has final approval of all activities.

## **Important Contact Information**

### **Contact Information for Coaches:**

#### **Head Coach**

- Coach Bell: Melinda\_Bell@hempfieldsd.org
- Location: HHS room 215

#### **Assistant Coach**

- Coach Istvanic
- Location: HHS room 08

#### **Volunteer Coaches**

- Coach Iris, Coach Donell, Coach Thomas

### **Local Racket Clubs (for lessons, clinics, etc.)**

Hempfield Area Rec: (717) 898-3102  
950 Church Street  
Landisville, PA 17538

RCW: (717) 299-5631  
200 Running Pump Road  
Lancaster, PA 17603

## Goal Setting

### Types of Goals:

- **Process Goals:** How you perform a certain skill. You have complete control over this goal!
  - Ex. Keeping your racket head at eye level when volleying (not dropping your racket)
- **Performance Goals:** Your actual performance in relation to your standard of excellence.
  - Ex. Reducing unforced errors from 20 a set to 15 a set
- **Outcome Goals:** Usually relate to winning and losing. You do not have complete control over these goals!
  - Ex. As a team we will win the League and District Championship this year!

### Individual vs. Team Goals:

- **Individual Goals:** Set individual goals so that you as a player can improve your skills throughout the season. Adjust your goals for the off-season so that you can improve and grow all year long.
  - Individual goals should never take precedence over team goals!!
- **Team Goals:** As a team, it is important to be a good teammate and have everyone working towards the same overall goals.

### Set **SMART** goals:

- **Specific** (avoid “do your best” goals)
- **Measurable** (able to track behavioral progress)
- **Achievable** (challenging but realistic)
- **Relevant** (important to the athlete or team)
- **Time-limited** (set deadlines for achievement)

### Examples of Team Goals:

- Demonstrate exceptionally high levels of sportsmanship
- Support teammates during matches
- Help teammates practice their weaknesses in order to improve
- Win the League and District!

### Examples of Individual Goals:

- I will get 75% of first serves in and 95% of second serves in
- I will maintain a strong, confident image on court, even when things are not going my way 100% of the time.
- I am going to improve my doubles play by learning about tactics and utilizing them every time I play.



# Positive Team Pledge

I pledge to be a positive leader who sets the example for my teammates through my positive attitude and actions.

I promise to share positive energy and encouragement with my team.

I will not be an energy vampire nor will I sabotage myself and team with negativity, complaining and excuses.

When I make a mistake I will own it and seek to improve.

When I'm not playing well I will stay positive and strive to get better.

When I experience self-doubt I will remember a time when I succeeded.

When I feel fear I will choose faith

When I face adversity I will find strength.

When my team experiences a defeat I will choose to stay positive and prepare to achieve another victory.

With hard work, determination and faith, I will never give up and will always help my team move forward towards our vision and goals.

Today and every day I will be positive and strive to make a positive impact on my team.

[www.TrainingCamp11.com](http://www.TrainingCamp11.com)

By Jon Gordon