

To: Parents, Hall Boys Tennis Team (Varsity and Junior Varsity-Team 1 and Team 2
From: Jim Solomon, Head Coach (Jim_Solomon@whps.org), (jfsol@sbcglobal.net);
Sean Passan, Assistant Coach (Sean_Passan@whps.org),
Steven Smith, Assistant Coach (Steven_Smith@whps.org)

Will Carpenter, Adam Glassman and Henry Glucksman, captains.

Welcome to the 2018 spring sports season and the Hall Boys Tennis family. The varsity (Team 1) has an 18 match schedule that includes league, non-league and tournament play and two pre-season scrimmages. The Junior Varsity (Team 2) has 12 scheduled matches--some co-ed. Both schedules may be found on Hall's Athletic Dept website. Few public schools have multiple teams, but with our outstanding facility, support of the Athletic Department and heightened interest among student-athletes, Hall is a nationally recognized USTA "No Cut Tennis" program and is the largest boys team in Connecticut. We are fortunate to have two returning assistant coaches, Sean Passan and Steven Smith.

Philosophy: Hall Tennis has an excellent reputation for its high standards of performance and conduct on the courts. As coaches we try to achieve success by balancing team and individual goals and by focusing on performance rather than outcome objectives. Players strive to improve competitive skills, strategy, mental toughness and physical conditioning. As with any individual sport, it is crucial that we build a strong sense of team. With the captains' capable assistance, we emphasize team commitment as well as the privilege of representing Hall Tennis, Hall High School, their families and themselves. We hope to instill a love of tennis as a life sport. We also acknowledge that tennis is one aspect of a well-balanced high school experience. And, above all, we want our student-athletes to have fun while they grow and learn.

Team Separation: Our **Team 1** competes against the top teams in our league and state. Only 10 players (4 singles and 3 doubles) can start in a varsity match (no substitutions like other sports), so the Team 1 roster contains our best and most experienced players. To make Team 1, players should demonstrate advanced skill, effort and positive attitude. Players on Team 1 have considerable competitive experience that may include USTA tournament or Junior Tennis Team play. The varsity schedule is challenging, so the top players on the team (the starters) play most of the matches. To obtain a starting position players must demonstrate skill, athleticism, mental toughness and success in competitive situations, including--but not limited to--challenge matches. In addition starters must demonstrate a positive attitude, strong

effort and good sportsmanship. The second half of the varsity may or may not get into official matches, but will at the least play exhibition matches.

Primarily coached by our Assistant Coaches, **Team 2** has fewer matches (12) because most high schools don't have more than 10-15 players and fewer courts. Hall often has over 60! For Team 2, we do attempt to broaden participation with the goal to get as many athletes playing experience as is reasonable, based on the number of opponents and their skill level. That can be a challenge because we usually outnumber our opponents by a lot, and many of our opponents are actually comparable in size to the second half of our varsity team because they are private school programs that limit the sizes of their teams. For those reasons there is no guarantee that a player will see action on a given day or go to all of the matches. Some players may not get into any matches. We attempt to provide good competition for players and reward them for their commitment. If a player has erratic attendance to practice, he should not expect to play in matches.

Practice Times: Practice times and matches vary according to the match schedules of both teams. If neither has a match, a typical practice would be **Team 2** from 2:30-4:00 (early dismissal for late bus), or 1:00-2:45 on Wednesdays. **Team 1** would go from 3:45-5:45 (2:45-4:30 on Wednesdays). If the courts are unplayable, we may have indoor practice in one of the gyms but the time slot is assigned and must coordinate with Volleyball Practice. Practice and match times are posted on Hall's Athletic Department website(www.whps.org/hall/athletics) and at the Athletic Office. **Please understand that we need to be flexible with practice times** due to weather conflicts and make-up matches. Also please do not call the coaches for the practice schedule as it will be posted on the website and student-athletes may get information from Google Classroom (Tennis 2018, 9urgast is the code). There will be some Saturday practices and the second annual **Coaches Against Cancer** fundraising event on **April 21** at Amity High School to support cancer research. **Please try to schedule appointments around matches and practice times.** With postponements, that can be a challenge, but please do your best.

Players must contact coaches by email when they cannot attend and must give an explanation for their absence on that day. Please do so prior to the day when possible.

Vacation Schedule: During April vacation (7th-15th) we will have one scheduled event, the Kingswood Invitational Tournament for just a few Team 1 players. There will be practices (10am-12pm) during the week for players that are not on family or school trips on days that the courts are playable. During that week, there may be limited access to courts due to annual court repair/maintenance. There will be no indoor Gym practice that week.

Outside Tournaments: Players can play 4 outside events (not team scheduled matches) during the season from the date of our first varsity contest (April 2) through the State Tournament. That event will count for one of the 3 matches a player can play during one week (rain out makeups excluded). In order to do so the players must have signed permission from the Coach and School Principal. If you are interested in outside events, please contact Coach Sol to plan which weekends would be optimal, because playing in that event may mean exclusion from another one during the weeks surrounding it. Players cannot play on a Junior Tennis Team during the season (CIAC rule).

Equipment: Players must supply tennis racquet(s), a water bottle, warm-up sweat gear, hats, gloves and for some on Team 2, shorts. Team 1 will be issued two clean shirts and one clean pair of shorts; Team 2 will receive two clean shirts and some will get one pair of clean shorts. Players should not wear any team-issued gear other than at matches with the exception of wearing uniforms on certain match days (as prescribed by the captains). Other team apparel may be purchased at the discretion of each player/family. The captains will organize that effort. At the end of the season, uniforms must be returned (clean) to one of the coaches. Players must wear tennis-type shoes that have flat soles and good traction, cut in. Running shoes with protruded treads are a twisted ankle waiting to happen. I suggest that starting players have a second racquet, because strings break frequently in cold weather, and during a match, a player must continue play immediately after breaking a string. **Since tennis has no team room, make sure players' equipment is secured in lockers or other safe places.**
Leaving equipment and uniforms out is an invitation for theft.

Parent Support: Please help us by doing the following:

1. Help players maintain the appropriate **balance** between academics and sports. We expect students to maintain their academic standings and will work with students that have impending academic demands. Attendance at all practices and matches is **mandatory** unless excused by the coaches. Athletes must let us know (ASAP) if they cannot attend on a given day with a valid excuse so that we may plan practices and match rosters. Academic reasons are excusable to an extent, but proper planning and communication is essential to minimize that conflict. Again, try to make appointments that do not conflict with games or practices. **Note:** Students must be in school to participate in practices or matches. The only exceptions include parent-approved appointments or school related functions. Students must be in their classes on time, and cannot receive detentions for lateness or classroom conduct. Detentions are considered

unexcused absences from practice or matches and put the student/athlete and team at risk.

2. Help our student athletes receive proper rest and nutrition. Hydration is also very important, and they should be drinking plenty of water throughout the day and evening. **Athletes must bring a water bottle every day for personal use.** Information about proper hydration is readily available. Athletes should also dress appropriately (warmly!) for practice and be dressed for games as indicated by the captains or coaches.

3. Make sure the coaches know of medical situations (asthma, allergies) that may require daily attention, and make sure the athlete and coaches have access to necessary medication (**athletes must have inhalers with them each day**). Most of this information is already available, but if the student is injured, we must receive clearance from his physician to the trainers in writing before returning to play. Contact the Hall High Trainers about all injuries—before, during or after practices/games. Concussions require a very specific rehabilitation program to return to action. The coaches will have copies of medical forms in our possession. **Please review concussion information as well as the emergency medical procedures.**

4. All players must ride to and from away matches on the team bus. A parent may get a waiver of this rule when there are approved, conflicting and extenuating circumstances. These need to be signed and given to the coach. Players cannot drive themselves, nor can they ride with friends to and from matches. Waivers may be given or emailed to the coach.

5. Please encourage players to **communicate** any concerns or conflicts with the coaches directly and immediately. Please feel free to email us or call with your own questions/concerns, but have your son deal with his own issues first. You may find information on a daily basis on the Hall Athletic Department website (practices, games, postponements, etc). I will also send messages through a mass mailing to the emails with which you registered. Players should notify one of the coaches about attendance. They should not rely on teammates to deliver a message with the possible exception of one of the captains in an emergency. This year players should join Google Classroom (Tennis 2018, 9urqast).

6. Help supervise the contract for eligibility and review the **West Hartford Public School's Drug and Alcohol** policy. This very serious commitment asks players to refrain from substance use of any kind and align themselves to a code of conduct. To pretend that this is not an issue for any school, especially in a suburban town, is naive.

Our school and athletic policies are clear—there are graduated consequences for a violation, but a self-referral is possible **before** a violation occurs. Also players should know that just being in the presence of substances (at a party for example) is generally considered by police to be an offense that violates our school policy. Discuss this topic with your student-athlete and we will also do so as a team. Young people do occasionally make bad choices—we had an incident a few years ago that resulted in the removal of two seniors before the state tournament. That is not how a player or a team wants to end a season.

7. Players cannot engage in the improper use of Social Media, specifically with regard to bullying, teasing, hazing or the bashing of opponents or even teammates.. Rarely has this been a problem for boys tennis, but once again we cannot pretend that this does not occur.

8. Parents cannot coach or communicate with their student-athletes during matches and practices. Please funnel any of your questions, concerns and comments through coaches.

9. Please come to our matches and support our team! Let me know if or when you would like to meet or if you need more information.

I am writing to you, a green “electronic parent meeting” because I find it difficult to identify a good time that meets all of our schedules, and I can communicate all you need to know this way. I understand that this a lot of information.

Please come by and say hello (even if your sons tell you to stay away) because we love the support of our parents/fans. **Please e-mail me (Jim_Solomon@whps.org) to confirm that you have review this newsletter as well as the information attached from our Athletic Trainers.** Include any questions you may have.

Have a great spring and thank you for your support. We are proud of the tradition of Hall Tennis and, especially, of the consistently large numbers we get for this life sport.

Coach Jim Solomon (“Coach Sol”)

Coach Sean Passan

Coach Steve Smith

Below is the information required by our Athletic Trainers followed by the WHPS Student-Athlete Pledge

Hello Parents!

Jon Davis and Mary Crevier (the athletic trainers) are sorry we cannot be at this meeting to discuss this information with you. In our absence is this information sheet. Please read it over. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mary or Jon via email: mary.crevier@hhchealth.org or jonathan.davis@hhchealth.org (Please allow at least one business day for someone to return your call). We look forward to the season and working with your children.

Sincerely,

Jon Davis and Mary Crevier

Concussion Information

Connecticut Public Act No. 14-66 requires that a coach **MUST** immediately remove a student- athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body, or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. **Upon removal of the athlete, a qualified school employee must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student athlete has exhibited the signs and symptoms of a concussion.**

What is a concussion?

A mild traumatic brain injury, which causes a physiological disturbance in the brain function. It can be a physical and/or cognitive disturbance. A concussion can be caused by a direct blow to the head or to the body (causing a whiplash effect). A person does not need to lose consciousness to be considered to have suffered a concussion.

Signs and symptoms

-Include but are not limited to:

- Headache, dizziness, nausea, sensitivity to light/noise, blurred vision, ringing in the ears
- Confusion/disorientation, decrease in concentration, slower than normal, memory problems

How you usually get a concussion (sport specific)

- Lacrosse—an unforeseen hit, a hard hit, hit by ball, falling
- Baseball/Softball—hit by ball, collision with fielder/baserunner
- Volleyball—falling, hit by ball

Evaluation Process (to may not utilize all tests, depending on situation)

- Sideline – signs and symptoms evaluation; orientation; concentration; memory; physical exertion; Neurological
- Later in day/delayed reporting – history; signs and symptoms; ImPACT

Communication chain: parent, coach, nurse, AT

-Home games: ATC will evaluate for signs/symptoms, contact parent within 24 hours, contact nurse

-Away games/off campus practices: coach will notify the athletic trainer and speak with the parents, the athletic trainer will notify the nurses and evaluate the athlete upon return to school

****IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED, ATHLETES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM DRIVING UNTIL CLEARED BY PHYSICIAN****

Process for physician evaluation:

- Recommend that you see your primary care doctor so that they are aware of the injury
- We can help facilitate an appointment with one of the concussion specialists in the area

-A doctor's note is needed in order to return to begin the return to play progression protocols

- Once athlete is cleared from the doctor, we conduct a return to play progression at the school

Protocol once a concussion has been evaluated

- ImPACT (freshmen/new athletes – baseline test), retest once symptom free and until they pass
 - ImPACT recommends at least 7 days between post-injury retest
- Gradual return to play for athletics AND PE class
 - minimum 24 hours between each stage
 - must remain symptom free
 - (every sport is different – light aerobics, moderate aerobics, sport specific exercise, full practice)

Website for additional information

www.concussioncentral.ciacsports.com

<http://hall.whps.org/page.cfm?p=697> – Athletic training page, has multiple subcategories for more info

<https://www.impacttest.com/>

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information

What is sudden cardiac arrest?

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating. The causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A student's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues.

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Although SCA happens unexpectedly, some people may have signs or symptoms, such as: fainting or seizures during exercise; unexplained shortness of breath; dizziness; extreme fatigue; chest pains; or racing heart.

These symptoms can be unclear in athletes, since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

REMOVAL FROM PLAY

Any student-athlete who shows signs or symptoms of SCA must be removed from athletic activity and referred to a licensed health care professional trained specifically in the treatment of cardiac care. The symptoms can happen before, during or after activity.

RETURN TO PLAY

Before returning to play, the athlete must be evaluated. Clearance to return to play must be in writing. The evaluation must be performed by a licensed medical provider.

** All coaches are CPR and AED certified. At the beginning of each season, CPR and AED use is reviewed at the coaches meeting. There is an AED available in the school, should it be needed.

West Hartford Public Schools

Student-Athlete Pledge

WHPS Student-Athlete Pledge: As a student-athlete, I am a role model and accept the responsibility of representing positively my school, my team, my family and myself in the classroom and on the field. I understand I am responsible for honest academic work and fair play. I will refrain from engaging in any type of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking, hazing, and unnecessary physical contact. I know and understand the behavioral expectations of my school and my conference, and hereby accept the privilege of representing this school and community as a student-athlete.

As a West Hartford Public School Student-Athlete I will,

- Be respectful; adhere to and promote the principles of good sportsmanship
- Use appropriate language
- Treat everyone (teachers, coaches, teammates, officials, opponents and fans) fairly and with dignity and respect
- Never bully, harass or retaliate against any individual or group
- Abstain from tobacco and nicotine products, illicit drugs and alcoholic beverages; avoid any peer environment where those substances are present
- Abstain from performance-enhancing drugs
- Commit fully to my teammates and coaches for the duration of the season (including post-season if applicable); abide by all team rules and be punctual for all games practices and contests
- Report any injury or aggravating condition to an athletic trainer
- Settle any conflicts or issues appropriately and respectfully
- Comply with all WHPS policies and regulations

Consequences for violation of student-athlete pledge and conduct guidelines can result in suspension from a team.

Student-Athlete Printed Name

Student-Athlete Signature

Current Team

Date