

We are wrapping up our Pre Season Camp this week and our group is in good spirits and good form if I do say so myself. Our boys have gotten better and are a tighter group to show for the journey we have all been on. The journey started with our three Mustang Tennis Club sessions and then into our Pre Season Camp but not before we set out to meet our goal of playing in 10 tournaments in the off season. These are exciting times for Ponderosa Tennis and I know this will not shock you but I believe the best is yet to come!

Registration: It is crunch time now as EVERYONE needs to register by this Friday for boys tennis and if you have not already registered please send me an email letting me know if you will be playing with us this year and how the registration process is going or if you are experiencing any challenges. If you are reading this and you are from **Lutheran High School, another school without a boys tennis program or maybe you are "homeschooling"** you have some additional steps to jump through. Upon completion of registration and payment of the \$200 registration fee I will be notified and you will be cleared for tryouts. We are here to help but you need to jump all over this NOW You can reach out to me or our Parent Manager, Kerry Knackstedt, 720-413-9873 or email at kknackers@comcast.net for some help as well. IF YOU ARE FROM LUTHERAN or outside of Ponderosa you need to follow the instructions which you should have already received from me via email but reach out to me right away if you need help. We can do this!

Helpful Links:

Ponderosa Website: <https://ponderosahs.rschoollteams.com/>

Boys Tennis Website: <https://ponderosahs.rschoollteams.com/page/2929>

I have also **attached our newest flyer for Tryouts compliments of our Kat Creative Team** - (Thanks Kat Knackstedt!)

Culture Tidbit Today: Today after the drill we talked about **commitment, respect and choices**. I reminded our boys that our JV program and Varsity teams are both great programs and while **there is a place for everyone**, I used Varsity as an example of commitment. Varsity will NOT be for everyone nor is it their decision to make. Our varsity team is going to be spending a lot of time together; on the tennis court, in cars, at dinners, bonding events and if that's not enough we will even have homework and have to read! There are times we will be together 6 days a week with most weekends being spoken for and I mentioned this so they (and you) know what to expect. No surprises. For those with a passion for tennis and the competition and who honestly like each other the question will not be "why 6 days" it will be ``why not 7"! Again, it is okay if your player or your family are not there yet in terms of commitment and dedication but for those chosen for varsity this will be incredibly exciting. Making varsity should mean something special and it should be filled with honor and pride. Our varsity players will look forward to the next practice, drill, match or classroom experience together not because the coach is making them but because that is who they are and where they are in life. When this happens there is nothing that will be able to stop our team and program. Junior Varsity will also provide a transformational experience for our athletes whether

they are trying out tennis for the first time or perhaps honing their craft with an eye for trying for varsity the next year.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T... Spending so much time together it makes sense that in order for this to be fun we really need to respect one another and stay away from drama, gossip and mean spirited behaviour that tears through most teams and organizations. So many great coaches say that players and staff need to love one another. We will not always agree on things but can we agree (if we choose) that making this season the best one yet is what needs to be done for our boys, for those watching us and for our future. Respect is a foundational and cultural issue for me and everyone needs to buy in and drink the kool aid. Respect shows itself in different ways and sometimes looks like servanthood, talking nicely about others when they aren't around, transitioning from selfishness to selflessness or even getting on board with our mission, values or visions. Maybe respect is all about trying to pursue an objective that we put out like playing more tennis. Respecting one another in our program will make our boys positive role models. Respecting one another and finding common ground is a choice that we get to make and all Junior Varsity and Varsity players will need to choose respect. sportsmanship and helping others along the way.

Lastly, today I talked about how the **choice** to compete and try out for tennis is the athletes (and family) whereas the choice to select the athlete for varsity is the coaches. I told the boys that likely I will be asking at tryouts WHY we should select them for varsity if they get into that position. Obviously a great question and easy to answer until the realization comes out that it has to be believable and supported by word and deed. We don't get raises based on what we say we will do but rather in my experience raises generally come from what has already been done (unless of course you work in non profit). The job interview usually goes to the candidate with the most skills, abilities for that position but also the chemistry, attitude, passion and soft skills which can mean so much in the decision process. I talked about the "little things mattering" like responding to emails, texts or just saying hello, please and thank you, things that have seemingly been forgotten long ago. We have talked about coachability and I used my time to make sure that they thought about this idea that how we treat one another in our daily interactions matter in the big picture.

Now obviously I didn't share it all like this but I shared the heart of this message but I want to share it with you as we have many new families with us trying to figure out who we are and what we stand for. I hope that by reading these emails you find yourself encouraged, hopeful and wanting to jump on board to something that I think is really special and out of the ordinary. While what we are trying to do is all about tennis it can also be so much more if we work together to make a difference in the lives of those around us.

Let me know if you are trying out this year and if you have not already and if you are in the process of registration let me know how that is going. Reach out to me if you need any help as we want to make this as easy as possible.