

We are one week away from the start of the high school tennis season.

We have 110 players who have completed the interest form to let us know that they are planning to play. I've included a list of those who have completed the interest form with this message. It is arranged by grade level and then alphabetically by last name. If you have not yet completed the form, it's linked here - [SME Tennis Interest Form](#).

## **GETTING READY FOR TRYOUTS**

### **Paperwork**

Players need to have a completed KSHSAA Physical Form on file with the SME athletic department as well as a Concussion/Head Injury Release Form, and a Transportation Form in order to tryout. You can find a link to those forms here - [KSHSAA Physical Form](#), [Concussion/Head Injury Release Form](#), and [Transportation Form](#). Paperwork needs to be submitted to the SME office by the start of practice. You can either bring completed forms to the SME office - the office is open weekdays from 8:00-3:00, bring them to the Lancer Launch event on August 8, or email them to Mrs. Dusek - the athletic department assistant - [jeannedusek@smsd.org](mailto:jeannedusek@smsd.org). Also, please be sure to complete the Athletics Section that's part of the online verification process in both family and student accounts in Skyward.

### **Prepare Your Body**

In addition to getting your paperwork submitted, be sure that you are getting outside and getting acclimated to the temperatures. If you have spent most of your summer inside or only outside during the morning or at night, afternoon court temperatures can be a shock to your system. Start to get yourself prepared. Spend some time this week outside on the courts during the afternoon. Focus on eating a healthy diet, hydrating properly, and getting enough sleep so that your system is ready for tryout week.

---

### **TRYOUTS - What to Expect**

While we are a NO-CUT program, we do have a tryout and sorting process for all players. This process begins on Monday, August 14. I anticipate having two sessions each afternoon so that we can evaluate each player. Assuming that the HS courts are ready for us to use, I anticipate having two session each afternoon so that we can evaluate each player. Based on the numbers of players from each grade level, we'll plan to have the following groups for Monday and Tuesday:

- 9th and 11th Graders - 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- 10th and 12th Graders - 4:30-6:00 p.m.

All players will report to Harmon Park courts to check in, confirm that paperwork is complete and submitted, and get a tryout number. Please be early so that we can get everyone checked in and on court as quickly as we can. We want to give you as much time as we can to see you play.

We will use the first two days of tryouts to make an initial assessment of the players' ability level to determine who is in competition for spots in the Varsity/Junior Varsity Group. We will use a variety of drills to assess your ability to hit groundstrokes, volleys, serves, and serve returns. We will also be taking note of attitude and effort.

On Tuesday evening, we will send out a list of players who are in competition for a spot in the Varsity/Junior Varsity Group. Those players will compete in match play during the remaining three days of tryouts to determine those positions. Players who are not continuing into the match play portion of the tryout process will automatically be placed in the Blue/White group. We will use results from match play to determine final placements.

Additionally, because of KSHSAA regulations, we will have some players who cannot attend their first practice until they have completed their USTA events for the summer. We will evaluate them for placement as they join the team.

Finally, if you are an 11th or 12th grader and you do not have an interest in being part of the Varsity/JV group, please email me and let me know that you only want to be part of the Blue/White Group. We do need you to attend tryouts on Monday, August 14 to confirm that you have the necessary level of tennis proficiency to play and your paperwork submitted. Then, we will get you placed as part of the Blue/White group.

## **OUR GROUPS**

We use the tryout process to sort our players into two groups - Varsity/Junior Varsity Group and Blue/White Group. Our goal is to have these group determinations made by the end of the first week of practice.

### **Varsity/Junior Varsity Group**

Through the tryout process, we will designate a core group of players as the Varsity and Junior Varsity teams. Typically, this has been a group of 32 players. These players will practice from 3:00-5:00 each weekday. We generally meet together at the start of practice and then use both the HS courts as well as 6 upper courts at Harmon Park.

Assignments for specific matches will be determined based on the opponent's level, the opponent's squad size, and the event in order to create as many competitive matches for as many of our players as possible. Because KSHSAA limits the number of events each player can play and because we schedule more events than any one player can play, you will not compete in every match on the schedule. Match assignments are sent out on a weekly basis. If you want to see the current schedule of all matches for players in our program, it can be accessed through the [Sunflower League website](#).

Competition for the 2 singles positions and the 2 doubles teams who will represent East in the Regional tournament will take place throughout the season. In determining these positions, our goal is to field a squad that gives our team the best opportunity to win a 15th Team State Championship.

### **Blue/White Groups**

All players who do not make the Varsity/Junior Varsity group will be placed on a Blue and White team. The Blue and White group will be organized after Varsity/JV teams have been determined. In the past, we have had a Blue/White team draft/organizational meeting on Monday or Tuesday of the week of August 21. We will plan to do the same this season.

Players are organized into teams of between 5 and 8 players. These teams will practice and compete with each other on a rotating schedule usually from 5:00-6:00. More details about the schedule will be determined once we have this group set up.

The goal is that all players placed in the Blue and White groups will have the opportunity to compete in at least 2 interscholastic matches. Players may be asked to play in additional interscholastic matches as opportunities become available. The Blue/White season concludes with an intrasquad tournament.

You can read more about the way that our program is set up and our sorting process here - <https://smeasttennis.wixsite.com/tennis/tryout-information>

---

## **UNIFORMS**

Because of the turnaround time required for items, we need to launch and close the shop prior to the season starting. THE BSN TEAM STOP closes this evening - <https://bsnteamssports.com/shop/SMETN223>. You order and pay through the website. Items will all ship to me at school in bulk, and we will distribute items to players from there.

All players will need a white uniform top. The design is consistent with the tops from past seasons, so many players typically use the same uniform top as in the past. Our experiences with Under Armour lead me to believe that the tanks will run large.

All players will also need black shorts or a black tennis skirt for matches. Again, you are welcome to use items that you already own or have purchased previously. Our sales rep added a few additional t-shirts and sweatshirts that have a design consistent with our uniform top. None of those items are required.

We want all interested players to be able to play, so if cost is a concern, let me know, and we will work to make sure you have a uniform to wear.

### **LANCER DAY PARADE**

The Lancer Day Parade will be held on Thursday, August 31. The overall theme is Lancer Game Day. Typically, the tennis team builds a float and invites all members of all teams - Varsity, JV, and Blue/White - to be part of the decorating and parade. We will be looking for a family or two to host the build and a driver as well as a truck and trailer for the float itself. Our driver will also need to complete a district motor vehicle check. I have the form for our interested driver. Our seniors usually select and develop a plan for our theme. Theme submissions and float/driver plans need to be submitted by the end of the school day on Wednesday, August 23.

---

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Tues., August 8** - Lancer Launch

**Mon., August 14** - Tryout Day One - Meet at Harmon Park Courts

3:00-4:30 - 9th and 11th Graders

4:30-6:00 - 10th and 12th Graders

**Tues., August 15** - Tryout Day Two - Meet at Harmon Park Courts

3:00-4:30 - 9th and 11th Graders

4:30-6:00 - 10th and 12th Graders

**Wed., August 16** - Tryout Day Three - Meet at Harmon Park

3:00-4:30 - Group 1 of players still in competition for V/JV spots

4:30-6:00 - Group 2 of players will in competition for V/JV spots

**Thurs., August 17** - Tryout Day Four - Meet at Harmon Park

3:00-4:30 - Group 1 of players still in competition for V/JV spots

4:30-6:00 - Group 2 of players will in competition for V/JV spots

7:00 PM - Fall Sports - Meet the Coach Night - All players and a parent/guardian should plan to attend

**Fri., August 18** - Tryout Day Five - Meet at Harmon Park

3:00-4:30 - Group 1 of players still in competition for V/JV spots

4:30-6:00 - Group 2 of players will in competition for V/JV spots

**Sat., August 19**

8:00 AM - Team Pictures for ALL PLAYERS - V/JV/Blue and White - Meet at Turf Field

8:00-11:00 - Lancer Dancer Pancake Breakfast - I've attached a flyer with information

**\* Reminder for USTA Tournament Players** - If you are planning to play in a USTA L4 event over Labor Day weekend, be sure to reach out to me - [andrewgibbs@smsd.org](mailto:andrewgibbs@smsd.org) - to discuss your plans for the season. The registration deadline for the L4 is August 23. Remember, KSHSAA does not allow you to compete in outside (non-high school) tournaments or attend group clinics/classes after you've joined the high school team and attended your first practice. We need to communicate so that we can keep you eligible and account for you in our tryout process.