

Team Handbook

Purpose - The purpose of this handbook is to provide a framework where everyone understands what we expect of each athlete on the team as well as the coaches. It is born of not only our own experience but that of other high school and college coaches. Our goal is to have as many questions as possible answered by these guidelines, not only to make our lives easier as coaches, but to give each member of this team confidence that they know what is expected each time we get together.

Grades - The number one goal of the team is to ensure that every student on the bowling team performs to the highest of academic standards and graduates from Denham Springs High School. We have a responsibility to hold each other accountable so that all students on the team can remain eligible for the full season of competition.

Goal setting - The coaching staff will communicate team goals at the parent meeting and with the team early in the pre-season. Each member of the team will schedule a goal setting session with a coach. Here we will assess long term goals, predominantly for bowling. Still, we want you to be the best student-athlete you can be at Denham Springs High School so setting academic goals can and should be part of this process. If bowling fits into your future plans, especially in college, we want to do our best to help you set realistic goals to get there. Having a good GPA is one of the biggest factors in getting noticed at the next level.

Fitness - You are expected to maintain a fitness level necessary to give you the best ability to perform for this team. Better fitness improves mental acuity and allows you to do more physically as a bowler. Making it to a Final Four requires bowling 9 games in a single day to achieve that goal. If you are not used to the level of fitness required to do that, the coaching staff will work with you to put a plan together to increase your fitness level. It is almost universal at the elite levels of bowling that they take an athletic approach to fitness.

Nutrition - Order your food choices towards optimum performance. Make every effort to eat a solid healthy breakfast and lunch on game days. Choose snacks and drinks wisely and eat long before matches start. Nothing will impact your performance more than a sugar crash during matches. If you notice that you perform particularly poorly or particularly well in practice make a note of what you ate on those days and try to repeat nutrition habits that result in your best physical and mental outcomes.

Team integrity - The bowling team is a diverse group and consists of bowlers from a variety of backgrounds. You are expected to respect every person on this team. Our goal is mutual growth. We are to respect our differences and hold firm to our common ground as a team with a mission. Disrespecting the dignity and/or privacy of your peers is disruptive to the team and is subject to strong disciplinary action including dismissal from the team.

Personal conduct - As a member of this team you will not verbally express nor post any unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, defamatory, vulgar, obscene, sexually explicit, profane, hateful or racially, ethnically, or otherwise objectionable material of any kind. Your own reputation as well as that of the team and school are on display. Online services remember everything. Students have lost opportunities for failure to abide by common standards of personal conduct. Violation of this policy is grounds for dismissal from the team.

Embrace the culture - Finally, be prepared to embrace the culture of this team. If you do not believe in our team culture, for your sake and ours, do something else. We are working towards a common goal of excellence which requires buy-in to the standards we expect.

Team Captains

Team captains will be decided by the team within the first few practices after the first set of tryouts for the season. When selecting captains, team members should consider all of the qualities we want to strive for as a team.

Team Culture

According to an article published by Psychology Today, team culture “is the expression of a team’s values, attitudes, and goals about sports, competition, and relationships.”

This season the team will abide by a mission statement that encompasses a series of values that make up who we are. These values are timeless and will benefit you throughout the course of your life. The goal is to be mission oriented and to become a unit guided by these common principles.

Mission Statement

The bowling teams at Denham Springs High School will foster strong relationships forged in trust and refined by accountability. We will embody confidence because we will have earned it by the persistent effort in improving our skills. We will immerse ourselves in these core values of relationship, trust, accountability, confidence and effort to strengthen the student athlete in ways that will benefit not only our team but will benefit them well into their future.

Relationships

We will cultivate strong relationships. No member is an island and everyone is responsible to assist in the growth of our team. We are less concerned with being the 6-bowler than we are with the success of the whole team. If we have six bowlers capable of being the 6-bowler we are better accomplishing this goal. It allows us to drive each other and strive for greater success than we each can on our own. Over the course of the season we will make an effort to get to know our teammates. When we know our teammates well we have a vested interest in their improvement. They are not adversaries vying for our spot, they are cooperating members of a team trying to achieve the goal of winning championships. We grow best when we support those around us in their growth.

Effort

We will put forth the effort necessary to improve over the course of the season. This means being at each practice and match. This means studying the game and diligently developing the physical and mental skills required to be the best bowler you can be. Effort is something everyone on the team can choose to be a leader in.

As the saying goes ... Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.

Accountability

We will hold each other accountable to the standards we set forth for our team.

We expect regular practice attendance and adherence to practice standards.

We expect the following to be present with each shot:

- Consistent pre-shot routine
- Clean start
- Balanced finish
- Follow through (relaxed arm swing)
- Watch the ball exit the pin deck

This accountability will flow into matches where we will be expected to bowl our average, make convertible spares and win each of our head to head matches.

We will expect the following out of each team member:

- Do what you say you are going to do.

- Make no excuses.
- Take ownership.
- Recognize your role.
- Do what it takes to improve your role.

Confidence

We will embody confidence as a team because we will have earned it.

We will not fear failure but rather will see it as an opportunity for growth. We will start off practices with common drills and work towards drills and games with more difficult goals. This will allow us to build confidence through the development of skill by repetition. It will allow us to increase our confidence by exercising those skills in situations designed to challenge us.

For example, if you struggle with corner pins, the only way you will overcome them is to persistently practice converting them until you are confident in your execution.

Trust

We will trust our teammates and coaches.

Trust leads to team unity and enhances the ability for all persons to reach their highest potential on the team. A lack of trust results in disruption, lower performance and a lack of confidence.

We will build trust by adhering to our vision, defining clear roles and responsibilities, rewarding desired behaviors, building confidence and encouraging open communication.

You must trust your coaches to do their best to help you to get better.

You must trust your teammates to do their part to get better and to assist you in getting better.

Coaches must trust the team to listen to guidance and learn as much as they can about this sport.

Finally, you must trust yourself by developing confidence which comes from hard work and repetition of core skills.

Practice

Practice format - Organized practices will be scheduled twice a week with the team typically on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. They will start promptly at 3:30pm and last until 5:00pm. They will consist of three sections:

1. **Mental minute (~10 mins):** this will be a short learning portion of the practice and will consist of knowledge from one of three aspects of the game; physical, tactical and mental.
2. **Warmup and core drills (20 min):** This section will consist of one of our core drills which are designed for warming up and focusing on multiple aspects of the physical game.
3. **Versatility drills and application (remainder time):** This section will consist of versatility drills such as low ball, seven arrows or spare drills. This will also be the time when you will bowl "measure" games to apply what you might have learned during the first segments of practice.

Practice schedules will be posted prior to the week. Ideally you should get one spare drill and at least two "measure" games per week.

Missing practice - You are expected to be at every practice. If you need to miss practice for school or some other good reason call ahead so we know you won't be there. You will be expected to make up your practice separately. Finally, keep in mind that players who seem to miss a lot of practice, especially prior to the season, may have made arrangements to practice at other times due to school conflicts. Trust that everyone is making an appropriate effort when it comes to practice.

Unscheduled practices - We will schedule practices outside of the normal schedule to better prepare for specific opponents and if very clear goals arise from competition that need prompt attention. These practices are highly recommended but we realize you have other obligations and have potentially scheduled things around the other practices and matches. Attendance will be noted for these practices so please make every effort to be there.

Tracking your progress - Coaches will schedule goal setting sessions with each team member. Goal setting requires tracking information. Everyone is expected to download Lanetalk and track their practice games and all league / high school games. The coaching staff will track your practice while with the team as well. We will teach you how to use these tools to identify your weaknesses so that you can improve.

Gameday

Gameday expectations - You are expected to be at every match where you are on the active roster. It is recommended that you are present to support the team even if you are not on the active roster. Prepare your uniform and your bowling equipment before game day. Visit the bathroom and wash your hands prior to the start of practice to ensure a clean release and to minimize interruptions during matches.

Lineups - The active roster for a match is set by the coaches prior to the start of play. We will inform the team if changes occur with the active roster prior to the match. Playing time is typically based on averages. However, there are other methods we use to help put us in a better position to win. If someone is showing great progress in practices, JV matches or other leagues that will be considered and low lane players may be shuffled to find more ideal lineups for future weeks. Playing time once matches are won have several goals and are at the discretion of the coach. Some examples might be: Establishing averages for substitutions or allowing the coaching staff to assess players in a competitive situation.

This is a team. Everyone on this team is one part of a whole unit. If you do not play a single varsity game all season, you are still part of the team and your participation is valued as a member of the team.

Emotional control - You must maintain control of your emotions during practice and during matches. You can only control what is in front of you and losing emotional control disrupts your ability to perform at a high level moving forward. Use of foul language or displays of excess anger will result in an immediate benching for the current game and, depending on the severity of the offense, potential suspension from the team.

Missing games (including being late) - Missing games without a serious reason (a reason you would miss work or school -- illness, death in the family, car trouble) is an offense to the integrity of the team. It greatly impacts planning and team morale. A team is a unit with many dependents. If a child is eligible to play by school standards then they are expected to be at a match. *Missing games without clearance by the coaching staff for said serious reasons ONLY will result in a one game suspension to be served after the week you miss games. Multiple offenses of missing games without clearance by the coaching staff will result in dismissal from the team for the current season.*

School conflicts - Conflicts like band, required testing, other sports etc. will be resolved by the appropriate educational/coaching staff. Please inform us as soon as possible about any conflicts. If the school staff rules that participation in a bowling event will not affect your grade you are deemed eligible and therefore expected to be at a match. Conflicts between multiple sports will be managed between the specific athletes and the coaches of each sport respectively. *Studies show great benefits to athletes who participate in multiple sports therefore we will make every effort to accommodate this participation.*

Off season expectations

- You are expected to continue bowling in the off-season. There are youth leagues, less expensive times you can bowl and high school discounts that make it easy to put a significant amount of time into improving your skill.
- You are expected to study your craft. There is a lot you can learn about this game and we can direct you to excellent resources.
- Private coaching is recommended especially if you are getting regular time in the starting lineup.

Social Media - Our team has a website. Our team also has active social media channels. Please regularly interact with our social media platforms. Tag us. Make comments and most importantly share them with everyone you know. The growth of our social media platforms gives us greater influence when looking for team sponsors. The more influence we have, the LESS fundraising we have to do.

Instagram @jacketsbowling

Twitter @jacketsbowling

TikTok @jacketsbowling

Facebook - Search for @jacketsbowling

YouTube - Search for jacketsbowling

Our social media platforms (particularly on Instagram and Twitter) follow and are followed by several college and university programs from around the country. One of our goals is to promote YOU should you desire to take that next step. These social media platforms are critical to making this possible. Share for the sake of the future of someone you care about on this team.

Fundraisers - All members will participate in at least one fundraiser related to the team during the preseason.

Business sponsorship plan - Early in each school year we will push for sponsorships from local businesses. If your employer or your company offers athletic sponsorship options please make us aware. We are currently planning ways to identify our sponsors to others including the use of our social media platforms, signage and other methods.

Grow the team - Last, but not least. Each season have your friends come try out with us even if they don't think they will make the team. Have them come support our teams at the matches. Don't let this team be your secret. We want to grow bowling and we want to put the best rosters possible out there to win at the highest level.

Letter of receipt

Please verify you have read this team handbook and understand the expectations of both the coaches and the students on the team by signing this letter of receipt.

Return this signed page to the coaching staff at practice OR preferably email a scanned copy to team@jacketsbowling.com

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____