

**TEAM CHARACTER WILL BE A MAJOR FOCUS THIS YEAR ; RESPECT,  
ACCOUNTABILITY AND TEAM UNITY ARE OUR #1 FOCUS!!!!**

You are all old enough to realize the difference between right and wrong. I expect all players to hold themselves accountable for their actions.

ALL PLAYERS WILL SHOW THE UTMOST RESPECT TO;

- 1) OFFICIALS - There will be no talking back or SWEARING to or at the OFFICIALS at any time!! Once a call is made, THEY WILL NOT CHANGE IT!! Whether the call is a PROPER CALL OR NOT, live with it!!! Arguing will only make matters worse for you and your team. Let Us Coaches debate any questionable call if need be.  
\*\*ADVERSITY , WHEN HANDLED PROPERLY, WILL MAKE YOU STRONGER, WHEN HANDLED IMPORPERLY, IT WILL ONLY MAKE YOU WEAKER !!!!
- 2) COACHES- All coaches will be treated with respect by all players. We are here because we want to be and we want to help you all grow as both players and young men. Both PLAYERS and COACHES make mistakes but there is a proper way to address mistakes.
- 3) TEAMMATES- I expect ALL players to respect each other!! Team unity is a priority and team success CANNOT be reached without it!
- 4) OPPONENTS- In order to gain respect, you need to give it!! Play hard and even dislike your opponents, but DO NOT disrespect, criticize or demean your opponents. Let your hustle and play do the talking on the ice.
- 5) SPECTATORS, FANS AND FAMILIES- I will NOT tolerate any player addressing any spectator, fan(s) or families in a negative, disrespectful way. Your attention needs to be on YOUR GAME. Any problems, gestures, comments or the like from spectators/fans will be ignored by our players. No reaction to the spectators, fans or families will be made by our players!

**DISCIPLINE YOURSELF SO NO ONE ELSE HAS TO !!!!!!!**

Be accountable for your own actions; Own your ACTIONS and own your CHARACTER  
Character goes a LONG WAY in life !!

In order to maintain our TEAM UNITY, RESPECT and ACCOUNTABILITY, I intent to hold all players accountable for their own actions. There will be DISCIPLINARY ACTION for any player who does not abide by the important above listed points.

(We will further discuss this as a team. Everyone involved in LAWRENCE COUNTY HOCKEY wants to grow and succeed as an Association, but we CANNOT ignore the importance of doing so with Respect and Dignity. It is up to all of us, Coaches, Player and Families, to build and EARN that respect. It all starts with ACCOUNTABILITY.)

Below are a few points that I wanted to relate to all of our players so that everyone is on the same page and is aware of at least a few things that I expect from our players. I am VERY excited about this upcoming year as I believe our roster is incredibly STRONG !!! However, as we often see in all levels of sports, strong talent alone is NOT ENOUGH to reach our highest potential level of success.

Let's all work together and be accountable both individually and as a team in order to reach our highest potential. No one player is greater than the Team itself; WE WILL WIN TOGETHER AND LOOSE TOGETHER AS A TEAM !!

IF WE GROW TOGETHER, RESPECT EACH OTHER AND UNITE TOGETHER AS A TEAM, WE WILL BE **VERY SUCCESSFUL** this coming year and most importantly, we will **HAVE FUN DOING IT!!**

- WORK HARD – When you're on the ice both at PRACTICE and at the GAME, make it worth it !! Be prepared to practice and play. A proper mind set is needed to get the most out of what you have. Take at least 10 minutes prior to BOTH PRACTICE and a GAME to focus on what you are about to do for the next hour to hour and a half. **Be warmed up and ready to practice ON TIME or early.**
- BE POSITIVE - A negative mindset can be VERY destructive to both yourself and to the team. We will ALL make mistakes but all of our mistakes can be overcome with a POSITIVE, learning attitude. Provide motivation and support to fellow teammates. This will build the unity we need to become successful.
- PAY ATTENTION – Both at Practice and at the Game...Paying attention to both what YOU are doing along with others is a very valuable asset to improving your play. When a coach is addressing the team, I expect full attention from everyone. Practice time is very limited and we have to make the best of what we have.
- ACCOUNTABILITY- Own your own actions and play. Don't be that player that criticizes other teammates or blames others in times of failure. **Everyone has something they can improve on, including the Coaches, and everyone makes mistakes. Nobody wants to make a mistake but it happens to EVERYONE. When it does, support your teammate with positive encouragement.** Pick each other up and learn from our mistakes.
- BE PHYSICALLY RESPONSIBLE – Hitting and Physical play is part of the game. I, for one, love the physical, checking aspect of hockey. However, all players MUST understand that this part of the game is becoming VERY scrutinized by the officials with respect to the safety factor. I expect all of our player to utilize CHECKING in a responsible way. Both coaches AND official alike, understand and know the difference between hitting for a hockey purpose (separate man from puck) and hitting with intent to injure!! PLAYERS, please understand that the difference is VERY NOTICABLE, and you all need to be responsible when using your body (checking). The official will hold YOU RESPONSIBLE for an unnecessary HIT OR CHECK on a opponent and enforce it through penalties. We (coaches and families) want you on the ice, playing the game, not in the penalty box or in the locker room due to disqualification. Be aware that this is going to be strictly enforced by the OFFICIALS this year and there is NOTHING we can do about it but hold each player accountable for the hits they make.

- READ and REACT - We have a very talented team! I expect a fast, flowing type game from our team this year. So, here are a few things to keep in mind with that regard;
  - Read each event on the ice and have a plan for it. Be aware of where you are on the ice with regards to the play at hand. Try to anticipate what will occur PRIOR to it occurring.
  - We will be playing AS A TEAM, A FIVE MAN UNIT at all times, at all areas of the ice; In the Defensive Zone, Neutral Zone and Offensive Zone. Proper Gap Control, amongst ourselves, not just our opponents, is crucial.
- Good puck handlers/carriers give up the puck BEFORE they are in trouble, not AFTER they are in trouble!! I EXPECT TEAM PLAY!!!! NOT SELFISH PLAY!!! A good hockey player knows when to carry the puck, shoot the puck or pass the puck. Players NEED to be aware and take advantage of opportunities given to them by their opposition. This is often the difference between a GOOD team and a GREAT team.
- Don't just Clear/Ice the puck wildly (unless actually needed). Try to have a plan for each puck that arrives on your stick AND each puck that leaves your stick. Have a purpose when you gain control of the puck and try to be as productive with each puck touch as possible.
- When we possess the puck, EVERYONE is on OFFENSE (Including Defense), when the opposition has the puck, EVERYONE is on DEFENSE (Including Forwards). Often times, when puck possession is lost, the Forwards shut down, or hang high. This will NOT be tolerated this year. Back checking and forechecking is essential. The FIVE MAN UNIT idea is essential here. Wingers WILL come back strong to support their Defensive players with puck control being the priority.
- Simple Puck Possession is essential. We will be STRONG on the puck all year long. I expect 100% from everyone when their skates hit the ice. I also want to possess the puck WITH A PURPOSE-again, have a plan when we gain control of the puck. This means that player positioning is vital so that the play is in constant movement or flow.
- Stagnant play or not moving your feet only helps your opponent; Hockey is a game of movement, momentum and flow, whether you have the puck or not. We will be focusing on constant movement, moving your feet to maintain constant momentum for play development.
- **Earn your spot on the Team every shift! You will be playing at a very high level this year. No matter what line you play on you will be expected to play at your full potential every shift. This mean at practice as well as during a game. If you do not your ice time will be affected.**

