

Cheerleading By-Laws

CHEERLEADING – Squad size limits may be imposed.

NOTE: Kelli Smith, AD at UGHS, serves as “advisor” to our HCMSAL competition cheer program.

A. All cheerleading competitions must be conducted according to the rules of the “National Federation Spirit Rules Book” and the “GHSAL Competitive Cheerleading Manual.” The GHSAL cheerleading manuals are posted on the GHSAL web site (www.ghsa.net)

B. The maximum number of competitions for middle school cheerleading is four (4) plus the HCMSAL championship. Middle school squads may not compete in any high school competition; there is no middle school national competition. Competition cheerleading must follow GHSAL calendar; may attend only GHSAL sanctioned events (excluding county championship); the county championship will be after the end of the GHSAL season.

C. All competitive coaches must have taken and passed the AACCA safety course (www.nfhslearn.com) that includes liability insurance. NOTES: Course completion is good for 4 years; full-time employees are covered by liability policy; school to pay cost of course.

D. Other information:

1. Tryouts may be scheduled to include four (4) days of preparation time before the actual tryout date.

2. The coach cannot require additional or supplemental training; i.e.; tumbling classes or participation with other elite competitive teams.

3. All camps must be attended outside of the school year during the summer months.

4. All schools with competitive cheer teams will participate in the league championships.

E. A competitive cheerleading team is comprised of a maximum of sixteen (16) performers.

1. Non students are not allowed to be a part of a cheer group either as junior cheerleader or as mascot (GHSAL white book).

2. A school may have a roster greater than sixteen performers, and may use any combination of eligible cheerleaders in any competition in each specific division.

3. All team members must be dressed in the adopted school uniform that displays the school identification (i.e., letter, monogram, mascot symbol, etc.) EXCEPTION: The mascot is exempt from this rule.

F. The competitive area is a 42'x42' blue cheerleading mat and the routine must be performed within the boundaries of the competitive area.

1. A full set of cheerleading mats (42'x42') must be used in all competitions including invitational, regional, and state competitions.

2. Only coaches, competitors, and officials are allowed in the competitive area.

3. Only team members may act as spotters.

4. Non-competitors may not assist during the routine.

5. All mats should be placed on the floor horizontally facing the judges. Center of the mat should be marked with tape. The floor will be considered out-of-bounds.

6. It is recommended, but not mandatory, that cheerleaders practice stunting on one or more 6'x42' cheerleading mats prior to performing stunts in a team routine.

G. The competitive routine must include both cheer and dance.

1. Tumbling skills are permitted only within the body of the routine.

2. Tumbling skills may not be performed as a part of the entrance to or exit from the competitive area.

3. Pom-poms are the only props allowed in a competitive routine.

H. The length of the routine shall be a maximum of two minutes and thirty seconds (2:30), timed by an official timer.

1. The routine must begin within thirty (30) seconds of the head judge's signal. Failure to do so shall result in a five-point deduction for delay of the meet.

2. Teams may begin from any position inbounds, and the time of the routine will begin with the first word, musical sound, or movement of any team member.

3. The routine ends on the last word, musical sound, or movement of any team member.

4. If the routine ends with a pyramid, the final dismount is not timed.

5. There is no minimum/maximum time limit for music in the routine.

6. If the routine is longer than the allotted time, a deduction of five (5) points for every fifteen (15) second period or portion thereof will be assessed.

I. Each school is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the music in its routine.

1. The principal must review the music to be used in the school's routine, and must stipulate that the music is in good taste for middle school students and acceptable for the morals of their community.

2. Each school must furnish a high-quality tape/CD of their music.

NOTE: It is recommended that each school bring an identical back-up tape/CD.

3. The coach or team representative is responsible for starting and stopping the music during the competition.

4. Schools are responsible for furnishing their own equipment and music for use in the practice/warm-up area.

J. Competitive routines shall be judged according to the following criteria:

1. Judging Categories

(a) Jumps

Degree of Difficulty - 6 points Execution - 8 points

(b) Standing Tumbling

Degree of Difficulty - 6 points Execution - 8 points

(c) Running Tumbling

Degree of Difficulty - 6 points Execution - 8 points

(d) Partner Stunts/Tosses

Degree of Difficulty - 8 points Execution - 10 points

(e) Pyramids

Degree of Difficulty - 8 points Execution - 10 points

(f) Dance - 8 points

(g) Cheer/Chant - 5 points

(h) Creativity - 3 points

(i) Formations/Transitions - 3 points

(j) Showmanship - 3 points

2. Deductions will be made for the following:

(a) NFHS Rules Violations (minor) - -2 points

(b) NFHS Rules Violations (major) - -5 points

(c) Sportsmanship - -10 points

(d) Improper uniforms - -5 points

(e) Falls - -5 points

- (f) Tumbling outside of the Routine - -5 points
- (g) Boundary violations - -5 points
- (h) Delay of meet - -5 points
- (i) Time infractions (overtime) - -5 points for each 15 seconds or portion thereof

3. Disqualifications will be made for the following:

- (a) Illegal substitution (ineligible member or non-team member)
- (b) Too many members on a competitive squad
- (c) Unauthorized props

K. Winners in the competitions will be determined by the highest point total from the judges after the highest score and the lowest score have been dropped.

1. In case of a tie, all judges' scores will be totaled.

2. If a tie still remains after all scores have been totaled, all judges will determine the ranking of the tied teams to break the tie.

L. Prior to any disqualification for a rules violation, the Head Judge must call a conference at the conclusion of competition, and the majority of the judges must agree the violation occurred.

M. Judges' decisions are final. The HCMSAL does not allow protests in any activity.

N. In all competitions, all judges must be registered with the GHSA and must have completed the GHSA training program.

1. A minimum of three (3) judges will be used at all competitions.

2. Judges must be secured by certified school personnel by contacting the assigning officer of a local judges' association.

O. Websites for further information: www.ghsacheerleading.com; www.georgiacheer.com

p. Basketball Cheer: No Stomping in bleachers or "Bucking" at the other cheer teams.

NOTE: All cheer forms are included in the Appendix to the By-Laws (GHSA forms).