

ARTICLE 19:

Cheer and Dance

19.1 Safety

19.1.1 NFHS current version will be strictly followed during all practices and competitions.

19.1.2 Refer to the current version of NFHS Spirit Rules and Regulations for legal and illegal moves for all divisions, including cheer and dance.

19.2 Skills Performed (Surfaces)

19.2.1 Following surfaces only: Mat, grass or rubberized track surface

19.2.1.1 Basket tosses

19.2.1.2 Elevator/sponge tosses and other similar multi-based tosses

19.2.1.3 Partner stunt in which the base uses only one arm to support the top person.

19.2.1.4 Twisting tumbling skills (Arabians, full twisting layouts, etc.).

19.2.1.5 The exception to this rule is the following: Cartwheels, round-offs, and aerial cartwheels are allowed on surfaces other than a mat, grass, or rubberized track.

19.2.1.6 Basket tosses, elevator tosses, and similar multi-based tosses are prohibited for ALL ELEMENTARY grades 1-5, MIDDLE SCHOOL, and JUNIOR HIGH TEAMS or ATHLETES IN THESE GRADE LEVELS PERFORMING WITHIN A HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL, regardless of ability.

19.2.1.7 Elementary is a CAA non-sanctioned division.

19.3.1 Game Day:

19.3.1.1 Elementary - may include grades K - 6th grade.

19.3.1.2 Jr. High School - may include grades 5th - 8th.

19.3.1.3 High School – may include grades 7th – 12th.

19.3.1.4 This category may not include music during the cheer section, tumbling, or lifts above shoulder level. 2 cheers must be performed and 1 band dance/fight song. Length of

cheers may not exceed 1 minute, and the band dance may not exceed 1.5 minutes. These 3 will be performed simultaneously with a short pause for judges to make notes in between. Squads will be judged from the total score of all three. The use of signs, poms, flags, and/or megaphones is highly encouraged. Performance should be focused on crowd involvement and school spirit.

19.3.2 NOVICE SHOWCHEER

19.3.2.1 Elementary - may include grades K-6th

19.3.2.2 Jr. High - may include grades 5th through 8th.

19.3.2.3 High School - may include grades 6th through 12th

19.3.2.4 Total routine time must not exceed 2.5 min. The Cheer/Chant Section must not exceed 1 min, and the Music Section may not exceed 1.5 min. You may have music throughout the entire routine. Just keep in mind that the judges will need to hear the words of the cheer. Stunts/Lifts are not allowed above shoulder level, and both feet must be supported at all times at prep level. 1-leg stunts are allowed at waist level and below ONLY. These restrictions also apply to pyramids. Cradle catches with a flare not exceeding 1 1/4 twists are allowed at both Jr. High and High School levels. There are to be no basket/shotgun tosses or inversions in the novice category. To receive credit for a stunt, the top person must be completely off the performance surface and supported by another person, following the stunt guidelines of the level. To receive credit for a pyramid, the same applies to stunts, but 2 top persons must connect by hand or foot during the pyramid as well. Standing tumbling in this category may not exceed a kick-over/walkover. Examples of standing tumbling allowed: front rolls, handstands, cartwheels, round-offs, back or front kick-over/walkover. Running tumbling must not exceed a single handspring in connection. Examples include a round-off back handspring and a front walkover round-off handspring. Handspring series are NOT allowed at this level.

19.3.3 SHOWCHEER

19.3.3.1 Jr. High - may include grades 5th through 8th.

19.3.3.2 High School - may include grades 6th through 12th

19.3.3.4 Total routine time is 2.5 min. This category may include a Cheer & Music combination. The cheer section must not exceed 1 min, and the music section may not exceed 1.5 min. You may have music throughout the entire routine. Just keep in mind that the judges will need to hear the words of the cheer. Stunts/lifts above shoulder level, 1-leg stunts, inversions, and basket tosses are allowed but must follow the NFHS 2023-2024 and CAA Article 19 guidelines. Cradle catches with a flare not exceeding 1 1/4 twists are

allowed at both Jr. High and High School levels. No Jr. High or below students may be involved in a basket/cradle/elevator toss. To receive credit for a stunt, the top person must be completely off the performance surface and supported by another person, following the stunt guidelines for the level. To receive credit for a pyramid, the same applies to stunts, but 2 top persons must also connect by hand or foot during the pyramid. All NFHS guidelines must be followed. There are no restrictions on tumbling other than those already stated in the NFHS guidelines.

19.3.4 GROUP STUNT

19.3.4.1 Jr. High - may include grades 5th through 8th.

19.3.4.2 High School - may include grades 7th through 12th

19.3.4.3 Stunt group routines must not exceed 1:30 and use all-music. Stunt routines may not incorporate choreographed motions (other than the flier during a stunt), tumbling (unless part of the stunt/transition), dance or jumps. Jr. High Students or below are not allowed to participate in elevator or basket tosses. However, cradle catches with a flare not exceeding 1 1/4 twist are allowed at both Jr. High and High. The maximum number in the group may not exceed 5 participants.

19.3.5 TUMBLING

19.3.5.1 Participant is to perform one single standing tumble skill, **one** running tumble pass not to exceed one length of the floor. Division may not exceed one participant per entry. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-place Medals will be awarded. No limit on the number of entries per school.

19.3.6 JUMPING

19.3.6.1 Participant is to perform one standing jump and one combo not to exceed three jumps in combo. No tumbling or dance may be incorporated. Division may not exceed one participant per entry. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place Medals will be awarded. No limit on the number of entries per school.

19.3.7 DANCE

19.3.7.1 Jr. High - may include grades 5th through 8th.

19.3.7.2 High School - may include grades 7th through 12th

19.3.7.3 Routine will include music and may not exceed 2.5 min without penalty. Props and pom-poms are allowed. Any props must be set up prior to the beginning of the routine by the team or their representative and must follow NFHS Guidelines. If there is no separate Hip- Hop category any tumbling will not create additional points for

Choreography, Technique, Group Execution, or Overall Presentation. All routines must follow the rules and regulations stated in the NFHS Spirit handbook.

19.3.7.4 Score points and deduction sheet are also included so you know what your squads will be judged on.

19.3.7.5 Music may not include any verbal content that is offensive, sexually suggestive, degrading to persons for any reason or of a violent nature. A deduction or exclusion may be assessed by the judges. Coaches watch your music closely or secure music that has no vocals.

19.3.7.6 Motions may not include content that is offensive, sexually suggestive, degrading to persons for any reason or of a violent nature. A deduction or exclusion may be assessed by the judges.

19.4 COMPETITION TROPHIES

19.4.1 At Least 5 entries: 1st, 2nd, 3rd

19.4.2 At Least 3 entries: 1st, 2nd

19.4.3 If there are fewer than 3 entries in a division, only a 1st place trophy will be awarded.

19.4.4 All awards will be decided by the judges, and their decision is final.

19.5 STUNT/PYRAMID DEDUCTIONS

19.5.1 Bobbles – 0.5

Examples:

1. Stunts and Pyramids that almost drop or fall, but are saved
2. Blatant incomplete twisting cradles (landing on stomach)
3. Knee or hand touching the ground during cradle or dismount
4. Severe balance checks

19.5.2 Falls – 1.0

Examples:

1. Falls from individual stunts/pyramids, etc.
2. Falls from individual stunts to a pop-down dismount
3. 1 person lands on the performance surface

19.5.3 Major Falls – 1.5

19.5.3.1 Falls from individual stunt to the ground (top person lands on ground or multiple bases land on the ground)

19.5.4 Collapse – 2.0

19.5.4.1 When multiple deductions are assessed during an individual stunt sequence or during a pyramid sequence and the sum of those deductions are greater than 2.0, the occurrences are instead combined and converted into a single deduction of 2.0 and noted as a collapse.

19.6 ATHLETE DEDUCTIONS

19.6.1 Bobbles - 0.25

Examples

1. Hands down on tumbling
2. Knees touching the ground in back handspring
3. Seat touching ground in standing tucks

19.6.2 Falls – 0.5

Examples

1. Drops to the floor during individual (Jumps and tumbling)

19.7 TIME LIMIT VIOLATIONS

19.7.1 Teams that exceed 2.5 mins will be subject to the following deduction:

19.7.1.1 1-5 seconds over time will result in a 0.5 deduction

19.7.1.2 6-10 seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction

19.7.1.3 11 or more seconds over time will result in a 2.0 deduction

19.7.2 The routine limit is 2.5 mins. Routines that exceed this time limit will run the risk of being assessed a deduction. Time keepers and or judges will use a stopwatch or similar device to measure the official time. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, time keepers/judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatch/clock shows a time that exceeds 2.33.

19.8 SAFETY VIOLATIONS

19.8.1 Violations of general safety guidelines and any skills performed out of level will be issued a 2.0 deduction. Safety guidelines will follow the NFHS rules book for spirit and dance.

19.9 BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

19.9.1 A 0.25 deduction will be assessed per occurrence for an athlete that makes contact with both feet outside the competition boundary. Stepping on or just past the boundary marker with one foot is not a violation.