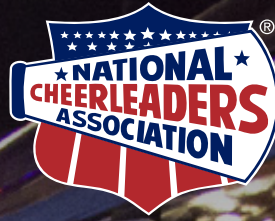


NCA COMPETITION RULE BOOK

FOR ALL-STAR TEAMS



THE WORK IS WORTH IT.®



NCA ALL-STAR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Dallas, Texas | February 23 - 25, 2018

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2017 - 2018 USASF SAFETY RULES

For the most up-to-date USASF Safety Rules for the 2017 - 2018 championship season, please visit <http://usasfrules.com>.

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NCA ALL-STAR COMPETITION RULES

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ELIGIBILITY POLICY

In fairness to all, NCA strictly enforces its age requirements for each division. NCA reserves the right to assess a penalty, disqualify, reclaim any and all awards and/or remove video appearance for any team/gym found to be in violation of the eligibility policy, whether before, during or after the event.

DIVISIONS AND CROSSOVERS

Unlimited Crossovers will continue to be allowed at all NCA events **with the exception of NCA All-Star Nationals.**

Crossovers at NCA ALL-STAR NATIONALS WILL BE ALLOWED given the following restrictions:

- Participant may only crossover into a division within the same USASF Level (exception: L 4.2 athletes may crossover to both L4 and L2).
- A participant may only represent up to a maximum of two teams.
- A participant may only represent one program.
- A maximum of five crossover participants is allowed per team. (exception: L5 Junior team - not L5 Junior Restricted - are allowed a maximum of 8 crossovers. Other L5 divisions may only exceed 5 crossovers if they all come from a L5 Junior team).

NCA LEVEL ELIGIBILITY POLICY

All teams must compete in their legitimate USASF level. Teams that move to a lower USASF Level prior to attending NCA Nationals are allowed to do so, provided they competed at least once in their new level at one or more USASF competitions prior to February 23, 2018. Should a team's Level Eligibility be questioned by another program, NCA will request documentation of that team's participation at a previous event.

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USASF IMAGE POLICY

Judges reserve the right to assess warnings and/or deductions when a team's choreography, uniform, make up, bows, etc. do not meet the standards of 'appropriate' as described in this policy.

COVER UP GUIDELINES

Athletes with non-full top uniforms must wear a T-shirt or other suitable cover up over their uniforms unless they are in the warm-up area, traveling as a group directly to or from the warm up area, or on the performance stage.

APPROPRIATE CHOREOGRAPHY

All facets of a performance/routine, including both choreography and music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening.

Examples of inappropriate choreography may include, but are not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another. Music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited, to swear words and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, explicit mention of specific parts of the body torso, and/or violent acts or behavior are other examples of inappropriate choreography. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.'

Music or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed as to not put their team in an unfortunate situation.

MAKEUP AND OTHER

MAKEUP

Makeup should be uniform and appropriate for both the performance and the age of the athletes. Face/Eyelid Rhinestones are not allowed. False eyelashes are allowed but may not be decorated in rhinestones or additional jewelry.

BOWS

Bows should not be excessive in size (acceptable bows are generally no more than 3" in width) and shouldn't be a distraction to the performance. Bows should be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participants, should be adequately secured and should not fall over the forehead into the participants' eyes or block the view of the participant while performing.

APPROPRIATE UNIFORM

GENERAL UNIFORM GUIDELINES

No risqué, sexually provocative or lingerie looking or inspired uniform or garments allowed. All uniform pieces should adequately cover an athlete and must be secured to eliminate any possible wardrobe malfunction. Appropriate undergarments must be worn.

In addition to the specific guidelines below, athletes must also consider that a combination of uniform pieces may also deem a uniform appropriate or inappropriate. ALL garments must properly cover the athlete and the athlete's undergarments during the routine.

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UNIFORM SKIRT/SHORTS GUIDELINES

When a skirt is worn as part of the uniform, briefs under the skirt are required. The skirt must fully cover the hips. The skirt must completely cover the briefs and must fall at least 1 inch below briefs (regular and boy cut briefs). When shorts are worn as part of the uniform, there must be a minimum of a 2" inseam.

UNIFORM TOP GUIDELINES

Uniform tops may not include an exposed midriff (crop top) except when worn by athletes competing in Senior divisions. Uniform tops must be secured by straps or material over at least one shoulder or around the neck (tube tops are not allowed). Judges reserve the right to assess warnings and/or deductions when a team's choreography, uniform, make up, bows, etc. do not meet the standards of 'appropriate' as described in this policy.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

INJURY

The Safety Judge, Panel Judge, coach, athlete or competition official reserves the right to stop a routine due to an obvious injury. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during a Nationals' Preliminary Competition, Classic Championship or a Regional Championship, the team will have 30 minutes to regroup before performing their routine again from the beginning. Judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the Judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine then, at the coach's discretion, they may take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in the category. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during final competition (Nationals), the judges will determine if there is sufficient time and feasibility for the team to complete their performance. If not, scores will be based on the performance prior to the injury.

UNIFORM DISTRACTIONS

The Safety Judge or Panel Judge reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g. garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.). Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance. If a judge stops the routine or a performer leaves the floor to adjust a uniform a penalty or disqualification may result. The team may or may not be given an opportunity to return to complete their performance.

INTERPRETATIONS/RULINGS

NCA has the authority to make a decision on any issue, protest, penalty or rule that is unclear or not specifically addressed in this document. NCA will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition is conducted in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition and NCA.

MUSIC

In the event a technical error causes a team's music to be interrupted, the coach will have the opportunity to stop the performance. Generally, the team will perform in the spot they currently have unless NCA determines for safety reasons they should be moved down in the order. It is recommended that coaches have a backup CD/digital player with them at the music table. Judging and timing will resume from the point at which the malfunction occurred as determined by the Judges.

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MUSIC GUIDELINES

NCA will follow the Varsity Spirit Music Guidelines for all competitions. Please visit varsity.com/music for the most up-to-date guidelines and latest resources.

CHALLENGE PROCESS

If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.

- All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
- There will be \$100 fee to request a music challenge and must be in the form of a check made out to St Jude Children's Research Hospital.
- Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
- If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
- If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.

MUSIC INFORMATION

Nationals, Classics and Regionals: Music should be on digital music player (iPod, iPhone, MP3).

- **Coaches are strongly advised to create routines (mix music) that finish a few seconds under the time limit to ensure that the team does not go over time.** Judges' decisions on timing of total routine and music portion of routines are final.
 - NCA & NDA will provide the necessary cables for digital music players. Be sure to follow these steps below prior to your performance:
 - Set up a playlist for each routine
 - Turn OFF any equalizer, sound check and/or volume limit
 - Turn OFF all notifications
 - Turn your volume up to 100%
 - If using a phone, make sure it is in airplane mode to avoid incoming calls during performance
 - It is best to have the phone or device out of its case for proper cable connection
- *Any team using an iPhone 7 as their digital music player will be required to furnish their own adapter.

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation.

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PERFORMANCE AREA

Performance surfaces and dimensions may vary by Championship based on venue, size and restrictions, divisions offered, and other factors. Please refer to specific Championship for which you are attending and make note of the Performance Area Information. Most NCA Competitions will have a Competition Area measuring 42' deep by 54' wide carpet-bonded foam spring floor.

ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (150 seconds; EXCEPTION: All-Star Prep time limit is 2 minutes and Tiny Novice time limit is 1 min. 30 seconds)
2. Organized, formal entrances that involve organized cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling, or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders should enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
3. Timing will begin with the first note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.
4. Timing will end with the last organized word, movement, or note of music by the team. Teams must exit the performance area immediately following the routine.
5. Team names will be called twice: once as the team on deck and once as the next team to perform.
6. Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Any vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music will result in a score deduction. No tear-away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF ATHLETES

Teams that compete with fewer than the minimum number of athletes required for that division may receive a 1.0 deduction or be disqualified.

JUDGING PANELS

PANEL JUDGES

Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the Varsity All Star Scoresheet. Each Panel Judge fills out his/her own score sheet for each performance. Panel Judges score technical ability and the overall routine, but they do not determine or score deductions or safety violations.

SAFETY JUDGE

The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.

POINT DEDUCTION JUDGE

The Point Deduction Judge is responsible for assessing deductions in each routine for mistakes from technical skills.

ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL

CALCULATING FINAL SCORE

At all NCA 2 Day events your Day 1 score will count as 25% of your final score. Your Day 2 score will account for the other 75%. At NCA All-Star Nationals teams will compete in reverse order from how they placed in prelims (e.g. squads with the highest score after prelims in a particular division will compete last in that division on finals).

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USASF ATHLETE ID

In lieu of the Team Eligibility Roster that was previously required by NCA & NDA, all cheer and dance participants must be registered in the USASF Athlete ID program. Registration is required prior to your first competition of the 2017-2018 championship season. If you haven't already registered, please see the process below.

ATHLETE ID PROCESS

Step 1

- Prior to attending your first event in the 2017-2018 season, register all cheer and dance athletes by entering information in member profiles at USASF.net.
- *Athlete birth certificates will be uploaded to USASF secure servers for birthdate verification by USASF staff. Once birthdates are verified, birth certificate files are digitally destroyed and not stored on any server.*



Step 2

- Create and print USASF Official Event Rosters for **each team prior to each event** and submit at check-in.

CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, NCA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during all NCA Championships:

- Any questions or concerns that affect a team's performance or experience must be communicated by the coach to the Accuscore Table. The appropriate NCA Official will then be called to discuss the situation with the coach.
- Participants, coaches or spectators are prohibited from making contact with the Judges during the competition.
- Judges' rulings are final related to deductions, final team placements and legalities.
- Any unruly, aggressive or belligerent behavior by participants, coaches or spectators toward any other attendee or NCA Event Staff may result in potential deduction, team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future NCA Championships.

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LEGALITY VERIFICATION

The cheer@usasfrules.com email address is only intended for rulings on videos regarding the USASF level 1-6 rules. **Every email sent to this address should be answerable with one word, LEGAL or ILLEGAL.** To get a reply your email must include a level and a video following the guidelines below. Coaches are encouraged to review videos prior to sending them to ensure they're clear and may be utilized for review, including ensuring they display in an upright manner when viewed from a computer.

Questions regarding dance skills should be sent to dance@usasfrules.com and follow the guidelines on <http://usasfrules.com/dancequestions/>. Emails regarding any other topic should be directed toward your Regional Director (http://usasf.net/regional_directors/) and will not receive a response from this email address beyond the automatic reply.

It usually takes about a week for replies and most replies will be sent mid-week due to the travel schedules of the officials that can reply. Response time is likely to increase leading up to major events due to the volume of inquiries, so please be patient and plan accordingly.

Guidelines & Reminders:

- **Every email should be answerable with one word, LEGAL or ILLEGAL.**
- **Videos must display in an upright manner when viewed from a computer.**
- **Videos submitted are subject to be used for educational purposes. If you want your video excluded please indicate that when submitting a video.**
- Videos should be filmed specifically for the purpose of getting a ruling.
- Videos must be of your team in a practice environment.
- Videos must be of a single skill or sequence.
- Tumbling videos should only include 1 person.
- Stunt or toss videos should only include 1 group.
- Pyramid videos may include all members, but should be of 1 side when possible.
- Videos from competitions, of more than one skill or sequence, or believed to be of other teams will not receive a reply.
- Video must be of exactly what you want a ruling on. We will not rule on a portion of a video, based on a description, or based on a video with a description of a difference.
- If you have questions regarding multiple skills they should be sent in separate emails. Sending multiple angles of the same skill in a single email is allowed, but a separate email is required for each different skill.
- USASF can only tell you if a skill is LEGAL for a specific level or if a skill is ILLEGAL along with citing the rule violated. USASF will not assist with changing choreography.
- USASF expects you to have knowledge of the rules and will not be teaching the rules in their replies.
- USASF will only rule on the legality of the skill in the video, not the participants.
- The USASF ruling is only valid if the skill is performed the same way in the video and at the event. If called on a skill they said was legal the safety judge or official at the event should point out the difference.
- Don't contact the USASF via any method other than email. They cannot give official replies via text, Facebook, Twitter, our personal email accounts, or any other non-USASF method.
- Please ensure there are no extra people in the video that could impact the ruling, such as someone that is in view and could incorrectly be considered a spotter.
- It is your responsibility to have the original email containing the ruling with you at events. This specifically means the email directly from cheer@usasfrules.com, not a forwarded version of an email from cheer@usasfrules.com.

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ALL-STAR BEST CHEERLEADER & GROUP STUNT REQUIREMENTS

These divisions will not be offered at Nationals but may be offered at other championships on a case-by-case basis when appropriate.

ALL-STAR BEST CHEERLEADER REQUIREMENTS

Time Limit

- 1 minute 30 seconds (90 seconds) maximum

Music

- May be used for the entire routine or just a portion of it

Routine

Should include the following: jumps, tumbling skills (standing and running), cheer/motions and a dance.

- These skills may be performed in any order.
- Must perform at least 3 jumps in routine.

Tumbling

- Skills are limited to 1 flipping and 1 twisting rotations.

Age Restrictions

- All-Star Senior Best Cheerleader: 15 – 18 Years
- All-Star Junior Best Cheerleader: 12 – 14 Years
- All-Star Youth Best Cheerleader: 11 Years and younger

ALL-STAR GROUP STUNT REQUIREMENTS

Time Limit

- 1 minute, maximum: routine may be performed to music.

Routine

- The participants must provide a spotter. The spotter must be a COACH (for safety purposes, you must provide a spotter who has proper knowledge of the routine and is capable of spotting the routine). No one will be allowed to compete without a proper spotter. The spotter may not help support or hold up a stunt and may not help with dismounts.
- Dance/Cheer motions, jumps and tumbling that are not performed with direct progression into a stunt will not be considered in the scoring process; therefore we strongly suggest that your routines consist of stunts only.
- Must follow USASF Age Division and Safety Rules.

Restrictions

- All-Star Senior Best Group Stunt: 12 – 18 Years; up to 5 members (all female)
- All-Star Coed Best Group Stunt: 12 – 18 Years; up to 5 members (1-2 may be males)
- All-Star Junior Best Group Stunt: 14 Years and younger; up to 5 members (1 may be male)