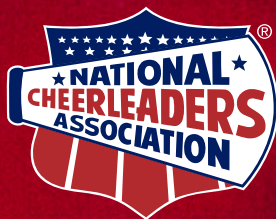


NCA COMPETITION RULE BOOK

FOR SCHOOL TEAMS



THE WORK IS WORTH IT.®



**NCA SENIOR & JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Dallas, Texas
January 26-27, 2019

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2018 - 2019 AACCA SAFETY RULES

For the most up-to-date AACCA Safety Rules for the 2018 - 2019 championship season, please visit <http://www.aacca.org>

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

NCA fervently encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches in all facets of cheerleading including, but not limited to, team/squad practice and performance. We strive to uphold the highest standards and promote this to the best of our abilities, and believe that coaches are instrumental in promoting and instilling this among their respective team members.

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 will result in a deduction, potential team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future NCA Championships.
- Varsity Spirit reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

High School/Junior High Division squads must consist entirely of students who have not graduated from high school. Divisions are determined by the grade of the participants at the time of the competition, regardless of the participant's current age.

Generally, every member of a team representing a school must be enrolled at that school, must be on a team officially representing the school and must perform in the official uniform of that school. All exceptions to this rule must receive written approval from NCA at least 2 weeks prior to competition. In an approved exception, a cheerleader must be a full-time member of the competing team and may not represent any other school-based team throughout the entire season. Promoting cheerleaders from other campuses for the sole purpose of competition will not be allowed. Members must be officially recognized by the competing school's administration as a member of the competing team's cheerleading squad.

The lowest official grade level for all athletes participating in high school divisions is listed as 9th grade. However, athletes younger than 9th grade will be allowed to participate in High School Open Divisions if they are enrolled in the school they are representing, are recognized as full-time cheerleaders for that school and receive written permission from NCA prior to the competition.

In fairness to all, NCA strictly enforces its age/grade 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 found to be in violation of the eligibility policy, whether before, during or after the event. A Team Roster Form will be sent to all coaches participating in an NCA Championship. One roster must be completed per team, and should include each participant's name, age, grade and birth date. This form must be signed and given to NCA during the event check-in. A school representative must sign and date this form. For High School and Junior High teams these forms must be notarized by school administration. The Team Roster Form will be reconciled against the Release and Waiver Forms to ensure all members are accounted for. Eligibility policy does not apply for teams competing in the Club Cheer division.

NCA strongly recommends that you have an alternate (not a member of another competing squad at the same event), who is prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No cheerleader may represent more than one School Performance Division Team, even in the event of injury or emergency. Once a team checks into the championship, the team will not be allowed to change divisions due to an injury. Note: Cheerleaders may compete in Performance and Game Day Divisions.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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COMPETITION AREA

- NCA Competitions comply with the NFHS and AACCA surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on a spring floor. Most NCA Competitions will have a Competition Area measuring 42' deep by 54' wide carpet-bonded foam floor. See each event for confirmation of the floor type and size.
- Participants may stand or enter outside the competition area.
- All permitted skills (stunts, pyramids, tumbling etc.) must be performed on the competition mat.
- Competitions comply with the NFHS and AACCA surface ruling that school based programs may not compete on a spring floor. Approximate floor size will be a traditional mat of 42 feet deep by 54 feet wide (9 strips).
- Objects cannot be thrown outside the competition floor.
- Poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member.

LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use any Varsity Spirit Brand logo including: banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the Varsity Spirit office. The use of the brand letters will be allowed.

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.

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.

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. If utilizing digital music player, NCA & NDA will provide an auxiliary cord. Depending on the type of phone, please make sure you have all necessary adapters to plug into auxiliary cord. 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 your volume up to 100%
- Turn off all notifications
- If using a phone, make sure it is in airplane mode to avoid incoming calls during performance

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

INJURY

The Safety 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 will 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 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 book. 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.

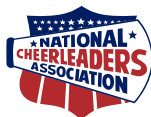
MUSIC

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 immediately unless NCA determines for safety reasons they should be moved later in the performance order. It is recommended that coaches have a backup music 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.

INAPPROPRIATE CHOREOGRAPHY / MUSIC / OUTFITTING

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection and outfitting (cheerleading), should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine. Outfitting for cheerleading performances should follow traditional dress standards. In general, school performances, including but not limited to the actual routine, signs, cheers, chants and hand signals/gestures, should adhere to outfitting, performance and music guidelines and criteria in place and approved by the administration or institution to which the school team belongs.

Any uniform or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to NCA for approval. Because multiple performances of the same routine will generally lack distinction, NCA is not able to approve with absoluteness the appropriateness of choreography (since movements can be easily modified, NCA could feasibly approve a particular movement when viewed on a video or in person, only to have it performed differently during competition). However, choreography, if questionable, may be submitted to NCA for feedback.



NCA COMPETITION DIVISIONS

FALL 2018 - SPRING 2019



PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

These routines are entertaining, visual and showcase athleticism. Each routine must be 2:30 (two minutes and 30 seconds) or under in length and include both a cheer and dance portion.

Coed Advanced High School	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Large Advanced High School	21 - 30 Members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Medium Advanced High School	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Small Advanced High School	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Advanced High School Open	5 - 30 members	12th grade & below	Female/Male
Advanced Non-Tumbling	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/0-2 Males
Coed Intermediate High School	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Large Intermediate High School	21 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Medium Intermediate High School	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Small Intermediate High School	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade	Female
Intermediate High School Open	5 - 30 members	12th grade & below	Female/Male
Intermediate Non-Tumbling	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/0-2 Males
Large Novice High School	21 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Medium Novice High School	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Small Novice High School	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Intermediate JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	9th - 11th grade	Female/Male
Novice JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	9th - 11th grade	Female/Male
Advanced Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
Intermediate Junior High School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
Large Novice Junior High/Middle School	16 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
Small Novice Junior High/Middle School	5 - 15 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male

GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

These routines are entertaining, visual and showcase athleticism. Each routine must be 2:30 (two minutes and 30 seconds) or under in length and include both a cheer and dance portion. *The cheer portion should focus on crowd leading.*

Large Advanced Game Performance	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Small Advanced Game Performance	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Large Intermediate Game Performance	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Small Intermediate Game Performance	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Novice Junior High/Middle School Game Performance	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male

CLUB CHEER DIVISIONS

Club divisions exist for teams who will follow the same 2 and ½ minute routine format as school teams. They will compete on the Game Performance score sheet with the standard restrictions applied to all Elementary, Middle School, and Junior high teams. They must be NFHS credentialed at a Varsity summer camp in order to compete at NCA Nationals. Elementary schools, Rec teams and other standard club teams may fall under this category. School eligibility requirements do not exist for this division, but the age of the competitor as of August 31, 2018 will be the age used for eligibility purposes for the 18-19 competition season.

Novice Junior Club	5 - 30 members	12 years & younger	Female/Male
Intermediate Senior Club	5 - 30 members	14 years & younger	Female/Male

GAME DAY DIVISIONS

These routines include crowd-leading material suitable for the sideline or pep rallies. Each routine must be 1:00 (one minute) or under in length. Game Day categories include: Game Day Cheer, Game Day Fight Song, and Game Day Band Chant. Teams must compete in all three categories to be eligible for the national title.

Large High School	21 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Medium High School	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
Small High School	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade	Female/Male
JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	9th - 11th grade	Female/Male
Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male

SPIRIT PROGRAM DIVISION

This division encourages the use of sideline cheerleaders, dancers, school band, drum line and mascot. Each routine must be 3:00 (three minutes) or under in length and include a crowd leading section, Band Chant, and Fight song. Visit nca.varsity.com for more information about this division.

Spirit Program	5 - 30 members	12th grade & below	Female/Male
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NCA reserves the right to split/combine divisions as deemed appropriate. Please refer to the NCA Rulebook for age eligibility, skill restrictions and enrollment requirements prior to registering for a specific division.



NCA SCHOOL DIVISIONS

2018 - 2019 RULES AND RESTRICTIONS



NOVICE SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Novice teams will follow AACA Safety Guidelines with these additional skill restrictions.

STANDING TUMBLING: Standing tumbling is limited to a standing single back handspring. Standing back handspring series and jump/back handspring combinations are not allowed. Standing tucks are not allowed.

RUNNING TUMBLING: Running tumbling is limited to front and back handspring series. Flips and aerials are not allowed (no tucks).

STUNTS: Single leg stunts may not be held or pass through an extended position. No extended liberties. Twisting transitions are limited to a ½ twist by the top person. Exception: Log Rolls/Barrel rolls are allowed. All release moves must land in a cradle.

The only inversions allowed are transitions from ground level inversions to non-inverted positions. No other inversions are allowed.

Example: Going from a handstand on the ground to a non-inverted stunt such as a shoulder sit is allowed.

Example: Going from a cradle to a handstand or from a prone position to a forward roll is not allowed.

PYRAMIDS: Extended one leg stunts must be braced by at least one person at prep level or below. The connection must be made prior to executing single leg extended stunt.

Any time a top person is released by the bases and braced by other top persons, they may not perform any skill during transition and must land in a cradle.

Inversion in pyramids are not allowed with the exceptions of the inversions allowed under Novice Stunts.

Release moves in pyramids are not allowed with the exception of the release moves allowed under Novice Stunts.

DISMOUNTS: Only straight pop downs, basic straight cradles and ¼ turns are allowed.

TOSSES: The only body position allowed is a straight ride.

INTERMEDIATE SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Intermediate teams will follow AACA Safety Guidelines with these additional skill restrictions.

STANDING TUMBLING: Flips are not allowed. No standing back tucks or back handspring back tucks.

RUNNING TUMBLING: Flips may ONLY be performed in tuck position only and from a round off or round off back handspring(s). Other skills with hand support prior to the round off or round off back handspring are allowed. Punch fronts are not allowed.

No twisting while airborne. (Exception: Aerial cartwheels are allowed.)

No tumbling is allowed after a flip or an aerial cartwheel.

Cartwheel tucked flips and/or cartwheel – back handspring(s) – tucks are not allowed.

STUNTS: Twisting transitions to and from an extended position may not exceed ½ twisting transition. Twisting transitions to, from and at prep level may not exceed 1 twisting transition. Release moves must start below prep level and must be caught at prep level or below. Release moves may not pass above extended arm level. Release moves above prep level are NOT allowed.

PYRAMIDS: Braced flips are not allowed.

DISMOUNTS: Only straight pop downs, basic straight rides, and ¼ turns are allowed from any single leg stunt. Up to 1¼ twists are allowed from any two leg stunt.

TOSSES: Up to 1 trick allowed during a toss. Tosses may not exceed 1 twisting rotation.

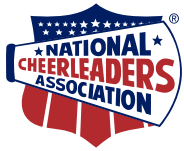
JUNIOR HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL / ELEMENTARY SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Junior High, Middle School, and Elementary teams will follow Additional Restrictions as listed in the AACA Safety Guidelines.

ADVANCED SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Advanced teams will follow the standard AACA Safety Guidelines with no other skill restrictions.

RULES AND RESTRICTIONS TO TAKE EFFECT FOR 2018 - 2019 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON.



2018 - 2019 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

NOVICE DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level	Pyramids involving Extended Two Leg Stunts and/or One Leg Stunts at Prep Level	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Round-off BHS or Standing BHS

TOSSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

- 4.0 – Single jumps
- 4.2 – Double jump combinations
- 4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety
- 4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety
- 4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, no variety
- 5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, must include variety

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

PERFORMANCE/SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

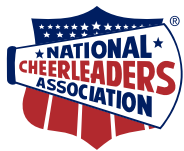
Image, sportsmanship, performance integrity

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional ACCA Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdlers (front or side), Pike



2018 - 2019 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
2 - 3	2 - 3	2 - 3
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended Two Leg Stunt and/or One Leg Stunt at Prep Level	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Round-off BHS or Stand BHS
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Extended One Leg Stunts Required Dismount: Single Twist from Two Leg Stunts	Pyramids involving multiple transitional elements, one of which is a release and multiple extended structures including extended one leg stunts.	Round-off BHS Back Tucks or Round-off Tucks or Standing BHS Series or Jump/BHS Combinations

TOSSSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

- 4.0 – Single jumps
- 4.2 – Double jump combinations
- 4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety
- 4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety
- 4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, no variety
- 5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, must include variety

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

PERFORMANCE/SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

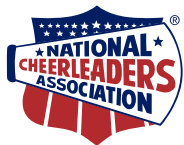
Image, sportsmanship, performance integrity

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional ACCA Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdlers (front or side), Pike



2018 - 2019 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

ADVANCED DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
2 - 3	2 - 3	2 - 3
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving Extended Two Leg Stunts and/or One Leg Stunts at Prep Level Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls Round-off BHS or Standing BHS
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extended One Leg Stunts Required Dismount: Single Twist from Two Leg Stunts	Pyramids involving multiple transitional elements, one of which is a release and multiple extended structures including extended one leg stunts.	Round-off BHS Back Tucks or Round-off Tucks or Standing BHS Series or Jump/BHS Combinations
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Required: Elite Skills* Single Twist from One Leg Stunts or Extended Stunt Sequence performed by a Single Base, Unassisted	Pyramids involving Extended One Leg Stunts with Multiple Transitional Sequences, at least one of which is a Braced Flip Transition or Arm Braced Tic Tock [and Multiple Extended Structures]	Layouts or Standing Back Tucks or Standing BHS Back Tucks

STUNTS

ELITE STUNT SKILLS* INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO):

- Full up to extended position
- Release moves that land in an extended position
- Tick tock variations
- Toss extended stunts
- Other unique mounts and transitions of similar difficulty level

**Advanced Divisions only*

TOSSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

- 4.0 – Single jumps
- 4.2 – Double jump combinations
- 4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety
- 4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety
- 4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, no variety
- 5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, must include variety

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional AACCA Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdlers (front or side), Pike

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

PERFORMANCE/SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

Image, sportsmanship, performance integrity

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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NCA SCORING PROCESS

The scoring process for NCA Championships will be on a 100 point scale. Scores for each category will range from 0-10, including tenths of points (example: 5.5, 9.2, etc.). These scores will be entered into a computer that will add the scores. All point deductions and/or penalties will be deducted from the subtotal to get the FINAL SCORE. At all 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 High School 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 in Finals).

JUDGING PANELS

PANEL JUDGES

Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the NCA Score Sheet. 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 (PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS ONLY)

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

ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

DEDUCTION SYSTEM

ATHLETE FALL .25

- Drops to the performance surface during tumbling and or/jump skills

Includes the following:

- Hand, hands or head down in tumbling or jump skills
- Knee or knees down in tumbling or jump skills

BUILDING FALL .75

- Drops to cradle and/or load in position from a stunt, pyramid and/or toss

Includes the following:

- Base or spotter drops to the performance surface during a building skill

MAJOR BUILDING FALL 1.25

- Drops to the performance surface from a stunt, pyramid, or toss by the top person and/or the bases/spotters

Includes the following:

- Top person drops to the performance surface
- Multiple bases and/or spotters drop to the performance surface
- Top person lands on base and/or spotter who drops to the performance surface

MAXIMUM 1.75

- When multiple deductions should be assessed during a stunt or toss (by a single group) or during a pyramid skill, then the sum of those deductions will not be greater than 1.75. During pyramids where a fall continues to effect other portions of the pyramid, the deduction will not exceed 1.75. Two separated pyramids will result in separate deductions. The MAX deduction for a pyramid will not exceed 3.75.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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SAFETY VIOLATIONS

- Building skills performed out of level will be issued a 1.0 deduction.
- Tumbling skills performed out of level and violation of any other General Safety Guidelines will be issued a .5 deduction.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT DEDUCTION

When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes and parents/spectators they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so will result in 1.0 deduction and removal of coach or disqualification.

Includes the following:

- Inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between athletes during the event
- Abuse of equipment or any items associated with the event
- Using language or a gesture that is obscene, offensive, or insulting
- Using language or gestures that offend race, religion, color, descent or national or ethnic origin
- Failing to perform a routine
- Excessive appealing at AccuScore
- Showing dissent towards scoring official decision by word or action
- Threat of assault to an event representative
- Public criticism of an event related incident or event official

BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

The performance surface is defined as the 42' x 54' competition floor. The competition boundary is defined as the performance surface. A .25 deduction will be assessed per occurrence for an athlete that makes contact with both feet outside the competition boundary.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF ATHLETES

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

UNIFORM MIDRIFF DEDUCTION

NCA enforces the NFHS ruling that states: "when standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff." If a school or recreational team is found to be in violation of this rule, the team will receive a 1.0 deduction off of their final score.

INAPPROPRIATE CHOREOGRAPHY DEDUCTION

A deduction of 1.0 will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes, but is 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. Deductions will be given for 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, mention of specific parts of the body torso, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

DIVISION VIOLATIONS

Participants may not compete in multiple performance divisions within the School Cheer categories at the same championship (example: performers may not compete on a Junior Varsity and Medium Intermediate High School team). Participants may compete with the same school for Performance and Game Day Divisions. If a team performs with a member participating in more than one performance division, the second and each subsequent team will receive a 1.0 deduction off of their final score for each illegal participant (maximum penalty is 10.0).

TIME LIMIT VIOLATIONS

Teams that exceed division time limits are subject to the following deduction:

- 1 or more seconds over time will result in a .25 deduction
- 6 or more seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction

Routines that exceed the time limit run a risk of being assessed a deduction. Judges will use a stop watch or similar device to measure the official time. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatch/clock shows a time that exceeds 3 seconds over the time limit.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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LEGALITY VERIFICATION

As a coach, it is important to be current on the NCA & AACCA Safety Rules. If you have questions concerning any safety rules or questions regarding specific performance elements, please follow these steps. This will ensure that you receive a timely and accurate response to your questions.

- All questions must be in written form.
- Due to the differences in interpretation and terminology; no phone calls will be accepted.
- Do not rely on prior rulings from NCA Championships.
- A separate video must be submitted for each competition to ensure legality.
- For all Legality questions, you must send a video that contains the skill in question.
- Video must include the following:
 1. Front, side and back view of skill.
 2. Name of the Championship where you will be performing skill and the Division you will be performing in.
 3. Include your name, team name, email and phone number with your video.
 4. Do not send the entire routine, only the **SKILL(S)** in question. Your video will be kept on file at NCA.

** Skills must be performed the same in video and at competition*

VIDEOS THAT ARE NOT IN THE ABOVE FORMAT WILL NOT BE VIEWED.

VIDEOS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE NCA OFFICE at least **THREE WEEKS PRIOR** to the championship date. Videos not received in the NCA office three weeks prior to the championship date will **NOT** be reviewed.

You must email your videos to:

ncahighschoolsafety@gmail.com.

Note: Emailed videos may not exceed 10MB and should be in either Windows Media Player or Quicktime formats.

**DO NOT DEPEND ON YOUR CHOREOGRAPHER
TO DETERMINE IF SOMETHING IS LEGAL.
IF YOU FEEL THAT SOMETHING MAY BE ILLEGAL,
SEND A VIDEO TO THE NCA OFFICE.**

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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PERFORMANCE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

- All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps must follow the AACCA Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach. See specific skill restrictions for each category.
- Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (150 seconds).
- Up to 1 minute and 30 seconds (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.
- Organized, formal entrances that involve organized cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders must enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
- Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement or 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.
- Cheer words should be practical, and flow of words should be easy to understand by the crowd and judges.
- In Performance Divisions mascots will not count towards participant count. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc. are not impaired. Mascots cannot participate in stunts, pyramids, or tumbling skills in any division.

GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

These divisions will follow the above NCA Performance Division Guidelines with Intermediate or Advanced restrictions and requires a cheer portion that emphasizes crowd-leading ability. Categories on the score sheet include: Spacing and Formations, Crowd Effective Material and Voice/Inflection.

NON-TUMBLING DIVISIONS

The Non-Tumbling divisions will follow the above NCA Performance Division Guidelines and in addition will prohibit all tumbling, except for inversions into or from load in positions, stunts and pyramids. Tumbling is defined as any skill with feet over head rotation.

Non-Tumbling divisions may not be eligible for certain specialty awards.

GAME DAY ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

- All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps must follow the AACCA Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach. See specific skill restrictions for each category.
- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Teams may not set up props in advance of any category.
- See specific Category for details on the start and stop for each type of routine.
- All introductions (entrances, chants, spell-outs, etc.) are considered part of the routine and are timed as part of the performance.
- There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.
- Cheer teams are encouraged to include other sideline spirit groups (i.e. dance team, song/pom, mascot, pep/short flag, etc.), but sideline groups will not be judged separately. Additional performance-based spirit groups may not enter the division without their cheerleaders.
- In all Game Day Division and the Spirit Program Division, any and all participants on the performance surface will count as a member of the team. This includes mascots, band members, flag runners, etc. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc. are not impaired. Mascots cannot participate in stunts, pyramids, or tumbling skills in any division.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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GAME DAY CHEER REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- In most locations, Game Day Cheer will begin and end with a buzzer sound similar to a time-out at a game. Athletes must start with both feet off of the performance surface. Timing will begin with the buzzer.
- No music may be used during the performance. Live drummer and/or drum track is allowed. All specialty skills (i.e. jumps, stunts, tumbling) must be performed within a safe distance of all Drummers. Drummers cannot be involved in any type of specialty skill.
- Each team's presentation must include at least two components required from the following: cheers, chants, traditional yells, and/or drum cadences.
- Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is encouraged.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 1. Crowd communication, including: crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners.
 2. Placement, synchronization and strength of motions.
 3. Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 4. Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No inversions from stunts.
- No twisting dismounts from stunts.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- **No running tumbling.**
- Standing tumbling is limited to standing back handsprings and standing back tucks.

GAME DAY FIGHT SONG REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Teams are encouraged to use their traditional team fight song.
- Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this category.
- Performances can incorporate up to three (3) eight counts of skills (stunts, tumbling and/or jumps). The three (3) eight counts must be consecutive. During the fight song, the three (3) eight counts may be repeated, if performed identically. The three (3) eight counts of skills includes loading and dismounting from stunts (unless routine finishes in stunt/pyramid).
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 1. Crowd-oriented material, fit to music, using effective spacing and formations, and incorporating visual effects.
 2. Placement, synchronization and strength of motions
 3. Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 4. Emphasis will be placed on practicality. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No inversions from stunts.
- No twisting dismounts from stunts.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- A jump is considered a skill and can only be performed in the three (3) eight count segment.
- A kick will not be considered as a skill and can be performed at any time during the routine.
- No running tumbling.
- Standing tumbling is limited to standing back handsprings and standing back tucks.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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GAME DAY BAND CHANT REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Traditional school band chant(s).
- Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
- Recorded band music must be used.
- Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- Camp material may be easily adapted to fit this category.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 1. Crowd effective material, variety and the execution of transitions and formations.
 2. Placement, synchronization and strength of motions/movement.
 3. Visual effect and spacing.
 4. Overall impression and crowd appeal.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- Dance skills (i.e. turns, leaps, kicks, etc.) are permitted.

GAME DAY DIVISION NATIONAL CHAMPION AWARDS

Up to five National Champion titles (Junior High/MS, JV/Freshman, Small High School, Medium High School, and Large High School) will be awarded at the NCA Senior and Junior High School National Championship to teams competing in the NCA Game Day categories. The National Championship title will be presented to the team having the highest average of all **THREE (3)** scores (once Game Day Fight Song and Band Chant are converted to a score out of 100). **To be eligible to win, teams must compete in each of the THREE (3) Game Day categories.**

If a team wins this National Championship title, and also wins a National Title in a Performance division, individuals will only receive one National Championship jacket. Teams will receive a banner and trophy for each national title.

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NEW! SPIRIT PROGRAM DIVISION

NCA and NDA are proud to introduce a NEW division being implemented at the NCA Senior and Junior High School National Championship. Our goal is to provide a unique and exciting opportunity for school Spirit Programs to work together to showcase their ability to promote school spirit and excitement in support of their school. This division not only allows the use of traditional sideline cheer and dance teams, but also the incorporation of members of the school Marching Band, Pep Band, Drum Line, Mascot(s), Spirit Group/Club, etc. The primary responsibility of Spirit Programs is to develop and implement effective methods of generating excitement and often requires close coordination between various campus groups. NCA & NDA now offers a way to showcase this at the NCA Senior and Junior High School National Championship.

FORMAT

Each performance must consist of the following performance sections, however you may determine the order of the sections. Sections cannot be split up.

CROWD LEADING SECTION

- Traditional school cheers and/or chants.
- Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
- No recorded music or voice enhancement is allowed. Onstage instruments are allowed to help set and enhance the rhythm and beats.
- Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.
- Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to promote crowd interaction and participation as well as display excitement and genuine school spirit.
- Actual crowd response at the Championship is NOT scored.

BAND CHANT SECTION

- Traditional school band chant(s).
- Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
- Recorded band music must be used and onstage musical instruments may also be utilized.
- Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.
- Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to promote crowd interaction and participation as well as display excitement and genuine school spirit.

FIGHT SONG SECTION

- Traditional school fight song.
- Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
- Recorded band music must be used and onstage musical instruments may also be utilized.
- Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.
- Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to effectively and accurately perform a traditional school fight song displaying high energy and solid performance techniques.

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

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GENERAL RULES

1. Timing will begin when the team is announced to take the floor.
2. Teams may stage props immediately following the conclusion of the team before them, but this staging must be timely so that it does not disrupt the flow of the competition and cause any delay.
3. Each team may be comprised of a maximum of 30 participating members.
4. Participants may include cheer, dance, mascots, band, drum line, flag corps, etc.
5. All Participating members must meet NCA & NDA eligibility verification requirements and must also meet all respective school's eligibility requirements.
6. Cheer participants may NOT also be members of a cheer team competing in another Performance Division at Nationals. However, they may compete in any, or all three, of the Game Day categories.
7. The maximum time allotted for each Spirit Program routine is three minutes.
8. Recorded band music is required and must follow the Varsity Spirit Music Guidelines. Visit Varsity.com/music for more information. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.
9. The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are highly recommended.
10. Props may be touching out of bounds without penalty, however participants may not step out of bounds with both feet to retrieve the prop.
11. No items may be thrown, tossed, or released from the performance area into the crowd.
12. Instruments may not be utilized in skills.
13. Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, weapons, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited (including, but not limited to, guns, knives, swords, nun-chucks, etc.).

SCORING & RESTRICTIONS

Skill incorporations are allowed and encouraged as long as they are utilized to effectively promote and encourage crowd involvement and entertainment. Teams competing in the Spirit Program division will adhere to AACCA safety guidelines with Game Day Skill restrictions. Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations. Dancers must abide by the NDA safety rules.

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.

BEST CHEERLEADER REQUIREMENTS

Each participant will perform the following in this order: three consecutive jumps, tumbling pass, and a cheer. Overall performance may not exceed 90 seconds. Music is not allowed. A partner may not be used during the performance. Judging is based on voice projection, showmanship, cheer execution, spirit and ability in the areas of jumps and tumbling, as well as overall impression. There is a five-trick limit (jumps, gymnastics, splits) in your performance after your tumbling pass. A back handspring back tuck, toe touch back handspring, or round-off back tuck are each considered two tricks. There will be a 1.0 penalty if more than five tricks are performed in your cheer and a separate penalty if the routine exceeds the time limit.

- Elementary Best Cheerleader: 6th grade and below
- Junior Best Cheerleader: 7th - 9th grade
- Senior Best Cheerleader: 10th - 12th grade
- Males and females will compete in the same division based on grade.
- There is no limit as to how many individuals may enter from a team.

GROUP STUNT REQUIREMENTS

Each group stunt routine may be up to, but no longer than 60 seconds, with background music. Timing will begin with the first sound of music or movement of the team. The routine does not have to be choreographed directly to the music. Teams will be judged on technique, strength and stability of stunts, flow of routine, degree of difficulty (taking into consideration the number of stunts), perfection of routine and overall impression. There will be a penalty each time there is a violation of the NCA High School Rules, and a separate penalty if your routine exceeds the time limit.

- Junior Best Group Stunt: 9th grade and below (up to 5 members, all females)
- Senior Best Group Stunt: 9th-12th grade (up to 5 members, 1 may be male)
- Coed Best Group Stunt: 9th-12th grade (up to 5 members, 1-2 may be males)
- Note: These groups must follow the NCA High School/Junior High Rules.

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2019 NCA SENIOR AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

HOW TO QUALIFY

CAMP QUALIFICATION

Squads may qualify for the NCA Senior and Junior High School National Championship at NCA Summer Camp by meeting specific criteria as measured by the NCA Staff. Bids are based on overall performance and potential. For more information, contact the NCA office. NFHS credential from 2018 Varsity Spirit Camp is required to receive a bid.

- NO QUALIFICATION BID NECESSARY FOR GAME DAY OR SPIRIT PROGRAM DIVISIONS / CATEGORIES
** Teams must have earned NFHS Squad Credentialing at a Varsity Spirit Summer or Fall Camp in 2018*

VIDEO QUALIFICATION

Teams wanting to qualify for NCA Nationals must be NFHS credentialed. If you are not yet NFHS credentialed, email your NCA State Director, or call 1-800-527-4422, to review your options.

Please email Justin Carrier at jcarrier@varsity.com for more information on how to submit your video.

Videos submitted for qualification will not be viewed for legalities. For more information on legalities, see page 9.

REGIONAL OR CLASSIC CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFICATION

Squads may qualify for the NCA Senior and Junior High School National Championship at an NCA Competition by December 14, 2018 (teams attending later competitions are responsible for payment deadlines). Squads placing in the top three of each division (in Divisions with 5 or more teams) and first place teams (in Divisions with less than 5 teams), or receiving a final score of 70 or above will receive a bid. Refer to each specific competition for complete details on performance and payment requirements. The routine must adhere to the NCA Rules. Teams receiving a bid at a Regional or Classic must also have the NFHS Credential from a Varsity Spirit Summer or Fall Camp before registering.