COLLEGE 2·0·1·8
CHEERLEADING AND DANCE TEAM NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

2017-2018
CHEER TEAM RULES AND REGULATIONS
Bold and grey denotes change

I. GENERAL RULES

A. COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY TEAM GUIDELINES

1. The competition is open to all colleges, universities, and junior colleges in the country.
2. Individuals may not represent more than one team at the National Championship.
3. There are NINE separate routine cheer divisions:
   a. Teams may not exceed sixteen (16) members, with the exception of All Girl Divisions. All Girl Divisions may not exceed twenty (20) female team members.
   b. Large Coed Divisions will be limited to a maximum number of nine male participants.
   c. Routine Cheer Divisions:
      1. Division IA (NCAA Division I – FBS)
      2. Division I (NCAA Division I – FCS)
      3. Division II (NCAA II)
      4. Open Coed (Division III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)
      5. All Girl IA (NCAA Division I - FBS)
      6. All Girl I (NCAA Division I – FCS & Division II)
      7. Open All Girl (Division III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)
      8. Small Coed I (4 males or less, NCAA Division I-FBS & NCAA Division I-FCS schools)
      9. Small Coed II (4 males or less, NCAA Division II, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)

4. There are FOUR separate Game Day cheer divisions:
   a. Teams may not exceed thirty (30) team members.
   b. Teams may add a drumline into their performance. Drumlines can be incorporated in their routine and may enter the floor with the team but may not stand on the performance floor during the performance. They may stand to the side of the back of the floor. Drumlines will not count toward the total number of participants allowed.
   c. Teams may add up to 1 (one) mascot in their routine. The mascot must enter the floor with the team and should be used to raise crowd energy and participation. The mascot should not be involved in any stunts / technical skills and / or tumbling and should position themselves away from skills being performed. The mascot will not count toward the total number of participants allowed.
   d. Game Day Cheer Divisions:
      1. Division IA (NCAA Division I – FBS)
      2. All Girl IA (NCAA Division I - FBS)
      3. Open Coed (NCAA Division I – FCS, NCAA II, Division III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)
      4. Open All Girl (NCAA Division I – FCS, NCAA II, Division III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)

B. PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1. All participants must be registered full-time students for the fall semester of the college or university that they are representing in competition and official members of that school's spirit team (no club teams or competition only teams). Official member's of the school's spirit team is that team recognized by their institution as the actual sideline/courtside spirit team that regularly supports their school athletic teams.
2. The Dean of Students, Director of Compliance or Registrar's office must complete the eligibility form and have notarized. Eligibility form must not be dated any earlier than DECEMBER 1, 2017. Teams violating this rule could forfeit their titles and be prohibited from entering the competition the following year. For any clarification on these rules please call 1-888-CHEERUCA.
3. Each cheer team must be accompanied by a current AACCA certified coach in order for the team to be eligible to compete. Proof of certification is required upon registering for the National Championship.
4. The team and each participating member/coach should constantly display good sportsmanship throughout the entire performance in regards to respect for themselves, other teams and the viewing audience of all ages. Teams should refrain from any taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.
5. We recommend that the team and each of its members display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school in regards to grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, conservative make-up, uniformity, etc.

C. ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

1. Any university or college competing in a Varsity College National Championship shall not permit a student-athlete to represent their school unless the student-athlete meets all applicable eligibility requirements, and the coach and program administrative supervisor has certified the student-athlete's eligibility.
2. A student-athlete may only represent ONE (1) school in a National Championship competition for each academic year. For example, a student-athlete may not compete for one school in January, transfer and compete for another school in April.
3. At the Junior College level, any student-athlete will only be eligible to compete in a **maximum of three (3)** National Championships during the course of his/her college career.
4. A student-athlete can be a part of the institution's cheer / dance spirit squad but will only be allowed to compete for a **maximum of five (5)** National Championships during the course of his/her college career, regardless of the number of universities or colleges they have attended.
5. A student-athlete may not compete in more than **five (5)** National Championships in combined Junior College and/or 4-year college / university.
6. Individual Championships such as Partner Stunt and Group Stunt will follow **five (5)** year eligibility rules.

7. An alternate or injured student-athlete that does not take the competition floor will not be perceived as a competing member and will not count towards the maximum of five (5) National Championships.
8. This will apply for any student-athlete competing at any one of the Varsity Brands College National Championships (UCA/UDA, NCA/NDA) as well as any other designated College National Championship.
9. Verification of eligibility will be required by the school's Registrar's Office and the program's administrative supervisor in addition to the coach. It will be the responsibility of these individuals to verify that all student-provided information and documentation is correct and valid.
10. Teams violating this rule could forfeit their titles and rankings as well as be prohibited from entering any other Varsity Brands Championship the following year. For any clarification on these rules, please contact the event producer of the Championship you wish to attend.
11. Any interpretations or decision of eligibility for the 2018 College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship will be rendered by the Rules Committee, which will consist of the Tournament Director, the UCA/UDA College Program Director and one other UCA/UDA official appointed by the Tournament Director. The Rules Committee will render a judgment in a manner consistent with the general goals of the championship.

D. TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Each team's presentation must include at least one cheer and / or sideline chant.
2. Each Performance Routine will have a maximum of 2 minutes and 30 seconds (1 minute 45 seconds maximum of music) to demonstrate its cheerleading expertise. Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of the music, whichever comes first.
3. **Each Game Day performance should consist of a Fight Song, Situational Sideline (offence / defense) and a Game Day Timeout. The maximum performance time must not exceed (3) three minutes. Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first. Each section should have a beginning and end. Note: Spirited crowd leading interaction between each section is encouraged to continue the game day feel.**
4. If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. Three (3) point deduction for 1 – 5 seconds over, Five (5) point deduction for 6-10 seconds over and Seven (7) point deduction for 11 seconds and over.
5. The routine time limit is 2:30 / 3:00. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of 2:33 / 3:03.
6. Because penalties are severe, it is recommended that all teams time their performance several times prior to competition and leave a several second cushion to all for variations in sound equipment.
7. Introductions
   a. All introductions (tumbling, entrances, chants, spellouts, etc. are considered part of the routine and will be timed as part of the performance.
   b. All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to entering the mat.
   c. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, handshakes, etc.
   d. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a ONE point deduction.
   e. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

E. MUSIC

1. I have read and understand the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
2. For the most up to date music information, visit http://varsity.com/music. If you have any questions, cheer teams should email info@usacheer.net. Please check Preferred Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
3. Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event.
4. **Should a team choose and original recording and is featured in the TV broadcast, your routine music may be used if synchronization rights are also secured. Teams must be able to provide proof of synchronization rights in the form of a printed copy during registration at the event.**
5. **If you would like to perform your school's original fight song, you may bring a recording of your marching band playing the song. You will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording. A letter granting permission for the cheer or dance team to use the fight song on school letterhead is sufficient. It should be signed by your program's administrative supervisor. Go to varsity.com/music for more details.**
6. If a team does not have required paperwork, they will be given the option to count the routine verbally or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (Provided by Varsity Spirit).
7. If a team does not have the required paperwork, and chooses not to count the routine or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
8. If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
9. A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
10. Challenge Process
    a) All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
    b) 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.
    c) Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
    d) If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
    e) If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.
11. Each team is required to have a responsible adult remain at the music station that knows the routine and music. This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music in case of technical malfunction or injury.
12. **All teams must provide their own CD or MP3 device for use on the event provided sound system. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo on a high quality CD or loaded onto an MP3 device.**
13. **It is not recommended that a smart phone be used for playing music, due to interference that may be caused**

during a routine. No cover may be on any MP3 player so that a jack may be easily inserted into the device.

14. **Please make sure that all devices have a head phone jack to connect to sound system and are fully charged, volume turned up and placed in airplane mode. If using a CD make sure it's unscratched so it doesn't skip.**
15. **Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. You will need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a head phone jack.**
16. **Music on CD must be labeled with the team name, division, team size, and be ready to play. One or several selections of music may be used. Due to greater room for technical error with some CDs you must have a back-up MP3 of your routine available.**

12. Teams may not use Disney themes nor may they have costumes that resemble a Disney character. However, Disney music is acceptable if following the music guidelines.

F. COMPETITION AREA

1. Participants must start in the competition area with at least one foot on the ground.
2. Teams may line up anywhere inside the competition area.
3. The competition area will be determined by the tournament director according to the size of the facility being used.
4. Approximate floor size will be fifty four feet wide by forty two feet deep (9 strips).
5. Any team member stepping outside the performance area will cause the squad to receive a point-five (.5) penalty per occurrence.
   a. The white line is considered a warning mark.
   b. A penalty will be assessed when any ONE full hand, foot or body part touches outside of the performance surface.
6. Signs or props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area. If a sign or prop is thrown outside the competition area, that team will receive a one (1) point deduction for each violation.
7. All team mascots, props, center markers, etc. are prohibited. We will have the center marked on all performance surfaces.

F. SPOTTER POLICY

In an effort to promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, UCA will provide additional spotters for all rehearsal and competition floors. **Note:** To provide the safest competitive environment, teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

H. LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use the UCA logo including; banners, rings, bows, t-shirts etc. without prior approval for the UCA Office. The use of the UCA letters will be allowed.

I. 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.

II. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
2. The team will perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.

B. FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.

C. INJURY

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are: a) competition officials, b) the advisor / coach from the team performing or c) an injured individual.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
   a. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) AND THEN the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
   b. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
   c. Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with concussion must be removed from the activity at that time and should not be allowed to return to activity that day. The athlete should not return to activity on a subsequent day until evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from a qualified physician (MD or DO specifically trained in concussion management).
   d. In addition to the USA Cheer head injury policy, we encourage you to be familiar with the specific law of the state where the competition is being held.

III. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

A. RULES & PROCEDURES

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance.

B. PERFORMANCE

Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance and/or following the outcome of the competition

IV. INTERPRETATIONS AND / OR RULINGS

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Rules Committee will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and a designated competition official.

V. SPORTSMANSHIP

All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine. The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.

VI. VIOLATIONS

Any team in violation of these Rules and Regulations or any of the above mentioned guidelines will be assessed a ten point (10) deduction for each violation. This deduction does not apply to deductions or violations within the point deduction system. Go to uca.varsity.com for more details on specific point deductions.

VII. DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate in a competition or the National Championship the following year.

VIII. FINALITY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this championship, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final and results may ONLY be reviewed for clarification. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative or procedural review of such decisions.

IX. SCORES AND RANKINGS

Individual judges score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his/her final score and rankings prior to the final tally of the score for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to advisors or coaches at the conclusion of the competition.

X. AWARDS AND PRIZE

1. Routine Division in the final round of competition will receive a trophy. Teams who rank first, second, or, third place will additionally receive gold, silver, or bronze medallions.
2. **Game Day Divisions in the final round of competition will receive a trophy. Teams who rank first, second, or third place will additionally receive gold, silver, or bronze medallions. Game Day National Champions will be featured on Varsity TV for the following season.**

XI. JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of Universal Cheerleaders Association. The judges will score each squad according the judging criteria to determine their total score. The "crowd highlights" will accounts for 15 points of your score. The judges' scores will be averaged together with deductions being taken off the averaged scores. In the event of a first place tie, the tie will be broken by carrying the decimal places out for the total score. If a tie remains, the ranking points from each judge will be used to break the tie. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com.

XII. JUDGING CRITERIA

1. Performance Routine Criteria
   a. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UCA score sheet. Each team will be evaluated on a 100 point system.
   b. **Cheer will count for 35 points, Building Skills will count for 35 points, Overall will count for 15 points and the Crowd Highlights will count for 15 points of the total routine.**
   c. Any deductions or violations will be taken off of the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com.
2. **UCA Game Day Routine Criteria**
   a. **The College Game Day Championship showcases what traditional cheerleading is all about – leading the crowd! Teams will be evaluated on their ability to lead the crowd, proper game day skill incorporations, execution of skills, motion technique and overall routine.**
   b. **The use of crowd leading tools such as signs, poms, flags and/or megaphones is recommended. (All are not required)**
   c. **The order for the College Game Day Championship will be in random order based on the audio cues and should consist of Fight Song, Situations Sideline (offence / defense) and a Game Day Timeout.**
   d. **The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UCA Game Day score sheet. Each team will be evaluated on a 100 point system. For detailed score sheets please visit uca.varsity.com.**
   e. **Fight Song**
      1. **Should represent the traditional Fight Song your school has always done at games.**
      2. **Skills should be minimal and practical.**
      3. **You should start from you sideline formation.**
   f. **Situational Sideline**
      1. **Will be situational for each team performing.**
      2. **With either an offensive or defensive scenario, the squad will determine which sideline to do based on the cues.**

3. **The teams are encouraged to use spirit raising props such as signs, poms and/or megaphones.**
4. **Skills should be minimal and practical.**

g. **Game Day Timeout (similar to what was done at camp)**
   1. **Similar to a 60 second extended band chant that is designed for crowd interaction and involves crowd response.**
   2. **This is the best time to showcase your squad's energy, leadership, visual appeal and connection to the crowd.**

h. **All teams attending the UCA College Cheerleading Championship will follow the AACCA Guidelines with the below restrictions. Rules are subject to change by AACCA. For the most recent safety rules and information, http://cheerrules.com/aacca-college/.**

i. **Skills must be practical for Game Day and executed with strong technique while providing a visual effect that influences the crowd's participation.**

j. **The incorporation of skills will be allowed with the following restrictions:**
   1. **Flips into or from partner stunts and pyramids will be prohibited.**
   2. **Twisting stunts and dismounts may not exceed 1 ¼ rotation.**
   3. **Flipping tosses are permitted with zero twisting rotations.**
   4. **No twisting tumbling is allowed.**

k. **Any deductions or violations will be taken off of the final averaged score. For more information on scoring, score sheets and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com**

l. **Traditional game day uniform is required.**

For more information, please visit www.uca.varsity.com.

XIII. SAFETY, GUIDELINES FOR PARTNER STUNTS, PYRAMIDS AND TOSSES

All teams attending the UCA College Cheerleading Championship will follow the AACCA Guidelines. Rules are subject to change by AACCA. For the most recent safety rules and information, http://cheerrules.com/aacca-college/.

IV. TOURNAMENT FACILITY

1. The competition is scheduled to be held at ESPN's Wide World of Sports® Complex.
2. The tournament officials shall have the right to alter the time and location of the competition in the event changes become necessary due to inclement weather, facility problems, television production requirements, or any other situation deemed by the tournament officials to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.

XV. PRELIMINARIES, SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

1. UCA reserves the right to determine if a preliminary, semi-final or final round will be necessary. All divisions with only one round prior to the finals will be classified as a semi-final.
2. There will be a minimum of 50% of the teams that will advance from each round of competition.

XVI. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION

It is understood that teams participating in the College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship will not knowingly and willingly participate in any other event promoted as a "open championship", "national championship" or "international championship" for the 2017-2018 school year (Exception: USA National Championship). Teams who do not adhere will automatically be disqualified from the 2018 Championship and will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the tournament the following year.

XVII. APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS AND PUBLICITY

All squads winning titles, awards or prizes agree to have all appearances, endorsements and publicity approved through the UCA office.

XVIII. TELEVISION COVERAGE

The UCA/UDA College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship nationally televised on ESPN and ESPN2. Because of the format of the show, not all finalist teams will be shown on the telecast.

For any clarification or interpretation of the above safety guideline please call Orry Clayborne at 1-888-CHEERUCA or Email oclayborne@varsity.com

ON BEHALF OF MY TEAM, I HEREBY ACCEPT THE COMPETITION AND ROUTINE RULES AND GUIDELINES AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE RULES.

_____	_____
(School/Team Name)	(Division — Division I, Small Coed, etc.)
_____	_____
(City/State)	(Advisor / Coach's Signature)
_____	_____
(Date)	(Administrator's Signature)

• Retain a copy of these rules for your files •