



## **THE U.S. FINALS 2011 CHEER & DANCE REGULATIONS & PROCEDURES**

1. Cheer teams must have at least 5 members. Dance teams must have at least 4 members. Please refer to specific divisions in order to see the maximum number of team members allowed in each division.
2. Mascots are welcome to perform as members of their squad but must adhere to all rules and regulations expected of team members.
3. Time Limits:
  - Cheer Teams – 2 minutes and 30 seconds
  - Dance Teams – 2 minutes and 30 seconds

There are no minimum time requirements on any type of routine. Timing and judging of routines will begin with the first organized movement or the first note of music. Timing will end with the last note of music or when the ending motion or pose is held. Introductions, spell-outs and/or organized entrances are considered part of the routine and are timed as part of the performance. All participants should walk/spirit onto the floor and immediately start their routine after placement of any props. Cheer team performances can consist of any combination of cheer and music.

4. The main performance surface will be approximately 44 feet deep by 56 feet wide. (The exact size of the performance floor could vary slightly by event.) A marly dance floor (approximately 40 feet deep by 49 feet wide) may be used for dance performances. For safety purposes, we require everyone to perform their routine on the performance surface. There is no deduction for stepping off the surface. Executing a skill off the surface will be treated as a rule infraction and will result in a 5.25 point deduction.
5. Coaches are allowed to sit on the stage/performance floor for Tiny & Special Needs divisions only. Coaches are not allowed to be on the stage/performance floor for any other divisions. (Exception: Cheer routine spotters. See *Spotter Guidelines* for details.) Coaches can always stand in the designated coaches' area or preferred seating area in front of the performance floor (if applicable). Also, no team is allowed to place "space markers" (i.e. something to show where the athletes should stand) on the performance floor except for Tiny or Special Needs teams. If space markers are placed by anyone outside of these divisions, this will be considered a rule infraction and will result in a 5.25 point deduction.
6. All routines must be suitable for viewing by audiences of all ages. Vulgar or suggestive music or material is not allowed and will result in a 5.25 point deduction for each incident. Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures, implications or lyrics. Vulgarity will be determined at the discretion of the judges and/or event directors.

### **Spotter Guidelines**

In an effort to provide a safe performance environment, The U.S. Finals allows programs to provide their own routine spotters. We feel allowing programs to provide trained and

knowledgeable routine spotters on the floor that are familiar with the performances and areas of the performance that may need “special attention”, the overall safety of the competition environment is improved. The U.S. Finals will **NOT** be providing routine spotters. It will be up to the discretion of the coach how many routine spotters, if any, they choose to use. Please pay special attention to the stipulations and suggestions below:

***DEFINITION OF ROUTINE SPOTTERS: Routine spotters are individuals affiliated with the performing program that are voluntarily provided by the performing program as a safety precaution for the routine. Routine spotters cannot be uniformed members of the competing team and must adhere to all “Rules for Routine Spotters.”***

#### **RULES FOR ROUTINE SPOTTERS:**

1. Routine spotters are there to help ‘catch’ falls and/or mistakes, not to assist or save skills. Routine spotters may only be used for stunts, pyramids and/or basket tosses. Spotting of tumbling is prohibited and will result in a 5.25 deduction for each occurrence.
2. Flagrant contact (anything other than assuring the safety of the athletes involved) by a routine spotter that assists a stunt, toss or pyramid may result in a 5.25 deduction for each occurrence. Point deduction is at the sole discretion of The U.S. Finals. The decision of the judges is FINAL.
3. Routine spotters **MUST** dress differently than the team so they are not mistaken for participants.
4. Routine spotters are for safety purposes only. Routine spotters should enter the stage behind their team and exit immediately ahead of their team.
5. The U.S. Finals encourages the use of routine spotters, however, they are not required. Use your best judgment as to whether routine spotters are needed for your routine.

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR ROUTINE SPOTTERS:**

1. Routine spotters should look presentable. Remember, the overall appearance of your team and their performance is important. Routine spotters should appear “neat and orderly” in order to minimize distraction.
2. It is strongly suggested that routine spotters be at least 18 years of age.
3. Routine spotters should make every attempt to be ‘inconspicuous’ during the routine. Remember, assisting the skill in any way (other than preventing injury) WILL result in a 5.25 point deduction. It is best to be present for safety reasons, but, unless there is a fall, the spotter cannot do anything that appears to help, assist, or save a stunt.
4. Routine spotters should be trained to know proper spotting technique. Routine spotters should know the routine(s), so that spotting is conducted as safely as possible.

#### **Music**

- Please bring TWO high quality copies of your music to the event. CDs or IPODS/MP3 PLAYERS ONLY! No tapes are allowed.
- One representative of your group will be responsible for running the music during the competition. This person must remain at the sound area throughout the entire performance. In the event a routine is delayed/stopped due to the team’s operator error, timing of your routine will continue. No unnecessary team members, parents, etc. are allowed in the sound area. This individual is responsible for making any decisions should a routine interruption occur.
- In the event that a routine is interrupted, the following procedures will be followed:  
Music Mishap
  - *Due to the failure of The U.S. Finals equipment/Team’s music equipment:*

If the music skips or cuts out during the routine the coach/designated team representative will need to decide if they want to re-perform their routine again in its entirety. If the team decides to re-perform their routine, the event manager will place them in the next available time slot. This time slot is non-negotiable. The team must perform their routine full out from start to finish, and will be scored on the 2<sup>nd</sup> performance only. If a team decides not to re-perform their routine, the original routine will be scored in full. Only 2 performances will be allowed per team.

## Injury

### Injury - Performance Area

- Music may be stopped by a coach/team representative/event staff member for a major injury only (i.e. broken bone, head/neck/back injury, etc.).
- If the music is stopped due to a major injury, the team will be asked to exit the floor while an EMT is attending to the injured participant(s).
- The team will be allotted time to make adjustments to their performance and re-perform their routine at a later time. The time given is up to the discretion of the event manager.
- The routine will be re-scored from the point the injury occurred. All scores received prior to the injury will remain the same.

### Injury – Practice Area

Minor injury – cut, bloody nose, etc.

- The team may move to an open area in the practice area to work through their issues, but must perform at their scheduled time.

Major injury – broken bone, head/neck/back injury, etc.

- The team will be allotted time to make adjustments to their performance. The amount of time given will be determined by the event manager and/or the practice area manager (45 minutes max.)

### **Safety Violations/Review Process**

- The appropriate event staff member will attempt to notify the coach or representative soon after the performance to inform him or her that a safety violation has been committed. If the coach or representative believes this is a mistake, he or she will have five minutes to discuss the violation with the event manager. All decisions made by the event manager are final.
- A coach may point out a rule violation committed by another team to an event manager. In order to provide equal respect and confidentiality to all teams, The U.S. Finals will not discuss safety violations or deductions with any individual other than the coach/owner/director of the team that committed the alleged infraction.

#### Participant Age/Grade Discrepancies:

- Only a coach/owner/director may challenge a participant's age/grade. To challenge a participant's age/grade, the challenge must be immediately brought to the attention of the event manager along with a \$200 (cash or credit) challenge fee per challenged participant. All challenges must be made at the event.
- The event manager will request proof of age/grade for the participant in question. The participant in question must supply official age/grade verification (i.e. birth certificate, driver's license, passport, report card or student ID) to the event manager no later than the Monday following the event at 5:00PM EST. The participant may provide proof to the event manager at the event if it is available.
- If the participant in question IS in violation of age/grade restrictions, the team will be disqualified, and the challenging team will receive their \$200 back.
- If the participant in question is NOT in violation of age/grade restrictions, the challenging team will forfeit their \$200 challenge fee. The \$200 fee will be given to the team that was challenged as compensation for their time spent providing verification.

#### Scoring Errors:

- In the instance a score is added incorrectly and the error is caught at the event, the team will be properly awarded during the next awards ceremony if possible.
- In the instance a score is added incorrectly and the error is caught after the event, the score and placement will be corrected and results will be changed on the website. All teams involved will be notified and correct awards will be mailed.
- Ties: In the event of a true tie (the tie cannot be broken by taking scores to additional decimal points) The U.S. Finals will not break the tie and all scores, placements and awards will stand.

### **Sportsmanship**

The U.S. Finals will promote sportsmanship by all who attend our events. Unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches, athletes and spectators during the event is not acceptable.

#### COACHES/OWNERS/DIRECTORS

Much like every sport, when a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes and parents/spectators they must maintain proper conduct. Failing to do so at any U.S. Finals event can/may result in a 5.25 point deduction, removal of coach, disqualification, etc.

#### ATHLETES

Much like every sport, when an athlete participates they must conduct themselves with the utmost in sportsmanship and maintain proper conduct at all times. Failing to do so at any U.S. Finals event can/may result in a 5.25 point deduction, removal of athlete, etc.

## RECRUITING OF ATHLETES/PROMOTING GYM AT THE U.S. FINALS EVENTS

The recruiting of athletes and promoting your gym to explicitly recruit athletes is strictly prohibited at all U.S. Finals events. The following are examples of what is not allowed:

- Flyers that are handed out detailing tryout information, gym location, number, web site etc. inside arena/competition area and/or parking lot. (the handing out of inspirations/good luck messages is allowed as long as there is no promotional information other than gym/team name).
- T-Shirts with tryout dates on them. T-Shirts with gym name, logo, website are acceptable as long as there is no reference to recruitment of athletes.
- Coaches, owners, directors, etc. talking to other athletes about attending their gym.

Recruiting of athletes/promoting gym at a U.S. Finals events can/may result in a 5.25 point deduction, removal of owners/directors/coaches, disqualification, etc.

Teams may report any issues to event management, but in order for us to assess a point deduction or disqualification, a member of our staff must actually witness such conduct and deem it unsportsmanlike. We cannot make a ruling based on hearsay alone. The U.S. Finals staff will not tolerate rude, angry, or disrespectful behavior. This behavior could also result in a 5.25 point deduction.

### **Inclement Weather Policy:**

All The U.S. Finals events will go on regardless of the weather conditions. Should an extenuating circumstance arise, please check the website for any updates. The U.S. Finals encourage you to exercise caution and make any necessary travel arrangements so that you will not have any problems making it to the event. No refunds will be given on any U.S. Finals expenses. Please keep an eye on the local and national weather forecasts so that you are prepared for any inclement weather.

### **Rule Interpretation**

It is the policy of The U.S. Finals not to give specific rule interpretations over the phone. All official rule interpretations must be submitted on a DVD, full size VHS videotape or sent via email to:

The U.S. Finals  
Attn: Rule Interpretations  
11500 Champions Way  
Louisville, KY 40299

All videos must contain the following:

1. A front, side and back view of the skill/section in question. Do not send entire routines.
2. A letter stating the question/request.
3. School/Organization name and event(s)/division entering.
4. Contact name, phone number and email address.

All official rule interpretation requests must be received at The U.S. Finals office at least 10 days prior to the event the team is attending.

If the skill/section in question is reviewed and cleared, The U.S. Finals will provide the coach with a rule interpretation response.

*Please bring the rule interpretation response that you receive with you to The U.S. Finals. Only official rule interpretations from The U.S. Finals office will be permissible at any U.S. Finals event.*

**Video Review at Events**

- No bobble, fall, or fall to the floor infractions will be reviewed.
- Only safety infractions can be reviewed. These safety infractions will only be reviewed on a U.S. Finals video reviewing system. These infractions will only be reviewed by an event representative and the coach/director of the team that is being reviewed. No team shot videos will be reviewed.
- All rulings decided at any U.S. Finals events are final.