

## 2024-2025 State Spirit Competition Guidelines Cheer Guidelines

### Eligibility

The NMAA State Spirit Competition is open to all NMAA member high school cheer teams whose coaches have attended the mandatory Spirit Coaches Clinic. Only one team may represent a school. All participants must adhere to all NMAA eligibility requirements. Each school must submit a team roster on MaxPreps by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

### Performance Category

- Both routines must follow the safety rules set forth in the current NFHS Spirit Rules Book along with any restrictions per the NMAA. Judges will provide digital comments and critiques on the score sheets. All judges' scores will be averaged to determine the final score for each performance. ***The score for Game Day is the total of each judges scores from Game Day Band Chant/Fight Song and Game Day Crowd Leading minus any deductions then divided by the total number of judges for an average score. The score for Cheer with Music is the total of each judge's scores from Cheer with Music Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Performance minus any deductions then divided by the number of judges for an average score.***
- ***The score from each (Game Day Band Chant/Fight Song, Game Day Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Performance) are then added together to arrive at a team's final score.*** Technical judges will rule on safety violations.

### Performance Criteria (Applies to both Game Day and Cheer with Music)

- There will be a total deduction of 5 points for any performance that exceeds the time limit. Deductions will be reflected on the technical judges' scoring sheet.
- Teams will begin their routine immediately after they are announced and have entered the floor (Now Performing...). A team will have 30 seconds to (1) enter the floor, (2) set up any props, and (3) get into position. At this point, teams will not be allowed to return to the tunnel. The time will begin with the first signal (stomp, clap, ready, music, etc.) and end when the routine is over. Teams exceeding the entrance time will receive a 5-point deduction from their total score for that performance. Deductions will be reflected on the technical judges' scoring sheet.
- No live music will be allowed during the entrance, routine, or exit. A music system will be provided. Each team will be responsible for furnishing a representative to control/start the music.
- Routine music must be recorded on a tablet or smartphone with the coach providing the correct connectors for your tablet or smartphone (USBC, Apple Dongle, AUX cord). You must have your music cued and ready to hand over to the music tech on your smartphone or tablet. If using a smartphone, it must be in airplane mode. Keep in mind that recording equipment differs.

- In the event of music malfunction during the State Competition, the school representative controls the music, to include the sound on the tablet or smartphone. Therefore, they will make the determination whether to stop the music. The announcer will then tell the performing team to regroup and start over. There will not be a point deduction for a music malfunction. A coach may not request that the routine be repeated once the team has left the floor. Please be sure to record your music at the highest volume possible.

#### **Game Day Performance Criteria**

- Each team will perform a routine composed of three sections (Band Chant, Crowd Leading, and Fight Song) not to exceed three minutes (3:00).
- Each section is not timed but should be approximately one minute each (1:00).
- Each team will showcase its best Game Day presentation that will include an announcer-lead situation game day element (football centered).
  - Every team will follow the same order: Band Chant, Crowd Leading, and then Fight Song.
  - Situational elements will be the transition between Band Chant and Cheer (crowd leading) sections.
  - Teams will not be aware of the Game Day situation prior to performance.
- The use of crowd leading tools such as signs, poms, flags, and/or megaphones are encouraged.

#### **Band Chant Performance Criteria**

##### **Band Chant Rules and Restrictions**

- Teams will take the floor when announced
- Recorded music performed by marching band
- No stunts or tumbling permitted
- Kicks and jumps ARE permitted
- Practicality is very important
  - Crowd entertainment vs. Crowd leading

#### **Crowd Leading Performance Criteria**

##### **Crowd Leading Rules and Restrictions**

- Emphasis on crowd involvement
- Crowd Leading tools highly encouraged
- No music permitted

##### **Skill Restrictions**

- No basket, sponge, or elevator tosses allowed
- No inversions
- No twisting dismounts from stunts
- Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
- No running tumbling
- Standing tumbling only restricted to single skills, NO connecting skills (example: standing back handspring/back tuck is NOT allowed.) Most elite skill is a standing back tuck. You MAY do multiple skills in the routine, but you are limited only to single skills- NO connecting skills.

### **Fight Song Performance Criteria**

#### **Fight Song Rules and Restrictions**

- Recorded music performed by marching band
- Up to three **consecutive** eight counts may be incorporated with stunts, tumbling, and/or jumps. IF REPEATED incorporating stunts, tumbling, and/or jumps, must repeat as initially performed.

#### **Skill Restrictions**

- No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed
- No inversions
- No twisting dismounts from stunts
- Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
- No running tumbling
- Standing tumbling only restricted to single skills, NO connecting skills (example: standing back handspring/back tuck.) Most elite skill is a standing back tuck. You MAY do multiple skills in the routine, but you are limited to single skills. NO connecting skills.
- A tumbling skill, stunting skill OR a jumping skill will be included and counted towards the 3 CONSECUTIVE eight count incorporation.

### **Cheer with Music Performance Criteria**

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed two minutes and thirty seconds (2:30).
- Music is mandatory and is to be no longer than a total of 1 minute and 30 seconds (1:30). Once the music starts, it can be interrupted with chants, cheers, stunts, etc. The school fight song can be used in this category. Music should be appropriate and not offensive in any manner to the audience.
- See judges' sheet for criteria that will be used to judge this category.

### **Classifications/Divisions**

- Divisions shall be made into the following classifications: A-AA, AAA, AAAA, AAAAA. Co-ed A-AAAA, and Co-ed AAAAA.
- Teams must compete at the classification level that the school participates in for basketball participation.
- Each team (All Girl and Co-ed) is limited to twenty-four (24) team participants in addition to one (1) mascot, and four (4) alternates. Each team will perform two routines with no more than four (4) team members different from one routine to the other. If more than four (4) team members are different from one routine to the other, an unsportsmanlike deduction or disqualification will be issued.
- Co-ed division is defined as having two (2) or more male participants in a performance routine. If only one male member is in a routine, the school can determine whether they compete in the All-Girl division or in the Co-ed division.
- Each school must declare the division in which they will perform by the stated deadline on the registration form. Teams will not be allowed to change divisions after the deadline.
- All performers must be listed on the state registration form submitted to the NMAA.
- Performers must be eligible per NMAA Bylaws, have competed in a minimum of ¼ of the varsity contests scheduled, and included on the team roster on MaxPreps. (See Bylaw 7.6.5)

### Trophies and Awards State

- State Championship trophies will be awarded using the following guidelines:
  - If a class has up to four teams, only one trophy will be awarded**
  - If a class has five or six teams, two trophies will be awarded**
  - If a class has seven or more teams, three trophies will be awarded.**
- In the event of a tie, the team's highest scoring performance will be used to determine the ranking for the state trophies.

#### Example:

Team	1 <sup>st</sup> Routine	2 <sup>nd</sup> Routine	Total
1	98	95	193
2	96	97	193
3	94	99	193

- All three teams would be in a three-way tie with the combination of both scores. Therefore, the highest routine score would be used in ranking for the state trophy, which would result in Team 3 winning first place (99), Team 1 second place (98) and Team 2 third place (97).
- If the tied teams have the **same** identical routine scores regardless of routine order the state trophy would be awarded to all three teams.

### Adjudication

- Judges for the State Spirit Competition will be impartial, qualified, and experienced professionals with a thorough knowledge and background in cheerleading. Judges will provide digital comments and critiques on the score sheets. All judges' scores will be averaged to determine the final score for each performance. ***The score for Game Day is the total of each judges scores from Game Day Band Chant/Fight Song and Game Day Crowd Leading minus any deductions then divided by the total number of judges for an average score. The score for Cheer with Music is the total of each judge's scores from Cheer with Music Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Performance minus any deductions then divided by the number of judges for an average score.***
- The score from each (Game Day Band Chant/Fight Song, Game Day Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Crowd Leading and Cheer with Music Performance) are then added together to arrive at a team's final score.*** Technical judges will rule on safety violations.
- No technical protests or appeals will be accepted.
- By participating in the state spirit competition, each team acknowledges the scores, judge's decisions and validated point totals from the individual scoresheets are final.

### Awards Presentation & Championship Photographs

- For second and third place, each team may send a maximum of four (4) members to the floor. For first place, the entire team may enter the floor for awards to accept the trophy and banner.
- The Awards Presentation will be held at the conclusion of the event.

### Regulations for Safety

- Safety rules apply to all Cheer teams at all times. Violation of the safety guideline(s) during the State Competition will result in penalty point deductions. Violation(s) of any rules in the current National Federation Spirit Rules Book will result in a deduction from the total score for that performance. Technical judges will determine violations of the safety guidelines.

- Refer to the current National Federation Spirit Rules Book for the safety guidelines.

### **Spotters**

- All spotters must be members of the varsity team performing and must participate in the routine. Qualified spotters will also be on the performance floor for the purpose of spotting all stunting.

### **Performance, Warm-Up, and Stretching Areas**

- Performances will be conducted on the basketball court (94' x 50'). An official Cheerleading Mat (54 ft. wide x 42 ft. deep) will be in place on center court for Cheer performances. All performances must stay within the perimeters of the mat. Failure to do so will result in a deduction by the technical judge.
- Teams will be given an adequate amount of time to warm up. No team will be permitted to warm-up on the concourse area.
- Only coaches who are state licensed, Cheer and Dance Safety Certified, recognized by the school, attended the NMAA Coaches Clinic, and listed on the official state entry form are permitted in the competition and warmup areas. These coaches are the only people authorized to perform coaching duties. *Alternates shall also be in uniform to be permitted in the competition and warm up areas.* Individuals not meeting these requirements will be asked to leave the competition and/or warm-up area(s).
- A designated "coaches' box" on the front edge of the performance area will be provided. Only two licensed Cheer and Dance Safety Certified coaches recognized by the school are permitted in that area. Coaches must remain in the designated "coaches' box" until the completion of the routine. Following their performance, teams will have 15 seconds to exit the floor.
- Lockers rooms will be provided for use between each routine on a scheduled basis by the NMAA.

### **Team Entrance and Seating**

- Teams will be provided with souvenir bag tags for participants who are listed on the State Registration Form and whose eligibility has been verified via the NMAA website. Bag tags will not be used for admission.
- It is required that all performing teams enter through the complimentary entrance door.
- Only eligible participants listed on the State Registration Form will gain free entry as members of the team.
- Any team member wanting to re-enter the arena, or the performance area must show ID at the complimentary entrance door and be listed on the state registration form.
- No outside food and/or beverages will be permitted.
- Administrators and Coaches must enter through the complimentary entrance door. Individuals will be admitted according to the NMAA Complimentary Entrance policy.
- Teams may sit in the participants' seating area.
  - Only the performing teams and coaches will be permitted to enter this area.
  - If you are in the participant seating area, you must remain seated during performances. Entrance and exit from this area will only be permitted between performances. A team may be asked to leave the participant seating if they are not respectful of the performing team.
- Teams are not allowed to change in the seating area. All uniform changes must be done in the provided facilities.

**\* Registration forms must be submitted by Monday, February 17, 2025**