

*MPA Fall
Cheer Coach Manual*



Build School Spirit
2017 Season

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Direct all National Federation Rules Interpretation Questions to:

Denise Gelinas: ggelinas@maine.rr.com

Susan Hartnett: sehartnett@comcast.net

All other questions should be addressed with your Athletic Director

Important Web Sites:

The Maine Principals' Association: www.mpa.cc

The Maine Principals Association Fall Spirit Bulletin:

<http://www.mpa.cc/images/bulletins/bulletin%20fall%20cheering.pdf>

Maine Cheer Officials: www.mainecheerofficials.com

The National Federation: www.nfhs.org

AACCA - American Association of Cheerleading Coaches & Administrators:
www.aacca.org

Site that helps to clarify legal stunts and pyramids – www.cheerrules.com

CheerSafe (Take the pledge) www.cheersafe.com

Maine Cheer Coaches Association Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Maine-Cheering-Coaches-Association/327631778673>

To: Fall Cheering Coaches,

This packet is to give you the necessary information you will need for the fall season. There have been some National Federation Spirit Rule changes and clarifications for the 2017 -2018 season, which all coaches/volunteers need to abide by to ensure that the athletes will have a safe and positive fall season. These rules are put into place for the Maine Cheer Programs to help reduce the risk and liability to all that are involved.

The fall season is not to be a preparation season for the winter/competition season. This season should be for promoting school spirit. The fundamentals of cheerleading can be used to promote school spirit and to get the crowd involved in supporting the team(s) that they are cheering for throughout the season. Remember, the advanced/elite skills are not necessary when trying to promote school spirit. The Maine Principals' Association expects all cheer coaches in Maine to abide by the National Federation Rules throughout the season. Additionally, there are rules such as twist dismounts and basket tosses put in place by the MPA Cheering Committee that are not permitted on grass (real or artificial) and rubberized tracks. These skills should be eliminated entirely during the fall season. Mats should not be taken out by the fall teams to perform these skills. These rules are to help prevent injuries. The intent is not to ground bound all fall cheer teams but to focus on the athletes' safety throughout the season. If a team is reported intentionally violating a cheer rule such as stunting on wet grass, performing basket tosses, wearing jewelry, etc., the situation will be investigated by the MPA. If found that this team is intentionally violating the rule(s) that are in place, then that team will be ground bound for the remainder of the season. So, if in doubt of the legality of something, then do not have your team perform the skill(s).

Teams should be aware of the conditions of the performing surface that they are cheering on during practice, warm-ups and at games. Warm days and cool nights usually create a surface that is wet and slippery. These wet surfaces are unsafe to stunt and tumble on during practices and at games, especially in the evenings. It is considered a violation if a team is stunting and tumbling on this type of hazardous surface. Please consider all the potentially dangerous cheer surfaces before putting valuable time in a routine that is unable to be performed due to weather conditions during game time.

All cheer coaches/volunteers must meet MPA Coaches Eligibility requirements. Along with the general eligibility coaching requirements, all Maine cheer coaches also need: ACCA Certification – <http://aacca.org/content.aspx?item=News/online-cheer-safety-course.xml>

The copyright laws for cheer music has been a national topic throughout the last year. The copyright laws have been in effect since the 1970s and are in place to protect the work by artists and to ensure they are compensated for their creation of music. It is the responsibility of the school, coach, and/ or sponsor to make sure the school is in compliance with their music. The use of copyrighted music in cheer for the fall includes any music used during rallies, games, or any cheer routines in general.

The information provided in this manual does not take the place of contacting an attorney for specific questions that you may have regarding the copyright law. This is not a cheer rule but the copyright law.

Thank you for your time and please read thoroughly through the information in this packet. There are many important pieces of information necessary for you as coach, especially for liability reasons. Please share the NFHS and the MPA rules with not only all the coaches involved but also share with your cheer team and their families.

Have a fun but safe season!



Spirit Points of Emphasis - 2017 – 2018

Application of NFHS Spirit Rules Book

The Spirit Rules Book provides rules and safety limitations that should be followed by all cheerleading/dance/drill/pom and other spirit teams that stunt, tumble or use props as a base. The spirit rules should be followed while participants are in a supporting role at an interscholastic contest and during competition. Situations and photos are provided as examples only, and do not cover all circumstances in which the rules apply.

Surfaces

Consideration of practice/performance surfaces are a vital component of risk minimization. The following skills are only allowed on a mat, grass or rubberized track surface:

- a. Basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses and other similar multi-base tosses.
- b. Partner stunts in which the base uses only one arm to support the top person.
- c. Twisting/tumbling skills (Arabians, full-twisting layouts, etc.).
- **EXCEPTION:** Cartwheels, round-offs and aerial cartwheels are allowed on surfaces other than a mat, grass or rubberized track.

Cradle Dismounts

NFHS injury reporting data reveals that more than 75 percent of all spirit injuries occur when dismounting to a cradle. Eighty-four percent of all concussions in spirit activities also occur when dismounting to a cradle. As such, coaches should be especially vigilant to minimize risk of this skill in practice, while participating in a supporting role at other interscholastic contests, and during competition. Risk minimization includes, but is not limited to, following proper progressions, teaching proper technique, adherence to NFHS surface restrictions and appropriate conditioning for the activity.

Overuse Injuries

Coaches are encouraged to limit the time spent practicing skills (e.g., headstands, head spins, head springs, etc.) that involve the head/neck area to avoid overuse injuries.

Spirit Rules Changes - 2017 – 2018

***Please note that not all rule changes apply to fall cheering.**

Rule 1: Deletes definitions for downward inversion, front drop, knee/seat/thigh drop, split drop, sponge and swan dive.

Rule 1: Adds definitions for braced flip, braced inversion, braced roll, prep level and swing roll down (teddy bear roll down).

Rule 1: Revises definition for switch liberty.

Rationale: The definitions were added to clarify language used in the updated Spirit Rules Book: braced flip, braced inversion, braced roll, prep level and swing roll down (teddy bear roll down). The definition for switch liberty was revised to match common practice.

2-1-10, 2-1-12: Revises language to match basketball rules book on spirit squad location during basketball games.

Rationale: Revised language was written to match the basketball rules book to create consistency across activities.

3-2-7, 4-2-7: Adds the words "extended stunts that stop" to allow for show-and-go and up-and-over stunts.

Rationale: Language was revised to allow for show-and-go and up-and-over stunts without a spotter. The stunts allowed without a spotter do not end in an extended position.

3-3-2, 4-3-2: Removes the word static and clarifies article 2.

Rationale: The word static was removed to clarify how a top person can pass through an extended position.

3-3-3, 4-3-3: Reorganizes and clarifies braced inversions in a pyramid.

Rationale: Conditions for braced inversions in a pyramid that do not flip or roll are enumerated for clarification.

3-3-4, 4-3-4: Reorganizes and clarifies braced rolls in a pyramid.

Rationale: Conditions for braced rolls in a pyramid were reorganized and clarified.

3-3-5: Reorganizes and clarifies braced flips in a pyramid.

Rationale: Conditions for braced flips in a pyramid were reorganized and enumerated for clarification.

3-3-6, 4-3-6: Reorganizes and clarifies all other inversions, including suspended rolls.

Rationale: Conditions for inversions that are released were clarified. A quarter turn was changed to a half turn; this increase does not elevate safety risks for participants. The number of bases and/or spotters was adjusted. Rules for suspended rolls were moved to this section.

3-3-8, 4-3-8: Prohibits a swing roll-down stunt.

Rationale: Swing roll down stunts (teddy bear roll down) were defined and prohibited.

3-4-3, 4-4-11: Removes the word static and clarifies the connection.

Rationale: The word static was removed for consistency throughout the rules book. Language was adjusted to clarify the connection for extended braced stunts. The connection cannot be made by holding the leg/foot in the hand.

3-5-5: Removes the requirement for spotter of a bracer in a double-based prep.

Rationale: Adjusted the requirement for bases/spotters of bracers in a double-based prep.

3-5-9, 4-5-2c: Eliminates swan dives.

Rationale: Swan dive rule was deleted, as releases to prone positions are covered in 3-5-2, 3-5-5, and 4-5-3.

3-6-2, 4-6-2: Adds an exception to allow the top to release to grab another base to adjust position.

Rationale: Language was added to create an exception to allow the top to release one hand to grab another base to adjust position.

3-8-2, 4-8-2: Allows poms to be held during airborne tumbling skills.

Rationale: Language was added to create an exception to allow the top to release one hand to grab another base to adjust position.

4-4-2: Removes the word static and clarifies article 2.

Rationale: The word static was removed and language was added to clarify how a top person can pass through an extended position.

4-7-7, 4-7-8: Prohibits skills to a cradle.

Rationale: Prohibits skills performed to cradle for dance/drill/pom participants. Dance/drill/pom participants may twist dismount to the performance surface.

4-10-14: Requires bases to be in contact with the top person when transitioning from a prop.

Rationale: Minimizes the risk to participants when transitioning from props as bases to people as bases. This ensures that at no time will the top person be free of contact from a base while transitioning to a stunt from a prop.



The Role of a Cheerleader

True Role of a Cheerleader

(See Cheerleading Philosophy pg. 7 & 8 in the Spirit Rules Book & Sportsmanship pg. 14 Rule 2-2-1 & 2-2-2)

- * Promote school spirit not only during games but throughout the season and in school for all sports.
- * Coaches and cheerleaders are role models not only for the school but also for the community.
- * Stretching and warm-ups should not be done directly in front of a crowd. It should be done in area away from the crowd.
- * Cheerleaders should show respect for the flag by standing at attention and not talking during the National Anthem.
- * To get the student body involved cheerleaders need to earn their respect.
- * Get the crowd of all ages involved. Use appropriate cheers and do not taunt the opponent.
- * Go back to the basics. Utilize your materials such as signs, the band, and incorporate crowd cheers. Create easy cheers such as “response cheers”. Pyramids and stunts are done to excite the crowd. Remember: more difficult stunts do not always capture the audience.
- * Go back to being “Cheer Leaders”.
- * Be aware of your team’s behavior- during pre-game, during the game, and after the game. Are the cheerleaders organized and enthusiastic? Does the team complete their time-out, quarter cheer, or half time routine and then walk off having discussions? Or do they try to get the crowd excited?
- * Make sure the cheer team knows the rules of the game that they are cheering for – know when it is appropriate to cheer.
- * Cheer teams and coaches need to respect the rules and regulations of the opposing school when traveling to away games.
- * When there is an injured player on either team cheerleaders should behave appropriately either by standing quietly until the player is recovered or removed from the field. This is not a time for discussions.
- * Opposing players, coaches, administrators, officials, and fans should be treated with respect. This extends outside of the game especially with social media.

Game situations for the fall season- Safety Issues

NFHS and MPA Rules are in effect always when student athletes are participating in practices, games, camps, or any other event(s) throughout the year.

- * No jewelry permitted- not even belly button rings, spacers, or nose rings.
- * Hair must be pulled back in a ponytail and out of the face.
- * Uniforms must be appropriate for the sport.
- * Rhinestones that are punched, sewn or glued on uniforms are legal. Rhinestones woven into the hair or glued on the face are illegal. Any other use of rhinestones being used on accessories such as socks, shoes, bloomers or bows is illegal.
- * No chewing gum.
- * No swearing.
- * Keep talking to a minimum. Athletes must be attentive at all times.
- * Please be aware of your surroundings and alter your skills to be safe and suitable for the facility or cheering surface.
- * Stunting and tumbling are prohibited when the grass, real or artificial, or the track surface, are wet.
- * No stunting or tumbling when the ball is "in play". The ball is "in play" during the team's warm-up session and during game time. **Remember:** people are watching the game so stunting during the time the ball is in play is not the appropriate time.
- * In the State of Maine - Basket tosses, multi-base tosses, or twists from dismounts are prohibited during the fall season on any type of surfaces.
- * Perform only perfected material.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Emergency Action Plan Worksheet – Student Response Team

Coach/Advisor Name:		Activity:																																													
1	911 TEAM	2	3																																												
CALL 911	START CPR	GET THE AED	GET THE ATHLETIC TRAINER																																												
<p>CALL 911. Explain emergency. Provide location.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Closest Phone</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>EMS Access Point</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Street Intersection</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>MEET AMBULANCE at EMS Access Point. Take to vic tim.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Entry Door/Gate</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	PRACTICE	EVENTS	Closest Phone		EMS Access Point		Street Intersection		Student 1		Student 2		PRACTICE	EVENTS	Entry Door/Gate		Student 1		Student 2		<p>POSITION PERSON ON BACK.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Position person on back. Put one hand on top of the other on middle of person's chest. Keeping arms straight, push hard and fast, 100 presses/minute. Let chest completely recoil after each compression. Take turns with other responders as needed <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr><th style="width: 80%;">COACH</th><th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Coach</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 3</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>WHEN AED ARRIVES, TURN IT ON AND FOLLOW VOICE PROMPTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remove clothing from chest. Attach electrode pads as directed by voice prompts. Stand clear while AED analyzes heart rhythm. Keep area clear if AED advises a shock. Follow device prompts for further action. After EMS takes over, give AED to Athletic Administrator for data download. 	COACH	EVENTS	Coach		Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		<p>GET THE AED</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Closest AED</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>GET THE ATHLETIC TRAINER</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">TYPICAL LOCATION</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	PRACTICE	EVENTS	Closest AED		Student 1		Student 2		TYPICAL LOCATION	EVENTS	Student 1		Student 2		<p>CALL 911 for all medical emergencies. If unresponsive and not breathing normally, begin CPR and get the AED.</p>
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<p>CALL CONTACTS. Provide location and vic tim's name.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">NAME</th> <th style="width: 20%;">CELL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Athletic Trainer</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Athletic AD</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	NAME	CELL	Athletic Trainer		Athletic AD		Student 1		Student 2		<p>PREPARE TUB DAILY</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remove equipment/excess clothing. Move to shade. Immerse athlete into cold ice water tub, stir water. If no tub: cold shower or rotating cold, wet towels over the entire body Monitor vital signs. Cool until rectal temperature reaches 102°F IF ATC or MD is available. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cool until rectal temperature reaches 102°F IF ATC or MD is available. If no medical staff, cool until EMS arrives. 	PRACTICE	EVENTS	Student 1		Student 2		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	PRACTICE	EVENTS	Student 1		Student 2		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;">PRACTICE</th> <th style="width: 20%;">EVENTS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Student 1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Student 2</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	PRACTICE	EVENTS	Student 1		Student 2																	
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Stunt Progressions

PROGRESSIONS - As with any athletic activity, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that team members demonstrate proficiency with lower level skills before progressing to more advanced skills. Just as the prudent football, field hockey or volleyball coach does not allow a player to take the field without adequate skills and preparation, the prudent spirit coach **will not allow** her/his participants to perform skills for which they are **not** adequately trained. These progressions are general in nature, and do not attempt to list every skill. All spirit stunts should be learned according to accepted progressions which means from **lower to higher** from **easy to more complex**.

Please note that the performance and safe execution of specific stunts, tosses and tumbling requires that they are limited to mats, grass or rubberized tracks as stated in the NFHS rules book. You should review this area and become very familiar with these specific performance skills and the appropriate surfaces on which they are allowed.

Partner Stunt Progression:

1. Step-up drills
2. Double-base thigh stand
3. Double-base shoulder stand
4. Single-base shoulder stand
5. Extension prep, step off dismount
6. Cradle drills
7. Extension prep, cradle dismount
8. Press extension, return to shoulders, cradle dismount
9. Press extension, cradle dismount
10. Full extension Step-up Liberty
11. Ground-up Liberty
12. Braced liberty tick-tock
13. Skills to cradles (i.e. toe touches and twists)
14. Basket toss drills ("rides")
15. Basket toss skill execution (i.e. toe touches and twists)

NOTE: No partner stunt should be attempted until each individual skill in the progression is mastered.