I. GENERAL RULES:

A. PERFORMANCE ROUTINE DIVISIONS

1. SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Junior High Divisions (9th grade & below):
Small Junior High - 5-16 members
Large Junior High - 17-25 members

Junior High Divisions WILL be allowed 9th grade participants if (1) they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the junior high school that they are representing AND (2) a minority of the team are 9th graders. Junior High teams with a majority of 9th graders would compete as a Junior Varsity.

Junior Varsity Divisions (7th grade – 12th grade):
Small Junior Varsity - 5-16 members – female only
Large Junior Varsity - 17-25 members – female only
Junior Varsity Coed - 5-25 members - one or more males

Junior Varsity Divisions WILL be allowed 7th grade participants if they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the high school that they are representing.

Varsity Divisions: (8th grade – 12th grade)
Small Varsity - 5-12 female members
Medium Varsity - 13-16 female members
Large Varsity - 17-20 female members
Super Varsity - 21-30 female members

Medium Varsity Coed - 5-20 members – 1 - 4 males
Medium Varsity Coed – 21-25 members – 4-7 males
Large Varsity Coed – 21-30 members – 8 or more males

7th grade participants will NOT be allowed on a Varsity team; however 8th grade participants will be allowed to participate on a Varsity team if the school they attend is under the direct administrative supervision of the same school board as the Varsity team they are representing.

Non Building Divisions:
Junior Non Building - 5-30 members – JH or JV team
Small Varsity Non Building-5-15 members
Large Varsity Non Building-16-30 members

Note: All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade

Non Tumbling Divisions:
Junior High Non Tumbling - 5-25 female/male members – 9th Grade and Below
Junior Varsity Non Tumbling - 5-25 female/male members – 7th Grade -12th Grade
Small Varsity Non Tumbling - 5-12 members – 0-2 males
Medium Varsity Non Tumbling - 13-16 members – 0-2 males
Large Varsity Non Tumbling - 17-20 members – 0-2 males
Super Varsity Non Tumbling – 21-30 members – 0-2 males

Note: All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade
(The Non Tumbling division will prohibit all tumbling, except for inversions into load in positions, stunts, and pyramids.)

Varsity Divisions for the NHSCC

Varsity Divisions will be subdivided based on school enrollments in the 9th – 12th grades as of October 1, 2015.
Small Varsity Division I – 1300 & above Students
Small Varsity Division II – 1-1299 Students
Medium Varsity Division I – 1300 & above Students
Medium Varsity Division II – 1-1299 Students
Large Varsity Division I - 1600 & above Students
Large Varsity Division II – 1 – 1599 Students
Super Varsity Division I – 1600 & above Students
Super Varsity Division II – 1 – 1599 Students

2. RECREATIONAL DIVISIONS

The Rec. Division exists for teams with the main purpose of cheering for and/or supporting a recreational team (i.e. youth football, pee wee sports, community sports teams, etc.).

All Rec Teams will need to provide a notarized letter from the city Director of Youth League that proves legitimacy of the organization. The letter must include how many teams are associated with the recreational program and approximate time or season/s they cheer.

Note: Competitive only youth programs are considered an All Star program, and must compete as an All Star team and follow the All Star rules and regulations.

Recreational Divisions:
Youth Rec – 5-35 members – 10 years of age and below
Junior Rec – 5-35 members – 12 years of age and below
Senior Rec – 5-35 members – 14 years of age and below

a. Rec divisions are determined by the age of the oldest team member. The competitor’s age on August 31, 2015 shall be the competitor’s age through the National High School Cheerleading Championship in February 2016.

b. Teams with a school affiliation may compete in the recreational division, only if at least half of the participants are in the 6th grade or younger. Teams with a school affiliation that have a majority of 7th and 8th graders must compete in the junior high division.

c. See additional skill restrictions for these divisions ( XIII Safety Rules Section I)

3. CLUB DIVISIONS

NEW - Club Divisions exist for teams who are not associated with a school program who will follow the same 2 and 1/2 minute routine format with cheer/sideline and music and all other rules and regulations (including additional restrictions for Elementary teams, Middle and Junior High School teams) along with all other teams competing at any UCA event and the NHSCC.

• The age of the competitor as of Aug. 31, 2015 will be the age used for the competition purposes throughout the 2015-2016 season for all Club Divisions

Club Divisions
Junior Club – 5-36 members – 12 years of age and below
Senior Club – 5-36 members – 14 years of age and below
4. GAME DAY DIVISIONS
   a. All teams MUST have attended a 2015 UCA camp to be eligible for the 2016 NHSCC.
   b. Eligible teams must qualify at a regional competition.
   c. UCA reserves the right to split or combine divisions based on the final number of teams competing.
   d. At the National Championship, teams will be responding to audio cues, as heard at football and basketball games.
   e. Game Day Divisions must follow all the event rules and regulations and will be eligible to qualify for the 2016 NHSCC in the above listed divisions. See section XIII for division specifics and restrictions.

   Game Day Divisions for the NHSCC
   Junior High Game Day - 5-25 members
   Junior Varsity Game Day - 5-25 members
   Small Varsity - 5-12 female members
   Medium Varsity - 13-16 female members
   Large Varsity - 17-20 female members
   Super Varsity - 21-30 female members
   Small Varsity Coed – 5-20 members – 1 - 4 males
   Medium Varsity Coed – 21-25 members – 4-7 males
   Large Varsity Coed – 21-30 members – 8 or more males
   Varsity Non Building – 5-30 members
   Varsity Non Tumbling – 5-30 members – 0-2 males
   Note: All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade

   B. SCHOOL / REC / CLUB REPRESENTATION AND TEAM PARTICIPATION
   1. All members of the cheerleading squad must be current members of the official school spirit squad and must attend the school they are representing. (Exception: this will not preclude participation from sister schools for same-gender schools as long as they are official members of the squad.)
   2. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete on two School / Rec / Club Teams, but are permitted on both a School / Rec / Club Team and an All Star Team at the same event. Teams competing in Game Day would be considered an additional category and does not count as a second individual performance.
   3. Teams may participate in more than one competition during the season.
   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. UNIFORM GUIDELINES
   1. All participant uniforms must cover the midriff when standing at attention. Covered midriff does include flesh or nude colored body suits and liners; however, fringe would not count as a cover.
   2. Any team in violation of the uniform guidelines will be assessed a five (5) point deduction.
   3. A traditional sideline uniform is required for all Game Day divisions.

   D. TIME LIMITATIONS
   1. Each performance routines presentation must include at least one cheer or sideline chant. The musical portion must not exceed one minute and thirty seconds. Total time limit is two minutes and thirty seconds. Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.
   2. Each Game Day performance should consist of a Cheer, Sideline and Band Chant or Fight Song. The music portion must not exceed one minute with an overall maximum performance time of three minutes. Time will begin after the first audio cue is given.
   3. 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.
   4. The routine time limit is 2:30. 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.
   5. 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 allow for variations in sound equipment.
   6. 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, hand shakes, 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. Teams may use an unlimited number of songs in their routine at all competitions.
   2. NHSCC MUSIC GUIDELINES – Teams may not use Disney themes, however, Disney music is acceptable.
      Note: All teams must provide their own Fight Song / Band Cadence music.

   F. COMPETITION PERFORMANCE 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. UCA Competitions comply with the NFHS & AACCA surface ruling that school based programs may not compete on a spring floor.
   4. Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips).
   5. Deductions will not be assessed for out of bounds at any of the UCA Competitions. With the exception of the NHSCC.
6. **BOUNDARY FOR THE NHSCC** – Any team member stepping outside or touching outside the performance area will cause the squad to receive a .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.

7. **Signs or props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area.** A ONE (1) point penalty will be assessed for signs or props that are thrown outside the competition area at the NHSCC.

8. **All props, center markers, etc. are prohibited.** Center will be marked on all performance surfaces.

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**G. NHSCC QUALIFICATION:**
1. All teams must compete in the same division at the National Championship in which they qualified.
2. Individuals may **NOT** represent more than one team at the National Championship.
3. It is understood that teams that participate in the National High School Cheerleading Championship will **NOT** knowingly and willingly participate in any other cheerleading event promoted as a national or international championship for the 2015-2016 school year. (Exception: USA National Championship) Teams who violate this rule will be subject to disqualification and will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the subsequent National High School Cheerleading Championship.

**H. LOGO USAGE**
Teams will not be allowed to use the UCA logo or the NHSCC logo including: banners, rings, bows, t-shirts etc.

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**I. SPOTTER POLICY**
In an effort to promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, UCA will provide additional spotters at all UCA school and recreational cheer competitions. School and Recreational cheer programs do not always have a large number of staff and coaches available to spot routines. To ensure that the safety of participants is not compromised due to limited number of team provided spotters, additional spotters will be provided by UCA.

**Guidelines:**
1. UCA Competition provided additional spotters will be mandatory on the competition floor.
2. At select events, a limited number of additional spotters may be available upon coaches’ request in rehearsal/warm up.
3. School-based teams and recreational teams may provide additional spotters in rehearsal/warm up.

**Definition of Additional Spotter:**
Individuals on the competition floor provided as a safety precaution to spot certain elements of a routine. Competition provided additional spotters will follow the listed guidelines:

**Additional Spotters:**
1. Should only be used during the stunt, pyramid, and/or basket toss sections. Additional spotters are present for added safety and should stand at the back of the floor when not spotting those sections.

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**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 should 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, Varsity Spirit Brand encourages you to be familiar with the specific laws 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 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. SAFETY 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 violations mentioned above that are designated a lesser point value.

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.

VIII. FINALITY OF DECISIONS
By participating in this competition, 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 score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the conclusion of the competition.

X. AWARDS AND PRIZE
All teams in the final round of competition will receive a trophy. Teams who rank first, second, or, third place will additionally receive a bronze, silver, or gold medallion. Teams placing first will receive a championship banner and jacket for each participant who performed on the floor plus two coaches. Based on availability, rostered alternates may request additional jackets after the completion of our final awards sessions on Sunday evening.

XI. JUDGING CRITERIA
1. Performance Routines
   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 and 65 points for the Music section of the routine. Each section will be averaged and then combined for the final score.
   c. Any deductions or violations will be taken off of the final averaged score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com.

2. Game Day Routines
   a. The 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 / performance, motion/dance and overall routine.
   b. Team are encouraged to use signs, poms, flags, and / or megaphones.
   c. The incorporation of skills (stunts, jumps, tumbling, motions/dance) may be added to any/all sections of the Game Day performance.
   d. To imitate the Game Day feel, audio cues will be given in random order to each team performing. (Fight Song / Band Chant, Offense / Defense / General Sideline, Cheer)
   e. Band Chant, is a music selection performed by a band that encourages crowd response and interaction.
   f. 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.
   g. Crowd leading will count for 60 points and the Band Chant will count for 40 points. Each section will be averaged and then combined for the final score.
   h. Each section should have a beginning and end. Note: Spirited crowd leading interaction between each section is encouraged to continue the game day feel.
   i. Traditional game day uniform is required.
   j. 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
XII. JUDGING PANELS
1. Head Judge - The Head Judge is responsible for overseeing the entire Judging Panel that consists of Panel Judges, Point Deduction Judge, and Safety Judge. The Head Judge will also fill out his/her own score sheet for each performance.
2. Panel Judge - Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team’s performance based on the UCA Score Sheets. Each Panel Judge will fill out a score sheet for each performance.
3. Point Deduction Judge – The Point Deduction Judge is responsible for assessing deductions in each routine for athlete(s), stunt(s), and pyramid fall(s), drop(s) or collapse. Please review the “Point Deduction” explanation sheet at uca.varsity.com under the competitions tab.
4. Safety Judge - The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.
5. All judges’ decisions are final.

XIII. 2015-2016 SAFETY RULES
Rules subject to change by AACCA. Rule changes listed in bold type. Go to www.AACCA.org for updates

A. Glossary
Base: A person who is in direct contact with the performing surface and is supporting another person’s weight.
Basket Toss: A stunt in which a top person is tossed by bases whose hands are interlocked.
Bracer: A top person who stabilizes and/or assists another top person.
Braced Flip/Roll: A pyramid in which the top person performs a hip-over-head rotation while in contact with bracers.
Cradle: A dismount from a partner stunt, pyramid or toss in which the catch is completed below shoulder height by a base or bases with the top person in a face-up open-pike position.
Cupie/Awesome: A stunt in which both feet of the top person are in one hand of a base.
Dive Roll: A forward roll where the feet leave the ground before the hands reach the ground.
Downward Inversion: A stunt or pyramid in which an inverted top person’s center of gravity moves toward the performing surface.
Drop: Landing on the performance surface from an airborne position.
Elevator/Sponge Toss: A stunt in which the top person loads in to an elevator/sponge loading position and is then tossed into the air.
Extended Stunt: A stunt in which the entire body of the top person is extended in an upright position over the base(s). Chairs, torches, flatbacks and straddle lifts are examples of stunts where the bases’ arms are extended overhead, but are NOT considered to be extended stunts since the height of the body of the top person is similar to a shoulder level stunt.
Flatback: A stunt in which a top person is held face up or face down, in a horizontal position, with their hips and shoulders in alignment.
Foldover Stunt: An inverted stunt in which the top person bends at the waist and is caught on his/her back by multiple catchers while one or both of the top person’s ankles/feet remain in the grip of the base(s) (e.g., yo-yo, pancake, etc.)
Hanging Pyramid: A pyramid in which the top person’s weight is primarily supported by another top person. Examples of hanging pyramids are: a person being suspended between two shoulder stands; a “whirlybird” stunt where one person’s weight is being supported by the legs of a top person in a shoulder sit; and a “diamond head” where two persons are suspended from one shoulder stand.
Helicopter: A stunt in which the top person is tossed into the air in a horizontal position and rotates parallel to the ground in the same motion as a helicopter blade.
Inverted: A body position where the shoulders are below the waist.
Loading Position: Bases support a non-extended top person under the foot/feet in preparation for a stunt or toss.
Log Roll: A top person in a horizontal position or cradle is popped then twists parallel to the performing surface before being caught by the original base(s) in a horizontal position or cradle.
Pyramid: Connected partner stunts.
Post: A person on the performing surface who may assist a top person during a stunt or transition.
Prep: A stunt in which one or more bases hold a standing top person at approximately shoulder height.
Prep Level: When a top person’s base of support is at approximately shoulder height.
Prop: Any object which can be manipulated or used as a base (ex: poms, signs, flags, megaphones, etc.)
Quick Toss/Partner Toss: A toss technique where the top person begins the toss with at least one foot on the ground. The base(s) can apply an upward force on any part of the body other than under the foot. Quick Toss is the common term when multiple bases are used.
Released Pyramid Transition: A pyramid transition in which the top person is connected to a bracer while being released from their bases before being caught in a cradle, stunt or loading position.
Release Stunt: A transition from one stunt to another stunt (including loading positions) in which the top person becomes free from all bases, posts and spotters.
Spotter: A person who is responsible for assisting or catching the top person in a partner stunt or pyramid.
Stunt/Partner Stunt: One or more persons supporting one or more top persons off of the ground.
Switch Liberty: A stunt in which the top person begins with one foot on the performing surface, is released from the bases, and then lands in a stunt on the other foot.
Suspended Roll: A stunt in which one or more upright bases or posts hold a top person’s hand(s)/arm(s) while the top person performs continuous hip-over-head rotation.
Tension Drop: A dismount from a stunt or pyramid where the top person(s) are directed toward the ground while their feet are held by the base(s) until just before the landing.
Tick-Tock: A stunt that is held in a static position on one leg, the base(s) takes a downward dip and release the top person as the top person switches the weight to the other leg and lands in a static position on the opposite leg. The dip may or may not pass through prep level before release.
Top Person: A person who is not in contact with the performing surface and is being supported or stabilized by another person or has been tossed into the air.
Toss: A release stunt in which the base(s) begin underneath the top person’s foot/feet, execute a throwing motion from below shoulder level to increase the height of the top person, and the top person becomes free from all bases, spotters, posts or bracers. Note: This term applies when at least one base is under one or both feet of the top person. For other types of tosses, see “Quick Toss/Partner Toss”. 
Performing surface, including rolls, inverted extended skills (cartwheels, handstands, walkovers, handsprings, etc.), aerals, twists and flips. NOTE: Jumps, leaps and side rolls on the performing surface are not considered to be tumbling.

B. General

1. These rules are to be in effect for all practices, games, competitions and other performances.
2. Cheerleading squads should be placed under the direction of a qualified and knowledgeable coach.
3. All practice sessions should be supervised by the coach and held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders (i.e., use of appropriate mats, away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.).
4. Coaches should recognize a squad’s particular ability level and should limit the squad’s activities accordingly. “Ability level” refers to the squad’s talents as a whole and individuals should not be pressed to perform activities until safely perfected.
5. All cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading gymnastics (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps).
6. Professional training in proper spotting techniques should be mandatory for all squads.
7. All cheerleading squads should adopt a comprehensive conditioning and strength-building program.
8. An appropriate warm-up routine should precede all cheerleading activities.
9. Prior to the performance of any skill, the immediate environment for the activity should be taken into consideration including, but not limited to proximity of non-squad personnel, performance surface, lighting and/or precipitation. Technical skills should not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or surfaces with obstructions.
10. Programs should qualify cheerleaders according to generally accepted teaching progressions. Appropriate spotting should be used until all performers demonstrate proficiency of the skill.
11. All jewelry is prohibited during participation. Religious medals and medical medals are not considered to be jewelry. A religious medal without a chain must be taped and may be visible.
12. Supports, braces and soft casts which are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production do not require any additional padding. Supports/braces that have been altered from the manufacturer’s original design/production must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than one-half inch thick if the participant is involved in partner stunts, pyramids or tosses. A participant wearing a plaster cast or a walking boot must not be involved in partner stunts, pyramids or tosses.
13. Squad members must wear athletic shoes (no gymnastic slippers).
14. When discarding props (signs, etc.) that are made of solid material or have sharp edges/corners, team members must gently toss or place the props so that they are under control.
15. The use of mini-trampolines, springboards, spring-assisted floors or any other height-increasing apparatus is prohibited for competition or performance. These devices may be used for skill development and practice under the supervision of a coach trained in their use.

C. Partner Stunts

1. Partner stunts (free-standing or as part of a pyramid) higher than shoulder stand level must have a separate, continuous spotter for each person over shoulder stand level.
2. The bases of any extended stunt must have both feet in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface.
3. Bases may not:
   a. Hold any objects in a hand that is supporting the top person.
   b. Assume a back bend, handstand or headstand position.
4. A spotter is required for single base shoulder level stunts in which the feet of the top person are in the hand(s) of the base. (This spotter may assist under the sole of the foot.)
5. In stunts requiring a spotter, a spotter:
   a. Cannot provide primary support for a top person. Primary support means the majority of the top person’s weight.
   b. Must be in a position to protect the top person’s head, neck and shoulders when coming off a stunt or pyramid or landing in a cradle. In most stunts this is behind or beside the top person.
   c. Spotters must have their attention focused on the top person. Momentarily looking away in order to assess environmental safety factors (poms, signs, another stunt, etc.) is allowed as long as their focus returns to the top person.
   d. May not have their hands behind their back.
   e. May not support under the heel or sole of the top person’s foot in a single based extended stunt. They may hold at the ankle of the top person and/or the wrist of the base or any combination thereof.
   f. May not hold any objects in their hands.
6. In all Quick Tosses and Partner Tosses the following rules apply:
   a. No one can apply force under the foot. If force is applied under the foot and there is a release, the rules in the “Tosses” section apply.
   b. If landing on the ground, a catcher must control the top person back to the ground and the top person must land with at least one foot on the ground.
   c. If landing in a cradle, one additional catcher is required.
   d. The top person cannot travel over or under another person.
   e. The top person cannot be caught in a single base horizontal position.
7. The total number of twists in a dismount from a stunt cannot be greater than 1 1/4 rotations.
8. Partner stunts and pyramids may not pass over, under or through other partner stunts or pyramids.
9. Cradle dismounts from partner stunts shoulder height or above to the original base(s) require an additional spotter in position to protect the head, neck and shoulders of the top person.
10. In all dismounts to catchers who are not the original bases, the following conditions must be met:
   a. The top person must be cradled by two catchers and a head-and-shoulders spotter/catcher.
   b. The new catchers must remain close to the original bases.
c. The new catchers must be in place and not involved in any other skill when the release is initiated.
d. The top person may not perform any skill (twist, toe touch, etc.) following the release.

11. In all cradle dismounts, the top person must not hold props that are made of hard material or have corners or sharp edges.

12. Unless listed below, a release stunt must either be cradled or connected to at least one bracer.
   a. Helicopters are allowed provided all of the following conditions are met:
      1. The top person makes no more than a 180 degree rotation (half-turn).
      2. Four bases must be in position during the entire release.
      3. There must be a base at the head/shoulder area during the initiation of the toss as well as the catch.
      4. The bases are not allowed to change positions during the release.
      5. The top person must begin and end in a face up position.
   b. The top person cannot perform a twisting skill.
   c. A top person in a horizontal position shoulder height or above must have assisted landings. If the dismount to cradles, there must be three people for each top person being cradled.
   d. A swinging stunt is legal provided all the following conditions are met:
      1. There is a total of four bases that support the top person.
      2. At least three of the bases must support under the legs of the top person. The fourth base may support under the legs or make contact with the hands of the top person.
      3. The top person must have both hands in contact with bases during the split portion of the transition.
   e. A downward movement is only allowed from below shoulder height.

13. Non-braced suspended splits in a transition are allowed provided all of the following conditions are met:
   a. The top person must have both hands in continuous contact with a post or with both bases’ hands or, when transitioning to the split without continuous hand-to-hand contact:
      1. The top person must have both hands in continuous contact with a post or with both bases’ hands or,
      2. At least three of the bases must support under the legs of the top person. The fourth base may support under the legs or make contact with the hands of the top person.
   b. The top person must maintain contact with at least one original base or spotter.
   c. The catchers must be to the side or front of the person(s) moving the top person.
   d. When the catchers are not the original bases, they remain close to the original bases and must be in place prior to the movement to the horizontal position.
   e. When the catchers are not the original bases and the top person begins or passes through an extended overhead position, at least three catchers are required.

14. A single-base may not be the only primary support for two extended top persons.

15. Braced inversions in a pyramid that do not flip or roll are allowed provided the following conditions are met:
   a. The top person does not begin in an extended inverted position.
   b. Braced inversions that release must follow the Release Pyramid Transition rule E-7.
   c. A single base/post suspended roll that ends on the performing surface requires a spotter.
   d. If caught in a cradle, load or stunt, the new catchers must be in place and are not involved with any other skill when the suspended roll is initiated.
   e. The feet/ankles of the top person are released.

16. A top person may be moved from a vertical position to a horizontal position (straight body or cradle) provided all the following conditions are met:
   a. The top person maintains contact with at least one original base or spotter.

b. At least two catchers and/or bases catch the upper body of the top person.
c. The catchers must be to the side or front of the person(s) moving the top person.
d. When the catchers are not the original bases, they remain close to the original bases and must be in place prior to the movement to the horizontal position.
e. When the catchers are not the original bases and the top person begins or passes through an extended overhead position, at least three catchers are required.
b. The top person does not begin in an extended inverted position.

c. The top person maintains continuous hand-to-hand/arm contact with a bracer on each side.

d. The bracers are in double base preps with a spotter.

e. The top person is between or in front of the bracers.

f. At least three catchers (one base and two spotters or two bases and one spotter) who were the original bases/spotters catch the top person in a loading position, stunt or cradle, or assist the top person to the performing surface. If the flip ends in a cradle, the bracers may release the top person once she/he begins to descend and is no longer inverted.

g. The top person ends in a non-inverted position.

h. The top person does not perform more than one and one quarter (1 ¼) flipping rotations and no more than one half (½) twist.

i. The bases/catchers remain stationary except as necessary for safety adjustments.

5. In all other inversions:

a. An inverted top person is allowed to pass through an extended position, but must not pause or stop while extended.

b. In inversions where the base of support begins and remains below prep level:
   1. At least one base or spotter must be in a position to protect the head/neck of the top person.
   2. The base or spotter must maintain contact with the top person’s upper body (waist and above, including arms/hands) until the top person is no longer inverted or his/her hands are on the performing surface. The contact must be sufficient to stabilize/control the top person’s position. EXCEPTION: A top person in an inverted position on the performing surface may be released to a loading position below shoulder height.

c. In inversions where the base of support begins at or passes through prep level:
   1. At least two people on the performing surface must be in a position to protect the head/neck of the top person.
   2. The bases/spotters must maintain contact with the top person’s upper body (waist and above, including arms/hands) until the top person is no longer inverted or his/her hands are on the performing surface. The contact must be sufficient to stabilize/control the top person’s position. EXCEPTION: In a foldover stunt, the top person may initiate the inversion without upper body contact.

3. The top person must not go directly to an inverted position on the performance surface from a prep or higher.

d. Dismounts from inverted stunts to a cradle or an upright position on the performing surface are allowed provided the top person begins in a static or “pump and go” position (i.e., handstand) and does not perform any skill (e.g., toe touches, twists, etc.). Dismounts to the performing surface from shoulder height or above must follow Rule C-18.

6. An inverted top person must not hold objects (poms, signs, etc.) in his/her hands. EXCEPTION: During a transition from an inverted position on the performing surface to a non-inverted stunt, a top person can hold objects.

E. Pyramids

In addition to these specific pyramid rules, all persons and stunts involved in a pyramid must follow all rules from the Partner Stunt and Inversion sections.

1. The top person in a pyramid must receive primary support from a base or be connected to a bracer who is on a base.

2. A bracer may not support a majority of a top person’s weight.

3. In braced pyramids, at least one bracer of each pair must be at shoulder height or below. EXCEPTION: Extensions (double- or single-based) may brace other extensions.

4. Partner stunts and pyramids may not pass over, under or through other partner stunts or pyramids.

5. If a person in a pyramid is used as a brace for an extended stunt, that brace must not be supporting a majority of the top person’s weight. (To demonstrate this, the foot of the top person’s braced leg must be at or above the knee of their supporting leg.)

6. Hanging pyramids must have a continuous spotter for each shoulder stand involved in suspending another person. Hanging pyramids are not allowed to rotate.

7. In a Released Pyramid Transition the following rules apply:

a. The skills before and after the release must be legal, including the required spotters.

b. The top person must be in hand/arm to hand/arm contact with at least one bracer during the entire transition.

c. The top person and each bracer must have a separate spotter. EXCEPTION: Bracers in shoulder sits and thigh stands do not require a spotter.

d. The top person may not be supporting his or her weight on any other body part of the person(s) assisting (i.e. Shoulders of the bracer).

e. The released top person and bases make no more than a ¼ turn around the bracer in a continuous movement in which the top person remains above the original base(s). The top person must be continuous in motion and cannot be supported so that they pause during the transition.

f. The top person must be caught by original bases. For braced inversion pyramids, see Rule D3 and D4.

F. Tosses

The rules in this section only apply to tosses where someone is under a foot, e.g. basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses, toe pitch tosses.

1. All tosses in this section are prohibited for Elementary, Middle School, and Junior High cheerleading teams.

2. In all tosses:

a. No more than four tossers are allowed.

b. Must be caught in a cradle.

   1. The cradle must include at least three of the original tossers.
   2. One of the catchers must be at the head and shoulders.

c. The toss may not be directed so that the bases must travel to catch the top person. (The bases can turn/rotate under the toss.)

d. The top person may not hold any objects (poms, signs, etc.) during the toss.

e. The top person cannot travel over or under another person.
f. The total number of twists cannot be greater than one and one quarter rotations.

EXCEPTION: Switch Liberties (also called Giddy Up or Tick Up) are allowed.

G. Tumbling and Jumps
1. Dive rolls are prohibited.
2. Flips greater than one rotation are prohibited.
3. Twists greater than one rotation are prohibited.
4. A forward three-quarter flip to the seat or knees is prohibited.
5. Tumbling or rebounding over or under a stunt, person or prop is illegal.
   EXCEPTION: Non-aerial tumbling over a person or prop is allowed. (Cartwheels, rolls and walkovers with poms or over a person are allowed. Back handsprings and tucks with poms are prohibited.)
6. A flip that lands in a partner stunt or cradle is prohibited.
   (Example: A back flip from a tumbling pass into a cradle is prohibited. However, rebounding from a back handspring into a cradle is allowed.)
7. Landings for all jumps must bear weight on at least one foot. (Example: A toe touch jump to the seat, knees, or landing with both feet back, or to a push-up position are prohibited.)
8. Knee drops are prohibited without first bearing weight on the hands.
9. Drops to a prone position (i.e. pushup) on the performing surface are illegal.
10. Airborne skills without hip over-head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto your neck, shoulders and hands. (This rule only refers to a type of entrance into the “kip-up/rubber band” skill.)

H. Specific Surface Restrictions
The following skills are only allowed on a mat, grass or rubberized track surface.
1. Basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses and other similar multi-base tosses.
2. Partner stunts in which the base uses only one arm to support the top person.
3. Twisting tumbling skills (Arabians, full twisting layouts, etc.),EXCEPTION: Cartwheels, roundoffs and aerial cartwheels are allowed on surfaces other than a mat, grass or rubberized track.

I. Additional Restrictions for Recreational, Club Rec, Elementary, Middle and Junior High School
The following restriction for elementary, middle school and junior high teams is in addition to the above rules for high school teams:
1. Basket tosses, elevator tosses and similar multi-based tosses are prohibited.

The above safety guidelines are general in nature and are not intended to cover all circumstances. All cheerleading gymnastics including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach.

Cheerleading jumps, gymnastics and stunts may involve height and inversion of the body and there is an inherent risk of injury involved with any athletic activity. While the use of these guidelines in coordination with the AACCA Safety Course will help minimize the risk of injury, the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators makes no warranties or representations, either expressed or implied, that the above guidelines will prevent injuries to individual participants.

For more information, visit AACCA.org. If you have questions regarding a specific rule, contact us at 800-533-6583.

XIV. 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. The top two teams in each preliminary round of 20 teams and over (“A”, “B”, etc.) will automatically advance to the finals in their respective division. One team in each preliminary round of 19 teams and under (“A”, “B”, etc.) will automatically advance to the finals in their respective division.
3. There will be a minimum of 50% of the teams that will advance from each round of competition.
4. Tournament officials will have full authority to make the final determination of the number of teams selected to advance to the next round.

XV. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION
It is understood that teams that participate in the National High School Cheerleading Championship will NOT knowingly and willingly participate in any other cheerleading event promoted as a national or international championship for the 2015-2016 school year. (Exception: USA National Championship) Teams who violate this rule will be subject to disqualification and will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the subsequent National High School Cheerleading Championship.

XVI. TELEVISION COVERAGE
The National High School Cheerleading Championship is nationally televised on ESPN and ESPN2. Because of the format of the show, not all finalist teams will be shown on the telecast.

XVII. TOURNAMENT FACILITY
1. The competition is scheduled to be held at Disney’s Wide World of Sports®.
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 offices to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.
XVIII. APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS AND PUBLICITY

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

For any clarification or interpretation of the above safety guideline please call Orry Clayborne at 1-888-CHEERUCA or Email oclayborne@varsity.com. You may upload your video for safety review in MP4 or MOV Format at http://eventuploads.varsityspirit.com by January 8, 2016.

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)       (Date)

_______________________________________________   _ ______________________________________________
(City/State)       (Advisor / Coach’s Signature)

_______________________________________________   _ ______________________________________________
(Division — Junior High, Small Varsity, etc.)    (Administrator’s Signature)