



Diocese of Cleveland CYO

Cheer

Rules

2023-2024



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CYO inspires young people to know God, to love God, and to serve God through athletics.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained within. CYO game contest rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may issue authorized changes.

SECTION 1 - OFFICIAL SQUAD

- A. Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more members listed on the team roster that meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Member Athletic Director, Member Administrator and CYO Office.
- B. A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled game for any reason without the consent of the game official or diocesan athletic representative may be subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 10. This also applies to Sanctioned Events.
- C. There is not a minimum number of cheerleaders on a squad.
 - 1. There is no maximum attendance number in Fall Cheer.
 - 2. The maximum number of cheer athletes who can attend a basketball game is 10.
- D. A partial roster or combined roster cannot be entered into any sanctioned event.
- E. Guest Players are not needed in the sport of Cheer.

SECTION 2 - SQUAD FORMATION AND REGISTRATION

- A. Cheer will be offered in the three divisions:
 - 1. 8th Grade: Only athletes in Grades 5-8 may be rostered and compete on an 8th Grade Squad
 - 2. 6th Grade: Only Athletes in Grades 3-6 may be rostered and compete on a 6th Grade Squad
 - 3. 4th Grade: Only Athletes in Grades 1-4 may be rostered and compete on a 4th Grade Squad.
- B. As outlined in Bylaw 3-2-1, an athlete must meet the grade and age requirements on August 1 before the school year starts to compete in the above divisions.
- C. All athletes can participate on a cheer squad.
- D. Cheer is sponsored during the fall and winter seasons.
- E. All squads must register with the CYO Office by the team entry deadline. Squads must register/re-register for each season of competition.
- F. In keeping with the CYO Philosophy standards have been set for the formation of squads and development of athletes.
 - 1. CYO prohibits "cutting" players from a squad. Tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.
 - 2. In the 4th grade division, if members sponsor more than one squad per division these squads must be split evenly. A & B (stronger/weaker, stacked/weaker teams) are not permitted. Violations are subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 10.

SECTION 3 - UNIFORMS

- A. All athletes are required to wear member issued uniforms. When standing at attention, the uniform must cover the midriff.
- B. All players must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.
- C. Glitter that does *not* readily adhere to the hair, face, body uniform or costume is not permitted. Glitter may be used on signs, props or backdrops only if laminated or sealed.
- D. Small and secured stud or post jewelry can be worn above the chin.
- E. Chains, other jewelry, or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.
- F. An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO Administration may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag nor patch interferes with the visibility of the squad's name.

SECTION 4 - PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Coaches must be CYO certified.
- B. CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.
 - 1. Credentials cannot be given to another coach at any time.
 - 2. Coaches who give their credentials to another coach, even for one game, will have their coaching privileges revoked for one year.
 - 3. If a coach has lost or forgotten their credential, they must inform the Site Director and show proof of certification with a photo ID and either the photo of the credential or the coach's name on the certification list.
- C. Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before and after the game.
- D. Three (3) non-athletes are allowed in the cheering zone with the team. Non-athletes 16 years of age or older must be CYO certified.
- E. At each game and practice, coaches are to have in their possession: an official team roster, a copy of each athlete's Pre-participation Form, Emergency Medical Authorization Form and a first aid kit.

SECTION 5 - PARTICIPATION

- A. Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of their ability.
- B. Mandatory participation applies to all games/competitions.
- E. Violation of these rules will result in a forfeit of the match and disciplinary action against the coach and/or parish.

SECTION 6 - GAME & TIME LIMITATIONS

- A. Events on Sunday cannot begin until 1:00 PM.
- B. No event can start after 8:00 PM.
- C. Practice sessions must be completed by 9:00 PM.

SECTION 7 - LIGHTNING AND INCLIMENT WEATHER

- A. When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen at a practice or competition, the squads must suspend cheering and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, a period of at least 30 minutes after the last thunder heard or lightning flash is witnessed must be honored prior to resuming play/practice.
- B. Contest or CYO officials assume authority for competitions when they arrive on the field. When the officials recognize inclement weather they are duty bound to suspend the game. Coaches and member athletic directors are responsible for application of this policy at practice.
- C. Announcements related to the status of competitions will be posted on the main page of the schedule website and social media as needed.

SECTION 8 - GENERAL RULES

- A. All cheers must be reviewed by the coach for good taste and propriety. The Coach must review each cheer. If there is any doubt of the appropriateness of the cheer the member athletic director or member administrator should review the cheer.
- B. All cheers are to be original & developed by the squad & coaches. Cheers or routines are not to be derived from other schools or squads. If cheers or routines performed in competition are proven to be derived from other squads/schools, the squad and coach shall be subject to penalties.
- C. A spotter should be used in practice and performance until a tumbling stunt or jump is perfected and approved by the coach.
- D. With parental approval, a participant may use a minimum amount of makeup.
- E. Chewing gum is prohibited.
- F. Cheerleaders should be cheerful, friendly, provide team spirit, and shall not belittle an opponent or another squad.

G. Coaches must be present for the squad to begin cheering.

SECTION 9 - PROHIBITED ELEMENTS

- A. Pyramids – defined as two people supporting one person or three people supporting two people, or any other position when one person has both feet off the floor and is in contact with another person who is in a supporting position.
- B. Mounts – defined as a duo-mount, shoulder sit, thigh stand or sitting on the shoulders of another person.
- C. Use of mini-trampolines.
- D. Knee-drops, slams or fireman catches.
- E. Aerial tricks in tumbling routines – aerial tricks are defined as any tumbling stunt that requires an individual to have both feet and/or hands off the floor.

SECTION 10 - GAME PERFORMANCES

- A. Cheerleaders may not, at any time, obstruct the view of spectators or interfere with the athletic competition in process.
- B. During games, squads are permitted to perform from the sidelines within reasonable distance of the out-of-bounds line.
- C. Specific Guidelines when cheering at football or soccer games.
 - 1. The performance location shall be behind the bench area of their team.
 - 2. If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the field.
 - 3. At half time each, each squad may perform two (2) cheers or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.
 - 4. On-field cheers are not allowed during timeouts.
- D. Specific Guidelines when cheering at basketball games.
 - 1. The performance location shall be located at the end of the basketball court of their team's bench. A cheer squad is not to be positioned under the basket or by the bench of the opposing team.
 - 2. If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the floor.
 - 3. At half time each squad may perform two (2) cheers or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.
 - 4. Short cheers may be allowed on the floor during timeouts. Squads should alternate time-out performances.
 - 5. Squads must leave the floor at the referee's whistle and are not to be with-in the court boundaries while the game is in play.
 - 6. Sites may limit/restrict performances/squad size due to space and safety concerns.

SECTION 11 - COMPETITION FORMAT

A. GAME DAY ELEMENTS

The competition will include the following GAME DAY elements. There are no organized entrances or exits. Teams may not execute skills off the floor prior to the beginning of the routine; all skills must be performed on the mat. Mascots may be included in the routine and must follow all guidelines. No running tumbling permitted.

1. BAND CHANT

- a. One minute time LIMIT (1)
- b. Emphasis on crowd appeal and practicality
- c. Marching band music or drum cadence music that encourages crowd participation will be provided* along with a minimum of 4 - 8 counts to a maximum of 8 - 8 counts of choreography. Coach(es) will be responsible for the remainder of the choreography. Choreography should be game sideline appropriate (this is not a traditional dance) with level changes, front to back line movements, etc. Think of how much room you have on the sideline at a game and go from there.

- d. Provided Choreography may not be changed for the first set. It may, however, be repeated with incorporated level changes, line changes, sign addition, etc. in addition to Coach(es) choreography. For example:
 - i. First 4 - 8 counts provided choreography
 - ii. Second 4 - 8 counts Coach(es) choreography
 - iii. Last 4 - 8 counts REPEAT provided choreography with incorporation of level changes, formation changes, added signs for call outs, etc.
- e. Spirit Kick(s) required (not a kick line), NO STUNTS OR TUMBLING; NO JUMPS!
- f. SIGNS AND FLAGS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED! (Think CROWD INVOLVEMENT!)
- g. Pom use required *
- 2. SPIRITED TRANSITION is required (not choreographed) to formation change for CROWD LEADING section.
 - a. Jumps required (not synchronized full team, not all members need to jump but we must see a few jumps here, random spirit think RALLY TIME EXCITEMENT)
 - b. Kicks required (not synchronized full team, not all members need to kick but we must see a few kicks here, random spirit think RALLY TIME EXCITEMENT)
 - c. No tumbling
 - d. Use call outs during this time, for example, Go Eagles! Let's go Green!
- 3. CROWD LEADING
 - a. One minute fifteen second time LIMIT (1:15): time will start with first cue of the chant
 - b. OFFENSE or DEFENSE situational chant is FIRST in this section and must be included; each squad will be assigned OFFENSE or DEFENSE status upon registration.
 - i. Be sure to choose short, repeatable words that your crowd would yell with you the key word, for example DEEEEFENSE, Come Eagles Let's Go! (For this use signs that say DEFENSE as that's the word I want the crowd to yell with us. See video example.)
 - ii. Must be basketball related
 - c. SPIRITED TRANSITION is required (not choreographed) to formation change; see #2 for guidelines here; this is included in the time limit
 - d. SIDELINE CHEER that engages CROWD RESPONSE (no storytelling cheers) will be performed second in this section
 - e. One (1) full team jump required
 - f. Standing tumbling only permitted with highest level being a back handspring
 - g. Signs required
 - h. Pom use encouraged
- 4. ENDING OF ROUTINE SHOULD BE A FULL TEAM SPIRITED RALLY! Once you hit your final motion, have the team hold it for at least 3 counts (timing stops here so make sure to make it a clear ending), clean together, and then RALLY/HIT THE CROWD with all your excitement!

B. JUMPS COMPETITION

1. An individual competition may be held in which athletes will perform a jump assigned from the list below in a head to head or grouped competition. The top performer(s) from the group will advance to a succeeding round of performance and asked to perform a different jump. The following jumps may be assigned in jumps competition:
 - a. The Herkie - The straight leg in the herkie should be held to the side, keep hips squared and torso facing forward. The bent knee should be pointing down.
 - b. Side Hurdler - It is important that the bent knee is facing the side as if placed on a table. In the side hurdler, the straight leg is to the side and the bent leg is to the side, much like in the herkie, but the bent knee is facing the side, rather than down.

- c. Toe-Touch - In this jump, the legs are straddled and straight, parallel to the ground, toes pointed, knees are back, and your hands are in fists or blades and arms in a "T" motion. Despite its name, you do not touch your toes during this jump, you reach out farther in front of your legs. Keep the back straight and bring the legs up to you. This is the most common cheer jump.
- d. Tuck - In this jump the cheerleader uses stomach muscles to pull the legs up with thighs as close to the chest as possible, knees facing upward as if in a tucked position.
- e. Pike - This jump is among the most difficult of jumps. Both legs are straight out, knees locked. Arms are in a touchdown motion out in front to create a folded position in the air, this motion is also called "candlesticks". This is often performed at a ninety-degree angle to the audience in order to show off the air position.

SECTION 12 - CAUTION AND DISQUALIFICATION

- A. Squads are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that the game officials and CYO administration feel shows respect and dignity towards its opponent.
- B. Athletes, coaches, parents, or fans who are removed from an athletic event are automatically barred from attending the next scheduled competition for that team. The individual must meet with the member administrator about the incident and obtain a signed letter from the member administrator requesting CYO diocesan administration to permit the individual to attend future competitions.
- C. Athletes, coaches, parents, or fans that are removed from an event for a second time will not be permitted to attend any competitions for the remainder of the season. The individual must meet with the member administrator about the incident and obtain a signed letter from the member administrator asking the diocesan administration to permit the individual to attend events in the subsequent season.



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