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**NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING AND DANCE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS  
ATTRACT RECORD PARTICIPATION**

*More than 1,000 cheerleading and dance teams around the world competed in the elite events at Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando*

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. – Feb. 8, 2016** – This year’s National High School Cheerleading Championship and National Dance Team Championships, produced by the Universal Cheerleaders Association and the Universal Dance Association, both Varsity Spirit brands, recently hosted more than 18,000 of the country’s top high school cheerleaders and dancers. The cheerleading championship took place Feb. 6 – 7 and the dance championship the previous weekend of Jan. 30 – 31, both at Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, Florida. This year’s number of participating athletes increased by nearly ten percent.

These groups have spent months on the sidelines cheering on their high school sporting teams, and all the hours of diligence and preparation were highlighted on the famous competition floor. The two events showcased nearly 5,400 dancers from 345 teams and nearly 13,000 cheerleaders from 667 teams. Cheerleading teams are judged on their stunting and tumbling skills, crowd-leading abilities and overall performance, while the dance competition is judged on choreography, technique, execution and overall effect. Teams competing in the championship had to qualify at a regional event or camp in order to participate.

“We’re honored to host these prestigious competitions that reward these athletes’ hard work and dedication,” said Jeff Webb, CEO of Varsity Brands, parent organization to Varsity Spirit, the organization that has hosted the events since the 1980s. “We’re thrilled to continue to see our competitions grow in popularity, encouraging cheerleading and dance participation from athletes across the world.”

Varsity Spirit will be posting segments of each performance on [www.varsity.com](http://www.varsity.com) so fans can watch their favorite teams. The competitions will also air on ESPN and ESPN2 starting in March and will continue through mid-April. Viewers can check their local listings for air times.

**Cheerleading Large Division winners included:**

- **Large Varsity Division I (>1,600 school enrollments):** *Sachem East High School—Lake Ronkonkoma, N.Y.*
- **Large Varsity Division II (<1,599 school enrollments):** *Mount Sinai High School—Mount Sinai, N.Y.*
- **Large Varsity Coed (21-30 members; 8+ males):** *Bartow High School—Bartow, Fla.*

**Cheerleading Medium Division winners included:**

- **Medium Varsity Division I (>1,300 school enrollments):** *Live Oak High School—Watson, La.*
- **Medium Varsity Division II (<1,299 school enrollments):** *Corbin High School—Corbin, Ky.*
- **Medium Varsity Coed (21 - 25 members; 4-7 males):** *Fleming Island High School—Orange Park, Fla.*

MORE

#### **Cheerleading Small Division winners included:**

- **Small Varsity Division I (>1,300 school enrollments):** *El Dorado High School – Placentia, Calif.*
- **Small Varsity Division II (<1,299 school enrollments):** *Pikeville High School—Pikeville, Ky.*
- **Small Varsity Coed (5-20 members; 1-4 males):** *Sparkman High School – Harvest, Ala.*

#### **Dance Team Large Varsity winners included:.**

- **Large Varsity Hip Hop (17 or more members):** *Coral Reef High School—Miami, Fla*
- **Large Varsity Pom (17 or more members):** *Floyd Central High School—Floyd's Knob, Ind.*
- **Large Varsity Jazz (17 or more members):** *Coral Reef High School –Miami, Fla.*

#### **Dance Team Medium Varsity winners included:.**

- **Medium Varsity Hip Hop (13-16 members):** *Westmoore High School –Oklahoma City, Okla.*
- **Medium Varsity Pom (13-16 members):** *St. Thomas More Catholic School—Lafayette, La.*
- **Medium Varsity Jazz (13-16 members):** *Westmoore High School—Oklahoma City, Okla.*

#### **Dance Team Small Varsity winners included:.**

- **Small Varsity Hip Hop (7-12 members):** *Academy of the Holy Angels—Demarest, N.J.*
- **Small Varsity Pom (7-12 members):** *Los Alamitos High School—Los Alamitos, Calif.*
- **Small Varsity Jazz (7-12 members):** *Eastern High School—Louisville, Ky.*
- **Varsity High Kick:** *Seminole High School –Sanford, Fla.*

More than 50,000 spectators attended the national championship events, with performances at five different venues within the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex on the grounds Walt Disney World® Resort. Earlier this month, it was announced that Varsity Spirit and ESPN Wide World of Sports are teaming up to create the first venue in the world specifically designed for cheerleading and dance team competitions. The venue will seat up to 8,000 spectators and will include a flexible design for one large competition space that can be set up for as many as four competition areas.

The Universal Cheerleaders Association and Universal Dance Association are dedicated to the safe and responsible practice of cheerleading and dance, and all teams participating in the National High School Cheerleading and Dance Team Championships comply with the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators' safety guidelines.

#### **About Varsity Spirit**

Memphis-based Varsity Spirit has been a driving force behind cheerleading's dynamic transformation into the high-energy, athletic activity it is today, and the leading global source for all things cheerleading and dance. A division of Varsity Brands, Varsity Spirit is a leader in uniform innovation and educational camps, clinics and competitions, impacting nearly a million athletes each year. Focused on safety, entertainment and traditional school leadership, Varsity Spirit's 1,200 employees have been helping raise cheerleading's influence and profile since 1974. For more information about Varsity Spirit or Varsity Brands, please visit [www.varsity.com](http://www.varsity.com) or [www.varsitybrands.com](http://www.varsitybrands.com).

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