

2019-20 RECREATION TEAMS GENERAL INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

The USA and/or its competition personnel reserves the right to delete, combine and/or divide categories and divisions as deemed necessary. If categories/divisions are altered, adjustments will be made in the awards.

CHEER DIVISIONS: Affiliated and Non-Affiliated Recreation Cheerleading Organizations please also refer to the Varsity Recreation general information documents.

<https://www.varsity.com/all-star/competitions/youth-rec/>

AFFILIATED RECREATION CHEER AND SONG/POM TEAMS

Affiliated teams need to prequalify at a USA Regional or Classic competition in order to attend Jr. Nationals in Anaheim, CA February 16, 2020.

A team must compete in the same category/division at Nationals for which it qualified in at a Regional or Classic, unless prior written approval is received from the USA. [i.e. 1) If you qualify for Level 1, 12 and younger cheer at a Regional or Classic, you may not compete in Level 3, 12 and younger cheer at Nationals unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional or Classic. 2) If you qualify for 12 and younger Song/Pom at a Regional or Classic, you may not compete in 14 and younger Song/Pom at Nationals unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional or Classic.] The above are two examples – other incidents of this may exist.

Song/Pom Affiliated Programs - The program must be affiliated with, report to, and be governed by an organization such as; YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, City/County Parks and Recreation Program, American Youth Cheer, Pop Warner Association, or other community run program not associated with All Star. Each team must cheer for a sport during the 2019-2020 cheer season.

An individual may not compete on two song/pom teams within the same category type and/or divisions within a category when separated by size, and/or age group (i.e. Song/Pom, 14 and younger and Song/Pom, 12 and younger song/pom divisions).

CATEGORIES/DIVISIONS CONT'D.

AFFILIATED RECREATION CHEER AND SONG/POM TEAMS Con't

An organization **cannot have** 2 song/pom teams in the same division. (i.e. 2 teams from the same program in Song/Pom, 14 and younger.)

Song/Pom categories may not be divided if there are less than 10 teams competing in that division. If there are 10 or more teams entered, the category is usually divided at the discretion of competition officials into Small and Large accordingly, with team size for each division to be determined from the registration for that particular event.

If a team qualifies for Nationals two or more times in a higher level (i.e. Level 3, 12 and younger cheer) at a Regional or Classic competition, then that team must receive written permission to move to a lower technical division (i.e. Level 2, 12 and younger cheer) at Nationals.

Any exceptions to the above must be requested in writing and pre-approved in writing by the USA office prior to and for the effected event.

NON-AFFILIATED RECREATION CHEER TEAMS

Non-Affiliated divisions will be offered during our All Star Championships event. Non-Affiliated teams do not need to prequalify to attend All Star Championships in Anaheim, CA March 21, 2020.

MUSIC

Note the music rules that are in place for the 2019-20 competition season. Be sure you are familiar with these prior to taking any competition floor. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification and forfeiture of all fees (registration, admission or otherwise) associated with a team's performance.

MUSIC RULES: Music rules are being followed at all USA and Varsity Brands events. Competition music must be properly licensed and a team must be able to provide proof of licensing at any event where the music is used. If a team cannot provide proof of licensing, the team may be disqualified from the event. For further details visit www.varsity.com/music. In order for a team's routine music to be featured in a television broadcast, should this be an option, teams must do the following:

- Use an original composition created or commissioned by you (i.e. an original song and recording to which you own or license the rights by written agreement)
- Additionally secure the synchronization rights. Not all original music providers can/will provide these rights.
- Submit proof of licensing, as well as synchronization rights, when requested after the event.
- One or several selections of music may be used as long as they follow the music licensing rules

Music is defined as any recorded sound amplified through the competition sound system.

A sound system will be provided. Speed control is not available. Music checks on the main sound system are not permitted. A representative must be present at the sound system at the time of performance. Advisors/coaches are asked to hold onto their own music until the time of performance and to take music back following the performance.

All teams must provide their own MP3 device (or smart phone) for use on the event provided sound system. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo. Although it is not recommended due to interference that may be caused during a routine, a smart phone may be used for playing music. No cover may be on any MP3 player or smart phone so that a patch cord may be easily inserted into the device. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. You must ensure that your device has a jack into which a patch cord may be inserted. Note that you will need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a head phone jack.

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation.

LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use any USA and/or Varsity Spirit Brand logo including: banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the Varsity Spirit office. The use of the brand letters will be allowed without permission; however, not the licensed logo.

ENTRANCE/EXIT

Judges are looking for enthusiasm and showmanship during entrances and exits. Teams and individuals are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible.

All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to the team being called to the performance floor. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, hand-shakes, etc. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation may receive a "sportsmanship" penalty. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

PERFORMANCE AREA

Performance boundaries at competitions will be a regulation basketball court (unless otherwise noted). All Regionals, Classics and Opens will have a carpet bonded foam mat for **affiliated** teams and a spring floor for **non-affiliated** teams on the performance area that measures 54'x42'. Unless otherwise noted, the mat will be removed for the **affiliated** song/pom divisions.

There will be no practicing on the performance floor prior to the competition.

Spring floors will **not** be used for affiliated cheer divisions. Spring floors will be used for non-affiliated cheer divisions.

All stunts and/or tumbling must be executed on the mat. At a Regional or Classic, a warning will be given for any infraction of this rule.

At Jr. Nationals, Opens and All Star Championships, a penalty will be assessed for any stunting or tumbling executed off of the mat.

You will not receive a penalty if you step off of the mat at any USA competition (not tumbling or stunting related).

PERFORMANCE ORDER/SCHEDULES

Typically, performance order is based on the receipt of registrations. The first registration received will be the last to perform in that division and the last registration received will be the first to perform. Adjustments may be necessary due to division/team conflicts.

All teams will be given an assigned check-in and warm-up time prior to competition. Warm up areas will vary depending on the competition location.

The "Person to Receive Correspondence" will be sent/emailed a tentative line up with performance times at least 10 days prior to the competition. These times are subject to change. The final schedule will be available by checking usa.varsity.com after 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Wednesday prior to your competition. On that Wednesday, performance times usually remain the same regardless of scratches. It is the director's/coach's responsibility to check the schedule for accuracy prior to the day of competition.

PENALTIES

Affiliated and Non-Affiliated Recreation Cheerleading Organizations please refer to the Varsity Recreation Rules.

Points will be deducted from the final team average for violations of safety rules and/or time limits. See below for song/pom divisions in addition to the 2019-20 USA Song/Pom/Pep Flag Safety Rules. See usa.varsity.com for these documents.

A) Safety Rules

2 points will be deducted from the final team average score for EACH occurrence of a safety rule violation or specialty skill/level restriction.

B) Time

Timing will begin on the first note of music, the first word of the cheer, the first organized cheer or the first cheer movement, and will stop with the end of the cheer or last note of the music.

Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the total routine time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-10 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 11-20 seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

In Song/Pom, all female members must use two poms for 80% of the routine. There will be a 1 point penalty for every 5 seconds under the time requirement for pom use. (1-5 seconds under = 1 point penalty; 6-10 seconds under = 2 point penalty, etc.)

PENALTIES CONT'D.

Due to the variability in sound systems, you should build in leeway in your routine to avoid timing penalties. It is suggested that routines end 3-5 seconds prior to the routine length time limit.

C) Performance Order/Division Changes

Preliminary competition schedules will be posted on the USA website at http://bit.ly/USA_One-Days by 5:00 p.m. (PST) 10 days prior to your competition date. It is the advisor's/s/coach's responsibility to check the preliminary schedule for accuracy of categories/divisions prior to the day of competition.

All changes to your original competition registration must be put in writing and e-mailed to usacompetitions@varsity.com. At the USA's and/or competition director's discretion, a penalty may be assessed for any requested changes from the schedule that was posted on-line. **To help avoid this penalty, any changes must be received in the USA office in writing by 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Friday one week prior to your competition date.**

Division changes may not be made the day of a Regional or Classic. At a Regional or Classic, a team performing in an incorrect division will be disqualified from competition, but affiliated teams may perform "Evaluation Only" to qualify for Jr. Nationals.

Division changes made the day of competition at an Open or National event may incur a 3-point penalty for "Unnecessary Change in Performance Order."

D) Uniforms

In all divisions, a school/team uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn (i.e. skirt and top). Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered "costuming". A deduction of 3 points will be taken if "costuming" is used.

When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff (front of the body). If a violation occurs, a 3 point deduction will be incurred.

Shoes - All participants must wear soft-soled shoes on both feet while competing. Shoes must have a solid sole and cover the toe and heel. This is a safety rule and if a violation occurs, a 3 point deduction will be incurred. This includes an individual with a shoe that comes off during a routine.

Uniform Distractions –The Legality Official, Head Judge or other competition official reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g. garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.). Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance.

PENALTIES CONT'D

E) Props -- Props are not allowed (excluding the exceptions below). A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is defined as any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine. Exception: hand-held signs, school/team flags, poms and/or megaphones are permitted.

Signs and school/team flags are permitted but may not be worn as an article of clothing or accessory.

F) Appropriateness of Choreography, Music, and Outfitting - All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection and outfitting, should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine.

In general, performances from school-based teams, including but not limited to the actual routine, signs, cheers, chants and hand signals/gestures, should adhere to outfitting, performance and music guidelines and criteria in place and approved by the administration or institution which the team represents.

Deductions will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes, but is not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another. Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited, to profanity and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, mention of specific parts of the body, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may be considered inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

Any uniform or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to the USA for approval prior to competing.

INSURANCE

Each participant must have his/her own personal insurance. All competitors must submit a USA Medical Release and Appearance Form at each competition in order to compete. The host facility, the host facility district, the directors/sponsors and/or the USA will not be responsible or held liable for any injuries occurring at a USA competition.

First aid staff will be on site at all competitions to provide assistance for emergencies only. Taping of wrists/ankles for individual performers **will not be provided**, unless medically necessary to treat an injury that occurs at the competition site.

FOOD

At most locations, food and drinks will be available for purchase throughout the competition. Food purchased at the competition venue may or may not be permitted inside the performance venue. Food purchased outside of the competition venue is not permitted inside the performance venue at any location.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms, locker rooms and/or restrooms may be available on a limited basis. The USA and/or the host facility will not be responsible for any lost or stolen articles.

GENERAL ADMISSION

At Regionals, Classics and Opens, **two** complimentary spectator admissions will be allotted at registration to each competing school for each division in which they have a team registered for advisors and/or coaches. Additional tickets for spectators, advisors, coaches, team alternates and/or "routine spotters" may be purchased at the door for each competition.

Team registration fees only cover those athletes taking the performance floor. "Alternates" must be registered on the team roster and be in the proper team uniform on the day of the competition in order to gain entry into the venue. For events that have a per person registration fee, all "alternates" must pay the registration fee.

CATEGORIES/DIVISIONS RULES

Sample scoresheets for all USA competitions will be available on-line by visiting usa.varsity.com after September 1, 2019.

CHEER DIVISIONS: Affiliated and Non-Affiliated Recreation Cheerleading Organizations please refer to the Varsity Recreation Rules. <https://www.varsity.com/all-star/competitions/youth-rec/>

You must visit the USA website at usa.varsity.com for a complete listing of the following:

- 2019-20 USA Recreation Divisions
- 2019-20 USA Recreation Cheer Rules
- 2019-20 USA CHEER/AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules
- 2019-20 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules

SONG/POM (Affiliated Programs Only)

NUMBER ON TEAM

5-23 members

DIVISIONS

Refer to division grid at usa.varsity.com

ROUTINE PROCEDURE

A song/pom freshman routine consists of visuals effects, synchronization, clean/sharp pom motions and technical skills. Visual effects include level changes, opposition, group work, transitions and formations. Emphasis should be placed on proper pom/motion technique, proper dance technique, timing, and showmanship. All female members must use two pompons for 80% of the routine. (See "Time" section penalty.) Props and/or costuming are not allowed [see D) Uniforms and E) Props above].

SAFETY RULES

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2019-20 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules for School and Rec Teams.

SPECIALTY SKILL RETRICTIONS

There are no additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2019-20 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams.

TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT

2 ½ minutes maximum

SONG/POM – An official school uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn. Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered "costuming". A deduction of 3 points will be taken if "costuming" is used.

SAFETY RULES

CHEER/SONG/POM/PEP FLAG

Routines at all USA competitions must follow the 2019-20 Varsity Recreation Cheer Safety Rules and the 2019-20 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules.

Submitting an electronic video is the only way to review a routine for potential safety violations. All video review for safety rule legalities for one-day events must be submitted 14 days or more prior to the competition date.

For all legality, division limitations, or questions regarding specific performance elements, you may email a video that contains the skill in question.

All emailed videos must include the following:

1. Name of the **School/Team** and **USA competitive division** in the *Subject Line* of the email
2. Videos should be in either Windows Media Player or Quicktime formats
3. Clear, close up view of skill in question
4. Include your name, team name, division level, e-mail address and phone number in the body of the email

Cheerleading videos should be emailed to Cheryl Moon at Cmoon@varsity.com
Song/Pom and Pep Flag videos should be emailed to Carina Clendenin at
Cclendenin@varsity.com

Note that submission of a routine and/or its elements does not preclude a team from being assessed a penalty while at a specific USA competition, as performances from the video submission may differ from those executed on the competition floor. Submission of a routine does not guarantee that it can be reviewed.

All rules and division limitations may be downloaded at usa.varsity.com.

For specific cheerleading stunt and safety questions that only pertain to the Varsity Recreation Cheer Safety Rules please call Cheryl Moon at 1-800-686-5718 or e-mail cmoon@varsity.com

For specific song/pom safety questions that only pertain to the 2019-20 USA Song/Pom/Pep Flag Safety Rules, please call Carina Clendenin at 1-800-886-4872 ext. 2023 or e-mail
Cclendenin@varsity.com