Cheerleading Manual For Coaches
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Production of this manual was undertaken to assist Minnesota schools in the organization and conduct of their cheerleading program, as it serves to support the interscholastic athletic program.
Section 1 – Philosophy

As a League-sponsored activity, cheerleaders serve as a support group for the interscholastic athletic program sponsored by MSHSL member schools. Cheerleaders should strive to boost school spirit, promote good sportsmanship, develop positive crowd involvement and help student participants and spectators understand and achieve the educational objectives of the interscholastic athletic program (refer to cheerleading bylaw in the current MSHSL Official Handbook).

Cheerleaders should focus on directing the cheering of student and adult fans. In this role, cheerleaders are positive, effective student leaders. Their activities should be focused on: creating a cooperative spirit among the cheerleading teams, athletes, student bodies, school administrators and the community; recognizing outstanding plays and examples of good sportsmanship on the part of competing teams; and aiding the school and game officials in the promotion of good sportsmanship by the spectators.

Section 2 – Gender Equity

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 defines cheerleading as a support activity which must be open to members of both sexes. Cheerleading is sponsored as a non-competitive athletic activity by the Minnesota State High School League.

Each MSHSL member school determines if, how and when cheer competition will be conducted and the status of a competitive cheer team within its athletic program. (Equity Reference: Gender Equity in Athletics Manual, 1992, published by the Minnesota State League with the technical assistance of the Minnesota Department of Education.)
Section 3 - Team Size

MSHSL member schools determine the size of their cheerleading team for each sports season. The MSHSL determines the maximum team size for state tournaments.

See the cheerleading section of the current MSHSL Rules and Policies Manual for team size requirements.

Section 4 – Eligibility

Cheerleading has been a part of the MSHSL activity program since 1968-1969 when the first eligibility rules appeared in the MSHSL Official Handbook.

Cheerleaders should be included in pre-season meetings of parents, coaches and students and be provided with the MSHSL Eligibility Information Brochure to be signed by the cheerleader and their parent(s)/guardian. Each school shall maintain the eligibility list for the cheerleading program.

The MSHSL Official Handbook, 401.00, Cheerleading, specifies that: Cheerleaders will be required to qualify under the eligibility bylaw stated as followed: Age, 101.00; Credit Requirements, 103.00; Enrollment, 104.00; Physical Examination, 107.00; Seasons of Participation, 109.00; Semesters Enrolled, 110.00 and Chemical Eligibility 205.00. See the current MSHSL Official Handbook and Rules and Policies Manual for specific information.
The Minnesota State League will conduct mandatory rules meetings for cheerleading coaches in August of each year. Since 2010, Cheer meetings are only offered online. Go to the League to view the online meeting.

The official rules book for Minnesota cheerleaders is the National Federation Spirit Rules Book. The book can be ordered annually on the MSHSL Supplies Order Form. You can also order the Rules Book directly from the National Federation. A copy of this manual and the Spirit Rules Book should be provided to each cheerleading coach.

Each cheerleading coach must have a current copy of the National Federation Spirit Rules Book and be knowledgeable about the safety standards. These rules define the standards for practice areas, warm-ups, uniforms, tumbling and partner stunts, bleeding, spotting and height limitations for pyramids and/or mounts and much more. The rules book emphasizes "It is ultimately the coach who must determine the capabilities and limitations of individuals and the team as a whole, and must limit activities accordingly." If you have questions regarding NFHS rules, please contact Jenn Carter at jencarter@edina.k12.mn.us.

All Minnesota cheer coaches whose team stunts are required to take the AACCA Safety Certification course and Stunt Progression course. Go to the League website for a list of Stunting Progression Classes offered in Minnesota. Visit the AACCA website at www.aacca.org for instructions on completing the AACCA Safety Certification online. An AACCA safety manual can be obtained from the American Association for Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA). The manual can be ordered from: AACCA, P.O. BOX 181102, Memphis, Tennessee 38181. For more information, go to www.aacca.org.

Section 6 - Responsibilities of the Coach
Each member school should define the specific responsibilities of the cheerleading coach. In general, duties include:

- Understand the NFHS and MSHSL rules, enforcing them at all practices, games, performances and competitions.
- Enforce the policies established by the MSHSL, school district and cheer program and take disciplinary action when necessary that is consistent with those policies.
- Set goals, remembering to keep goals and skills within your team's athletic ability level. *(SEE SAMPLE FORM A)*
- Locate and reserve adequate practice facilities.
- Schedule and oversee all practices. Set daily practice goals to help increase the level of a team's ability.
- Implement safety rules and guidelines into practice sessions.
- Schedule game assignments and other team activities.
- Supervise team at school-sponsored events. Assign a substitute when this is not feasible according to school policies.
- Delegate duties to the assistant coach throughout the year to assist in program operation.
- Delegate duties to cheerleaders to help promote school spirit and sportsmanship.
- Encourage cheerleaders to promote school spirit.
- Monitor academic level of the team members.
- Organize all aspects of the tryouts.
- Distribute and collect uniforms.
- If fund-raisers are used, screen potential ideas for the most practical and profitable. Follow through with the fund-raiser and make sure all moneys are collected.
- Keep an open line of communication to the athletic director, coaches, administration, and parents/guardians of the cheerleaders. Keep them informed of cheerleading activities and periodically ask for any ideas that would assist them in their support of the cheerleading program.
- NOTE: See also Spirit Coaches Responsibilities at NFHS.org
The Nine Legal Duties of a Coach


1. **Properly plan the activity.** Make sure that athletes are in proper condition. Teach skills in a progression so that athletes are prepared to handle more difficult skills.

2. **Provide proper instruction.** Keep up-to-date on better and safer ways of performing techniques. Teach athletes the rules and the correct skills and strategies of the activity.

3. **Provide a safe physical environment.** Periodically inspect playing areas, the locker room, the weight room, and the practice area for hazards and remove them. Prevent improper or unsupervised use of facilities.

4. **Provide adequate and proper equipment.** Make sure athletes are using top-quality equipment. Inspect the equipment regularly. Teach athletes how to fit, use and inspect their equipment.

5. **Match your athletes.** Match athlete according to size, physical maturity, skill level, and experience.

6. **Evaluate athletes for injury or incapacity.** Enforce rules requiring all athletes to submit to pre-season physical and screenings to detect potential health problems. If any athlete is not able to participate without pain or restriction of function, immediately remove her or him from the activity.

7. **Supervise the activity closely.** Do not allow athletes to practice difficult or potentially dangerous skills without proper supervision. Forbid horseplay. Do not allow athletes to use facilities without supervision.

8. **Warn of inherent risks.** Provide parents and athletes with both oral and written statements of the inherent health risks of their particular activity.

9. **Provide appropriate emergency assistance.** Learn sport first aid. Use only the skills that you are qualified to administer.
Section 7 – Sportsmanship

Responsibility For Spectator Conduct: In order to elevate standards of sportsmanship and encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students, member schools, fans and school personnel, the MSHSL held a Sportsmanship Summit and asked student participants to identify behavior expectations they felt should be in place at every school event.

These minimum behavior expectations provide a foundation upon which member schools, conferences, administrative regions and the League’s Board of Directors can build specific guidelines for activities under their control.

MSHSL Bylaw 409, RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING TEAMS, STUDENTS AND SPECTATORS, speaks to this issue, directly, and Bylaw 409-2 specifically states that, “School officials shall be held responsible for the proper conduct of teams, team members, students and home spectators regardless of where the contest is being held.”

In all MSHSL activities, each participating school shall designate a person or persons from that school to serve as crowd control supervisors or chaperones. MSHSL tournament staff may require school administrators to contact the tournament manager prior to the start of the tournament game so that they can be immediately contacted to respond to behavioral issues regarding their team members, students and/or spectators at the tournament site. Each supervisor or chaperone should be immediately identifiable to the students and to the tournament site ushers and other security personnel. This will help to coordinate crowd control between school supervisors and tournament site personnel. (Revised 8-9-05)

MSHSL Minimal Behavior Expectations For Regular and Post-Season Tournament Competitions

- Respect the American flag and the National Anthem.
- Spectators must wear clothing that covers the entire torso. Those who do not comply or who wear clothing that is vulgar, obscene or that in some other way inappropriate, as determined by school/tournament personnel, will be removed from the arena/stadium if they do not cooperate with this behavior expectation.
- The use of appropriate language is expected at all times. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable and must be immediately addressed by school and/or tournament administrators.
- Respect the game/contest. Under no condition shall anyone other than the members of the official squad enter the playing surface. No one may interfere with the contest in any way.
- Hand held signs, which do not obstruct the view of others, will be permitted provided they are in good taste. Signs, message boards, “white” boards or other similar items contest/tournament officials deem to be in poor taste will be removed.
- Artificial noise makers (i.e. megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, and other similar items) are not allowed.
- Laser lights are strictly prohibited.

THANK YOU for supporting your student athletes and fine arts participants and for providing a positive environment in which educational activities are conducted.
Flag Etiquette
HOW DO YOUR CHEERLEADERS SALUTE THE FLAG?

There are only two ways in our society to salute the United States flag. The first, the salute, is usually reserved for military personnel or those local officers who are in uniform. The second, and the most appropriate for cheerleaders is to place their right hand over their heart. Avoid a straight arm salute pointed toward the flag.

Cheerleading and Sportsmanship
The following information was taken from Sportsmanship-Citizenship, a booklet prepared and produced by the National Federation of State Associations. Cheerleaders, like players, are representatives of the student body chosen to such positions as a result of their significant role in the promoting of good sportsmanship.

Some important areas for consideration follow:
1. Stimulate and control crowd response.
2. Choose the right cheers at the right time.
3. Be certain that words used in a cheer do not suggest or inflame an audience.
4. Use gestures that are synchronized, pleasing to watch and easy to follow.
5. Divert the crowd’s attention by starting a popular yell when booing develops.
6. DO NOT conduct a cheer at the same time as the visiting cheerleading team.
7. Select positive cheers.
8. Develop a large repertoire of desirable and timely cheers which may be called upon at appropriate moments.
9. Always maintain enthusiasm and composure especially in trying circumstances, remembering your responsibilities for leadership.
10. Give encouragement to injured players and recognition to outstanding performances regardless of team affiliation.
11. Always show friendliness to rival cheerleaders.

Cheerleaders must have good communication skills and a general ability to lead. By the nature of their position and the fact that they are respected by fellow students, they have an excellent opportunity and important responsibility for promoting good sportsmanship. By setting a good example the cheerleaders can influence greatly and help control reactions of students and adult spectators at athletic contests. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations and graceful acceptance of results. Sportsmanship is shown in athletic contests, classrooms, student assemblies and many other areas of school. School spirit is a reflection of these attitudes and behavior.

If a school is to succeed in one of its prime functions, "good citizenship," it is necessary that student groups radiate proper sportsmanlike conduct. Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action.

Helpful Hints For Sportsmanship
The most important thing for you to remember about sportsmanship is to always cheer positively. It is never good to cheer against the other team or to cheer an opposing player's mistake; it is much more effective to cheer FOR your own team.

Some people feel that the first yell at every game should be a "hello cheer." If you have exchange yells, encourage students from your own school to welcome the opposing cheerleaders and to cooperate with them. You will be a strong influence in the success of such an exchange.

It is a good idea to make an agreement with cheerleaders from the opposing school on when to cheer. A suggestion is for one school to have the privilege of cheering first during the time-outs for the first and third quarters, the other school going first during time-outs of the second and fourth quarters.
**Good Sports Don’t**

- Hold newspapers or programs in front of their faces when opponents are introduced or are shooting a free throw.
- Boo or heckle an official's decision or blame a loss on them.
- Heckle individual players.
- Throw objects onto the playing surface.
- Participate in unsportsmanlike chants or yells such as "Good-bye," "Airball," "You, You, You," "What's The Score?" "Warm Up The Bus."

**Ten Rules of Cheerleading Etiquette**

1. Greet and speak to the members of the visiting cheer teams.
2. Smile and greet players from the visiting team.
3. Call people by name whenever you can.
4. Be friendly and helpful.
5. Be cordial.
6. Be genuinely interested in others.
7. Be generous with praise. Be cautious with criticism.
8. Be considerate of the feelings of others.
9. Be thoughtful and receptive, whenever possible, of the opinions of others.
10. Be alert to give service.

**Additional Ideas for Promoting Good Sportsmanship**

- Make brief and interesting announcements to be included in your student announcements a day or two prior to a competition. This could be informative ("Do you know that it is appropriate to stand for the playing of BOTH school songs at an athletic event?") or a thank you ("The North Bears continue to be known for their display of positive sportsmanship! Thanks to everyone for your help in this important part of athletics!")

- Have a policy in conjunction with administration to deal with students who noticeably do not display good sportsmanship and follow it! Be consistent.

- Recognize those who do an outstanding job – either by mentioning them in an announcement, at a Pep Fest, or by sending their name and special deed into the MSHSL "Good Sports Honor Roll!" If they are selected, they will receive a certificate from the League.

- **Enforce** a positive sign policy for locker signs or spirit signs. Make sure the opponent is not deflated. Build up your own team instead. The key here is enforce!
The Importance of a Handbook

A well-written handbook is a valuable tool for a coach. A cheerleading handbook will help you guide your cheerleaders throughout the year and it will assist you in objectively managing your team.

It is important that your handbook be one that reflects the policies and philosophy of your school: a guide of standards to follow during the year, an expression of your team's goals, and a guideline for all activities and functions involving the cheerleading team. Include policies that are firm, fair, and enforceable.

Your cheerleading handbook is a written set of clear-cut rules and policies that your administration, cheerleaders, parents and you, the coach, have agreed to follow. Not only does the handbook state the rules, it clearly spells out the specific consequences when a rule is broken.

The more detailed the handbook, the less room there will be for vague, gray areas if situations do arise. Clearly define the cheerleading coach, with the agreement of the school administrator(s) and within the policies of the school administration, as the final authority in any situation not covered specifically in the handbook.

Writing Your First Handbook

If you are writing your first handbook, use an outline as a guide; obtain copies of handbooks currently being used in your area. Using the outline and any previously written rules as a guide, adapt the handbook to fit the needs of your team and your school. Prepare a preliminary draft and present it to your administrator for written approval.

Updating Your Handbook

Handbooks should be updated yearly and rule changes should be highlighted for all cheerleaders and parents. Always be sure to have anyone trying out for cheerleading read the handbook, take a copy home to their parents, and have them sign and date it before tryouts or hold a parent meeting to review handbook information.

Handbook Outline

I. Statement of purpose
   A. For who is the handbook being written.
      1. Name of school.
      2. Name(s) of the team(s).
   B. List the values the team is trying to promote (i.e. school spirit, sportsmanship, better relations with rival schools, public relations activities in the community, etc.).

II. Attendance requirements
   A. Practices.
   B. Games
   C. Community activities
   D. Social activities.
   E. Other - clinics, camps, etc.

III. Awards
   A. Determine awards to be given.
   B. Determine selection process for award winners.
IV. **Selection of/and Captain’s responsibilities (SEE SAMPLE FORM F)**
   A. Selection of head captain and co-captain.
   B. Selection of officers and managers.
   C. Assignment of duties to the captain, co-captain or any other officers chosen.

V. **Eligibility requirements**
   A. Length of time a student must be enrolled prior to tryouts.
   B. Class level eligible to try out (9th, 10th, etc.).
   C. Academic requirements.
   D. Physical requirements.
   E. Insurance.
   F. Permission forms.
   G. Grades.

VI. **Expenses**
   A. Establish school policies regarding the providing of uniforms, transportation to contests, etc.
   B. Miscellaneous costs: camps, clinics, social events, etc.

VII. **Fund raising activities**
   A. Determine if fund-raising is necessary.
   B. If so, determine how much money is needed and for how the money earned be used.
   C. Determine who is responsible for coordinating fundraising activities.

VIII. **Lettering policy**

IX. **Parent involvement**

X. **Practice schedule**
   A. Number of days per week practice is to be held.
   B. Length of each practice.
   C. Time of day practice is to be held.
   D. Absence policy.
   E. Apparel.

XI. **Team selection/tryouts**
   A. Time of the year tryouts will be held.
   B. Required skills.
   C. Establish criteria for how the team will be selected.

XII. **Transportation (SEE SAMPLE FORM B)**
   A. How the team will be transported to away games?
   B. How will the team be transported to other cheer events?

XIII. **Uniforms**
   A. What uniforms will be purchased by the school?
   B. What uniforms will be purchased by the cheerleader?
   C. Who is responsible for the upkeep, updating, and selection of all uniforms?
   D. When may the cheerleading uniform or part of the uniform be worn?
   E. Policy on returning uniforms, replacing damaged uniforms.
   F. Regulations concerning jewelry, nails, hair, glitter, etc.
Sample Cheerleading Policies and Guidelines

Note: The following is a sample from a cheerleading handbook and is provided as a sample outline for developing your school's policies.

WHEREAS, a cheerleader's ultimate responsibility is to promote school spirit by encouraging positive student participation at sporting events, the following policies and guidelines shall be in effect:

I. Tryouts
   A. Tryouts will be held in the spring:
      1) Eighth graders are eligible for B team tryouts.
      2) Freshman, sophomores and juniors are eligible for jv/varisty tryouts.
   B. A permission slip granting the student permission to try out for cheerleading must be signed by parents or guardian and returned to the cheerleading coach prior to the tryout date.

II. Cheerleading Packet
   A. Verification of a current physical examination, is required to be on file for each cheerleader.
   B. This Form must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the main office before the student may participate.

III. Varsity Team Selection
   A. Seniors and juniors are eligible for varsity cheerleading.
   B. Twenty-four cheerleaders are chosen for boys and girls varsity. In the fall, they cheer for varsity football and boys' and girls' soccer, and volleyball. In the winter, they cheer for varsity hockey, boys' and girls' basketball and wrestling.
   C. Cheerleaders are divided into three teams of eight each. Two teams cheer for each varsity football game, one team for each varsity boys' soccer game, one team for each varsity girl's soccer game and one team for each volleyball game. Rotation and scheduling of teams is approved by the coach.
   D. In the winter, four teams of six cheerleaders each will be assigned by the coach for varsity hockey, boys' and girls' basketball and wrestling. These teams remain the same throughout the winter sports season.

IV. JV Team Selection
   A. JV team cheerleaders consist of twenty persons from the sophomore class.
   B. Four teams of five are assigned on a rotation basis to cheer for sophomore and JV football and sophomore and JV boys' and girls' soccer in the fall.
   C. In the winter, four teams of five are assigned by the coach to cheer for JV hockey, JV wrestling, and sophomore and JV boys' and girls' basketball. The winter teams remain the same throughout the winter sports season.

V. Captains
   A. Three or four cheerleaders may be selected to be captains for the fall season varsity team.
   B. Captains for the fall season are selected by a majority vote from fall team members and graduating seniors.
   C. Winter captains are chosen by a majority vote from team members at the beginning of the winter season.
   D. One JV captain per team will be selected by team members.
VI. **Game Attendance**
   A. A cheerleader is expected to attend all home and away games for which s/he is scheduled. (See Section VIII for information about how absences relate to lettering criteria.)
   B. If a cheerleader cannot be in attendance s/he must notify her/his captain and is responsible for finding a substitute for the event s/he will miss.
   C. If a cheerleader becomes ill the day of a game, s/he should notify the coach or cheerleading captain. Persons who fail to notify the coach or cheerleading captain must meet with the coach before s/he is allowed to cheer for another game or event.
   E. If a JV cheerleader misses more than three contests per season for other than a valid reason, s/he will be terminated from the team.

VII. **Practice Attendance**
   A. A cheerleader is expected to attend all practices. Practices are called by captains and/or coach.
   B. An excused absence includes ill or a pre-arranged trip based on parental permission.
   C. An unexcused absence includes job, dental appointment, vacation, etc. Please make every effort not to schedule appointments when practices are scheduled.
   D. All practice absences must be excused in writing by a parent or guardian.
   F. Two unexcused absences will result in termination from the team.

VIII. **Lettering**
   A. Only varsity cheerleaders and those who participate on the varsity competition team may earn a letter.
   B. The point system used to determine whether a cheerleader qualifies to receive a letter will be as follows:
      1. A cheerleader will be able to earn a maximum of 10 points per game. Holiday and regular tournament absences are included in lettering totals. An exception to holiday tournament absences would be those involving family holiday trip and related activities. In those instances, if parents give advance notice in writing to the coach and captain, the absences will not count against her/his lettering points.
         Each cheerleader will start out with 10 points each time s/he reports to her/his assigned game. Those 10 points awarded each game will stay in tact provided the cheerleader does not receive any of the following deductions:
         • Did not show up with correct/appropriate uniform as designated by the team captain – 1 point deducted
         • Comes to the game or pre-game practice late – 1 point deducted
         • Leaves the game early – 1 point deducted
         • Does not participate with spirit or enthusiasm, or does not cooperate with the team – 1-2 point deducted.
         • If a cheerleader does not come to the game at all, 0 points are recorded for that particular game. (Please see section VIII, E regarding extended illnesses and injuries)
      2. In order for a cheerleader to earn a letter or bar, the cheerleader's total points at the end of the season must be at least 85% of the total possible points. For example, if a cheerleader has 24 games on her/his schedule, s/he must earn at least 204 points to letter.
      3. The team captains have the ultimate responsibility of recording each person's score at the end of the game, but the coach reserves the right to scrutinize point totals given for each individual. Captains will make every effort to be consistent and fair.
   C. No letter will be awarded for a partial commitment.
   D. If a varsity cheerleader decides to cheer both fall and winter, and fulfills all requirements, s/he will letter for two seasons during that particular school year.
E. If a varsity cheerleader does not wish to have an absence count against her/his lettering points because of a serious illness/injury or a death in the immediate family, s/he must bring a parental and/or doctors note to the coach within one week of the absence. Noncompliance will result in the absence being considered within the normal lettering policies. No other written parental notes are required for game absences except for those described above.

F. If a cheerleader decides she cannot fulfill her/his original commitment, s/he must terminate all cheerleading activities.

IX. **Uniforms & Appearance**
   A. A cheerleader will always represent their school with dignity and pride.
   B. Neatness is essential—uniforms must be cleaned and pressed regularly. Shoes must be clean and neat.
      1. Costs for cleaning and pressing are determined by the school.
      2. Before a cheerleader may tryout for the following season, her/his uniform and pom-poms must be returned to the coach or before a designated date. A fine will be assessed after the deadline until the uniform is returned.
      3. A graduating senior will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony unless her/his uniform is returned.
   C. Cheerleading teams must dress uniformly.
   D. All jewelry and glitter is prohibited while cheering for any event. (See MSHSL guidelines for ruling on religious medals.)
   E. Hair must be worn away from the face and off the shoulders. Hair devices shall be kept in accordance with National Federation Guidelines.
   F. Nails must be kept in accordance with National Federation Guidelines.

X. **Academics**
   A. A cheerleader must earn a minimum of 10 credits at the end of her/his sophomore year and a minimum of 20 credits at the end of her/his junior year.
   B. If a cheerleader is suspended from school, s/he will receive a three (3) week suspension from the team.

XI. **Penalties for Violation of MSHSL By-Laws**
   A. See school administrator for information on District & MSHSL rules & policies.

XII. **Expected Game Behavior and Sample Consequences**
   A. Cheerleaders may not converse with fans standing along the ropes, fences, etc., during the game or match. Exception: A parent who needs to leave a message during the game.
   B. Cheerleaders should not stand in small groups carrying on conversations which have nothing to do with the contest.
   C. Cheerleaders should face the field or floor during the game or match unless they are leading a cheer or chant.
   D. Failure to comply with any of the policies would result in:
      1. The cheerleader being asked by coach or a supervising staff member to leave the stadium/gym or in the case of an away game, being asked to sit in the bus/van for the remainder of the game or match.
      2. The cheerleader being suspended from the next game for which s/he was scheduled to cheer.
      3. The cheerleader being removed from the team for the remainder of the year if s/he continues to disregard these policies after the first suspension.

XIII. **Replacement of cheerleaders**
   A. In the event a replacement is needed, the coach will assign a person to fill the vacancy.
XIV. Transportation
A. All cheerleaders must ride to and from away events on the bus where one is provided.
B. Misbehavior on the bus or at the event warrants discipline by the adult escorting the team. If a cheerleader does not obey the adult’s directions, the coach will be notified and the cheerleader will be disciplined by the coach.
C. Transportation to and from away games must be authorized by the coach. In most situations, cheerleaders are transported to and from away games by athletic team bus, cheerleaders bus, or van. Cheerleaders may ride with authorized adults only in special situations. In all instances, such arrangements must be made with the coach prior to the game.
C. Noncompliance could result in suspension from the next event. Suspensions could result in termination from the team.

XV. Responsibility of Captains
A. Captains are responsible for having cheerleaders at every game to support teams.
B. Captains are responsible to coaches for any special requests regarding appropriate behavior on a bus, at the game, etc.

XVI. Initiation
A. No initiation activities will be allowed. Any new cheerleader who permits themselves to be initiated by previous members of the team, current cheerleaders, or anyone that they have asked to participate must report the names of anyone involved to the coach.
B. Anyone participating in any hazing, or initiation activities shall be disciplined by school administration and the cheerleading coach.

Section 9
Medical/Emergency Plan

Medical Guidelines

1. Maintain a well-stocked first aid kit and have it readily accessible at all practices and events.
2. Recommended that one staff member should be trained in first-aid and CPR.
3. Require pre-participation physicals of each participant.
4. Have information cards available for all team members and coaches. (See below)
5. Have a well-established emergency plan and practice it. (See below)
6. Become familiar with the common medical conditions and injuries that can affect cheerleaders. (See AACCA manual)
7. Implement a strength and conditioning program for athletes to help prevent injuries.
8. Ensure that the environment and equipment is appropriate for the activity.
9. Report all accidents to the designated school personnel according to school policy.
10. Only a physician (or other medical personnel) should determine when an injured student could return to participation.
Emergency Plan

It is essential that you have an emergency plan that has been tailored to fit your specific situation. Note: You may need variations of this plan for practice, home games and away games.

- Make sure that everyone knows her/his role in an emergency.
- Plan ahead for an emergency and practice what you will do in a real crisis.
- Assign everyone a specific role.
- Give copies of the plan to the administration, athletic trainer, and all team members.
- Record the dates and times you practiced your emergency plan.

(SEE SAMPLE FORMS D & E)

Initial Procedures in case of an emergency

1. Taking Command
   - Prevent panic
   - Issue definite orders
   - Keep the crowd at a distance
   - Protect the victim and the scene

2. What to look for
   - Analyze environment and circumstances
   - Note position of victim
   - Check for trauma to head or neck and/or serious bleeding

3. Initiate first aid and/or CPR
4. Call 911 if deemed necessary

Emergency Information Cards

Have information cards available for all team members and coaches. Include the following information:

- Full name
- Team member home address and telephone number
- Telephone numbers for the individual's parents (home & work) as well as their first and last names.
- Names and telephone numbers for two people to contact in case of emergency.
- Allergies
- Medications being taken
- Previous injuries
- Family doctors name
- Copy of insurance card or school insurance number
- Parents permission form stating you have permission to have their daughter/son treated medically in case of emergency.

Proper Procedures for Handling Apparent Concussions*

Action Plan

If you suspect that a player has a concussion, you should take the following steps:

1. Remove athlete from play.
2. Ensure athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
3. Inform athlete's parents or guardians about the known or possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussions.
4. Allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from an appropriate health care professional.
Signs and Symptoms
- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double vision or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

*Information provided by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Injury Treatment for Cheerleaders**
The best cure in any injury is prevention; but even with the strictest safety guidelines and the best supervision, injuries can occur. Below is a list of a suggested "5 Stage Treatment Program" to aid you in the treatment of injuries to your team through their 5 "basic" stages. If you have any questions you should consult a local physician.

I. **Immediate Treatment**
   A. Ice - Ice pack
   B. Compression - Wet pressure bandage
   C. Elevation, if possible
   D. If no swelling, light support
   E. If swelling - Support plus ice (no heat)
   F. If in doubt, refer to physician

II. **Second Stage**
   A. If swelling is present
      1. RICE: Rest-Ice-Compression-Elevation
      2. Tape support
   B. If no swelling or light swelling, and no fever to the body part
      1. Ice massage
      2. Whirlpool (cool under 100°) - promote range of motion
      3. Contrast baths
      4. Analgesic packs
      5. Light massage - above and below injury
      6. Tape support

III. **Third Stage**
   A. If swelling, follow swelling rules of second stage
   B. If no swelling
      1. Whirlpool (warm 100° - 104°)
      2. Ice Massage - promote range of motion
      3. Hydrocollator steam packs
      4. Paraffin bath
      5. Massage
      6. Tape support
IV. Fourth Stage
A. Swelling controlled
   1. Whirlpool (warm 100°- 104°)
   2. Ice Massage - promote range of motion
   3. Contrast bath
   4. Tape support
B. No swelling and full range motion
   1. Rehabilitative exercises
   1. Tape support
   2. Activity as tolerated

V. Fifth Stage
A. Swelling controlled
   1. Whirlpool
   2. Ice Massage
   3. Contrast
   4. Tape Support
   5. Rehabilitation when range of motion is established
B. No swelling and full range of motion
   1. Controlled rehabilitation
   2. Tape support
   3. Activity as tolerated

Process For Blood

The MSHSL Board of Directors approved the following procedure to follow for an athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on the uniform.

Communicable Disease Precautions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Precaution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The official discovers a player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game/meet until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and or/the uniform is changed before returning to competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The bloodied portion of the uniform must be properly disinfected or the uniform changed before the athlete may participate. To disinfect the uniform use a solution of 1-100 (for example, 1/4 cup to one gallon water) of sodium hypochlorite (example bleach) or 70% isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) or other appropriate disinfectant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment with a solution made from a 1-10 dilution of household bleach or other disinfectants before competition resumes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouthguards and other articles containing body fluids.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It shall not be the responsibility of the official to provide first aid to an injured athlete or to remove blood from the playing surface.
Section 10 – Tryouts

Suggestions For Organizing Cheerleading Tryouts

Two months prior
1. Set the date for tryouts.
2. Arrange for the gymnasium, mats, sound system, etc.
3. Inform other coaches, administrators, etc. of the dates of clinic and tryout.
4. Determine judging process. Note: As the coach, consider selecting your own team as other coaches do.
5. Update paperwork, judges score sheet, scorekeeper sheets, parental permission forms, etc.
(SEE SAMPLE FORMS AT THE BACK OF THIS MANUAL)

One month prior
1. Meet with prospective cheerleaders (hand out permission slips (SEE SAMPLE FORM C), medical information sheets, and post season evaluations)
2. Contact judges if using them.

Two weeks prior
Develop tryout material

Tryout week
Day 1---------------------- Collect permission slips, and other necessary forms.
Teach tryout material.

Day 2---------------------- Teach material

Day 3---------------------- Review material

Day 4---------------------- Review material
Assign tryout order

Day 5—Tryout Day ------- Have materials available for tryouts. For example:
1. numbers for participants
2. pencils, pens
3. calculators
4. judging forms
5. CD/Boombox
6. Tumbling mats
Section 11 – Captains/Leadership

Sample List of Captain’s Responsibilities

- Demonstrate strong leadership skills
- Help resolve issues among team members
- Encourage others to work hard and excel
- Be a positive role model
- Teach team members skills and techniques
- Communicate with team and coach(es)
- Assist coach in planning and facilitating effective practices
- Assume a leadership role for team at games
- Represent the school and community at all functions
- Appoint or assign team members to help delegate responsibilities
- Attend scheduled captain’s meetings

(SEE SAMPLE FORMS H-J)

Section 12 – Cheerleading Practices

Suggestions for Organizing Effective Practices

The following suggestions can help the coach to set up practices.

- **Place**—this should be a safe environment. Practice sessions must be held in a location suitable for spirit activities, i.e., appropriate matting, free of obstructions, free of distractions and excessive noise.

- **Time**—if possible, have a consistent start time each day. Start on time and wrap up at the end of practice. Distribute a monthly calendar with a schedule of all practices and games.

- **Goals**—set goals for each practice. Involve the students in goal setting. Post goals in the practice area and check them off as completed.

- **Conditioning**—a well-conditioned athlete will have fewer injuries and will recover more quickly from injuries. Conditioning should be done before practicing jumps, stunting and tumbling. (See strength and conditioning on page 24)

- **Have a variety of activities** for each practice by incorporating all aspects of cheerleading.

- **Review safety techniques** at every practice.

- **Follow progressions** for teaching stunts and tumbling using guidelines on the NFHS website, in the AACCA safety certification manual and on page 24 of this manual.
Sample Practice Schedule

2-Hour Schedule:
1. Team goal setting 10 min
2. Conditioning 25 min
3. Jumps 10 min
4. Stunting 30 min
5. Water/rest breaks 5 min
6. Learn new material 30 min
7. Game material and planning for games 20 min
8. Wrap up and announcements 5 min

NOTE: Time spent on various activities will vary depending on the time of the season. During Homecoming Week, for example, time may be needed for pep rally material. As the coach it is your responsibility to keep the team on task to achieve goals. However, it is important to adjust to meet the needs of the team. (SEE SAMPLE FORM L)

Stunting

Stunting is an exciting and growing aspect of cheerleading requiring endurance, strength, balance, flexibility and timing. As the athleticism and complexity of stunting increases, it is important that coaches are well trained. A reminder that all Minnesota cheer coaches directly supervising teams that stunt must have completed AACCA Certification and Partner Stunt Progression.

Getting Ready for Stunts
- Access performer readiness
- Implement a strength and conditioning program
- Emphasize spotting
- Follow stunt progressions

Accessing performer readiness
- Is the athlete strong enough to perform the skill?
- Has the athlete learned the skills leading up to this skill?
- Does the athlete clearly understand the skill being practiced?
- Is the environment adequate to practice the skill? (Matting, lighting, ceiling height, etc.)

Strength and conditioning
- Warm up—Should include general activities that warm the body. Walking and jogging are examples of warm up activities.
- Stretching—Should be an organized routine covering all parts of the body.
- Flexibility training—Used to decrease the chance of pulled muscles.
- Endurance training—Increases the efficiency and capacity of the cardiopulmonary system.
- Strength training—Used to build muscle mass and reduce injury.

Spotting
- Assists in the building of, or dismounting from, a partner stunt or pyramid.
- Should always be used while learning a new stunt.
- Should not provide primary support for the flyer.
- Characteristics of an effective spotter.
  1. Attentive—concentrates on the flyer at all times.
  2. Knowledgeable—understands the stunt and recognizes positioning for safety.
Safety tips for spotters:
1. Primarily focus on the flyer’s head.
2. Reach up to assist the flyer while descending.
3. It is better to come down from a poorly built stunt than to keep it up.

Partner Stunt Progressions  (SEE SAMPLE FORM M)
Note: It is the coaches’ responsibility to make sure the team members demonstrate proficiency with lower level skills before progressing to more advanced skills.

Progressions Guide from the NFHS

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, twists)

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

Tumbling
Tumbling can add an exciting element at games and performances but should be taught in progression by a knowledgeable coach.

Tumbling skill levels from the NFHS Rules book:
Level 1
Basic rolls, bridges, handstands, cartwheels, round-off handstand forward roll, back walkover, front walkover.
Level 2
Standing back handspring, round-off back handspring, standing back handspring series, aerial cartwheel.
Level 3
Round-off back handspring series, standing back tuck, round-off back tuck, round-off back handspring back tuck, layouts from round-off back handspring, whip backs, half twists, full twists.
Section 13 – Cheerleading Skills & Techniques

Cheerleading Motions

T-Motion................ arms extended straight out to the side and parallel to the ground

V-Motion ................ (upper or lower) - arms extended forming a "V" up or down

Diagonal................ (right or left) - one arm extended upward in a half "V" and the other arm extended into a lower "V"

L-Motion............... one arm extended to the side with other arm extended up by the head with fist in dagger position, forming a right angle

Half T............... both arms parallel to the ground and bent at elbows; fists into shoulders

Bow & Arrow......... one arm extended to side with other arm bent at elbow in a broken half “T” motion

Buckets............... fist position with fingers facing the ground as if holding a bucket, with thumb on outside of fingers

Candlesticks ......... fist motion (as if holding a burning candle) with thumb on outside of fingers

Blades............... fingers together extended

Clasp ................ hand position with hands clasped together; arms may be extended straight out or pulled in with elbows bent

Jumps

Jumps are one of the most important aspects of cheerleading and raising spirit because they add so much energy and enthusiasm. At times during a game or pep rally, they are as important as a cheer to motivate the crowd because they exhibit excitement with the entire body. Jumps can be performed before, during, and after a cheer. Jumping after the cheer is finished sustains the crowd's spirit. Remember, never finish a cheer and just walk away. JUMP!!
**Jumps Are Comprised Of Four Areas:**
1. approach/prep
2. execution
3. landing
4. recovery

**Ingredients of a Good Jump:**
- good prep before the initial jump
- jump as high as possible using good form
- use arms to lift
- keep arms straight
- keep fingers together
- point toes
- be precise and controlled
- keep head and chest up

**Approaches/Preps**
Prep: Feet together, legs straight, arms in a high-V. Roll up onto the balls of your feet. As you bend your knee slightly start moving your arms toward the front in a circular motion. They will cross in front of you at the same time your legs are bent. As you explode upward with your legs, PULL back up to the high V thus completing the circle. Be sure to keep your head and chest up. Execute your jump with arms high. Pull feet back together and land with knees slightly bent. This is a powerful approach. This can be used with all jumps to attain the maximum height you can generate.

**Jump Conditioning**
- Condition muscles by doing 5-15 V-ups
- Do 5-15 sitting toe touches, start in tuck position, arms daggers to touch you
- Do 5-15 straddle raises (place hands in front of body)
- Hold leg up 2 seconds.
- Hold both legs up 5 seconds.
- Tuck jump to "A" jump; 10 in a row; arms dagger to touchdown
Formations

Formations and formation changes are an extremely important visual device used in cheerleading. They add excitement to a performance cheer which can only result in a more enthusiastic crowd. The following formations are a fun and creative way to practice them.

The following techniques are called a formation drill and when doing this drill you must remember the following steps:

1. Have your team members number off and keep the same number throughout the drill.
2. Place each team member in their beginning position.
3. Walk through each of the changes slowly and be sure to note new positions each time. Everyone will have to learn the importance of timing so that no one runs into each other.
4. Once everyone is familiar with the changes, go through them rather quickly, to teach the importance of quick transitions.

Remember that this drill can be adapted to use any number of team members. Simply add an additional member and modify each formation. The same steps apply whether you have two members or twenty. Once you have mastered the formation drill, add interest to each formation with the use of level changes or peel offs. Try having the middle portion of the formation stay standing while the outside kneels down or use a peel off which starts from the inside and works its way out. All it takes is a little creativity!

Creativity is also called for as cheerleaders move from formation to formation. Why not use a clap or a snap for added effect? If using four or five formation changes within one cheer remember to keep the cheer flowing and keep all the transitions very smooth. Continue to do the motions or modify them for easy movement. Add a peel off or even a pyramid within the transition, but always remember to say the words loud and clear. If done correctly, formations can be both fun and exciting for the team and the crowd.

![Formation Diagrams]
Game Techniques For Cheerleaders

Pre-Game Organization
- Band/pom/cheer coordination
- Visiting cheerleaders - Welcome
- Time-out coordination
- Early Arrival

Time-Outs
- Use time-outs effectively to lead the crowd & involve crowd in your cheer
- Cheer when crowd is cheering and perform when the situation calls for it
- Don't slow the momentum of the crowd
- Use signs to involve the crowd

Stunts
Stunts add variety, excitement, emphasis to the beginning, middle or end of a cheer. They can be used for special introductions. Stunts are a great way to get crowds attention so they will yell with the cheerleaders!

Sidelines Strategy
- Stand in line formation (don't group)
- Be prepared, don't practice while in-line
- Be aware of the game situation
- Have a basic knowledge of the game
- Megaphones should only be used to lead the crowd
- Work the crowd and be enthusiastic

Use of Signs
- Practice with the crowd once before putting signs in cheer
- Keep the cheer simple
- Use level changes
- Have contests between sections
Section 14 – Pep Rally Information

Pep Rally Success

A pep rally should promote crowd involvement, create positive school image, and most of all be fun!

1. Develop theme
2. Create atmosphere
3. Generate school spirit by involving:
   a. student body
   b. teacher and staff
   c. school organizations
   d. school clubs
4. Recognize athletic team(s) and other activities
   a. skit
   b. speaker(s)
   c. games
5. Include performance of other activity groups
   a. cheering team
   b. danceline
   c. band
   d. color guard
6. Work within the time framework allowed by school administration

Responsibilities of Pep Rally Planning Committee

1. Determine all of the above goals
2. Schedule your pep rally with your administration
3. Set agenda
4. Contact people and organizations involved
   a. custodians
   b. public address set-up
   c. band director
   d. other pep rally participants
   e. other people as needed
5. Make a list and acquire the necessary props
6. Publicize the event
   a. skit (preferred) or an announcement
   b. draft a write-up for the daily bulletin
   c. design flyers
   d. hall banners
   e. lunch time creativity
7. Set-up
8. Clean-up
Additional Ideas For Pep Rally

1. Good sportsmanship is an intentional, on going effort. It should always be mentioned at Pep Fests, where the entire student body is present.
2. Effective Pep fests should be carefully planned in advance. The key to successful Pep Fest is ACTION and ORGANIZATION!
3. Keep Pep Fest brief (20-25 minutes, maximum) and full of activity!
4. Limit speakers and ask them to make their comments brief. (Do not introduce individual members of teams, rather invite entire teams to stand for recognition.
5. Ask your Pep band to be involved and ask them to be prepared to play the school song, as well as music as students enter the Pep Fest as well as when they leave. They may also have brief "songs" that include cheerleaders/crowd. Avoid "silent time!!"
6. If you have games or skits, be sure to involve a cross-section of the student body (not only athletes/officers) and ask for their help ahead of time!
7. Have at least one activity that involves the entire crowd (i.e. "the Wave" done with the band, both slow & fast, "Bleacher Mania," or a crowd involvement cheer). It is more fun for students to participate vs. solely being a spectator.
8. Include in the Pep Fest a statement about your school's good sportsmanship. This can either be a thank you for good sportsmanship that is continued to be displayed by the faculty and student body or a reminder that it is an important part of athletics. This portion is especially effective if it is done by a student who is respected and recognized by the student body.
9. The school song is unifying. It is most effective if done at the beginning or end of the Pep Fest – or both!

The following is an example of an outline that might be given to all Pep Fest participants (principal, A.D. band director, etc.)

Sample Schedule For A Pep Rally

1. Brief Welcome/Opening Comments (Principal)
2. School Song (Band)
3. Introduction of teams honored (stand as teams)
4. Crowd involvement cheer with or without band
5. Brief game or skit.
6. Class competition cheer
7. Performance by groups i.e. Cheerleaders, Dance Team, Color Guard
8. Brief Closing Comments (include sportsmanship message)
9. School Song
10. Dismissal (band playing peppy music)
Mascot Guidelines

**Purpose:** The purpose of a mascot shall be to symbolize school and community spirit and is used to enhance the tradition and emotions of its audience through exaggeration, characterization and entertainment. The mascot is governed by all rules and expectations of the school’s cheerleading program.

**General Guidelines:**

1. Must be bona-fide students of the school who are designated as member of the school’s spirit teams(s).
2. Serve as a positive representative of school spirit.
3. Know the NFHS rules for cheerleaders and mascots.
4. Meet the opposing mascot to discuss interaction during the game.
5. Stand at attention during the national anthem.
6. Do not degrade game officials.
7. Never dress or undress in front of the crowd.
8. Do not talk while in costume.
9. Do not use lewd or obscene gestures.
10. Do not encourage the crowd in dangerous or unsportsmanlike situations.
11. Do not stunt in full head/body costume. Only a legal forward roll or cartwheel is allowed.
12. Attend cheerleading practices regularly to coordinate performances, special events and to receive pertinent information.
Team Unity and Goal Setting
Sample Form A

Team Building - Why team build with cheerleaders?
- Team building is a proactive method of managing issues, leadership, attitudes, success, and misbehavior.
- They are not familiar with one another.
- Usually, they have just completed tryouts in which they were competing for a position on the team and, in most cases, competing against one another.

Setting Team Goals
Teams should set goals for each practice, each game, each week, each season, each year. Here are some suggestions to you on how to set goals in different areas, depending on your traditions, your style, your potential, your limitations, your attitudes, and your determination.

Determining Your Goals

Cheers
- Basic cheer technique
- Crowd involvement cheers--use of signs, using easy cheers which are easy to follow.
- Performance-type cheers

Jumps
- Execution, technique
- Learn new ones
- Warm-up exercises
- Team incorporation

Attitude Goals
- Becoming better friends
- Building unity
- Communication with each other
- Understanding and following guidelines
- Raising the level of the cheerleaders' attitudes

Involvement
- Raising school spirit
- Student involvement at games
- Community involvement
- Student support of cheerleading program

Chants
- Short Spirit
- Game action-knowing what to do when
- Crowd response, allowing enough repetitions
- Working with the band to the best of your ability

Stunts/Mounts
- Basics
- Improve what we know
- Work into cheers
- Spotting techniques
- Endings

Creativity Goals
- Use of new cheers and chants
- Formations/Incorporation's
- Using innovative ways to encourage crowd participation and interest
I, the undersigned parent or guardian, do hereby grant permission for my daughter/son to attend the ____________________ (event and location) on ________________ (date) and agree with all expectations described at the bottom of the page. I understand that my daughter/son will be traveling with the coaches and ___________________ (activity) team on a chartered bus. The cheerleaders will/will not be staying at a motel.

Chaperones for the cheerleaders will be:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________

I, the undersigned cheerleader, do hereby agree to follow the list of expectations set by ______________________
(Cheerleading coach) and _________________________________ (Chaperone).

**Expectations**

1. Cheerleaders will meet at the school: ____________________________ (Date and time).

2. An evening room curfew will be in effect and it will be set by a chaperone each night. Each cheerleader will follow this set curfew. I will remember that there are other guests in the motel and I will respect their rights as guests.

3. I will remember at all times that I am representing ____________________________ (school name). My behavior should be a positive reflection of my school and the community I represent.

4. No other people will be in my room other than cheerleaders, parents, and the chaperone(s). I agree that at all times the chaperone will know my location.

5. My responsibility is to serve as a cheerleader at this event. I will follow our team rules and will stretch, practice and review before each game.

Cheerleader Signature: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________
Cheerleading Risk Statement

Cheerleading, as with any sport, has some risk involved. Even though coaches do all they can to minimize these risks, injuries can happen. These injuries can range from bumps, bruises, and over stretched muscles to severe injury resulting in paralysis and/or death. To minimize these risks follow these guidelines:

1. Never try a new stunt (mount or pyramid) without a coach present.
2. Always use spotters. Know where a stunt may fall and anticipate it. Always expect the unexpected.
3. Talk through every stunt, including how to come back down from it, before you start to build it.
4. Take your role in the stunt seriously. No laughing, talking, etc. until every one is safely on the floor.
5. Report every injury – no matter how slight - to the coach immediately.
6. To minimize the risk of the transmission of the HIV virus, no one shall touch any other cheerleader that is bleeding or has blood on them, without proper protective equipment. Any cheerleader that has on a uniform that is blood splattered will not be allowed to return to practice or the game until the blood has been cleaned off or the uniform changed.

I understand these risks and will follow these simple guidelines to help reduce my chances of injuring myself or someone else.

Student Signature: ________________________________________ Date: __________________

I, as parent or guardian, understand that my daughter/son is involved in an activity that does include risk. I have read and understand the prevention procedure and rules which are in effect for this school year.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _________________________________ Date: __________________
Emergency Plan Of Action
Sample Form D

1. During an emergency, ___________________________ will stay with the injured cheerleader.

   If the coach is the injured person, ___________________________ will be assigned to stay with her/him.

2. The closest phone is located at ___________________________.

   Call 911 and give the dispatcher the following information:

   ● Address of school
   ● Nearest cross street
   ● Location of injured victim and a brief description of injury
   ● Tell dispatcher what first aid is being given.
   ● Tell dispatcher that you have someone ready to direct the ambulance to where the injured victim is.
   ● Speak slowly. Stay on the phone until the dispatcher tells you to hang up.
   ● Two people meet the ambulance and direct the medics to the correct location.
   ● Coach calls parent or guardian.
   ● If coach goes to the hospital with the injured cheerleader, practice is canceled for the day.

Sample phone message

CALL 911 - SPEAK SLOWLY AND CLEARLY

My name is (Mary Smith) and I am the cheerleading coach at ___________________________ and this is an emergency.

We are located at ___________________________ (give address).

One of our cheerleaders had an accident and needs an ambulance.

Please come to the _____________ doors located ___________________________.

We will have someone waiting there to direct you.

STAY ON THE PHONE UNTIL THE DISPATCHER SAYS YOU MAY HANG UP!!
## Emergency Plan Check List

**Sample Form E**

### High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency Procedure Practiced: (Date)</th>
<th>Emergency Procedure Practiced: (Date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to Do</strong></td>
<td>Cheer Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for training kit?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for emergency cards?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will determine if ambulance is needed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for calling ambulance?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will contact the parents?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will meet the ambulance?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will go to the hospital with injured?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Important Phone Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency 911</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheer Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### First Aid Kit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Aid Kit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ace Bandages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antacids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band-Aids - Assorted Sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly Strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Lens Wetting Solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrogen Peroxide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterile eye patches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterile gauze pads, 2x2 and 4x4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear parent of a prospective cheerleader:

Your daughter/son has shown an interest in trying out for cheerleading at ________________.

We welcome all students to try out for this team. The fun and excitement of cheering for your school is accompanied by a responsibility and a commitment to the cheerleading program. There are a number of the things you should discuss with your child prior to signing all the forms necessary for her/him to be eligible to try out:

**FIRST:** Time Commitment - there will be practices held throughout the season. These practices are very important and every effort must be made to have your child at all of them. There will also be athletic events in the evenings during the week and on some weekends.

**SECOND:** Costs: There are initial and basic costs to which your daughter/son will be responsible. Our district policies for cheerleading equipment are: ____________________. All fees must be paid prior to participation by your daughter/son.

There will be a meeting for all cheerleaders and their parents on ______________________ at ______________________ in the auditorium. At this meeting we will discuss the policies and schedule for each team. It is important that at least one parent/guardian accompanies their daughter/son to this meeting.

Sincerely,

Cheerleading Coach
# Judges Score Sheet

## Sample Form G

### Station #1 - Arm Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharp, stiff, clean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm, with count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Station #2 – Pom Routine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Execution of motions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm and timing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Impression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Station #3 – Cheer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execution of movements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pep and enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality projected</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Impression</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Station #4 – School Song

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arms, footwork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execution, technique, flow of movements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm, timing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does candidate know the words</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Impression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Station #5 – Jumps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-Jump</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian (Toe Touch)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herkie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Split, left</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Station #6 – Gymnastics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
<th>Score 6</th>
<th>Score 7</th>
<th>Score 8</th>
<th>Score 9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cartwheel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartwheel, Round Off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Back Handspring</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round Off, Back Handspring</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round Off, Back Handspring, Back Tuck</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOTAL:

38
Application for Varsity Cheerleading Captain

Sample Form H

Thank you for your interest in being a varsity captain for the coming season. Being a captain can be very demanding and carries many responsibilities. Some of these include: keeping track of lettering records, assisting coach in enforcing policies and guidelines, collecting forms, etc. You must be a role model for your team and be able to be objective when it comes to making some critical decisions. The teams will be choosing individual team captains. The head captain will be one of the three team captains. If you are ready to accept this challenge, please fill out and return this form to the cheerleading coach by date listed below. Applicants returning forms later than due date will not be considered eligible for a captain's position.

Application Due Date: ______________________  Assigned Team: ______________________

Name: ____________________________________________

List some reasons why you believe you would make a good captain:

What ideas do you have that would promote spirit among your team?

What ideas do you have that would promote school spirit among the fans?

NOTE: Questions of this nature may also be answered verbally for captain selection.
### Captain's Weekly Worksheet

This worksheet may be used on a weekly or monthly basis to assess a captain's perception of team performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Squad:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One word that describes the week:

My overall feelings about how the team functioned:

I think we could have improved in these areas:

I think I could have improved in these areas:

Specific problems or areas of dissension:

We received the greatest response when we:

The most fun we had all week was when:

New ideas that made us more effective this week:

Is your team meeting its goals? Why or why not?

General comments or insights:
# Captain's Season Evaluation Form

## Sample Form J

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

My overall feelings about how the team functioned this season:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Comments:**

My overall feelings about how effective I was this season:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Comments:**

I believe my team could have improved in these areas:

I could have improved in these areas:

| Conditioning: |
| Skills: |
| Leadership: |

**Something special that happened to me this season:**

My favorite part of being on the cheering team this season:

We received the greatest response when we:

An experience or fun moment when we experienced team unity was:

New ideas that made us more effective this season:

My personal goals for next season:

| Conditioning: |
| Skills: |
| Leadership: |

Areas we should cover in our team goals for next season:

| Cheers: |
| Stunts: |
| New Material: |

**General comments or insights:**
This year an evaluation of captain's performance will be requested from the cheerleading coach. Each criterion has a total possible number of 4 points. (4-always or outstanding; 3-usually or above average; 2-sometimes or below average; 1-needs work).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th># or Points</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is your captain leading your team at games?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain delegate responsibilities if necessary?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain call meetings if necessary?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain keep you informed about what is going on?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your captain organized?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain/team publicize your activities/games?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain have a good attitude about her/his responsibilities?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your captain willing to work hard?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your captain happy in this job and does s/he inspire others to want to work and improve?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your team's practices run effectively?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your captain ask for or listen to your ideas?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Team member's signature:                                                  Date:
# Outline of Practice Plan

## Sample Form L

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check attendance</th>
<th>Conditioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lunges/run/rope (heart rate ex.)</td>
<td>Sit-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicks (10 to each side)</td>
<td>Push-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Kicks (5 to each side)</td>
<td>Jumps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm-up</td>
<td>Run/walk/lines/rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat rolls</td>
<td>Stamina toe-touches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm motion drill lines</td>
<td>V-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumps</td>
<td>Kicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Herkie, L Herkie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toe touch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion items:**

- Review chants:
- Review cheers:
- Review stunts:

**New material:**

**Conditioning:**

**Notes for next practice:**
Cheer/Stunt Check-Off Form
Sample Form M

Squad: __________________________________________________________

Cheer: __________________________________________________________

Signs Used: _____________________________________________________

Starting Formation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stunt 1</th>
<th>Stunt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flyer</td>
<td>Flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base 1</td>
<td>Base 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base 2</td>
<td>Base 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base 3</td>
<td>Base 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotter</td>
<td>Spotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Passed (5 for 5)</td>
<td>Date Passed (5 for 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stunt 3</th>
<th>Stunt 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flyer</td>
<td>Flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base 1</td>
<td>Base 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base 2</td>
<td>Base 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Base 3</td>
<td>Base 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotter</td>
<td>Spotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Passed (5 for 5)</td>
<td>Date Passed (5 for 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## End of Season Cheerleader Evaluation Form

**Sample Form N**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Team:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade:</th>
<th>Phone #:</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice attendance:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game attendance:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constitution violations including date and action taken:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accidents, injuries, medical attention sought:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General attitude observation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems or concerns:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations for future use:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas that need the most improvement at the start of the season:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas that have improved the most during the season:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach Signature:</th>
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