

I  
N  
S  
I  
D  
E

CHEERLEADING



2023 ALL STAR ALL AMERICAN CHEERLEADING

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

APRIL 2023

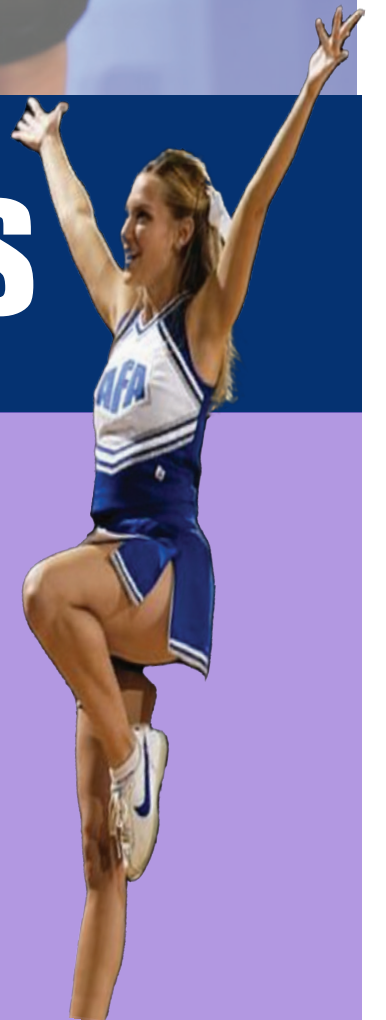
INSIDE  
CHEERLEADING  
MAGAZINE



THE 2023  
CHEER WORLDS  
ISSUE!



\$15.99





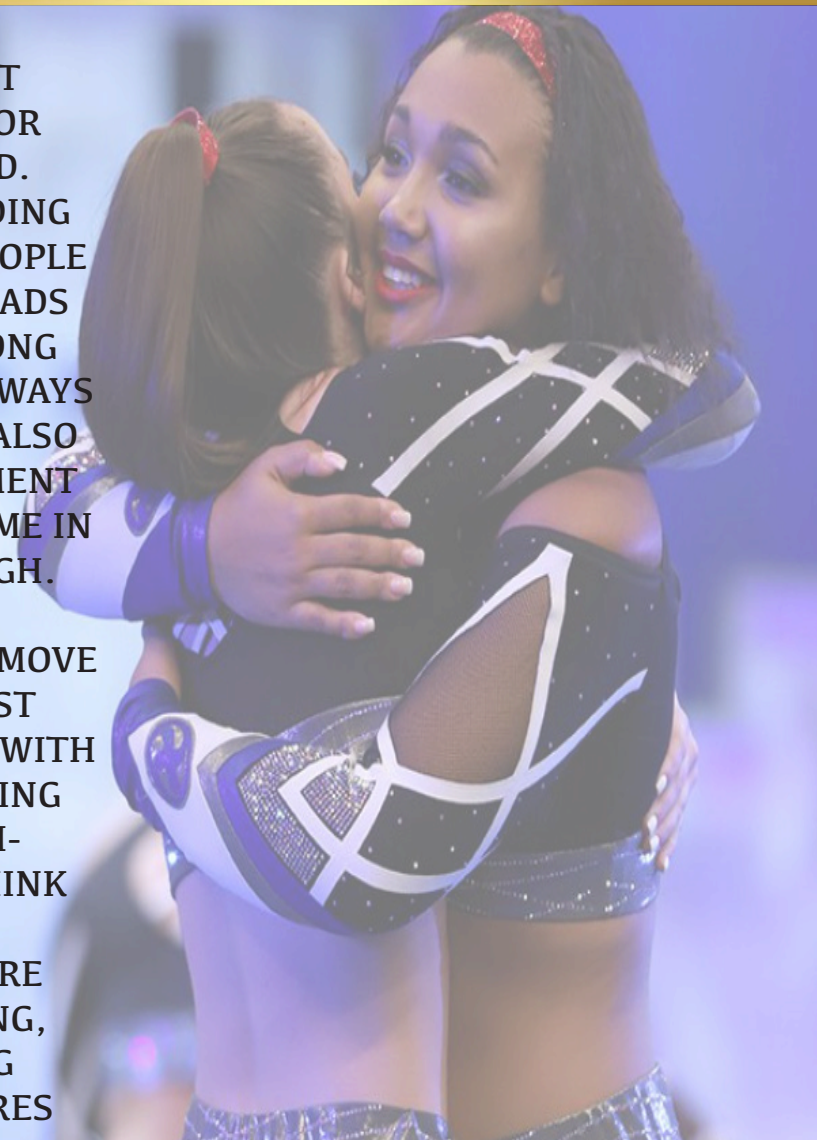
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

HISTORY OF CHEERLEADING.....	3
LEVELS AND DIVISIONS.....	5
VARSITY VS. REBEL.....	7
2023-2024 VARSITY EVENTS.....	9
WORLDS OUTLOOK.....	11
TOP GYMS.....	13
NCA.....	15
MENTAL BLOCKS AND MIND SET.....	17
HIGHSCHOOL VS. COMPETITIVE CHEER.....	19
COLLEGE CHEERLEADING.....	21



# WHAT CHEERLEADING MEANS TO ME

TO ME, CHEERLEADING IS ABOUT FAMILY. WE PRACTICE EVERYDAY FOR SEVERAL HOURS, MONTHS ON END. WE SPEND THIS ENTIRE TIME BONDING AND LEARNING WITH THE SAME PEOPLE EVERYDAY, WHICH EVENTUALLY LEADS TO INCREDIBLE BONDS AND LIFE LONG FRIENDSHIPS. OUR TEAMMATES ALWAYS GOT OUR BACK. CHEERLEADING IS ALSO ABOUT LEARNING TIME MANAGEMENT AND PATIENCE. THERE COMES A TIME IN EVERY SEASON WHEN IT GETS TOUGH. LEARNING TO TAKE A STEP BACK, BREATHE, FIX THE PROBLEM, AND MOVE ON HAS HELPED ME LEARN TO TRUST THE PROCESS AND BE PERSISTENT WITH MYSELF NO MATTER WHAT I AM GOING THROUGH. IT IS ALSO ABOUT PHYSICAL ENDURANCE. MOST PEOPLE THINK ALL WE DO IS USE POM POMS AND SCREAM CHATS BUT IT IS A LOT MORE THAN THAT. THE ENDLESS TUMBLING, DANCING, STUNTING, AND JUMPING THAT MAKES UP A ROUTINE REQUIRES LOADS OF STRENGTH AND PRACTICE. THIS SPORT HAS HELPED ME TO REALIZE THAT EVERY GOOD THING COMES WITH HARD WORK. IT IS ALSO ABOUT LEADERSHIP AND PROVIDES MANY PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO STEP UP AND SET A POSITIVE MOOD FOR A LONG NIGHT'S PRACTICE. POSITIVITY, DISCIPLINE, HARD WORK, AND DEDICATION ARE ALL THINGS EACH ATHLETE HAS TO POSSESS IN ORDER FOR A TEAM TO MESH WELL TOGETHER.

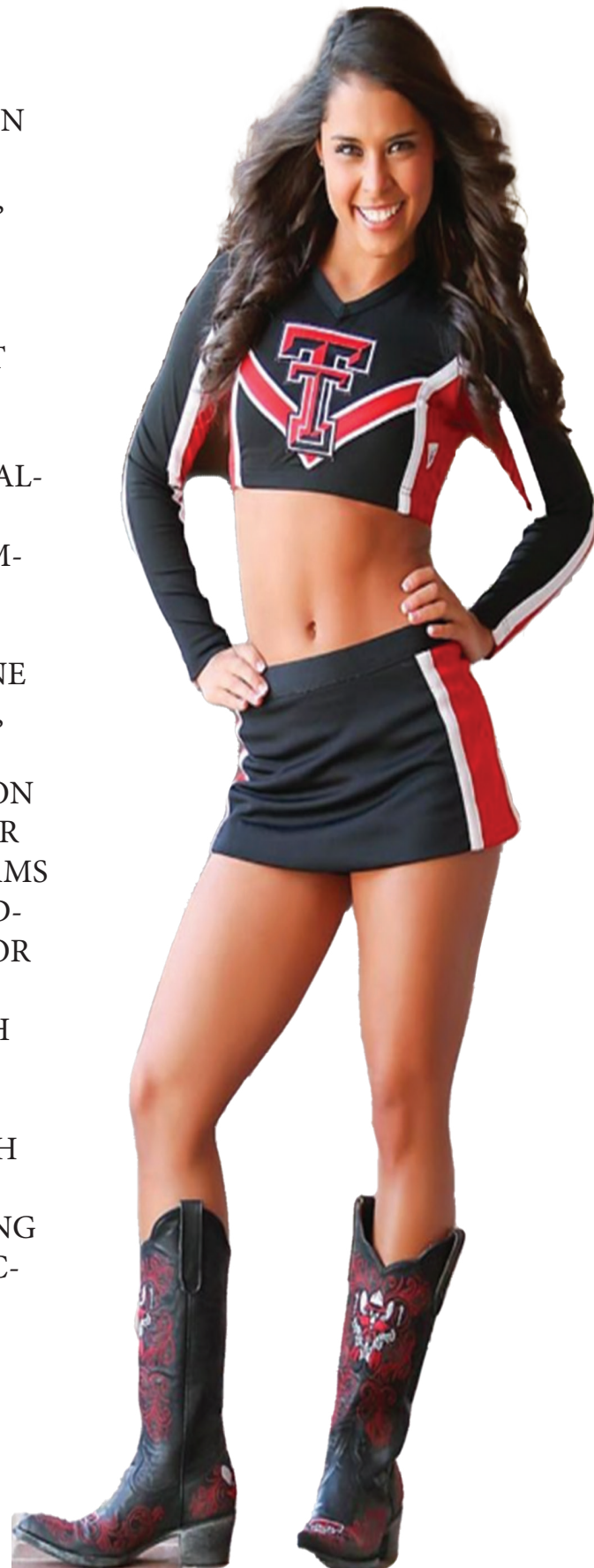


CHEERLEADING IS ABOUT HAVING CONFIDENCE IN ONESELF. YOU MUST BELIEVE IN YOURSELF THAT YOU WILL LAND THE SKILL OR YOU WILL HIT THE FULL OUT. BELIEVING IN YOURSELF IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT THAT CHEERLEADING REQUIRES IN ORDER FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM TO BE SUCCESSFUL. IT HAS TAUGHT ME TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN ANYTHING I DO.



# WHAT IT TAKES

COLLEGE CHEERLEADING RECRUITING IS UNLIKE ANY SPORT. WHILE THERE ARE CHEER PROGRAMS AT THE NCAA DIVISION 1, DIVISION 2, AND DIVISION 3 LEVELS, AS WELL AS NAIA AND JUNIOR COLLEGES, IT ISN'T RECOGNIZED AS A SANCTIONED SPORT. THEREFORE, COLLEGE COACHES AND STUDENT ATHLETES CAN INITIATE THE RECRUITING PROCESS AT ANY POINT DURING HIGH SCHOOL. CHEERLEADING COACHES TYPICALLY USE RECRUITING VIDEOS AND IN PERSON TRY OUTS TO EVALUATE A CHEERLEADING RECRUIT'S FULL ABILITY, FROM JUMPS TO STUNTS TO TUMBLING. WHILE EACH PROGRAM COMES WITH ITS OWN QUALIFICATIONS, MANY COACHES GENERALLY LOOK FOR BASELINE REQUIREMENTS WITHIN EACH POSITION, INCLUDING THE TOP GIRLS OR FLYERS, TUMBLERS, STUNTERS, AND DANCERS. NON COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS WILL LOOK FOR BASIC CHEER SKILLS, WHILE TOP PROGRAMS IN THE COUNTRY WANT TO EVALUATE ADVANCED SKILLS. SOME REQUIREMENTS FOR TUMBLING ARE COACHES ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO CAN PERFORM BOTH RUNNING AND STANDING TUMBLING. COACHES EVALUATE JUMPS BASED ON HEIGHT, FLEXIBILITY, AND LANDING WITH FEET TOGETHER IN COMPLEX JUMP SEQUENCES. FOR STUNTS THEY ARE LOOKING FOR MULTIPLE PARTNER STUNT SEQUENCES AND WHO CAN PERFORM TWO HAND STUNT COMBINATIONS.



# HISTORY OF CHEERLEADING



FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN REMEMBER, THE IDEA OF YELLING ENCOURAGEMENT HAS BEEN AROUND. THINK ABOUT CROWDS CHEERING FOR OR AGAINST EACH OTHER'S TEAMS. THE FIRST KNOWN ORGANIZED CHEERS BEGAN WHEN CHEERLEADING TOOK PLACE AT IVE LEAGUE COLLEGE SPORTING EVENT IN 1860. THE FIRST KNOWN "CHEER" WAS SHOUTED FROM THE CROWD AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY IN 1884. IN 1898 JOHNNY CAMPBELL GOT UP FROM THE SEATS AND TOOK THE FIELD AND LEAD THE STUDENT BODY IN CHANTS. SOON AFTER THAT STUDENTS SOON JOINED HIM ON THE FIELD, AS THIS WAS AN EYE OPENER FOR FANS AS THEY SAW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FIRING UP THE CROWD. WHILE WOMEN WERE PERMITTED TO BE ON CHEERLEADING TEAMS THIS STILL YELLED. AS MEN WENT OFF TO WAR, WOMEN FILLED THE ROLE ON THE SIDELINES. TODAY, FEMALES ACCOUNT FOR 85% OF PARTICIPANTS IN THIS SPORT. IN 1949, LAWRENCE "HERKIE" HERKIMER

A CHEERLEADING EDUCATIONAL CLINIC AT THE TEXAS TEACHER'S COLLEGE. THIS CLINIC DREW ABOUT 50 CHEERLEADERS WHICH PROMPTED A SECOND CLINIC WITH 350 CHEERLEADERS IN ATTENDANCE. HERKIE CREATED THE FIRST CHEERLEADING TRAINING ORGANIZATION, THE NATIONAL CHEERLEADERS ASSOCIATION, AND BEGAN TEACHING BASIC PARTNER STUNTS, JUMPS, AND CROWD LEADING TECHNIQUES TO CHEERLEADERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

IN LATE 1980'S, THE FIRST CHEER PROGRAMS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL SETTING WERE FORMED CALLED "ALL STAR". ALL STAR CHEER COMPETITIONS POPULARITY GREW, AND THE US ALL STAR FEDERATION (USASF) WAS CREATED TO PROVIDE TRAINING, RULES, AND COMPETITION GUIDELINES. ALL STAR CHEER HAS OVER 150,000 PARTICIPANTS. AS CHEERLEADING GREW, THERE CAME AN INCREASE IN SAFETY CONCERNS. WHILE CHEERLEADING DID HAVE TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS, THERE WAS NO SET OF SPECIFIC SET OF RULES THAT LIMITED THE SKILLS BEING PERFORMED. SOON UCA PUBLISHED A SET OF SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHEERLEADING. IN 2007, USA CHEER WAS FORMED WITH ONE OF ITS MISSIONS BEING TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND SAFETY EDUCATION FOR CHEER IN THE UNITED STATES. IN 2004, THE INTERNATIONAL CHEER UNION WAS FORMED TO PROVIDE GLOBAL GOVERNING BODY FOR CHEER. IN 2011, A NEW DISCIPLINE OF CHEER CALLED STUNTS WAS DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN CHEER. CURRENTLY CHEER HAS OVER 3 MILLION CHEERLEADERS IN THE US THAT PARTICIPATE IN REC, ALL STAR, SCHOOL CHEER, AND STUNTS.





LAWRENCE HERKIMER CREATED THE HERKIE CHEERLEADING JUMP. HE IS KNOWN AS THE “GODFATHER OF MODERN CHEERLEADING” AND HAS SHAPED CHEERLEADING INTO WHAT IT IS TODAY. HE ALSO STARTED THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHEERLEADING. HE BEGAN CREATING TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS FOR CHEERLEADERS TO ATTEND.

**LAWRENCE HERKIMER**

**JOHNNY CAMPBELL**

JOHNNY CAMPBELL WAS THE FIRST OFFICIAL CHEERLEADER. HE STEPPED INTO THIS ROLE IN 1898. CAMPBELL, A MEDICAL STUDENT, ASSEMBLED A GROUP THAT TOOK THE FIELD AND LED THE CROWD IN A CHANT AT A FOOTBALL GAME. THE FIRST CHEER SQUAD HAD 6 MEMBERS AND THEY ELECTRIFIED THE CROWD.



**COLLEGE**

**CHEERLEADING**

Most American universities have a cheerleading squad to cheer for football, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, and soccer. Most college squads tend to be larger coed teams, although in recent years; all-girl squads and smaller college squads have increased rapidly. Cheerleading is not recognized by NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA as athletics; therefore, there are few to no scholarships offered to athletes wanting to pursue cheerleading at the collegiate level. However, some community colleges and universities offer scholarships directly from the program or sponsorship funds. Some colleges offer scholarships for an athlete’s talents, academic excellence, and/or involvement in community events. College squads perform more difficult stunts which include multi-level pyramids, as well as flipping and twisting basket tosses. Not only do college cheerleaders cheer on the other sports at their university, many teams at universities compete with other schools at either UCA College Nationals or NCA College Nationals. This requires the teams to choreograph a 2-minute and 30 second routine that includes elements of jumps, tumbling, stunting, basket tosses, pyramids, and a crowd involvement section. Winning one of these competitions is a very prestigious accomplishment, and is seen as another national title for most schools. Most colleges do not typically recruit for cheerleading like other sports. Instead, they rely on the cheerleaders to first decide which school they would like to attend, and then contact the coaches about trying out for the cheerleading team.



# COMPETITIVE CHEERLEADING

Competitive cheerleading is when cheer squads compete against each other at a competition. At a typical cheerleading competition, teams perform a 2 and a half minute routine with music that includes stunts, jumps, tumbling. Teams are judged by a panel of cheerleading experts on difficulty and execution. The winner in each division gets a trophy and bragging rights. All types of cheerleading teams have the option to compete, but not all school-based cheerleading squads are competitive. School teams perform routines with a cheer with signs, poms, and megaphones that showcase their sideline skills along with an entertainment section to music. On the other hand, all star cheerleading squads, who are not affiliated with a school, exist solely to compete. All star routines do not include a cheer since they don't technically cheer for anyone, and their routines are all entertainment/music. Teams compete based on age and difficulty level (1-6, 6 being the most difficult). Either way, competing as a cheerleader is really challenging, athletic, and so much fun. If you want to become a competitive cheerleader, find out if your school has a cheer squad that competes or contact a local all star gym.

There are four main elements of competitive cheerleading. At competitions, teams are scored on the difficulty, technique, and creativity of each of these elements. These elements are, as listed in the definition are, stunting, tumbling, dancing, and jumping. "Teams are formed based on tiers for every ability level, from Novice to Elite. All-Star rules are leveled based on progressions of skills commonly performed in cheer and are developmentally appropriate for the age of the competitor. Teams range from Level 1 to Level 7" (USASF). Stunting is when a group of two to our athletes lifts, throws, and or spins another athlete into the air. There are 4 different stunting positions. These positions are known as the bases, back-spots, front-spots, and flyers. There are 2 bases in a stunt group and their job is to control the movement and power of the stunt. Bases have the job of holding the flyer's feet. The next position is the back spot. The back spot has the job of holding the ankles and or legs of the flyer. There is one back-spot in each stunt group. The back-spot is the leader of the group. They make any calls and count in the stunt at practices. The back spot also holds an important role in keeping the flyers neck and head protected. The next stunting position is called the front spot. Not to be confused with the back-spot, the front-spot is not essential to the stunt group. The next element of competitive cheer is tumbling. Tumbling is the action of an athlete flipping their own feet over their head in a form of rolling, tucking, springing, or twisting. Tumbling is worth 20% of a score sheet. Jumps are included in a section of the routine that showcases the athlete's leg strength and flexibility. Jumps are worth 10% of a team's score at a competition.



# LEVELS

Teams compete on different levels that allow different skills. The level system starts with level 1, followed by level 2, and so on. Level 7 is the highest level in cheerleading, where the most skills are allowed. Athletes on all levels are incredibly skilled and teams are just as competitive on level 1 as level 7. The level represents the overall skill level of the whole team, not just individual athletes. For example, an athlete with level 4 skills may compete on a level 3 team. In the same way, an athlete with level 1 skills may compete on a level 2 team. Gyms can choose to have teams on any level – there are no specific requirements to compete on a specific level. However, being on the level that best matches a team's skill abilities is often the best option. Having a team with mostly level 3 skills compete on level 5 would probably only lead to more problems than the "glory" of being on a higher level!



## Level 1

Teams competing on level 1 have the most restrictions when it comes to skills. Despite the strict rules, many routines are very creative and teams perform difficult skills! For stunts, the flyer is not allowed to be held higher than prep level (exception for pyramids, see below), which is by the base's shoulders. One-legged stunts are allowed but must be braced if on prep level. A brace is not needed for one-legged stunts below prep level. Up to a 1/4 twist is allowed in stunts.



## Level 2

On level 2, teams start doing more stunting on extended level and handsprings in tumbling. Two-legged stunts are allowed on extended level and one-legged stunts don't need a brace on prep level. Teams are allowed up to 1/2 twist to extended two-legged stunts and prep level one-legged stunts. Basket tosses are also allowed, but only "straight rides" where the flyer does not perform a skill in the air.



# HIGH SCHOOL CHEER



## LEVEL 3

Starting on level 3, we see teams performing tucks in tumbling and basket skills! One-legged stunts are allowed on extended level and do not need a brace. Teams are also allowed to do up to a  $\frac{1}{2}$  twist to extended one-legged stunts and 1 twist to prep level one-legged stunts. For basket tosses, flyers can perform one skill, like a full twist or toe touch. Tumbling skills include series of standing back handsprings, round-off tucks, front tucks, aerials, and combinations of skills.



6

## LEVEL 4

Tumbling skills include standing back tucks, standing back handsprings tuck, round-off layouts, punch fronts, and combinations of skills. More skills are allowed in level 4 pyramids, like braced flips and rewinds,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  twists, and more. Teams are also allowed to do up to 1 twist to extended one-legged stunts and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  twist to prep level one-legged stunts.

## LEVEL 5

For stunting, teams are allowed up to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  twist to extended two-legged stunts and 1 twist to extended one-legged stunts. Flyers are also allowed to do a double twist dismount from extended one-legged stunts. Up to three skills are allowed in baskets, except for kick doubles. The main difference in tumbling is that athletes are allowed to perform full twists in running tumbling, like a round-off back handspring full twist. Level 5 pyramid skills are similar to those allowed on level 4. For some skills though, more twisting is allowed and fewer braces needed.

## LEVEL 6

Double-ups are allowed to both two-legged and one-legged stunts. Flyers can also double twist down from a stunt, where up to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  twists are allowed. Up to three skills are allowed in basket tosses, like the kick doubles most teams perform. Almost any tumbling pass is allowed to end with a double full so it is one of the main level 6 skills we see in tumbling. For standing tumbling, it is also allowed to perform standing fulls.

## LEVEL 7

Skills like rewinds and back handspring full ups are allowed to both extended one and two-legged stunts. As flyers are allowed to flip in baskets, many different skills are allowed. Level 7 features baskets like double fulls, pike open fulls, kick triples, and many more.

School Cheer is a discipline of cheer that involves athletes in a scholastic setting who cheer in support of other sports, most often football and basketball. School cheerleaders' primary role is supporting the other athletic programs through leading the crowd at games and pep rallies as well as promoting school spirit overall. School cheer teams may also participate in competitions, performing a 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  minute routine composed of tumbling, stunting, pyramids, dance, and cheer segments. High school cheer is most often organized at the local level by the organization that oversees the other scholastic sports and activities. Most high school cheer teams are governed by their state high school or activities association. Many state associations, districts, and even individual schools require USA Cheer safety training for their coaches. USA Cheer and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) have reached an agreement to publish one set of rules as the NFHS/USA Cheer Rule Book. In high school, there are usually two squads per school: varsity and a junior varsity. High school cheerleading contains aspects of school spirit as well as competition. These squads have become part of a year-round cycle. Starting with tryouts in the spring, year-round practice, cheering on teams in the fall and winter, and participating in cheerleading competitions. Most squads practice at least three days a week for about two hours each practice during the summer. [citation needed] Many teams also attend separate tumbling sessions outside of practice. During the school year, cheerleading is usually practiced five- to six-days-a-week. During competition season, it often becomes seven days with practice twice a day sometimes.



The school spirit aspect of cheerleading involves cheering, supporting, and “hyping up” the crowd at football games, basketball games, and even at wrestling meets. Along with this, cheerleaders usually perform at pep rallies, and bring school spirit to other students. In May 2009, the National Federation of State High School Associations released the results of their first true high school participation study. They estimated that the number of high school cheerleaders from public high schools is around 394,700. There are different cheerleading organizations that put on competitions; some of the major ones include state and regional competitions. Many high schools will often host cheerleading competitions, bringing in IHSA judges. The regional competitions are qualifiers for national competitions, such as the UCA (Universal Cheerleaders Association).

19



# MIND SET

The best defense against mental blocks is fostering a positive mindset and maintaining a healthy relationship with the sport. Consider the following strategies: Set achievable goals: Establishing realistic expectations for yourself and your performance helps you focus on progress, reducing the risk of frustration or disappointment. Some athletes fear setting goals because it provides the opportunity to fail. However, without a goal, an athlete has no direction or sense of progression or digression. An unreachable goal doesn't motivate an athlete as well as a goal that's easily completed. It must be right in between, challenging but attainable.

Stay optimistic: Maintaining a positive outlook keeps you motivated and focused on your objectives. Seek out supportive people who encourage and believe in you. A negative mindset only pushes you and others around you down. Visualize success: Imagining yourself effortlessly executing a skill or routine can build confidence and conquer fear. When visualizing focus on the moment completely and fully. How did the tumbling pass feel, what environment are you in, what are you focused on in the skill. Your brain doesn't know the difference between a mental rep and a physical rep so believe it and you will achieve it.

Practice self-care: Taking care of your physical and mental well-being optimizes performance and minimizes the risk of mental blocks. Ensure you eat a balanced diet, get adequate sleep, and engage in physical activity to stay in top form. Despite the best prevention efforts, mental blocks may still occur. In these cases, it's crucial to have a plan for overcoming them. Here are a few tips and tricks to help:

18

Identify the cause: Understanding the source of your mental block enables you to address it more effectively. Ask yourself what thoughts or beliefs are holding you back and take steps to change them. Allowing yourself to be transparent with yourself is a big step and easily one of the most important when it comes to getting past a block. You can only know where you are going if you first know where you are.

Seek support: Talking to a coach, mentor, or therapist can help you overcome your mental block. They provide guidance and support to help you conquer your obstacles. Use positive self-talk: Replacing negative thoughts with positive affirmations keeps you motivated and confident. Focus on your strengths and remember past successes. Now positive self-talk isn't lying to yourself or a teammate.

It's an understanding of the situation as well as accepting that progress isn't linear. It's going to take failing and succeeding a couple times to get past it, but the effort you put in is the only thing that matters. If you are trying, never talk down about yourself because that's all any of us can ever do. Take Action: The most effective way to overcome a mental block is to take action. Start with simple skills or routines and gradually build up to more challenging ones. It's easy to escape the mental block by working on different skills or finding ways to push it off but that only delays the process you will have to go through. Most of the time this makes it harder and harder to break out of a mental block. The Bottom-Line is that mental blocks are a common challenge in cheerleading and tumbling, but they don't have to stand in your way. By preventing mental blocks and having a plan for overcoming them, you can remain focused, motivated, and confident as you pursue your athletic aspirations. Remember, every athlete experiences mental blocks, but with the right mindset and approach, they can be conquered and conquered with ease.

# VARSITY

Varsity Brands, Inc. is an American apparel company owned by Bain Capital. It is primarily focused on academic apparel and memorabilia, with its operations split among three major subsidiaries, including Herff Jones—a manufacturer of products such as class rings, graduation caps and gowns, and yearbooks; Varsity Spirit—which produces apparel and competitions in cheerleading; and BSN Sports, a distributor of sports uniforms and equipment. In 2011, Herff Jones merged with Varsity Brands. Its founder and CEO Jeff Webb became president and CEO of Herff Jones. Herff Jones acquired BSN Sports in 2013. In June 2014, it was announced that the company as a whole would operate under the Varsity Brands name in order to reflect a more integrated operation. The company was then sold to the private equity group Charlesbank Capital Partners In 2018, it was sold to Bain Capital for around \$2.5 billion. In May 2020, Varsity Brands faced a consolidated lawsuit over monopoly control in the cheerleading apparel industry. In September 2022, Varsity Brands also faced two lawsuits regarding sexual assault charges related to Varsity-Brands-connected coaches.



7



# REBEL

**Karen Noseff Aldridge founded Rebel Athletic in 2012 with a simple goal: to provide the best cheerleading uniforms in the world, at the best value, backed up by the best service, choice and designs available anywhere. All cheerleaders, teams and gyms need to look their best to perform their best. Looks matter in this sport and can, literally, make the difference between winning and just placing. Rebel Athletic was founded to enable every cheerleader, team and gym to compete on a level playing field. By designing like a fashion house, and producing our apparel in our own offshore factory, we are able to provide incredible design and unparalleled customization at an unbeatable price, fast. It has been Karen's hope that Rebel's unique approach would resonate with gym owners and coaches across America - and now - across the world. In the past 5 years we've continued to innovate based on your needs. We've challenged what some said couldn't be done and strived to exceed expectations.**



“I continue to be humbled by the coaches that call us daily as a result of referrals from our loyal customers. It has been our guiding principle to deliver uniforms that allow every athlete, at every gym – regardless of size, affiliation or record – to compete with confidence on a level playing field. Time and time again our customers are blown away by the quality of design and construction that we can achieve for their budget,” said Karen.

# MENTAL BLOCKS

Mental blocks in cheerleading can be one of the most challenging and frustrating obstacles for both the athlete and the coach. Contrary to belief, a mental block is not a rookie mistake. It's something that even the most highly trained athletes in the world can go through unexpectedly. A mental block can stem from various causes, including fear of injury, lack of progression, fatigue, distraction, and external stress. After reading this article, you should understand what a mental block is, what causes a mental block, ways to prevent a mental block, and finally, how to overcome a mental block. A mental block in cheerleading refers to a psychological barrier or obstacle that prevents an individual from performing at their best. Mental blocks can manifest in the form of fear, self-doubt, lack of understanding, negative thoughts, or performance anxiety. A mental block can prevent an athlete from executing their routine with confidence and accuracy, hindering their performance and overall success in the sport. While many people believe mental blocks only occur in tumbling, it's a problem that can and does spread into every aspect of cheerleading. It's essential to understand and know when you or an athlete is showing signs of building a mental block so you can attack the problem before it gets any worse.

## Signs of a mental block are:

- The inability for an athlete to commit to a skill they have -done previously with no problem.
- Not committing to technique
- Feeling frozen, blank, or having brain fog
- Lack of confidence

**Fear of Injury:** One common cause of mental blocks in cheerleading is fear of injury. This can be especially prevalent in young athletes who have learned quickly with no fear but have since suffered an injury that has made them cautious. In these cases, it's essential to focus on conditioning specific areas of the body to build strength and reduce the fear of injury. By mastering each step of a skill before moving on to the next, coaches can also create consistency and reduce the risk of injury. **Lack of Progression:** The most common cause of mental blocks is a lack of progression in the athlete's skills. In cheerleading, it's important to master each step of a skill before moving on to the next. If the athlete is not progressing and feels inconsistent in their performance, this can lead to fear, nervousness, and ultimately a mental block. **Fatigue and Distraction:** Fatigue and distraction can also contribute to mental blocks in cheerleading. If an athlete is forced to do one more repetition when already fatigued, this can lead to losing focus and confidence. Similarly, easily distracted athletes may benefit from learning techniques for focusing their mind and improving their concentration. **External Stress:** External stress from sources such as school, family conflict, or outside pressures can also contribute to mental blocks in cheerleading. When an athlete feels overwhelmed and stressed, performing to their full potential can be difficult. Coaches should be aware of external stressors and work with athletes to develop strategies for managing stress and reducing its impact on their performance.



NCA challenges the societal ideas that cheerleading is a feminine sport that does not require athletic abilities. NCA is to be considered by many, as a strong community activist especially in relation to non-profit organizations that advocate for the health benefits of children. The growth of NCA has inspired many upcoming cheerleading programs, to strive for a level of excellence that has allowed it to achieve as much as the company has over the past 70 years. Many of these athletes are stereotyped as not being as intelligent and only being good at cheerleading because of their looks. However, today's cheerleaders are athletes, scholars, and leaders. Ninety percent of cheerleaders are "B" students or better. 98.5% plan on going to college. Over half participate in other extra-curricular activities. Many hold leadership positions in their class and in clubs at school. 40% of cheerleaders participate in school sport outside of cheerleading. Also, over half of all cheer teams participate in community charity events.



## 2023-2024 VARSITY EVENTS

OCTOBER 20TH: HALLOWEEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

NOVEMBER 5TH: ALL LEVEL 1 COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 6TH: ALL LEVEL 2 COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 7TH: ALL LEVEL 3 AND 4 COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 8TH: ALL LEVEL 4 AND 5 COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 10TH: ALL LEVEL 6 AND 7 COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 20TH: CASH BASH COMPETITION

DECEMBER 4TH: CHEERSPORT COMPETITION

DECEMBER 18TH-19TH: ENCORE CHAMPIONSHIPS







The NCA hosts competitions for school teams and All-star teams. For school teams, they host the NCA Nationals. This is a competition for high school teams to compete after earning a bid. Many high school teams have to win at their state competition before being able to move on to nationals. The All-star teams compete at NCA All-star Nationals. These All-star cheerleaders compete at many competitions within their region to earn a bid to compete at nationals. The College National Championships are held in Daytona Beach, Florida in April. NCA has granted adolescent men and women the opportunity to showcase their gymnastic based abilities on a national and international level, and the number of its participants has exponentially increased every year for nearly over a decade. At the 2018 NCA Dallas National Championship alone 23,655 athletes from over 39 states and 9 countries, gathered together to participate in one of the most premier competitions of the cheerleading community. Athletes from across the country compete at the National Cheer Association (NCA) and National Dance Association (NDA) Collegiate National Championship in Daytona Beach. Teams gather in Daytona Beach to compete against the nation's top universities in hopes of winning the title of NCA & NDA Collegiate National Champion and taking home the coveted golden trophy. The competitions are based at the Ocean Center and Bandshell. These competitions allow cheerleaders to showcase their skills and have the honor of becoming National Champs.

The US National Cheerleaders Association (NCA) was established as a way to bring cheerleaders together to learn new skills. Since 1951, the NCA has held summer camps, and is credited with the invention of the herkie jump, the pom pom, the spirit stick[1] and being the first uniform manufacturer. The NCA was founded in 1948 by the "Grandfather" of cheerleading, Lawrence "Herkie" Herkimer, a former member of the Spirit Squad at Southern Methodist University. The NCA, incorporated in 1948, is the first organization to hold cheer camps with the purpose of bringing cheerleaders together to learn new skills under qualified instructors and compete against other schools in dance, jumps, tumbling and stunting. The first camp was held in 1951 at Sam Houston State University with only athletes in attendance. The camp was so popular, that the next year attendance skyrocketed to 450 athletes. Summer Camps were also established across the United States with Cheer and Tumbling Classes led by some of the most outstanding Collegiate Cheerleaders in the United States. The National Cheerleaders Association, at one point was held at around 430 different sites, along with 1,500 instructors. During this time, there were up to 150,000 anticipated cheerleaders yearly. NCA Summer Camps were first started in 1948. Today the NCA still hosts summer camps as a way to bring new skills to teams in a safe controlled environment. The main goal of the summer camps is to help teams and athletes learn more about cheerleading. The summer camps are supposed to help athletes learn new skills and enhance old skills. The NCA summer camps are a way for teams to get started and ready for the season. The NCA staff help teams create choreography, enhance skills, build leadership, master stunts and many more things.

**JANUARY 12: REGIONALS COMPETITION**

**JANUARY 18-19TH: MAJORS CHAMPIONSHIP**

**FEBRUARY 24-25: NCA COMPETITION**

**MARCH 5TH: CASH BASH COMPETITION**

**MARCH 20TH-21ST: CASH BASH COMPETITION**

**APRIL 15-16: CHEER AMERICA EVENT**

**APRIL 17-18TH: CHEER POWER EVENT**

**MAY 7-8: SUMMIT REGIONALS**



# VARSITY





## WORLD CUP ALL STARS

World Cup All Stars, founded by Elaine Pascale and Joelle Antico, is home to the 2007, 2008, 2009, 2015, 2017, and 2019 USASF Cheerleading Worlds champions in the Large Senior All Girl division, the World Cup Shooting Stars. In the International Junior All Girl division, the World Cup Starlites are the 2007 and 2008 World Champions. World Cup was founded in 1994 in Freehold, New Jersey by owner Elaine Pascale and her daughter Joelle Antico. [World Cup is one of the most respected all-star programs in the U.S. World Cup grew out of the Pop Warner success of mother–daughter team Elaine Pascale and Joelle Antico. For many years, Pascale served as coach of the local Pop Warner team that Antico had joined. Eventually, the family moved to Freehold, New Jersey, where Pascale found herself coaching a Pop Warner midget squad. By this time Antico was attending Penn State and would come home on weekends to assist her mother with the team. In 1992,

the pair won their first Pop Warner National Championship. The transition from Pop Warner to all stars was not a big leap for Pascale and Antico. After the national win and with the Pop Warner season over, a small group of their students and parents persuaded them to start a competition squad, and the World Cup All Stars were born. World Cup All Stars officially began in 1994. The first team formed was the Shooting Stars. In 1995 World Cup won its very first national championship. From that point, the team from World Cup has won numerous national championships from NCA, Spirit Sports, Americheer, WSF and many other companies. Most recently, winning 2015 IASF Cheerleading Worlds in the Large Senior All Girl division and earning the bronze in the International Junior division. Both the Large Senior All Girl (Shooting Stars) and International Junior All Girl (Starlites) are back-to-back world champions, winning in both 2007 and 2008. Also in 2008, World Cup's Large Senior Limited Coed Team (Odyssey) received 3rd place at the Cheerleading Worlds. One of their other well known teams is the Twinkles. They are a youth level 5 team composed of girls ages 8–12 who compete many of the same advanced stunt and tumbling skills as the teams composed of much older athletes. This team has won the NCA National Championship five times recently, in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, and 2017. Both in 2012 and 2014, Twinkles finished the season undefeated. Starlites won NCA in 2011, 2014, and 2015. Cosmic Rays won NCA in 2012. The Shooting Stars have won NCA eight times in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2016. World Cup has had multiple teams competing in the Cheerleading Worlds for years. In 2014, they have received 4 full paid bids to attend Worlds, one for each of their Worlds eligible teams. World Cup didn't win any world Championships from 2009-2014, though Shooting Stars still medaled in Large Senior each year. In 2015 Shooting Stars won World Cup's 6th and the team's 4th World Championship title in 6 years in the Large Senior All Girl Level 5 division!



The Cheerleading Worlds, or Cheerleading World Championships, colloquially known as Worlds, is an annual international championship event for competitive cheerleading held in the United States. It is hosted by the U.S. All Star Federation in partnership with the International All Star Federation, the global organization of professionals and athletes involved in a club or All Star Cheer. Teams from around the world compete each year to receive a Bid to worlds. The competition is held in Orlando, Florida at the ESPN Wide World of Sports in April or May and is a three-day event consisting of preliminary competitions, semi finals and finals. The first Cheerleading Worlds took place in 2004, and have recurred annually with the exception of the 2020 World Championships, which were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Level 5, 6 and 7 cheerleading teams are invited to the competition

by obtaining a bid from one of multiple regional and national competitions. Two types of bids are offered as a prerequisite in order to be eligible to compete. A “paid bid”, where all competition expenses are covered, is worth up to \$25,000. These expenses include lodging, passes to the Disney Parks, and registration fees to compete at the event. Full paid bids are awarded to only the highest scoring teams at the largest and most prestigious competitions throughout the season leading up to The Cheerleading Worlds. An “at-large bid” may also be awarded to teams that do not receive a paid bid, which does not cover any expenses to compete. Each routine is judged upon both difficulty and execution of jumps, standing tumbling, running tumbling, pyramid, basket tosses, dance, performance, and overall routine composition. Creativity is also included as a vital aspect of the scoresheet.



## HISTORY OF WORLDS

The first USASF World Cheerleading Championship was held on April 24, 2004. This event was an invite-only competition, with only two divisions - Senior All Girl Level 5 and Senior Coed Level 5 - and only 14 teams competing. This first event was held at a backstage sound stage at Disney MGM Studios (now Disney Hollywood Studios) at Walt Disney World that held a maximum of 500 spectators. At this point in time, the winners of each category received jackets, similar to NCA and UCA, instead of the rings currently received. The second Cheerleading Worlds event happened April 23 - 25, 2005. This year, the competition expanded to include both small and large divisions within the senior all-girl level 5 and senior coed level 5 categories, for a total of four divisions teams could be eligible within. This year saw the first international teams competing at worlds with New Zealand All Stars, however, there was not yet a split of international divisions from regular divisions. The Cheerleading Worlds' third event occurred on April 21 - 24, 2006. This year's event introduced the split of international divisions, offering international open all-girl level 5 and international open coed level 5 divisions, making a total of 6 divisions. FloCheer. This also marked the first time that one gym program took home multiple titles within one year, with Cheer Athletics being the world champion across three divisions and GymTyme All Stars being the world champion across two divisions.

## TOP SCORING TEAMS

### 2004:

**Senior All-Girl Level 5: Cheer Athletics**

**SENIOR COED LEVEL 5: MIAMI ELITE**

### 2005:

**Senior Small All-Girl Level 5: THE STINGRAY ALL STARS**

**SENIOR LARGE ALL GIRL LEVEL 5: MARYLAND TWISTERS F5**

## BEST GYMS



## CHEER ATHLETICS

Cheer Athletics is one of the largest All-Star cheerleading programs in the United States, with thousands of athletes competing on 80+ teams from Plano, Texas (near Dallas); Austin, Texas; Frisco, Texas; Charlotte, North Carolina; Columbus, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Denver, Colorado; St. Louis, Missouri; Rochester, New York; Dallas, Texas; Omaha, Nebraska; and Pensacola, Florida. Cheer Athletics has won 24 World Championships at The Cheerleading Worlds sponsored by the USASF. In 2007, CA's owner/coaches were ranked #1 in the country by American Cheerleader Magazine's list of the 25 Most Influential People in All-Star Cheerleading. Cheer Athletics teams have consistently outpaced other cheer programs with more than 70 National Titles from the National Cheerleaders Association (NCA) and earned 53 medals from the USASF Worlds. Cheer Athletics began in May 1994 when co-founders Jody Melton and Angela Rogers began their first practice with 2 athletes at a local park in Plano, TX. The 1995-96 season brought many new challenges.

Cheer Athletics had more than tripled in size since nationals, with 3 main teams: Panthers, Tigers, Jags. CA now had a total of 58 athletes and was tasting its first success at local and regional competitions. The gym had now grown to have 5 teams: Cats, Jags, Tigers, Panthers, and Wildcats. Cheer Athletics debuted at the 1997 NCA All-Star Nationals. Cheer Athletics had become the largest program in the country with 8 teams: Cats, Jags, Tigers, Sabres, Cougars, Panthers, Wildcats, and Cheetahs. By the spring of 1998, Cheer Athletics moved into its own practice facility; a former baseball training center just down the street from NCA's main offices. As Cheer Athletics expanded, there were now 13 teams in the CA Family: KittyKats, Cats, Jags, Bengals, Bobcats, Tigers, Thundercats, Sabres, Bearcats, Panthers, Pumas, Wildcats, and Cheetahs. Interested in this up-and-coming program, the New York Times Production Company sent a film crew to feature two Cheer Athletics teams in a documentary, "On the Inside: Cheerleading" which aired the Discovery Channel. An amazing season with 30 national championship titles brought the overall title count to 116. Cheer Athletics was invited to compete in the first annual USASF World Championships.