



A VARSITY BRAND

## 2011-12 HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITIONS GENERAL INFORMATION

### ELIGIBILITY

Entrants must be registered students in the school they are representing and official full-time members of their team at the time of competition. No members shall be older than 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The penalty for an eligibility violation will be disqualification.

### CATEGORIES/DIVISIONS

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

An individual may not compete against her/himself in the same division/category (i.e. two Group Stunt teams). An individual may not participate on two teams within the same category type and/or divisions within a category when separated by size, stunt/tumbling limitations, squad level or All-Girl and Co-Ed. [i.e. 1) Small and Large Varsity Show Cheer divisions 2) Show Cheer Novice and Show Cheer Advanced categories 3) JV Cheer and Varsity Cheer division 4) All-Girl Show and Co-Ed Show Cheer 5) JV Song/Pom and Varsity Song/Pom division]. The penalty for this violation will be disqualification of one of the routines.

NEW! - Varsity teams that enter co-ed and all girl cannot have any crossover participants.

A team must compete in the same category/division at Nationals for which it qualified in at a Regional or Classic, **unless prior written approval is received from the USA**. (i.e. If you qualify for Show Cheer at a Regional or Classic, you may not compete in Co-Ed Show Cheer at Nationals unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional or Classic. If you qualify for Show Cheer - Novice at a Regional or Classic, you may not compete in Show Cheer - Advanced at Nationals unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional or Classic.)

If a team qualifies two or more times with a Superior rating (75 points or greater regardless of any penalties received) in the Intermediate or Advanced level at a Regional or Classic competition, then that team may not move down to a lower technical division at Nationals.

A school cannot have 2 teams in the same category type. [i.e. 1) Varsity Show Cheer Advanced and Varsity Show Cheer Novice divisions 2) Varsity Song/Pom Intermediate and Varsity Song/Pom Novice division]. The penalty for this violation will be disqualification of one of the routines.

Freshman team members all must be in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and must represent a high school. Jr. High / Middle School teams may not compete in a freshman division.

The limit to the number of individuals permitted on a team for the "Large" or "Super" divisions is 36 members.

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

**SPLITTING CATEGORIES BY TEAM SIZE** - At high school spirit competitions, Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman Show Cheer and Songleading/Pom Pon will not be divided if there are less than 10 teams competing in that category. If there are **10** or more teams entered, the category will be split by size to be determined at the discretion of competition officials.

## MUSIC

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

All teams who use music must provide their own CD or MP3 device for use on the event provided sound system. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo on a high quality CD or loaded onto an MP3 device. Music must be labeled with the school name, division, team size and be ready to play. One or several selections of music may be used. A sound system will be provided. Due to variability in sound systems, a back-up MP3 device must be available and present at the time of performance. Speed control is not available. Music checks on the main sound system are not permitted. A representative must be present at the sound system at the time of performance. Directors/coaches are asked to hold onto their own music until the time of performance and to take music back following the performance. Due to greater room for technical error with some CDs you must have a back-up MP3 of your routine available.

In an effort to comply with music licensing rules, all music for USA Spirit Nationals must be registered with ASCAP, BMI, SESAC or a combination of ASCAP, BMI and/or SESAC should you qualify and choose to participate at the USA Nationals event. A combination of ASCAP, BMI or SESAC with any other agency will not be permitted (i.e. ASCAP and EMI will not be allowed.) European titles are not allowed. Check the following websites to ensure that your music is registered with ASCAP, BMI or SESAC: [www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com) , [www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com), [www.sesac.com](http://www.sesac.com).

## ENTRANCE/EXIT

Judges are looking for enthusiasm and showmanship during entrances and exits. Teams and individuals are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible. Set-ups and break-downs for props, signs, megaphones, etc. will be timed in the Mascot category.

Pep Flags will be limited to 1 minute for entrance and 1 minute for exit. Choreographed entrances and exits will not be judged.

## PERFORMANCE AREA

Performance boundaries at competitions will be a regulation basketball court (unless otherwise noted). All Regionals, Classics and Opens will have a carpet bonded foam mat on the performance area that measures 54'x42'. The mat may or may not be removed for the songleading/pom, mascot and/or pep flag categories/divisions. There will be no practicing on the performance floor prior to the competition.

Spring floors will **not** be used for school-based cheer divisions.

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

At Spirit Nationals and Opens, a 3-point penalty will be assessed for any stunting or tumbling completed off of the mat. Mats at High School Spirit Nationals, Classic and Open competitions will be removed for the songleading/pom and pep flag categories/divisions.

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

## PERFORMANCE ORDER/SCHEDULES

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

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

The "Person to Receive Correspondence" will be sent/emailed a tentative line up with performance times at least 1 1/2 weeks prior to the competition. These times are subject to change. The final schedule will be available by checking <http://usa.varsity.com> after 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Wednesday prior to your competition. As of this day, performance times will

remain the same regardless of scratches. It is the advisor's/coach's responsibility to check the schedule for accuracy of your competing division prior to the team taking the performance floor.

## **PENALTIES**

Points will be deducted from the final team average for violations of safety rules and/or time limits. See below in addition to the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules, 2011-12 USA High School Teams Show Cheer Division Limitations, 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams and the 2011-12 USA High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations. See <http://usa.varsity.com> for these documents.

### **A) Safety Rules**

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

### **Competition Standard for Spotters**

**“Team Spotters”** = are part of the performing team and required as part of specific types of stunting/pyramid/toss, etc. skills.

**“Additional (Routine) Spotters”** = Individuals on the competition floor provided as a safety precaution to spot certain elements of a routine. These are in addition to the team and do not take the place of “team spotters” required by specific types of stunting/pyramid/toss, etc. skills.

In an effort to promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, USA will provide additional spotters at all USA school and recreational/youth cheer competitions. School and recreational/youth cheer programs do not always have a large number of staff and coaches available to spot routines. To ensure that the safety of participants is not compromised due to limited number of team provided spotters, “additional (routine) spotters” will be provided by the USA. Additional (routine) spotters cannot be provided by the performing team, they must be provided by the USA.

**These USA-provided “additional (routine) spotters” will be mandatory on the competition floor.**

Reminder – To provide the safest competitive environment, teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

### **B) Time**

Timing will begin on the first note of music, the first vocal command (for cheer squads), the first organized cheer or the first movement, and will stop with the end of the cheer or last note of the music.

For the Crowdleader® Teams division, timing begins after the game situation has been read and ends at the conclusion of the fight song.

Timing for prop set-up in the Mascot category will begin at the drop of the starter's hand. Set-up timing will stop when the routine begins. Teams have 1 minute to set-up props and 1 minute to exit the floor at the end of their performance.

Pep Flags will be limited to 1 minute for entrance and 1 minute for exit. Choreographed entrances and exits will not be judged.

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

For show cheer teams, up to 1:30 (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. There is no restriction as to the proportion of the music section(s) used in relation to the cheer only section(s). Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:30 total music time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-10 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 11-20 seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

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

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

### **C) Performance Order/Division Changes**

Preliminary competition schedules will be posted on the <http://usa.Varsity.com> website by 5:00 p.m. (PST) 10 days prior to your competition date. It is the advisor's/director's responsibility to check all performance schedules for accuracy of your competing division prior to the team taking the performance floor.

Any changes to your original competition registration must be submitted in writing and faxed to 1.866.761.9365 or e-mailed to [competitions@usacamps.com](mailto:competitions@usacamps.com). **In order to avoid a possible penalty, any changes must be received in the USA office in writing by 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Friday one week prior to your competition date.**

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

Division changes made the day of competition at an Open or National event may incur a 3-point penalty.

### **D) Uniforms**

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

In Cheer, Songleading/Pom Pon and Pep Flag props are not allowed. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine. Hand-held signs, flags, poms or megaphones **are** permitted.

Shoes - All participants must wear shoes. This is a safety rule and if a violation occurs, 3 points will be deducted from the final team average score. All footwear must have soft soles and be non-marking.

When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff. If a violation occurs, 3 points will be deducted from the final team average score.

**Uniform Distractions** –The Safety Judge, Head Judge or other competition official reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g. garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.). Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance. If a judge/competition official stops the routine the penalty will vary from 3 points to possible disqualification of the routine.

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

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

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

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

### **INSURANCE**

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

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

## **FOOD**

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

## **DRESSING ROOMS**

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

## **GENERAL ADMISSION**

At Regionals, Classics and Opens, two complimentary admissions will be allotted at registration to each competing school/team for advisors and/or coaches. Additional tickets for spectators, advisors, coaches and/or "routine spotters" may be purchased at the door for each competition.

## **CATEGORIES/DIVISIONS RULES**

Sample scoresheets for all USA competitions will be available on-line by visiting <http://usa.varsity.com> after September 1, 2011.

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

- 2011-12 USA High School Spirit Nationals Divisions
- 2011-12 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations
- 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules
- 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams
- 2011-12 USA High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations.

## **SHOW CHEER – ADVANCED**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

6-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute routine of your choice using a combination of music and words. Audience participation is encouraged. Props and costuming are not allowed. Signs and/or flags are permitted but may not be worn as an article of clothing or accessory. Up to 1:30 (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. There is no restriction as to the proportion of the music section(s) used in relation to the cheer only section(s). Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:30 total music time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-10 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 11-20 seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules. No tumbling or stunt/pyramid/toss restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules apply for this category.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

## **SHOW CHEER – INTERMEDIATE**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

6-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

## **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute routine of your choice using a combination of music and words. Audience participation is encouraged. Props and costuming are not allowed. Signs and/or flags are permitted but may not be worn as an article of clothing or accessory. Up to 1:30 (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. There is no restriction as to the proportion of the music section(s) used in relation to the cheer only section(s). Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:30 total music time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-10 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 11-20 seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules. In addition to these rules, the following restrictions also apply for the “Intermediate” divisions:

### **SPECIALTY SKILL RESTRICTIONS**

#### **Tumbling**

1. Maximum difficulty in standing tumbling is limited to a back handspring (i.e. standing tucks are prohibited). Standing tumbling is defined as any tumbling skill not originating from a cartwheel, or round-off. Therefore, a standing back handspring back tuck is prohibited.
2. Round off back tucks and round off back handspring back tucks are allowed. The following types of advanced running tumbling skills are prohibited: X-outs, layouts, full twists and/or tumbling out of an aerial/flipping skill.

#### **Stunts/Pyramids/Tosses**

1. Extended *freestanding* one-legged stunts are limited to a liberty (or high torch) only.
2. All other extended one-legged stunts must be braced on at least one side by another top person who is at shoulder height or lower.
3. Twists exceeding more than one and one quarter rotation in any stunt/toss/dismount are not permitted.
4. Basket, sponge, elevator or similar type of tosses are permitted, but are limited to one trick only (i.e. one toe touch). For example, a kick followed by a twist is considered 2 tricks.

These rules are also listed on the 2011-12 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

## **SHOW CHEER – NOVICE**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

6-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

## **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute routine of your choice using a combination of music and words. Audience participation is encouraged. Props and costuming are not allowed. Signs and/or flags are permitted but may not be worn as an article of clothing or accessory. Up to 1:30 (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. There is no restriction as to the proportion of the music section(s) used in relation to the cheer only section(s). Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:30 total music time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-10 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 11-20 seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules. In addition to these rules, the following restrictions also apply for the “Novice” divisions:

### **SPECIALTY SKILL RESTRICTIONS**

#### **Tumbling**

All tumbling, both standing and running, must have both hands and/or feet on the performance surface at all times. Therefore, skills including, but not limited to the following are not permitted: aerials, back tucks, punch fronts, layouts, fulls, etc. Back handsprings are allowed.

#### **Stunts/Pyramids/Tosses**

1. Extended *freestanding* stunts are limited to both feet in the base(s)' hands at all times.
2. All other extended one-legged stunts (i.e. arabesque, hitch, heel stretch, etc.) must be braced on two sides by top persons who are at shoulder stand height or lower. The braced connection must be established at the shoulder level or lower before the stunt passes into the extended position.
3. Free from contact twist dismounts or free from contact twist skills to/from a stunt of any type are prohibited (i.e. full down/full twist cradles, single log rolls, etc.) Exception: ¼ dismounts to cradle are permitted.
4. No basket, sponge, elevator or similar type of tosses are permitted.

These rules are also listed on the 2011-12 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

## **MASCOT**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

Mascots may perform as individuals or as mascot groups. Participants in this category must be the official mascot(s) of the school and be in official mascot uniform. Additional individuals, i.e. cheerleaders and/or songleaders/pom, are not permitted to be visible and/or perform as part of this routine.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute any type of skit or novelty routine. Use of a theme and crowd involvement are encouraged. Competitors may use music, props, costumes and accessories. All props/sets/accessories (either assembled or disassembled) must be able to fit through a standard door measuring 7'h x 3'w. Please, no use of water or other substances that would be harmful to the floor. Individuals assisting with props may not be visible during the routine. Materials that require clean up (i.e. confetti) are not permitted. Pyramids and basket tosses are illegal. Tumbling is not allowed. A 3 point penalty will be assessed for any infraction of the above rules.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 minutes maximum. You will be limited to 1 minute to set-up your props and 1 minute to breakdown your props. (See "Time" section penalty)

## **SONGLEADER/POM PON - ADVANCED**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

3-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute any type of pom pon/songleading routine with the use of tricks and advanced dance technique (i.e. multiple turns, leaps, leg holds, etc). All female members must use two pompons for at least half of the routine. (See "Time" section penalty.) Props are not allowed in this division. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine.

### **SAFETY RULES**

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams. No additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams apply for this category.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

## **SONGLEADER/POM PON - INTERMEDIATE**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

3-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE/SPECIALTY SKILL RESTRICTIONS**

Execute any type of pom pon/songleading routine. In addition to the skills permitted at the Novice level, the following skills will be permitted at the Intermediate level: double pirouettes (in passé or coupe position only), single leg hold turn, axels, leaps (except for the leaps listed below). Turn sequences must meet the following criteria: You are permitted to do a maximum of 2 stationary turn sequences in your routine, which can be performed by one or more team members. Turn sequences are limited to fouette, second turns and pirouettes only. No other skills besides these turns are permitted within a turn sequence. Pirouette turns must be in passé or coupe. Each turn sequence can be no longer than one eight count and turn sequences may not be performed consecutively. Turn sequences must be completed with both feet on floor before executing another skill. Fouette and second turns may be performed only as a part of a turn sequence (see above). The following advanced dance technique skills will not be permitted at the Intermediate level (i.e. switch/scissor leaps, double leg hold turns or more, triple pirouettes, turn sequences that are longer than one eight count, 3 or more turn sequences in a routine). These rules are also listed on the 2011-12 High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations document. 3 points will be deducted from the final team average for EACH occurrence of dance technique or tricks. All female members must use two pompons for at least half of the routine. (See "Time" section penalty.) Props are not allowed in this division. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine.

## **SAFETY RULES**

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams. Additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams apply for this category. These restrictions are listed above and on the 2011-12 High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations document.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

## **SONGLEADER/POM PON – NOVICE**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

3-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE/SPECIALTY SKILL RESTRICTIONS**

Execute any type of pom pon/songleading routine. The following skills will be permitted at the Novice level: chaine turns, single pirouettes, single piques, all jumps (including c jumps and tilt jumps), forward/front leap, leg holds, kicks, and/or kicklines. The following skills will not be permitted at the Novice level: Advanced dance technique and tricks [i.e. multiple turns (with the exception of the turns listed above), axels, leaps (with the exception of a forward/front leap) and/or leg hold turns]. These rules are also listed on the 2011-12 High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations document. 3 points will be deducted from the final team average for EACH occurrence of dance technique or tricks. All female members must use two pompons for at least half of the routine. (See "Time" section penalty.) Props are not allowed in this division. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine.

### **SAFETY RULES**

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams. Additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams apply for this category. These restrictions are listed above and on the 2011-12 High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations document.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum

Please Note: For technical skills or combination of skills that are not specifically stated in the Novice and Intermediate divisions, USA has the discretion to determine the level of difficulty based on the similarity of skills in the particular division. Submitting a DVD at least one week prior to the competition is the only way to clear a routine of potential safety violations.

SONGLEADER/POM – A school uniform must be worn (i.e. skirt and top). Pants are not allowed. Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered "costuming". A deduction of 3 points will be taken if "costuming" is used.

## **PEP FLAGS/SHORT FLAGS**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

3-36 members

### **DIVISIONS**

Refer to division grid at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

Execute a pep/short flag routine. Squads are encouraged to use flags during the entire routine. A team member that performs more than 2 eight-counts of their routine without a flag(s) will be assessed a .5 deduction for each eight-count or fraction thereof over the 2 eight-count limit. A deduction of .5 will be taken for each dropped flag shaft. School uniforms must be worn - costuming is not allowed. If a hair accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall theme of the routine, it will be considered costuming. Props are not allowed in this division. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props or costuming are used. Choreographed entrances/exits will not be judged.

### **SAFETY RULES**

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams. No additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules for School and Youth Teams apply for this category.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Flag shafts must have rubber or plastic tips on both ends.

## **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

2 ½ minutes maximum. You will be limited to entrance and exit up to 1 minute each. (See “Time” section penalty)

**NOTE:** The Pep Flag category will be only offered in Southern California at the following regional/classic locations: Anaheim Convention Center, Dec 10; Agoura H.S., Jan 21; Brea Olinda H.S., Jan 22. If your team is located outside of Southern California a DVD must be submitted by December 31, 2011 for qualification for Spirit Nationals. To request a DVD entry form please email [info@usacamps.com](mailto:info@usacamps.com).

## **CROWDLEADER® TEAMS**

A crowdleader team may consist of a combination of separate groups (cheer, song/pom, pep flags, mascots) working together, or a single team that does both cheer and pom.

You will perform a game action cheer/sideline cheer and fight song routine.

### **DIVISIONS**

There will be one division.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

1. A team will be given a randomly selected game situation prior to taking the floor. Once the situation is read, timing for entire performance length begins.
2. You must select and perform an appropriate game-action/sideline cheer. You may huddle or use another method of communication to make your decision in how to respond to the situation; however the routine timing begins after the situation has been read.
3. After completing your game-action/sideline cheer, begin the transition to your fight song. Transition should be short and crowd oriented. Do not do a performance or time out cheer. Choreography during the transition from the game-action/sideline cheer to the fight song is not permitted.
4. After your transition, your music will begin for your fight song routine. Teams are encouraged to use their school’s traditional fight song. If the school does not have a fight song, then a fight song from another school may be used. In either case, only fight song music may be used.
5. Cheernastics, tumbling, partner stunts and pyramids are allowed in the game-action/sideline cheer and/or fight song but they should enhance, not distract from, your crowd involvement. Remember that this is a crowd LEADER competition and we are looking for performances and transitions that would be effective at a game. Practicality will be considered in this division.
6. Props are permitted but not required. (i.e. megaphones)
7. Choreographed or music/crowdgetter entrances/exits will be included in your overall routine time and will not be timed as set-up or breakdown. Timing begins as soon as the game situation is read and ends with the conclusion of the team’s fight song.
8. Should you choose to compete in any Game Time division, material performed in the Crowdleader® Teams Division must be different than that performed in any Game Time category. The penalty for this violation will be disqualification.
9. Auxiliary groups (i.e. drummers, band members, etc.) may perform with the spirit squad. These “auxiliary groups” must remain on the gym floor and are not permitted on the performance mat. Auxiliary groups are encouraged to participate in activities that would assist the spirit squad in leading the crowd.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules. No tumbling or stunt/pyramid/toss restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules apply for this category.

### **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

3 ½ minutes maximum (entrance through end of fight song). Props may not be set-up prior to a team taking the floor. The performance floor must start empty of all props/accessories. (See time penalty)

## **GROUP STUNT – ADVANCED**

### **NUMBER ON TEAM**

Four/Five members, including spotter (all female or all male).

### **DIVISIONS**

There will be one division.

### **ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

The participants all must be from the same school. Execute stunts of your choice. Background music is encouraged. Additional spotters are not permitted.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules. No tumbling or stunt/pyramid/toss restrictions besides those listed in the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules apply for this category.

**TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

1 minute maximum

**GROUP STUNT – INTERMEDIATE**

**NUMBER ON TEAM**

Four/Five members, including spotter (all female or all male).

**DIVISIONS**

There will be one division.

**ROUTINE PROCEDURE**

The participants all must be from the same school. Execute stunts of your choice. Background music is encouraged. Additional spotters are not permitted.

**SAFETY RULES:** As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA High School Cheerleading Safety Rules. In addition to these rules, the following restrictions also apply for the “Intermediate” division:

**SPECIALTY SKILL RESTRICTIONS**

**Tumbling**

1. Maximum difficulty in standing tumbling is limited to a back handspring (i.e. standing tucks are prohibited). Standing tumbling is defined as any tumbling skill not originating from a cartwheel, or round-off. Therefore, a standing back handspring back tuck is prohibited.
2. Round off back tucks and round off back handspring back tucks are allowed. The following types of advanced running tumbling skills are prohibited: X-outs, layouts, full twists and/or tumbling out of an aerial/flipping skill.

**Stunts/Pyramids/Tosses**

1. Extended *freestanding* one-legged stunts are limited to a liberty (or high torch) only.
2. All other extended one-legged stunts must be braced on at least one side by another top person who is at shoulder height or lower.
3. Twists exceeding more than one and one quarter rotation in any stunt/toss/dismount are not permitted.
4. Basket, sponge, elevator or similar type of tosses are permitted, but are limited to one trick only (i.e. one toe touch).

These rules are also listed on the 2011-12 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document.

**TOTAL ROUTINE TIME LIMIT**

1 minute maximum

**TUMBLING, STUNT, DANCE AND SAFETY RULES**

Routines at all USA competitions must follow the 2011-12 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules, 2011-12 USA High School Teams Show Cheer Division Limitations, 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules and the 2011-12 USA High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations.

For specific cheerleading stunt and safety questions that only pertain to the AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules, or to the 2011-12 USA High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations please call 1-800-686-5718.

For specific song/pom or pep flag/short flag safety questions that only pertain to the 2011-12 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules, or to the 2011-12 High School Teams Song/Pom Division Limitations please call 1-800-886-4872 ext. 2004.

**Submitting a DVD is the only way to review a routine for potential safety violations, prior to a competition.**

Submission of a routine does not guarantee that it can be reviewed.

All rules and division limitations may be downloaded at <http://usa.varsity.com>.

**. FOR COMPETITION DIVISION QUESTIONS, CALL:  
1.800.886.4USA(4872)**