

SMYFA Cheer & Pom Competition Rules

General Items

Awards

Medals will be given as awards for each division. The awards will be announced in the following order: 3rd place, 2nd place, 1st place

Cheer: Freshmen 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place
 JV 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place
 Varsity 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place

Pom: Flag 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place
 Freshmen 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place

 JV 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place
 Varsity 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place

Note: There are no awards for overall places. In the case of a tie, there will be duplicate awards given.

Score Tallies

SMYFA Board Members will tally scores outside the presence of the teams and their representatives to the extent possible. Tally sheets shall be checked immediately after each team's performance to ensure all applicable scores have been entered.

Judges

Judges will be MHSAA/MCJAA certified judges and are hired by the host group. There will be a minimum of 3 panel judges for both pom and cheer: 2 cheer and 2 pom.

Rules

1. Flag Squads will only compete in the Pom portion of the event.
2. Freshman, JV and Varsity squads are required to perform both a cheer and pom routine. a. If a girl performs in the cheer routine, she must also perform in the pom routine.
3. Age-appropriate music must be chosen for the Pom routine (appropriate for 6-14 year old children and may not contain any vulgar/swear words, references to drugs or sexual content)

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4. Pom Point Scale. Point scale in each category is 1-10. Music may be cut and spliced by a professional.

5. Rubber bands and bobby pins of any kind may be worn in hair.

6. Rules apply to all teams whether they are competing or showcasing (including flag/mascot teams)

7. All teams are required to wear their team uniform, which shall consist of a cheer skirt and/or pants, shell, socks and shoes. If teams decide to change from cheer skirts to cheer pants in between performances, that is allowed if there is time to do so. Shoes must all be the same color and of a similar style.

8. Crowd participation responses are permissible without penalty. However, noise makers of any kind are **prohibited**.

9. Coach's Box – Coaches are allowed to direct/encourage their team during competition. Verbal communication by the coaches to their squad during the performance while in the coach's box is not allowed. Coaches may motion while in the coach's box without penalty.

a. An area will be marked behind the panel judges but in front of the spectators. If this area is not of an appropriate size or otherwise deemed not usable by the Board, an alternate area will be selected.

b. No more than 3 coaches allowed in this area, if a Junior Coach is present in the coaches' box, they must be accompanied by an adult Coach. Spectators should not interfere with the coaches. Coaches may enter the area when their team is called to approach the floor and must exit when their team exits c. Any remaining coaches are not allowed to be on the performance floor. A penalty of 5 points will be assessed if more than 3 coaches are in the coach's box or on the performance floor or otherwise violate this provision.

10. After the routine is performed, squads must quietly and quickly leave the area

11. Bleacher seats are allowed inside competing area

12. Team Banners cannot exceed 12 feet

13. If your squad doesn't want to compete or perform for the competition, they are still encouraged to perform in front of an audience, called a showcase.

14. No cheers or chants are allowed during the pom portion. Squads may yell a word or a phrase; for example, "Let's Go Team" or "fight. Max of 5 words; either said together or during the routine.

15. Appearance: This is based on clean and neat uniforms which include socks, shoes and poms. Hair: needs to be back and off the face; permanent hair color of any kind is allowed; however, the temporary spray of color isn't, also no beads or clip in extensions are allowed. The whole team needs to be in the same hair styles, for example, all in a single braid or a high pony. For safety and appearance reasons; pins and buttons, jewelry including earrings cannot be worn at Cheerfest. No gum, no nail polish, nails must be neat and trimmed, no excessive make up, no glitter (including hairspray glitter and glitter

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face makeup). The only exception is glitter bows. Shoes: need to be similar style and need to be the same color. Violation of any of the above list will result in a 3-point penalty. The entire appearance should be neat, uniform and not distracting. Wearing a knee brace or KT tape is allowed if necessary.

Skill Cheer Routine

Time: This round must be a minimum of 45 seconds and a maximum of 90 seconds.

Skills & Formation Changes

The following applies to ALL LEVELS (Freshman, JV, Varsity)

Each squad must have the required number of formation changes and skills. Squads may have more than the required skills and formations. Each squad will be judged on the first occurrences of each skill. The skills that are judged must be three different skills (All levels). Any formation changes and skills over the required number will be considered under the Difficulty and Variety category

Required Number of Skills: 3 (Must be 3 Different Skills)

Required Formations: 3 Formations, 2 Changes

Each team must supply four (4) copies of their squads judging sheet.

Qualifying Skills

Note: These skills must be performed in unison by all team members

Point Value 1-5

All Tucks Jumps

Spread Eagle Jump

Straight Jump

Point Value 1-7

Double Hook Jump

Side Split

High Kick

Forward Roll

Point Value 1-10

Heel Stretch

Switch Splits & Triple Splits

Backward Roll

Toe Touch

Herkie

Hurdler

Pike

1. Spread Eagle Jump may be executed with arms in a V-Motion or Clap Overhead
2. Splits must be performed parallel to the judges
3. Each skill must be performed with some hesitation before moving on to the next skill.
4. There will be someone to indicate when to begin the cheer.

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5. Time for cheer begins when the entire squad begins the cheer and ends with last word or motion at the end of the cheer. After the last girl leaves the floor, the squad must quietly return to their seats.

6. NO STUNTING OR TUMBLING IS ALLOWED, with the exception of a forward or backward roll.

a. A “stunt” is defined as a girl’s feet leaving the floor with the assistance by one or more girls. Examples of a “stunt” includes, but is not limited to, the following moves: assisted jumps, partner moves, swing-dance moves, stalls, elevators, thigh-stands, pony-sits, shoulder sits (shoulder straddle), shoulder stands, cupie, liberty, and scale.

b. “Tumbling” is defined as any gymnastics and/or dance moves with weight-bearing on hands, shoulders, torso or neck, except for those enumerated herein as “qualifying skills.” Prohibited “tumbling” moves include, but are not limited to the following: back extension roll, cartwheel, one handed cartwheel, round off, backbend, handstand to a backbend, backbend kickover, back-walkover, front walkover, back-handspring, front-handspring, front tuck, back tuck, back layout, and pike

Penalty Scoring Time – A penalty of 5 points shall be imposed on a team for failure to stay within 45 – 90 second time frame

- Coaches Box – A penalty of 5 points will be assessed if more than 3 coaches are in the coach’s box or if remaining coaches are on the performance floor or otherwise violate this provision.
- Stunting or Tumbling – A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See category score sheet.
- Appearance Penalty - A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See Rule #7 under General Items

Categories on the score sheet for this division are

Note: Categories taken from MHSAA Junior High Judges Sheets

Jumps

Judging Technique: form, toes pointed, backs straight, arm positions, landing with feet together.

Level of Difficulty:

Level 1 (tuck jumps, spread eagle jump, straight jump)

Level 2 (double hook jump)

Level 3 (toe touch, herkie, hurdler, pike)

Togetherness: Preps are the same, all go up together, land together, style the same (hand, arms, legs, etc.)

Ease: Jump is completed without evidence of difficulty.

Floor Mobility

Defined: Accuracy of formations, spacing, effectiveness, ease of transitions, visual patterns, transition moves, purpose of movement from formation to formation.

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Judging: Note all errors in accuracy of formation. Evaluate the effectiveness of the moves as to whether they flow with the cheer, enhance the cheer, and provide a smooth transition.

Vocals

Defined: Voice inflection, clarity, squad volume, style of speaking, speed and appropriate choice of words.

Judging: Throughout the cheer, evaluate voice inflection, clarity, appropriate choice of words as it relates to sportsmanship, squad volume appropriate for the number of competitors – are words understood through-out cheer. Evaluate throughout the cheer.

Team Coordination

Defined: Precision and timing of all motions (punch, crispness, hit, ripple, peel-offs), execution of moves and effective use of all team members.

Judging: Evaluate precision and synchronization in position of hands/arms/legs/feet/body/head. Keep in mind that the execution is precise for the team's style. Keep track of errors and rate performance based on the number of errors compared to the volume of movements.

Execution / Technique

Defined: Placement and accuracy of all motions (high V's, T's, wrists)

Judging: Evaluate placement/position of arms, hands and wrists when hitting movements.

General Impression

Defined: Creativity, continuity, team confidence, smiles, facials, showmanship, overall impression

Judging: Variety Evaluate routine based on its uniqueness and creativity*. Also judge continuity, overall impression of entire performance, team confidence.

*creativity – a judge's opinion of creativity, evaluated in the General Impression category, may include unusual formations, difficult flairs, transitions and preps. Overall impression allows credit to be given for the team that has given the judge a feeling of excitement, goose bumps or a WOW! impression.

Variety

Defined: Movements, motions, levels, enhancements, arm whips, ripples, etc.

Judging: Assign difficulty and variety points to movements, motions, peel offs, level changes, and ripples, etc.

Judges must keep track of what a team performs. However, the categories are not limited to these elements of difficulty or examples of variety.

Examples of Variety

Additional formation changes
Arm motions while transitioning
Below waist foot/leg work
Blades
Diagonal spins

Examples of Difficulty

Arm whips
Intricate transitions
Difficult oppositions
Dips
Extra jumps

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Diagonal arm motions
Levels
Oppositions
Ripples
Waist level kicks
Spinning

High kicks
Hopping
Knee level movements
Moving backwards
Side stepping formation changes

Pom Routine

Time: This round must be a minimum of 1 and ½ minutes (90 seconds) and a maximum of 3 minutes.

Each team will be required to provide music in a format to be determined by Cheerfest hosts; could be CD, MP3 or a JP file. Music player will be provided. Each team will also need to supply four (4) copies of their squads judging sheet.

Formations/Changes

All squad routines must contain a minimum of 2 formation changes (3 total formations)

JV & Varsity only—The kick-line is considered a formation and must be one straight line. A kick-line shall consist of 32 counts [Four (4) eight-counts]. At least four consecutive full height straight forward kicks, two medium straight forward kicks and two low straight forward kicks must be included somewhere within the 32 counts continuous kick line.

A kick line is OPTIONAL at the Flag & Freshman levels. It will not be judged as part of the overall pom routine for freshman. The kickline will not appear as a scorable field on the Freshman and Flag Scoresheets.

All kick line rules listed DO NOT apply to an optional kick line.

Choreographed entrances and exits are allowed but not judged. The entrance and exit may be a maximum of 48 counts each. [Six (6) eight-counts].

Notes for Pom Routines:

1. Pretzel drops are allowed.
2. No body slams or partner moves in which feet leave the floor.
3. No Stunting or tumbling is allowed
 - a. A “stunt” is defined as a girl’s feet leaving the floor with the assistance by one or more girls. Examples of a “stunt” includes, but is not limited to, the following moves: assisted jumps, partner moves, swing-dance moves, stalls, elevators, thigh-stands, pony-sits, shoulder sits (shoulder straddle), shoulder stands, cupie, liberty, and scale.
 - b. “Tumbling” is defined as any gymnastics and/or dance moves with weight-bearing on hands, shoulders, torso or neck, except for those enumerated herein as “qualifying skills.” Prohibited “tumbling” moves include, but are not limited to the following: back extension roll, cartwheel, one handed cartwheel, round off, backbend, handstand to a backbend, backbend kick over, back-walkover, front walkover, back-handspring, fronthandspring, front tuck, back tuck, back layout, and pike

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4. Poms are required, but can be set down in a synchronized fashion as part of the routine. No other props may be used.
5. Poms can only be on the ground for a maximum of 32 counts (not necessarily consecutive)
6. Timing will begin when the music starts and ends when the music stops.

Penalty Scoring

- Time – A penalty of 5 points shall be imposed on a team for failure to stay within these time frames
- Appearance – A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See category score sheet
- Coaches Box – A penalty of 5 points will be assessed if more than 3 coaches are in the coach's box or if remaining coaches are on the performance floor or otherwise violate this provision.
- Music – A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See category score sheet.
- Stunting or Tumbling – A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See category score sheet
- Use of Poms - A penalty of 3 points for non-compliance. See category score sheet.

Categories on the score sheet for POM event are:

Smiles and Showmanship (10): Smiles and enthusiasm, poise, showmanship, audience interest, eye contact, and projection (Does this team look like they're having fun?) NO singing or counting. Level of professionalism is judged including covering mistakes.

Formation/Transitions (10): Attractive, orderly changes with even spacing, straight lines, unique and organized movements into formations. Formations should be original and evenly spaced. The changes should be smooth, organized, unique, and attractive while centered on the performance floor. When changing formations, team members arrive simultaneously into their formations (i.e. when moving from a column to a horizontal line, the two end people should arrive in their spaces at the same time).

Team Unity, Precision, Rhythm and Timing (10): All members should be executing the movements the same way, at the same moment. The team remains on beat with the music throughout the routine. In addition, ripples and contagions will be scored within this category

Music: Choose original music that has definite beats and a good tempo that accents their routine. Keep in mind that sometimes too many music splices make a routine appear choppy. Squads should avoid music that is too screechy, heavy, fast, slow, or uses poor taste in words. Penalty for music with suggestive or sexual content will be at the discretion of the judges. There is to be no reference in the music to profanity, alcohol, drugs or lyrics that may be found offensive. All music used in competition must be approved by cheer director or cheer coordinator prior to routine creation.

Skill of Kick Line (10): A minimum of 32 continuous counts of connected kick sequence. Kick line must be one straight line. Poms are not required for the kick line. At least four consecutive full height straight forward kicks, two medium straight forward kicks and two low straight forward

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kicks must be included somewhere within the 32 counts. Skill judging will include pointed toes, straight knees, height, arm connection, posture, unity and difficulty.

Use of Poms (10): Poms should be used to visually enhance the choreography and music. At no time can a pom be placed in a participant's mouth. A pom that is accidentally dropped should be picked up as soon as possible during the routine for safety reasons. Poms may be placed on the floor momentarily as part of the choreographed routine. Poms on the ground greater than a 32 count will be penalized 3 points.

Unique/Original Ideas/Choreography (10): Teams should use a variety of movements that are attractive, creative, and original. Include "WOW" moves that accent the music such as moves that are remembered once the routine is finished. The overall adaptation to and creative use of music also falls in this category.

Skill/Level of Ability/Talent (10): Each team will be evaluated upon the level of skill/talent demonstrated in the routine. However, even though a team may do a difficult move, stunt, jump, etc., it must be done well and uniformly by each team member to receive a score in this category. The skill must be appealing to watch as well as choreographed into the routine.

General Form/Execution (10): This includes straight arms, snappy heads, clean and uniform leg and foot positions (for example, all diagonals or points are at the same angle), execution and posture. This also includes uniform positions among team members (are all of the V's and diagonals the same among all team members?) Judges will look for strength behind the movements to score in this category.

Overall Impression (10): Each judge will give each team an overall performance score indicating his or her overall impression of the routine. The quality and choice of the squad's music as well as the starting set point will also be considered in this category. **Appearance (10):** This is based on clean and neat uniforms, socks, shoes and poms, hair back and off of face (the whole team should wear their hair the same). The entire appearance should be neat, uniform and not distracting. For safety and appearance reasons, pins and buttons, jewelry and bobby pins cannot be worn at Cheerfest. No gum, no nail polish, nails must be neat and trimmed, no excessive make-up, no glitter (including hairspray glitter and glitter face makeup). The only exception is glitter bows. Violation of any of the above listed will result in a 3 point penalty.