



2019-20 MHSAA GIRLS COMPETITIVE CHEER GIRLS COMPETITIVE CHEER MANUAL (2018-20)

Updated 12/17/19 – see additional information at end of document.

The 2018-20 Competitive Cheer Manual has been prepared to provide coaches, judges and administrators of Competitive Cheer a comprehensive guide in which to locate general information regarding regular season limitations and procedures of Competitive Cheer. In addition, the rules and format of the MHSAA Competitive Cheer Tournament Series are also described. When necessary, additional 2018-19 Competitive Cheer information will be listed at mhsaa.com on the competitive cheer page under 2018-19 Rules Changes & Interpretations (light blue coaches box). Video resources include the Precision 10 Count from the front and back, both full speed and slow motion.

The high school and junior high school panel score sheets and safety score sheets are included on mhsaa.com as well as the varsity three and five judge scoring and tally sheets and junior high school three judge scoring and tally sheets. Judges will also find the Tournament Availability Form listed on this page.

2019-20 RULE CHANGE

1. For high school participants only, unless allowed under the rules in the below section, a flyer must not be in a static inverted position.

A static inversion, such as a handstand or inversion at shoulder level, may release to a stunt or transition at shoulder level or below. An inverted stunt requires a minimum of four competitors with three people involved in the support of the flyer, one who must be responsible for protection of the head and neck of the flyer. An inversion may not be performed at extension level and the flyer cannot be in a handstand position on the shoulders of the bases with her arms fully extended. The original bases or spotters must maintain constant contact with the flyer and are not part of any other skill, until the flyer is no longer inverted. The contact must be sufficient to stabilize and control the flyer's position. THIS IS AN UNBRACED STUNT ONLY.

A static inversion must:

1. Come to a complete stop before moving to the next transition or stunt.
2. The bases and spotter must remain stationary, unless adjusting position for safety purposes. (It cannot be a moving skill).
3. The inversion must originate below shoulder level which includes any stunt or transition below shoulder level.
4. Twists, turns, flips OR TUMBLING are not allowed into the inversion.
5. One flair is allowed at the point of the static inversion.
6. The inversion must occur at shoulder level or below.

Static inversions may only dismount/transition to the following:

1. Foot/feet to the cheering surface.
2. Non-inverted stunt, cradle or transition at shoulder level or below.
3. There may be a temporary loss of contact with the flyer when transitioned to a double based sponge with both feet of the flyer in the hands of the bases or to a cradle.
4. In any static inversion transition, there must always be at least three original people with one responsible for the protection of the head and neck of the flyer.
5. Twists, turns, flips OR TUMBLING are not allowed from the inversion.

2018-19 RULE CHANGE

1. For junior high/middle school: Allow junior high/middle school athletes to perform a cradle to back walkover inverted exit only.
2. For high school level only: Allow any catch that originates from shoulder level or below and transitions from a vertical body position to a horizontal body position to require three or more catchers. This may transition only to a dismount and not back up to a stunt or load. All other rules regarding a transition from a vertical to a horizontal position must be followed.
3. For the high school level only: Allow a Mt. Climber to an unbraced OLE to receive OLE choreography bonus.
4. For all levels (MS/HS): Award four difficulty points for a ground-up to an elevator.

2017-18 RULE CHANGE

1. Allow forward/backward suspended rolls, in a double-braced pyramid, to be transitioned directly to a stunt.
 - Both hands of the flyer are in continuous hand-to-hand/arm contact which is provided by bases, back-spots or bracer(s).
 - A single-braced suspended forward/backward roll in a pyramid is only allowed to a cradle or sponge and not to the cheering surface or a stunt.
 - A double-braced suspended forward or a double braced backward roll pyramid is allowed to a cradle, sponge or a stunt, and not the cheering surface.

2016-17 RULE CHANGE

1. Beginning this year (2019-20 season), the competitive cheer uniform must be free of any adornments (rhinestones, sequins, studs, etc.) or cutouts within the fabric. Wording/lettering, tackle twill, heat transfers, etc. are permitted. Metallic as part of the braid coated fabric, or tackle twill is permitted. Cutouts as part of the hemline are permitted. FAQs:
 - **Would mesh fabric meet this criteria?**
No. Mesh fabric is not a solid material.
 - **Can a uniform cutout be enclosed by fabric to fulfill the 2019-20 uniform requirement?**
Uniform cutouts within the fabric must have a piece of solid, coordinating colored fabric sewn in to enclose the opening. Once material is affixed to the open area of a cutout within the fabric, the opening is no longer a cutout. View uniform requirements for allowed Tops and Bottoms on pg. 13.
 - **Are sequins acceptable?**
No. Adornments of any kind on the uniform are not allowed.
 - **May sub-varsity teams wear uniforms with cutouts or adornments?**
No. Team uniforms, regardless of level, must meet all requirements listed on pg. 13.
 - **Do sub-varsity team uniforms need to be identical and matching?**
No. Only varsity team uniforms need to be identical and matching, as identified on pg. 13.

RULES MEETINGS REQUIREMENTS

Head coaches are required to attend or take an online rules meeting (during the dates indicated) or that coach shall be prohibited from coaching in the MHSAA Competitive Cheer Tournament and shall not be present at the tournament.

Each head coach of a varsity team in an MHSAA tournament sport hired for the first time as a varsity head coach at any MHSAA member high school (after July 31, 2016) must have completed Level 1 or Level 2 of the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP). If the coach does not complete CAP Level 1 or 2 prior to the established deadline, that coach will be prohibited from coaching in that season's MHSAA tournament for the sport involved.

All assistant and subvarsity coaches must complete an MHSAA rules meeting (online or in person). Schools shall attest that sub-varsity coaches have fulfilled this requirement, or that coach shall be prohibited from coaching in the MHSAA Competitive Cheer Tournament and shall not be present at the tournament.

To officiate in the MHSAA Tournament, judges must attend or take an online rules meeting and submit a schedule to the MHSAA.

ADDITIONS FOR 2019-20:

1. When a student or coach commits an offense worthy of ejection and disqualification against an official following the conclusion of the contest, but before the officials have left the facility and/or grounds, an official may disqualify the student or coach as though it had occurred during the contest. A coach or student who receives a post-contest disqualification shall be withheld from competition according to the policies of Section 3(D) 1-2. This does not apply to a situation when an official from an earlier contest remains at the facility as a spectator and encounters an offense by a student or coach at that later date.
2. The use of videotape or equipment by game officials for the purpose of making calls or rendering decisions is prohibited. The use of replay or television monitoring equipment by officials in making any decision relating to the game is prohibited.

2019-20 DATES TO REMEMBER

Opt-Out Due Date – February 7, 2020

Districts – February 21 – 22, 2020

Regionals – February 29, 2020

Finals – March 6 – 7, 2020

2018-20 MANUAL CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS:

p. 11: Frequently Asked Questions: 2A: **with the** (should be separated), **is provided** (should be separated)

p. 13: Starting in the 2019-20 season uniform, the adornments NOT ALLOWED on the top or bottom for the uniform refer to rhinestones, sequins, glitter or studs.

Wording/lettering, tackle twill, heat transfer, logos/symbols and metallic as part of the braid, coated fabric or tackle twill are all ALLOWED.

- p. 16: Procedure to Restart a Routine: Information should include: If option 3 or 4 are chosen, the scoring will restart at the stoppage point. In any case, once the routine is performed the second time, the coach cannot elect Option 1.
- p. 21: In position 9 in the Precision drill: As indicated on the video, the right heel to left heel information provided in parenthesis indicates position – not direct contact.
- p. 34: Remove the word “Bonus” from the choreography category.
- p. 64: Should include the following language:
A single braced suspended for forward/backward roll in a pyramid is only allowed to a cradle or sponge and not to the cheering surface or a stunt.
A double-braced suspended forward or a double braced backward roll pyramid is allowed to a cradle, sponge or a stunt, and not the cheering surface.
- p. 67: #6 should read: When a flyer is in a . . .
- p. 71 In the paragraph which begins “in order to maintain the unison requirement” . . . , after “body position” (*torso direction, arm position, shoulder direction*) must be added.
- p. 77: A double-braced hitch is worth 18 points (not 14).

2018-19 INTERPRETATIONS/CASE PLAYS:

- 1. A double braced flyer performs a double braced forward suspended roll holding on to the hands of the bracers. In addition to the hand to hand contact, the flyer places her foot on to the bracer(s) arms/hands/legs and steps up while she is flipping.**
Illegal: All stunts and/or pyramids are limited to two persons high, meaning the flyer receives primary support from a base(s) who is in direct, weight bearing contact with the cheering surface (p. 41, Stunt Limitations, 2018-20 Competitive Cheer Manual).
- 2. Flyer #1 hitches on to flyer #2 while both are in an elevator position. Flyer #1 performs a weight-bearing step-up on Flyer #2 and then cradles to the original bases.**
Illegal: All stunts are limited to two persons high, meaning the flyer receives primary support from a base(s) who is in direct, weight bearing contact with the cheering surface. (p. 41, Stunt Limitations, 2018-20 Competitive Cheer Manual).
- 3. In High School Round 1, an athlete is in a plank or push-up position.**
Legal: In Round 1, it is legal to be in a plank or push-up position. However, it is not legal to perform stunts, tumbling, heel stretches, splits and an actual push-up in Round 1.
- 4. A middle school/junior high team performs vocals and arm motions prior to performing their first jump.**
Legal. The required jump must be the first skill performed.
- 5. A middle school/junior high team performs a kick then the required jump in unison.**
Illegal. The required jump must be the first skill performed.
- 6. A middle school/junior high team performs a double-braced hitch.**
Legal. Middle school/junior high teams can perform extended double braced stunts as long as all bracers have their own spotter.
- 7. A stunt which begins in a 2-footed elevator and is transitioned to a one-leg extension with a flair receives choreography bonus.**
Legal: Choreography bonus credit will be given when the skill originates from the elevator level or below and is unbraced. The OLE must originate and fully extend unbraced (p. 36).
- 8. A flyer starts from the floor or an elevator and completes a flatback by being caught between two bases and at least one head and shoulders catcher.**
Legal. The only time that a flatback is allowed to have three catchers is when it originates from the floor, an elevator or below shoulder level stunt.

9. **A flyer is transitioned from an extension to a flatback between three catchers.**
Illegal. When a flyer is in a vertical position from an extended level, at least two bases and at least two catchers to protect the head and shoulders area of the flyer are required.
10. **A team of 12 begins a routine and completes all requirements of the round. Once the requirements are completed, team members exit the mat in choreographed small groups.**
Illegal. Once the routine is completed, additional choreographed exits are not permitted. A two point mat violation per competitors will be assessed.
11. **A flyer is in an elevator and transitions into a split with four bases who support the thighs and lower legs of the flyer as she is being lowered.**
Legal. As noted on p. 54 of the MHSAA Girls Competitive Cheer Manual, four bases must support the thighs and lower legs of the flyer as she is being lowered or, three bases must support the thighs and calves of the flyer's legs and another base hold the hands of the flyer while she is being lowered.
12. **A team performs an OLE with liberty, lowers to an elevator, to a front walkover inverted exit.**
Illegal. On p. 58 of the MHSAA Girls Competitive Cheer Manual, a flyer is allowed to pass through an inverted position for exit when all of the following conditions are met: Begins from double bases only and the flyer begins in either a cradle position or a below shoulder level horizontal position (parallel to the cheering surface only).
13. **A stunt begins with a mountain climber and "climbs" bases with hand-to-foot contact switching weight from base to base and ends in an unbraced OLE. The team receives choreography bonus.**
Correct. Choreography bonus credit will be given when the skill originates from the elevator level or below and fully extends unbraced.
14. **A Middle School team performs a shoulder level or below flatback with dismount to three catchers.**
Illegal. At the middle school level, a vertical to horizontal transition from the elevator level must be double braced and must have at least five catchers (additional spotter).
15. During a team's performance, the fire alarm goes off. **Can they repeat the performance?**
If the judges stop competition due to the disruption, the same procedure that is used on page 15 (Competitor injury during a routine) should be followed.
16. A varsity team's competitor does a fully twisting layout in a tumbling sequence. **What does it count for in choreography bonus?**
This counts as the tuck bonus. The layout receives the tuck bonus points. (The twist bonus is for stunting).
17. A coach approaches the safety judges and indicates that they have an athlete with a Daith ear piercing. **Should they be able to participate?**
If the student has a signed physician's allowance (and a letter from the MHSAA), the piercing is in the inside of the ear and flat, and fully covered with tape/padding, the allowance would be made for the current year only.
18. **PRECISION DRILL:**
In position 7: As indicated on the video, Hands on hips with hands in fists. Step out (back) to lunge position with right foot, (position of foot is forward) facing forward and left foot perpendicular.
The step out (back) is with the right foot. The left foot simply turns from forward to perpendicular.
In position 8: As indicated in the photo and video, entire body facing left includes the head facing left.
In position 9: As indicated on the video, the right heel to left heel information provided in parenthesis indicates position – not direct contact.
- Go to the MHSAA Girls Competitive Cheer page, video resources for the Precision 10 Count Video (front - full and slow speed and back - full and slow speed.)**
<https://www.mhsaa.com/Sports/Girls-Competitive-Cheer>
19. See also updated information from 12/17/18.
A team is wearing a manufacturer's logo/trademark on their shell and on their shorts. Is this permitted? Yes. A single manufacturer's logo/trademark (no more than 2 ½ square inches with no dimension exceeding 2 ½ inches) is permitted on each piece of the uniform. (All MHSAA and NFHS rules books have similar language – although for NFHS specific rules books, the size is 2 ¼ square inches with no dimension exceeding 2 ¼ inches).

20. **What is the uniform for officials of Girls Competitive Cheer?**

Judges of Girls Competitive Cheer are required to wear a solid white blouse/shirt or top and **solid black** skirt or dress slacks. Any additional garments such as a blazer (or sweater) shall be black. Judges must wear their MHSAA Officials Emblem on the left chest pocket area of the blouse or jacket/blazer or suspended by a black lanyard around the neck.

21. All flairs at the extension level in middle school girls competitive cheer are illegal, except for the mountain climber entrance, cupie and double braced OLE, double braced OLE with liberty, double braced OLE hitch, and Tic-Toc. (See p. 76 – illegal stunts).

22. As also indicated in this original document and on p. 69 – Section P #1 – Choreography: **A stunt group performs a liberty show-n-go and receives 11 difficulty points but no choreography points for an OLE.**
Correct. A one-legged extension (OLE) needs to be held in a stationary position to receive OLE choreography bonus points.

23. Four (4) points should be awarded for skills performed at waist level (except hop and go).

2019-20 INTERPRETATIONS/CASE PLAYS (updated 11/10/19)

1. **In a static inversion position, do the base's hands have to make contact with the head or neck of the flyer?**
Support from base(s) on shoulders protecting the head and neck of the flyer, qualifies as protection of head or neck of flyer. This person is responsible for protection of the head/neck of the flyer.
2. **In a static inversion, the flyer is in a handstand position with arms fully extended below shoulder level.** LEGAL. A flyer's arms can be fully extended below shoulder level as long as there is support from the bases on the shoulders to protect the head and neck of the flyer.
3. **In Round 3, a team of 12 begins their team tumble with 10 back walkovers and 2 running round-off back handsprings. The run and the back walkovers begin on the same count. The team is not awarded team tumble choreography points.** CORRECT. To be awarded choreography points for team tumble, the run prior to the round off is not considered the start of the tumbling skill.
4. **In Round 3, in a face down flat back stunt, the bases assist the flyer with hand(s) on the upper front torso, to the cheering surface, where the flyer performs a forward roll dismount.** LEGAL. The base(s) guiding the flyer with hands(s) on the upper front torso to the cheering surface constitutes a legal head /neck and shoulder spot.
5. **A middle school/junior high team performs a triple base straddle sit at shoulder level (bases arms are not extended) without a spotter.** LEGAL. A spotter must be used when performing stunts in an extended triple base straddle sit.
6. **A middle school/junior high team performs a double based OLE Hitch with a shoulder sit as the bracer. The shoulder sit bracer is without a spotter.** ILLEGAL. At the middle school/junior high level, a spotter is required on the bracers.

2019-20 INTERPRETATIONS/CASE PLAYS (updated 12/17/19)

1. **A team elects to start their Round 1 with claps and motions, prior to the first word of the routine by a team member.** ILLEGAL. Once set in formation, timing begins with the first word of a team member and all choreographed motions, claps, stomps, etc. should be after the first word.
2. **In an inverted stunt, a team changes leg position several times while in the inversion.** ILLEGAL. Leg position can change one time while in the inversion.
3. **A flyer performs a 360 rotation (AKA "Ruby Slipper") and receives variety and choreography points in Round 3.** LEGAL. If done properly, this 360 rotation should receive variety and choreography points. Additionally, it should be written as a "360 entrance to a stunt elevator level or higher" – dependent on how it is performed. (p. 35)