

# **DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO CHEER SQUAD RULES**

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Cheer Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained within. CYO game rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may authorize changes.

## **SECTION 1 - OFFICIAL SQUAD**

- A. Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more Members listed on the team roster that meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Pastoral Designee, Member Administrator and CYO Office.
- B. A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled game for any reason without the consent of the game official or CYO representative may be subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.
- C. There is not a minimum number of cheerleaders on a squad.
- D. A partial roster or combined roster cannot be entered into any sanctioned event.

## **SECTION 2 - SQUAD FORMATION AND REGISTRATION**

- A. Cheer will be offered in the three divisions:
  - 1. Intermediate - 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - 2. Cadet - 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - 3. Elemental - 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- B. As outlined in Bylaw 4-5-1, an athlete must meet the grade and age requirements on August 1 before the school year starts to compete in the above divisions.
- C. Squads may consist of boys and girls.
- D. Cheer is sponsored during the fall and winter seasons.
- E. All squads must register with the CYO Office by the team entry deadline. Squads must register/re-register for each season of competition.
- F. In keeping with the CYO Philosophy standards have been set for the formation of squads and development of athletes.
  - 1. CYO prohibits "cutting" players from a squad. Tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.
  - 2. In the Cadet and Elemental Divisions, if members sponsor more than one squad per division these squads must be split evenly.  
A & B (stronger/weaker, stacked/weaker teams) are not permitted. Violations are subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

### **SECTION 3 - UNIFORMS**

- A. All athletes are required to wear member issued uniforms.
- B. All players must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.
- C. Chains, earrings, other jewelry, glitter, face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.
- D. An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO Administration may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag nor patch interferes with the visibility of the squad's name.

### **SECTION 4 - PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Coaches must be CYO certified.
- B. CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times with the seasonal sticker.
  - 1. Credentials cannot be given to another coach at any time.
  - 2. Coaches who are reported of giving their credentials to another coach, even for one game, will have their coaching privileges revoked for one year.
- C. Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before and after the game.
- D. At each game and practice, coaches are to have in their possession: an official team roster, a copy of each athlete's Pre-participation Form, Emergency Medical Authorization Form and a first aid kit.

### **SECTION 5 - PARTICIPATION**

- A. Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of his or her ability.
- B. A player on a CYO squad may not participate on any other cheer squad during the CYO season. For purposes of defining eligibility, a player may not be on another squad from the published CYO roster due date to the published end of the season date for the sport.
- C. Mandatory participation applies to all games/competitions.
- D. Violation of these rules will result in a warning or disciplinary action toward the coach.

### **SECTION 6 - GAME & TIME LIMITATION**

- A. Events on Sunday cannot begin until 1:00 PM.
- B. No event can start after 8:00 PM.
- C. Practice sessions must be completed by 9:00 PM.

## **SECTION 7 - LIGHTNING & INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- A. When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen at a practice or competition, the squads must suspend cheering and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, a period of at least 30 minutes after the last thunder heard or lightning flash is witnessed must be honored prior to resuming play/practice.
- B. Contest or CYO officials assume authority for competitions when they arrive on the field. When the officials recognize inclement weather they are duty bound to suspend the game. Coaches and Pastoral Designees are responsible for application of this policy at practice.
- C. Announcements related to the status of competitions will be posted on the main page of the schedule website or telephone announcement lines and media as needed.

## **SECTION 8 - GENERAL RULES**

- A. All cheers must be reviewed by the coach for good taste and propriety. The Coach must review each cheer. If there is any doubt of the appropriateness of the cheer the Pastoral Designee or Member Administrator should review the cheer.
- B. All cheers are to be original & developed by the squad & coaches. Cheers or routines are not to be derived from other schools or squads. If cheers or routines performed in competition are proven to be derived from other squads/schools, the squad and coach shall be subject to penalties.
- C. A spotter should be used in practice and performance until a tumbling stunt or jump is perfected and approved by the coach.
- D. With parental approval, a participant may use a minimum amount of makeup.
- E. Chewing gum is prohibited.
- F. Cheerleaders should be cheerful, friendly, provide team spirit, and shall not belittle an opponent or another squad.

## **SECTION 9 - PROHIBITED ELEMENTS**

- A. Pyramids – defined as two people supporting one person or three people supporting two people, or any other position when one person has both feet off the floor and is in contact with another person who is in a supporting position.
- B. Mounts – defined as a duo-mount, shoulder sit, thigh stand or sitting on the shoulders of another person.
- C. Use of mini-trampolines.
- D. Knee-drops, slams or fireman catches.

- E. Aerial tricks in tumbling routines – aerial tricks are defined as any tumbling stunt that requires an individual to have both feet and/or hands off the floor.

## **SECTION 10 - GAME PERFORMANCES**

- A. Cheerleaders may not, at any time, obstruct the view of spectators or interfere with the athletic competition in process.
- B. During games, squads are permitted to perform from the sidelines within reasonable distance of the out-of-bounds line.
- C. Specific Guidelines when cheering at football or soccer games.
  - 1. The performance location shall be behind the bench area of their team.
  - 2. If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the field.
  - 3. At half time each, each squad may perform two (2) cheers or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.
  - 4. On-field cheers are not allowed during timeouts.
- D. Specific Guidelines when cheering at basketball games.
  - 1. The performance location shall be located at the end of the basketball court of their team's bench. A cheer squad is not to be positioned under the basket or by the bench of the opposing team.
  - 2. If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the floor.
  - 3. At half time each squad may perform two (2) cheers or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.
  - 4. Short cheers may be allowed on the floor during timeouts. Squads should alternate time-out performances.
  - 5. Squads must leave the floor at the referee's whistle and are not to be with-in the court boundaries while the game is in play.
  - 6. Sites may limit/restrict performances/size due to space and safety concerns.

## **SECTION 11 – CAUTION AND DISQUALIFICATION**

Squads are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that the game officials and CYO administration feel shows respect and dignity towards its opponent.

(Revised June 1, 2014)