



INTERNATIONAL CHEER UNION

International Governing Body for World Cheerleading



2008-2009 ICU Cheer Rules

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GENERAL SAFETY RULES AND ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. All athletes must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/coach.
2. Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.
3. All teams, gyms, coaches and directors must have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.
4. **Athletes and coaches may not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances, or over-the-counter medications while participating in a practice or performance that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely.**
5. Athletes **must** always practice and perform on an appropriate surface.
6. Soft-soled shoes must be worn while competing. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole.
7. Jewelry of any kind including but not limited to ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces and pins on uniforms are not allowed. Jewelry must be removed and may not be taped over. (Exception: medical ID tags/bracelets, and uniform rhinestones. Rhinestones are not allowed when adhered to the skin as opposed to a uniform. Temporary tattoos are also allowed.)
8. Any height increasing apparatus used to propel an athlete is not allowed. (Exception: spring floor)
9. Flags, banners, signs, pom poms, megaphones, and pieces of cloth are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus may not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling. All props must be safely discarded out of harms way (e.g. throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt would be illegal). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop.
10. Casts that are hard and unyielding or have rough edges must be appropriately covered with a padded material. *Clarification: The appropriately padded material must be such that it protects both the athlete and fellow athletes from injury.*
11. On the level grid, all skills allowed for a particular level encompass all skills allowed in the preceding level.
12. Required spotters for all skills must be your own team's members.
13. Drops including but not limited to knee, seat, thigh, front, back, and split drops from a jump, stunt, or inverted position are not allowed unless the majority of the weight is first borne on the hands or feet, which breaks the impact of the drop. Shushinovas are allowed.
14. Competition routines shall not exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds.
15. Athletes must have at least one foot, **hand or body part (other than hair)** on the performing surface when the routine begins. **Exception: Athletes may have their feet in the hands of base(s) if the base(s) hands are resting on the performing surface.**





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ICU ELITE DIVISION RULES

Elite Division GENERAL TUMBLING

- A. All tumbling must originate from and land on the performing surface. (Exception: Tumbler may [without hip-over-head rotation] rebound from his/her feet into a stunt transition. Rebounding to a prone position in a stunt is allowed.)
- B. Tumbling over, under, or through a stunt, individual, or prop, is not allowed.
- C. Tumbling while holding or in contact with any prop is not allowed.
- D. Assisted or connected tumbling is not allowed.

Clarification: double cartwheels and double forward rolls are allowed because they will be interpreted as stunts, not assisted tumbling.

E. Dive rolls:

1. Dive rolls performed in a swan/arched position are not allowed.
2. Dive rolls that involve twisting are not allowed.

Elite Division STANDING/RUNNING TUMBLING

- A. Skills are allowed up to 1 flipping and 2 twisting rotations.

Elite Division STUNTS

- A. A spotter is required for all extended stunts.
- B. Single leg extended stunts are allowed.
- C. Twisting mounts and twisting transitions are allowed up to 2 twisting rotations by the top person.
- D. Free flipping stunts or transitional are not allowed.
- E. **RULE ADJUSTMENT: No stunt or pyramid may move over or under another stunt or pyramid. (ex: shoulder sits walking under prep). This rule no longer exists.**
- F. **Prep level or above pendulum and pendulum style transitional stunts where the top person falls away from the bases requires three stationary catchers, at least two of which are not original bases. Physical contact must be maintained with all of the original base(s).**
- G. Single based split catches are not allowed.
- H. Single based double awesomes/cupies require a separate spotter for each top person.

I. Elite Division Stunts - Release Moves

1. Release moves are allowed but must not exceed more than eighteen inches above extended arm level. (Example: Tic-tocks are allowed.)
2. Release moves may not land in a prone position.
3. Release moves must return to original bases.
4. Helicopters are allowed up to a 180 degree rotation with a ½ twist and must be caught by at least 3 catchers, one of which is positioned at head and shoulder area of the top person.
5. **Release moves may not intentionally travel.**

J. Elite Division Stunts - Inversions

1. Extended inverted stunts allowed. Also, see "Stunts" and "Pyramids."
2. Downward inversions are allowed from prep level and above and must be assisted by at least three bases, at least two of which are positioned to protect the head and shoulder area. Contact must be initiated at the shoulder level (or above) of the bases. (Exception: A controlled power pressing of an extended inverted stunt (i.e. needle) to shoulder level is allowed).
3. Downward inversions must maintain contact with an original base.
4. **RULE ADJUSTMENT: Downward inversions from above prep level may not be caught and/or land in an inverted position.**

Clarification: Top person may not be caught or land with their shoulders below their hips.

Elite Division PYRAMIDS

- A. Pyramids must follow Elite Division "Stunts" and "Dismounts" rules and are allowed up to 2 high.
- B. Top persons must receive primary support from a base.
- C. **Elite Division Pyramids - Release Moves**
 1. During a pyramid transition, a top person may pass above 2 persons high while in direct physical contact with at least one person at prep level or below.
 2. Primary weight may not be borne at second level. *Clarification: The transition must be continuous.*



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3. **Non-inverted pyramid release moves must be caught by at least 2 catchers.**

a. RULE ADJUSTMENT: In pyramids where the top person travels over their bracer (i.e. leap frogs or wolf wall transitions), both catchers must be stationary.

b. Both catchers must maintain visual contact with the top person throughout the entire transition.

4. **Non inverted transitional pyramids may involve changing bases. When changing bases:**

a. The top person must maintain physical contact with a person at prep level or below.

b. The top person must be caught by at least 2 catchers. Both catchers must be stationary and may not be involved with any other skill or choreography when the transition is initiated.

D. Elite Division Pyramids - Inversions

1. Must follow Elite Division Stunt Inversions rules.

E. Elite Division Pyramids - Release Moves w/ Braced Inversions

1. Pyramid transitions may involve braced inversions (including braced flips) while released from the bases if contact is maintained with at least 1 person at prep level or below.

Contact must be maintained throughout entire transition with either the top person(s) or the base(s).

2. Braced inversions (including braced flips) are allowed up to 1-¼ flipping rotations.

3. Braced inversions (including braced flips) are allowed up to 1 twist if contact is maintained with 2 top persons at prep level or below.

4. Inverted transitional pyramids may involve changing bases.

5. Braced inversions (including braced flips) must be in continuous movement.

6. **All braced inversions (including braced flips) must be caught by at least 3 catchers.**

a. All catchers must be stationary.

b. All catchers must maintain visual contact with the top person throughout the entire transition.

c. The 3 catchers may not be involved with any other skill or choreography when the transition is initiated.

7. Braced inversions (including braced flips) may not travel downward while inverted.

Elite Division DISMOUNTS

A. Cradles from single based stunts at prep level **and above** must have a **separate** spotter with at least one hand/arm supporting the head and shoulder area through the cradle.

B. Cradles from multi-based stunts at prep level **and above** must have two catchers and a separate spotter **with at least one hand/arm supporting** the head and shoulder area through the cradle.

C. Dismounts to the performing surface must be assisted by an original base.

D. Up to a 2-1/4 twisting rotations allowed from all stunts.

E. No free flipping dismounts allowed.

F. Tension drops/rolls of any kind are not allowed.

G. When cradling single based double awesomes/cupies 2 catchers must catch each top person.

Elite Division TOSSES

A. Tosses are allowed up to a total of 4 tossing bases. One base must be behind the top person during the toss and may assist the top person into the toss.

B. Tosses must be performed from ground level and must land in a cradle position. Top person must be caught in a cradle position by at least 3 original bases one of which is positioned at the head and shoulder area of the top person. Bases must remain stationary during the toss (i.e. No intentional traveling tosses). (Exception: A 1/2 turn is allowed by bases as in a kick full basket.)

C. Flipping, inverted or traveling tosses are not allowed.

D. No stunt, pyramid, individual, or prop may move over or under a toss, and a toss may not be thrown over, under, or through stunts, pyramids, individuals, or props.

E. Up to 2-1/2 twisting rotations allowed.



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ICU PREMIER DIVISION RULES

Premier Division GENERAL TUMBLING

- A. All tumbling must originate from and land on the performing surface. (Exception: Tumbler may [without hip-over-head rotation] rebound from his/her feet into a stunt transition. Rebounding to a prone position in a stunt is allowed.)
- B. Tumbling over, under, or through a stunt, individual, or prop, is not allowed.
- C. Tumbling while holding or in contact with any prop is not allowed.
- D. Assisted or connected tumbling is not allowed.
- E. **Dive rolls:**

- 1. Dive rolls performed in a swan/arched position are not allowed.
- 2. Dive rolls that involve twisting are not allowed.

Premier Division STANDING/RUNNING TUMBLING

- A. Skills are allowed up to 1 flipping and 1 twisting rotation.

Premier Division STUNTS

A. A spotter is required:

- 1. **During extended one-arm stunts other than an awesomes/cupies or liberties**
- 2. **When the load/transition involves a twist or flip**

- B. Twisting stunts and transitions are allowed up to 2 twisting rotations by the top person.
- C. Free flipping or assisted flipping stunts and transitions are allowed. Rewinds must originate from ground level only and are allowed up to 1 flipping and 2 twisting rotations. Exception: Rewinds to a cradle position are allowed. **RULE ADJUSTMENT: All free flipping transitions caught at shoulder level or below must use an additional catcher who protects the head and neck. (example: a flip that lands in a straddle position requires a hands-on spotter)**

D. Transitional stunts may involve changing bases.

E. Single based split catches are not allowed.

F. Single based double awesomes/cupies require a separate spotter for each top person

G. **RULE ADJUSTMENT: No stunt or pyramid may move over or under another stunt or pyramid. (ex: shoulder sits walking under prep). This rule no longer exists.**

H. Premier Division Stunts - Release Moves

- 1. Release moves are allowed.
- 2. Release moves may not land in a prone position.
- 3. Release moves must return to original bases.
- 4. Helicopters are allowed up to a 180 degree rotation with a ½ twist and must be caught by at least 3 catchers, one of which is positioned at head and shoulder area of the top person.
- 5. **Release moves may not intentionally travel.**

I. Premier Division Stunts - Inversions

- 1. Downward inversions from above prep level must be assisted by at least 2 bases. Top person must maintain contact with a base.

Premier Division PYRAMIDS

A. Pyramids are allowed up to 2-1/2 high.

B. For 2-½ high pyramids, there must be a spotter in front and back for each person on the top level, and the spotter(s) must be in position the entire time the top person(s) is at the 2-½ high level(s). Spotters may stand slightly to the side but must remain in a position to adequately spot the top person. Spotters must maintain visual contact with the top pers on the entire time the top person is at the 2-½ high level. Spotters may not be a primary support of the pyramid.

C. **RULE ADJUSTMENT: Free-flyings mounts must originate from ground level only and are allowed up to 1 flipping and 1 twisting rotation, or 0 flipping and 2 twisting rotations.**

D. Premier Division Pyramids – Release Moves

- 1. During a pyramid transition, a top person may pass above 2-1/2 high while in direct physical contact with at least one person at prep level or below.

E. Premier Division Pyramids - Inversions

- 1. Inverted stunts are allowed up to 2-1/2 persons high and must be braced by at least 1 person at prep level or below.



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2. Downward inversions from above prep level must be assisted by at least 2 bases. Top person must maintain contact with a base or another top person.

F. Premier Division Pyramids – Release Moves w/ Braced Inversions

1. Braced flips are allowed up to up to 1-1/4 flipping and 1 twisting rotation.

2. Braced flips are allowed if direct physical contact is maintained with at least 1 top person at prep level or below and must be caught by at least 2 catchers.

Premier Division DISMOUNTS

A. Single based cradles that exceed 1-1/4 twisting rotations must have a spotter assisting the cradle with at least one hand/arm supporting the head and shoulder of the top person.

B. Dismounts to the performing surface from stunts and pyramids must be assisted.

C. **RULE ADJUSTMENT:** Up to a 2-1/4 twist cradle is allowed from all stunts and pyramids up to 2 persons high **and requires at least 2 catchers**. Cradles from 2-1/2 high pyramids are allowed up to 1-1/4 twist and require 3 catchers. (Exception: 2-1-1 thigh stands may perform 2 twists from a forward facing stunt only. E.g. extension, liberty, heel stretch).

D. Free flipping **skills dismounts** are allowed up to 1 flipping and 0 twisting rotations.

E. Free flipping dismounts to the performance surface are not allowed.

F. Flips into cradles from prep level **or below stunts** require at least 2 catchers, one of which is an original base.

G. Flips that originate above prep level are not allowed. (Exception: 3/4 front flip may occur from a 2-1/2 high pyramid but requires 2 catchers and an additional spotter positioned at the head and shoulder area of the top person. Spotter may stand slightly to the side but must use at least one hand/arm to catch under the top person's head and shoulders.)

H. Tension drops/rolls of any kind are not allowed.

I. When cradling single based double awesomes/cupies 2 catchers must catch each top person.

Catchers and bases must be stationary prior to the initiation of the dismount.

Premier Division TOSSES

A. Tosses are allowed up to a total of 4 tossing bases. One base must be behind the top person during the toss and may assist the top person into the toss.

B. Basket tosses or similar tosses may only be performed from ground level, can use no more than four bases, and must be cradled by three of the original bases, one of which must catch in a scoop under the head and shoulders.

C. Flipping tosses are allowed up to 1 flipping rotation and 2 twists.

D. In flipping tosses (tuck, layout or pike position) only two additional skills are allowed. One twisting rotation is considered to be one skill.

Legal (two skills)

Tuck flip, X-out, Full Twist

Double Full-twisting Layout

Kick, Full-Twisting Layout

Pike, Open, Double Full Twist

Arabian Front, Full Twist

Illegal (Three skills)

Tuck flip, X-out, Double Full Twist

Kick, Double Full-twisting Layout

Kick, Full-Twisting Layout, Kick

Pike, Split, Double Full Twist

Full-twisting Layout, Split, Full Twist

Note: An Arabian Front followed by a 1 1/2 twist is considered to be a legal skill.

E. No stunt, pyramid, individual, or, prop may move over or under a toss, and a toss may not be thrown over, under, or through stunts, pyramids, individuals, or props.

F. Non-flipping tosses may not exceed 3-1/2 twists.