

We Are
CAROLINA

Carolina
Gymnastics Center

Competitive Team
Information

Welcome to the Team!

Carolina Gymnastics Center would like to welcome your family to our club. If you are reading this team manual then your son/daughter has already impressed us with his/her gymnastics talent and potential. Through this team manual we hope to give you more insight into how our program operates and answer many of your questions.

First, and most important, providing a fantastic gymnastics experience is what this club is all about. **We are here for the children**, many who have hopes and dreams of being the best they can be in life and in this sport. We are here to support them in that dream.

To make that dream come alive, the gymnast, parents, and coaches must function as a TEAM. Team for our purpose means:

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

You might have noticed there is no “I” in Team. That does not mean that your son/daughter as an individual, or you as a parent, is not important. Not at all! It simply means that the whole is stronger than the sum of its parts. If we all work together toward common goals, we have a much greater chance of achieving something really significant with our program.

The purpose of this team manual is to give you a better idea of what our goals are and how we operate as a TEAM called *Carolina Gymnastics Center*.

After reading this manual, if you have any questions about any aspect of the program, please ASK! The coaching staff will be happy to answer any questions or provide you with options to help you solve your problems.

Once again, welcome to *Carolina Gymnastics Center*. We are glad to have you as part of our TEAM.

Carolina Gymnastics Center

MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal at *Carolina Gymnastics Center* is to develop each individual's gymnastic potential in a safe, yet enjoyable, atmosphere.

Using specific gymnastics progressions and highly trained gymnastics staff, each gymnast will learn the correct fundamentals and basic skills which will equip him/her with the knowledge and ability to progress to whatever level he/she desires.

As coaches, we will use the sport of gymnastics to help each child gain greater self-confidence and a more positive self-image. Nothing is more important than your child's self-esteem.

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

At *Carolina Gymnastics Center*, we are committed to the development of young people through the sport of gymnastics. The young athlete's intrinsic value as a person is more important than any performance. Their well-being physically, emotionally, or psychologically will never be sacrificed for performance.

Our goal is to provide a mental and physical discipline needed for competition within a framework of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Learning to be comfortable in a competitive situation is a positive experience and adds to a child's development.

Introduction

The decision to enter competitive gymnastics is an important and exciting step in the life of your child!

This team manual is designed to answer questions and explain rules and policies for the competitive gymnastics program at *Carolina Gymnastics Center*.

Competitive gymnastics is a unique sport requiring the backing and support of the family for any gymnast to be successful. Therefore, when making the selection for team gymnasts we also look closely at the team parents. Can they also make a commitment to the program? This need not be a difficult or demanding task, only one that shows each family is interested in and committed to providing their child with a positive learning experience through the competitive aspect of men's and women's gymnastics.?

You are to be congratulated because you are taking time to think through the consequences of team membership. Many parents are so thrilled when their child is asked to be on the team they do not take the time to assess what the impact this commitment will have on their entire lives.

Gymnastics Goals

Does your son or daughter plan to make it to the Olympics, get a scholarship to college, or does he or she just enjoy the achievement of new skills and the companionship of other team members? Any of these may be valid reasons for joining the team, but it may be important to assess his/her goals in a shorter time frame, such as within the next six months to a year.

Talking to parents reveals that in many instances there is no agreement as to what the actual goal is regarding the child's gymnastics experience. The father might say, "I want him/her to be the best, win state championships!" while the mother says, "I just want him/her to enjoy himself/herself" and the gymnast says, "I like to go to gym because my friends are there and we have a lot of fun working out." Which goal is the coach supposed to follow? And what about the goals the coach has for the team?

Gymnastics is a specialized sport that demands many hours of hard work and dedication. In this day and age teaching children to delay gratification for the attainment of a worthy ideal is all but impossible. Everything they see and hear on television they absorb and internalize as the way the world is supposed to be.

If a 30-second commercial can get us to buy a product, a 30-minute sitcom or drama will surely sell us a lifestyle. The problem with television is that it condenses what in the real world takes years of hard work and dedication to achieve. Please understand if your son/daughter says she wants to be on a gymnastics team or go for the gold at the Olympics, that's great, but it will take lots of hard work and dedication to make it there. It certainly will not happen overnight.

If you are joining the team at one of the entry levels, familiarizing yourself with this information will prepare you for the future as your child develops his/her gymnastics proficiency and competitive success.

Life Changes to Keep in Mind

At the lower team levels the number of hours of practice per week is relatively few. As your son/daughter progresses up the competitive ladder, the hours and days of workout will continue to build.

Will you have to change your schedule to the extent that you are available to drive your gymnast to practice and pick him/her up? Is there anyone close to you with whom you could carpool?

There will be gym meets that take up a number of weekends during the competitive season.

Homework will have to be done much more efficiently and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available. It has been the experience of most coaches that students who are involved in a team program such as gymnastics tend to have good grades and are better at studying because they have learned to budget their time more effectively than their peers.

Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life (and yours). Your son/daughter will have less time at home and less time to spend with friends outside the sphere of gymnastics influence.

The rest of this team manual will go over the various aspects of team participation. Please take the time to read this material and then set a time to discuss with the team coaches the goals and objectives of the team program and how they fit with your child's gymnastics goals. Then, discuss in a family meeting exactly what your child's goals are and if they can be achieved in this setting.

COMPETITIVE PROGRAM POLICIES

Team Guidelines

1. Each gymnast is required to attend all regularly scheduled workouts. Be on time to all workouts. That means on the floor ready to workout when your workout begins, not talking in the locker room or hanging around out front. If for some reason you will be late or absent you are required to call the office and notify the coaches so that they may adjust the workout accordingly.
2. **PLEASE do not allow a sick gymnast to attend practice.** Gymnasts must be fever-free for at least 24 hours (without medication) before returning. Allowing a sick gymnast to practice not only is dangerous for the gymnast but can cause his or her teammates and/or coaches to also become sick and miss practice and/or an important meet.
3. Proper workout attire is a must. A properly fitting leotard (shirt/shorts for boys) is the only acceptable workout attire. The gym or Booster Club does will not supply your child with workout attire should your child not come prepared. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during the workout. No jewelry of any kind may be worn during the workout.
4. For each workout, all gymnasts are required to bring a gym bag with the appropriate equipment as listed by the coaching staff.
5. Absolutely no food, drink, or candy is permitted on the workout floor. All snacks or meals must remain in designated areas. Personal drinks of juice or other sports beverages are allowed. Soda should not be consumed during practice.
6. Gymnasts may not leave the workout or competition floor without the express permission of the coaching staff.
7. **Interaction between gymnast and parent (visually or verbally) during workouts or at gymnastics competitions is not appropriate.** A distracted gymnast is a prime candidate for injury. Contact the front desk or coach first if you need to communicate with a gymnast on the workout floor.
8. Gymnasts are expected to maintain the best physical condition possible. This includes maximum effort in conditioning and flexibility, both in the gym and in the home when necessary. Also included would be a sound healthy diet, adequate rest, as well as the obvious of not abusing themselves with alcohol, smoking, or drugs.
9. All injuries, no matter how small, must be reported to the coach.
10. Coaching technique and discipline ***are not*** subject to compromise with parents or gymnasts. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters, as they are ultimately responsible in the eyes of the law for each child's well being.
11. All competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have attended every workout the week prior to any competition. Special situations should be discussed well in advance of the competition with the coach.
12. Gymnasts are not allowed to train at any other gym under any other coaches without the permission of the Team Program Director. This includes summer camps and clinics. Gymnasts found violating this rule may be removed from the team program immediately.
13. Gymnasts are to be treated with respect and in return must demonstrate respect for the staff as the adults and professionals they are. Gymnasts are expected to voice their concerns in a positive manner. Foul language or inappropriate remarks or gestures will not be tolerated.

14. The majority of this section has focused on the gym and competition; however, the coaching staff believes that **the order of importance always needs to be family, education, and then gymnastics**. If you choose to be a member of our program, we make the assumption you have allowed appropriate time for family functions and that your child's study habits and schoolwork is of exemplary quality.

Communication

Rumor, innuendo, and just plain backstabbing tend to occur when there is a vacuum created by a lack of information which is detrimental to the successful operation of any gymnastic facility. If you need or want to know any information, please see the coaching staff (except during workout). Participation in the any of the negative actions above could be cause for dismissal from the program.

All questions regarding your child's progress, discipline, etc., may be discussed by making an appointment with the coaching staff – **NOT** by cornering your child's coach after practice. To schedule a meeting, please see the Team Program Director.

From time to time the coaches may have discussions in which they seek the opinion of team members and even parents. There may even be a vote, but the coach has the final word on any decision that affects the competitive gymnastics program. This will be most evident in determining workout structure and training styles, but also includes routine construction, choreography, choice of music, choice of leotards and warm ups, what meets we attend and workout times.

Discipline and gymnastic technique are determined only by the coaching staff. Workouts are not for socializing; they are for skill development. Idle chatter and horseplay is not acceptable during workout.

Disciplinary Procedures

FIRST OCCURRENCE – Conference between coach and gymnast

SECOND OCCURRENCE – Gymnast will be removed from practice and the parent will be contacted

THIRD OCCURRENCE – Gymnast will be suspended from the gym for a period of time determined by the Head Coach

FOURTH OCCURRENCE – Gymnast will be removed from the team program due to continuous disciplinary problems, which impair the safety and progress of the other program participants

Competitive Program Financial Policies

Team is a Year Round Commitment.

1. The competitive program tuition is calculated on a yearly basis. Tuition is due on a monthly basis and if received in the office by the 7th of each month, you will receive a \$5.00 discount. Competitive program accounts must be current and paid in full to enable your gymnast to participate in the competitive season and team workouts.
2. There are no prorated accounts due to absence of any nature, except in the case of medical injury or illness. The competitive program is already greatly discounted in comparison to other club programs and is, in fact, effectively subsidized by the class programs.
3. Clinics, meets, private lessons, summer programs, etc., are separate from your yearly/monthly competitive program tuition and must be paid for accordingly.
4. Each gymnast must maintain up-to-date USAG athlete registration and club registration fees.
5. Gymnasts are required to obtain team leotards/uniforms, warm-ups, grips, etc. necessary to being a member of this program.
6. Meet expenses for all coaching fees (i.e. gas, mileage, food, lodging, and session fees) must be shared by all gymnasts competing and/or by the CGC Booster Club.
7. **As a member of this competitive program, all gymnasts are required to attend and be actively involved in gymnastic activities related to this facility (i.e. fundraising projects, exhibitions, meets, etc.).**

Please remember that Carolina Gymnastics Center and the CGC Booster Club are 2 separate legal and financial entities. Tuition and registration are paid to Carolina Gymnastics Center at the front desk. Meet fees, USAG/AAU fees, team apparel (leotards & uniforms), Booster Club dues, team t-shirts or anything else related to team should be paid to the CGC Booster Club. Booster Club payments may be put in the black mailbox on the side of the gymnast mailboxes or given to the President, Team Parent Coordinator or your Level Parent.

THE BOOSTER CLUB DOES NOT ACCEPT CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS THROUGH THE FRONT DESK but does accept checks, money orders and cash.

The employees at the front desk are employed by Carolina Gymnastics Center, not the Booster Club. Most of the front desk employees are not aware of what is going on with Booster Club so please refrain from asking them questions about anything other than your tuition or registration. If you have a team-related question, please contact the President, Team Parent Coordinator or your Level Parent. Please do not leave Booster Club payments with the front desk – put them in the black CGC Booster Club mailbox on the side of the gymnast mailboxes.

List of Fees According to Level

LEVEL 2 & 3

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$15 per year
State Competition Fee	\$3 per year
Booster Club Membership (\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	\$80 per year
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Leotard	\$60
Gym Bag (optional for Level 2)	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$35-\$60 plus travel expenses (meets within SC only)
AAU Membership Fee (if applicable)	\$12 (as of this printing)

LEVEL 4-6 (girls)

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$49 per year
State Competition Fee	\$10 per year
Booster Club Membership (\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	\$80 per year
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Competition Leotard	\$140 for Level 4 & 5; \$200 for Level 6
Practice/Warm-up Leotard (optional for Level 4)	\$30
March-in Suit (only for Level 6)	\$170
Gym Bag	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$45-\$85 plus travel expenses (mainly in SC – may have 1 out of state meet)
AAU Membership Fee (if applicable)	\$12 (as of this printing)

LEVEL 7-10 (girls)

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$49 per year
State Competition Fee	\$10 per year
Booster Club Membership (\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	\$80 per year
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Competition Leotard	\$200
Practice/Warm-up Leotard	\$30
March-Suit	\$170
Gym Bag	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$55-\$125 plus travel expenses (mainly within SC with the possibility of 2-4 out of state meets plus Regional and National competitions)
AAU Membership Fee (if applicable)	\$12 (as of this printing)

PREP OPT BRONZE & SILVER

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$15 per year
State Competition Fee	\$3 per year
Booster Club Membership	\$80 per year
(\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Leotard	\$60 for Bronze; \$140 for Silver
Gym Bag	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$45-\$85 plus travel expenses (mainly within SC)
AAU Membership Fee (if applicable)	\$12 (as of this printing)

PREP OPT GOLD & PLATINUM

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$15 per year
State Competition Fee	\$3 per year
Booster Club Membership	\$80 per year
(\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Leotard	\$200
Gym Bag	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$45-\$90 plus travel expenses (mainly within SC with the possibility of 1 out of state meet plus Regional competition)
AAU Membership Fee (if applicable)	\$12 (as of this printing)

BOYS - ALL

Carolina Gymnastics Registration Fee	\$40 per year
USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration Fee	\$49 per year
State Competition Fee	\$10 per year
Booster Club Membership	\$80 per year
(\$60 membership, \$10 coaches' holiday gift, \$10 conditioning fee)	
Booster Club Points	100 points or \$200 (or combination thereof – any family not earning at least 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100)
Competition Uniform	\$105
March-in Suit (Level 5 & up only)	\$65
Gym Bag	\$25 (approximate)
Average Meet Fee per competition	\$55-\$75 plus travel expenses (Level 4 stays mainly within SC. Levels 5-10 have the possibility of 1-2 out of state meets plus Regional and National competitions)

Parent Commitment

1. Make sure gymnast attends all regular scheduled workouts, meets, and special functions. Communicate with coaches regarding any problems.
2. Check the bulletin board, team mailboxes and www.cgcbc.com regularly to stay current with team activities. Be sure to get on the Booster Club email list!
3. Membership in the CGC Booster Club: All parents of *Carolina Gymnastics Center* team members must join and support this organization. **Attendance of scheduled CGC Booster Club meetings and participation in fundraising activities is expected.** Notices will be posted around the gym. Please check your child's mailbox and your email inbox for all team information.

The CGC Booster Club

As its name aptly describes, the CGC Booster Club is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization whose membership includes parents and guardians of any gymnast who is a competitive team member at Carolina Gymnastics Center.

The mission of the CGC Booster Club is to:

- ◆ be a support network for gymnasts, financially and emotionally as they pursue their goals
- ◆ promote good sportsmanship and wholesome recreation
- ◆ encourage each gymnast and their family to enjoy healthy competition while maintaining support for fellow teammates
- ◆ promote participation in internal, national, inter-associational and invitational meets
- ◆ maintain a good working relationship with the coaches and gym owner

The primary purpose of the CGC Booster Club is to raise monies to pay the meet expenses incurred by the CGC competitive teams. Money may also be raised to assist with other team related expenses such as team apparel, team parties, equipment, etc.

The Booster Club pays coaching fees to meets, mileage, hotel, and a per diem rate for food (using the US Government standards). Without the Booster Club this financial responsibility would fall directly to the parents.

As a competitive team parent, *Carolina Gymnastics Center* requires the following level of participation from active CGC Booster Club members:

- Membership in the CGC Booster Club is mandatory. The Booster Club requires an annual membership fee. As an active member, you will have a voice in the activities of the organization.
- CGC Booster Club meeting notices will be posted on the front door and several other places around the gym. All parents are encouraged to attend these meetings. Points are earned for each Booster Club meeting which you attend.
- A point system is in place to ensure participation by all families of competitive gymnasts. Each family is required to earn 100 points each year. Points are earned several different ways. If you work at the meets we host and bring the food donations asked of you for each meet or Booster Club function, you should have no trouble earning at least 100 points. The families that do not earn the required points are billed \$2.00 for each point not earned. Any family earning fewer than 25 points will be assessed an additional \$100 fee. If you are not willing or able to work with the club, you may pay the \$300 fee instead. An overview of the point system will be provided at the first Booster Club meeting of each year.

Join with your fellow parents and support the efforts to continue this successful program by lending the Booster Club your thoughts, ideas, abilities and resources.

Examples of Points-Earning Opportunities

10 points	Turn in your signed contract, Booster Club dues, yellow medical form, completed USAG form and USAG fee by the first Booster Club meeting of the year
5 points	Receive points for each Booster Club meeting you attend (maximum of 5 points per family per meeting) – there are an average of 7 meetings per year
10 points	Holiday Party Chaperone
3-20 points	Selling or buying ads in our Meet Programs
10 points	Average points per shift worked at one of the 3 meets the Booster Club hosts each year
50 points	Setup and teardown for one of the 3 meets the Booster Club hosts each year (must be able to lift very heavy objects – balance beams, vaults, p-bars, etc.)
50 points	Be a lead level parent
varies	Bring food listed on the sign-up sheet for meets
50 points	Decorations Committee Co-Chair
75 points	Concessions Co-Chair
75 points	Create the Meet Programs for all 3 meets (some graphics knowledge needed)
100 points	Co-Meet Director

There are many other ways to earn points. DO NOT wait until the last meet of the year to attempt to earn the bulk of your points. The first points balance list is not released until after the first girls meet of the year. After the points balances are released, you will have at least 7 days to submit an inquiry to the Points Chairperson if you have a question. If you do not earn 100 points by the last Booster Club meeting of the year, you will receive a notice of the amount of money owed the Booster Club. This amount is payable upon receipt.

Please note that children under 13 cannot earn points. However, gymnasts are the beneficiaries of our hard work and are expected to assist with pre-meet preparation when possible, regardless of whether or not they'll earn points (putting together medals, stapling papers, putting labels on scorecards, packing t-shirts, etc.).

Requiring families to earn points ensures that the same 10 people are not carrying the load for everyone. Please remember that every Booster Club parent is a volunteer and NO ONE is being paid by Carolina Gymnastics Center or the Booster Club to raise funds for your gymnast. The parents that work hard do so equally for everyone's child. The more parents who volunteer, the easier the task is on everyone.

Competitive Season Information

USAG REGISTRATION FORM, FEES & NUMBER: Carolina Gymnastics Center Team competes in the USA Gymnastics (USAG) competitive system. USAG fees differ per level and are good from August 1st to July 31st. With your contract, you should have received a USAG Athlete (all boys & girls 4-10) or Introductory Athlete (Levels 2, 3 & Prep Opt) Form to complete. After CGC registers your child with USAG, your child will then have a USAG member number. Levels 4-10 (boys & girls) will receive a printed USAG Membership Card and a free subscription to USA Gymnastics Magazine via postal mail (6 issues per year). www.usa-gymnastics.org

AAU FEES: Some years, the Carolina Gymnastics Center team competes in the AAU competitive system. The current fee for this is \$12.00. After CGC registers your child with AAU, your child will receive an AAU membership card. www.ausports.org

MEET SCHEDULING: At the beginning of each season (mid-September), a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be put in the gymnasts' mailboxes and posted on www.cgcbc.com. Meets may be added, changed, or cancelled. The schedule will show the weekends on which your child is scheduled to compete, the cost of the meet fee and the due date for the meet fee. Your child will not compete the entire weekend but will only compete for approximately 4-6 continuous hours at some point during that weekend. However, the specific day or time may not be known until the Monday before the meet. You should block the entire weekend until the competition schedule is released by the host club.

MEET INFORMATION: Approximately 1-2 weeks before a meet, the host gym will release their competition schedule telling us which day/time each level will compete. This information will be disbursed via your level parent, gymnasts' mailboxes, the bulletin board, email and www.cgcbc.com. It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out meet information late or make last minute changes.

MEET FEE DUE DATES: When the due date for a meet fee is near, you will be given a friendly reminder by your level parent at least once. It is the level parent's job to remind you that a meet fee is due but it is not her/his job to require you to pay the meet fee. Failure to turn in a meet fee by the due date will result in your child not attending that particular meet. **MEET FEES ARE NOT ACCEPTED AFTER THE DUE DATE.** If you have an emergency or other issue, please contact the Team Parent Coordinator BEFORE THE DUE DATE to make arrangements. Checks used to pay meet fees which are returned from the bank for insufficient funds, closed accounts, etc. will result in your child being removed from the meet entry. MEET FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. The only case in which a meet fee could possibly be refunded is if your child has a medical injury. To receive a medical injury refund, you must submit a medical injury report to our Head Coach no fewer than 14 days prior to a meet. Honoring a medical injury refund is left to the discretion of the host club. A refund is not guaranteed in these cases.

HOME MEETS: Home meets are those hosted by the CGC Booster Club. Traditionally they are held at our gym but could possibly be held at a rented location nearby. Each participating gymnast pays a meet fee to compete.

GYMNASTS' MAILBOXES: These wooden mailboxes are located just as you walk in the front doors of the gym. Mailboxes are re-done on a yearly basis after every contract has been turned. Notes, reminders, meet information, etc. will be placed in these boxes. Please make sure your child knows that the paperwork in these boxes could be important and he/she needs to be sure to pass the information on to you.

GYMNASTS' LOCKERS: The lockers in the girls' bathroom are maintained and coordinated by Carolina Gymnastics Center, not the Booster Club. Please see the Team Program Director about locker issues.

Gymnast Selection Criteria for Meet Invitations

All gymnasts do not go to every meet. Meets should be a positive experience and therefore gymnast selection is made very carefully. Coaches make the decision on giving meet invitations based on the following criteria:

1. **Eligibility** - Gymnast must have all necessary fees paid and be considered an active and eligible gymnast.
2. **Performance Level** - Mastery of skills is based on performance in workouts. *A gymnast will not be sent to a meet unless she can perform ALL required skills as per compulsory and/or optional guidelines published by USA Gymnastics and possible specific state guidelines at least 2 weeks prior to the meet.*
3. **Attendance** - Gymnasts missing an excessive number of practices may not be selected for competition. The same could be true for gymnasts who consistently arrive late or leave early from workouts. Arriving late and leaving early may seem insignificant at first glance, however, gymnasts arriving late or leaving early tend to miss stretching and/or conditioning. As a result, flexibility and strength suffer and it shows in split leaps and several skills that demand a wide range of dynamic movement. No coach would willingly send a gymnast into a competition knowing the gymnast is not prepared to do her best. The child could have an unsuccessful experience, which could have a detrimental effect on his or her self confidence and ruin the competitive experience.
4. **Gymnasts must have perfect attendance the week previous to a meet or they could be removed from competition.** Please see coaches well in advance regarding extenuating circumstances.
5. **Attitude** - A positive attitude and showing respect to coaches and teammates is important. Gymnasts must be emotionally ready for the competitive arena.

Participation In Scheduled Meets

All team gymnasts should compete in ALL meets to which they are invited unless they are sick or injured.

Meets have different purposes and the training for each will differ accordingly. For some meets the focus may only be on obtaining a **qualifying score** for the state championship meet, therefore a coach may tone down the power and focus on higher quality execution. Another meet might be used to develop confidence and the coach may allow the gymnast to attempt new skills while removing the worry of scoring high from the gymnast's mindset.

Mobility meets are set up for a gymnast to obtain a specific score so he or she can move to the next competitive level. The coach may not be focusing on awards in such a meet.

Finally, there is the meet that everyone hopes the coach and gymnast will pull out all the stops – **State Championships!!** This is where everyone hopes their efforts over the past year will make them a winner.

Missing Meets

Gymnasts who are unable to attend a scheduled meet should contact the coach as soon as possible especially if the meet weekend has already arrived. Please do not allow your coach to worry why your child has not arrived at a scheduled meet. Such worrying could have a negative effect on your child's teammates who are competing. If you do not have your coach's contact information, please try to contact someone at the gym, your level parent or another parent so he/she can get in touch with your coach to pass along the information.

Meet Fees & Travel Expenses

Each gymnast is responsible for paying his or her own meet fees. These fees will vary depending on the type of meet (*i.e. local qualifying meet, invitational or State Meet*). Each gymnast is also responsible for her own transportation to the competition, hotel (*if needed*) and restaurants. **Admission is charged to spectators at meets – which includes parents & families of the competing gymnasts.** Admission charges should range between \$6 and \$10 per adult. Competing gymnasts do not pay admission fee to a meet. In South Carolina, there is a SC-USAG rule regarding a maximum admission fees for meets. These amounts vary from year to year so check with the Booster Club to find out each year's maximum. If you have multiple gymnasts in your family who might compete on different days, please be aware that admission fees paid at meets in South Carolina are for the WEEKEND, not just for one day.

Moving From Level To Level

Moving up from one level to the next is decided by the coaches based upon scores from the meet season, attendance at workouts, required skill acquisitions **and the attitude of the gymnast.** The coaches will discuss the move with the parent(s) before a final decision is made. This decision will be made in the best interest of the gymnast. As a gymnast moves up, his or her responsibility to workout and to participate in scheduled meets increases. Although one of the criteria used to advance gymnasts from one level to the next is meet scores, gymnasts whose scores qualify them to move to the next higher level are not necessarily required or allowed to do so.

Women's Program Requirements for Compulsory & Optional Competition by Level

Level	Vault	Bars	Beam	Floor
2	Handstand block to flat back	Pullover (feet together) Cast Back-hip circle Straddle sole circle dismount	Mount, V-sit (straight legs) One leg stand to squat Forward roll to stand 30° arabesque Leg swings Releve balance Tuck jump Tuck jump dismount to feet	Forward roll to straddle stand Headstand to kneel Arch back and up Cartwheel with ¼ turn Backward roll to pike stand Vertical Handstand (hold 1 sec.) 30° split jump Pivot turn Forward chasse
3	Handstand flat back Forward roll to waist high mats	Pullover (feet together) Cast Back-hip circle Leg cut forward Mill circle Leg cut backward Cast squat on Pike sole circle dismount	Mount, V-sit (straight legs) Adequate swing to push up 30° arabesque Partial cross handstand Running steps Pivot turn 30° split jump Cartwheel to side handstand	Handstand forward roll (one second hold) Round-off with 2-4 running steps Backward roll pike stand with straight arms Backbend kick over Forward chasse 60° straight leg leap Heel snap ½ turn Straight jump, tuck jump (60°)
4	Handstand Flat Back on min of 32" stacked mats	Glide Pullover with straight legs Front hip circle, cast Shoot through, mill circle Leg cut backward Cast back-hip circle Undershoot dismount	Mount, V-sit (straight legs) Adequate swing to squat Heel snap ½ turn 60° straight leg leap ¾ handstand Leg swings min 45° ½ turn Straight jump, tuck jump(90°;45°) Arabesque, horizontal scale Pivot turn Cartwheel side handstand dismount Knowledge of Routine	Straight jump, 90° split jump Handstand fwd roll (straight arms) Side chasse Handstand to bridge kick over (straight legs) Good leg leap (90°) with hop Good leg split Straight arm backward roll to push up ½ turn Round-off back handspring rebound Knowledge of Routine
5	Handspring over Table	Kip mount Front hip circle Cast to horizontal Cast squat on Long hang kip Horizontal cast Back-hip circle Under-swing, counter swing (min 30° below horizontal) Tap swing with counter swing (min 15°) ½ turn dismount	Leg swing mount, single leg squat to stand Heel snap ½ turn 90° straight leg leap Vertical handstand Leg swing (horizontal) Pivot turns ½ turn Cartwheel Straight jump, 90° split jump >45° arabesque, scale above horizontal Cartwheel to side handstand dismount	Straddle jump 120° Dive forward roll Side chasse with hop ½ turn Front handspring rebound(2 feet) 120° straight leg leap Leg swing hop ¼ turn (90°) Complete good leg split ½ turn inward Straight arm back ext. roll to handstand Full turn Hitchkick, swing ½ turn Backwalkover (straight legs) Round-off 2 back-handsprings (connected, with rebound)
6	Handspring over table	Kip mount Cast to min 30° above horizontal Clear hip to min 30° above horizontal Kip cast squat or pike on or sole circle Long hang kip Cast to min 30° above horizontal Long hang pullover Under swing with counterswing (min 15° below horizontal) Tap swing with counterswing (min of horizontal) Fly-a-way (Coach may stand there, but may not assist in any way)	Heel snap ½ turn Leap of 120° BWO or backward roll to ¾ Handstand Leg swing to horizontal Pivot turns Full turn on good leg Tuck jump (90°), split jump (120°) >45° arabesque, scale 45° above horizontal Dismount hold each handstand 2 seconds	Straddle jump 150° Back handspring step out Front tuck Side chasse with hop ½ turn Front handspring, front handspring 150° straight leg leap, 150° side leap Complete good leg split Straight arm back ext. roll to handstand Full turn Hitchkick, swing ½ turn Backwalkover (straight legs) Round-off back-handspring Back tuck

Level	Vault	Bars	Beam	Floor
7	Front handspring Or ½ on ½ off	Kip mount Cast to nominal 1 Bar change 2 circling elements *One must be clear hip *The other may be giant or uprise Fly-a-way dismount	Mount BHS, FHS, RO, Dive carthwheel Full turn Split leap or jump 180° HS/BWO or BWO/BWO, HS BHS Dismount: Front tuck, Back tuck, or Brani 2 B's	Round-off, back-handspring, layout Front handspring, front tuck or fly spring Round-off back-handspring back tuck 180° split leap 1 ½ turn or better B tumbling pass or B gymnastics leap or jump
8	Minimum of 9.0 start value or better Front handspring/ front tuck Tsuk tuck or RO entry (required to move to Level 9)	Cast to handstand 1 Bar change Giants Clear hip, stalder, or toe circle at least to horizontal (3,6,7 skill B value) 4 "A" skills 4 "B" skills ½ pirouette or release of choice (straddle back or bail) salto dismount	Mount Full turn BHS/BHS Alternatives BWO/BHS or FWO/RO 180° leap or jump/ series Dismount: RO or BHS/flip Alternatives Front tuck, back tuck 4 B's	RO/BHS/ Full twist or ½ twist FHS/ front layout or pike RO/whip/back tuck or layout Or Front tuck/RO/BHS/back tuck FHS/front tuck/front tuck 180° leap 1 ½ turn or better Gym series (180° leap)
9	Minimum of 9.4 start value vault	3 "A" skills 4 "B" skills 1 "C" skill 2 bar changes 1 flight minimum of B 2nd flight or LA Turn minimum of C B dismount	Mount Series with one flip 180° leap or jump/series Full Turn Dismount (B value) 3 B's 1 C	RO/BHS/double full or 1 ½ RO/BHS/double back Double salto pass: FHS/front layout/front tuck RO/whip/ full twist, layout, tuck Front tuck/RO/BHS/1 ½ RO/BHS/full punch front RO/BHS/1 ½ punch front Gym series with 180° leap Bonus: 0.3 in tumbling and dance B dismount (tumbling pass)
10	Minimum of 9.7 start value vault	3 "A" skills 3 "B" skills 2 "C" skills 2 bar changes 2 flight elements 1 minimum of "B" value 1 minimum of "C" value C dismount	Mount Series with one flip 180° leap or jump/ series Full turn Dismount (C value) 3 B's 2 C's	RO/BHS/Double back (pike or tuck) or RO/BHS/2-1/2 FHS/Front layout/layout or FHS/full/layout RO/whip/1-1/2 Must have a D or E front and or back pass Bonus: 0.5 in tumbling and dance C dismount (tumbling pass)

**To compete the level your child is currently training, all of the skills above must be completed without spot each day of your child's practice the week prior to competition. Due to safety concerns, if any one of these skills is not completed without spot your child will have to scratch the event pertaining to that skill.

**** Also, if a child arrives at competition and does not successfully perform any one of these skills during her timed warm up period, she will have to scratch that event. This requirement again is concerning the safety of your child in the competition setting.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

The following guidelines will help each gymnast make competition a fun and successful experience.

- **Be friendly and use sportsman like conduct all times.**

Everybody has a unique way of experiencing gymnastics competition. Some people look for the fun in the experience, while others are simply hoping to cope with their fears and others are focused to the point of excluding everything else around them - including you! This may at times make it seem difficult to be friendly with some gymnasts at a meet. Just remember, everyone is doing the best they are capable of at that moment.

When the opportunity presents itself, introduce yourself to the other gymnasts and coaches in your competitive rotation. Most of the time you will have the chance to develop some new relationships. However, when another gymnast is being given directions by her coach or preparing to compete, you must allow her time to concentrate without distraction.

- **Stay focused on the competition. Talking with parents, relatives, or friends is inappropriate during the meet.**

Even with the best of intentions, relatives and friends may give advice that conflicts with what your coach says. What will you do when you receive advice from Mom that differs from what Dad told you and even the coach says something different? You'll probably become more nervous and uptight because you don't where to place your focus. During workouts and competition you must pay attention to the coach.

- **Before leaving the competition, notify the head coach.**

Always let the coach know when you are going to leave the facility. You should never leave the competition facility or go to the parking lot without specific permission from the coach. You should always be accompanied by another team member or coach when leaving the competition floor.

- **There is absolutely no reason for you to be on any piece of gymnastics equipment unless you are warming up or currently competing.**

If you are staying to watch another teammate compete, or you have arrived early for warm ups, stay seated in the bleachers. Do not to wander out onto the competition floor.

- **Competing gymnasts must stay in their rotation group, sitting quietly until the last competitor has finished.**

- **Gym bags, warm up suits, grips, and any other items you brought with you should be placed inside your gym bag and kept near you or under your chair.**

- **Warm ups should be worn when accepting awards.**

The meet is not complete until **ALL** the awards have been handed out. The other gymnasts have waited patiently to receive their awards and have applauded your efforts. You owe them the same consideration.

Win, Lose, or Wipeout

It is important to remember that a score for any routine is an evaluation of one single performance in your career as a gymnast – not a label you must live up to (*i.e. winning the all-around this time means you must win it every time*) or hang around your neck for the rest of your life (*'a 95th place ribbon for falling off the beam or pommel 20 times*). Each meet teaches you more about your abilities as a gymnast, competitor, and human being, and each are necessary ingredients for success at higher levels of competition. Regardless of the outcome of a routine or overall competition, you must learn that crying and feeling sorry for yourself is not an appropriate response to this situation or to most learning situations in the gym or normal life.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

1. Team Spirit is a big help!! Wear team colors. Please clap and “pull for” everyone on the team.
2. Remember, your gymnast is part of **Carolina Gymnastics Center** team. He/she competes not only for himself/herself but also for his/her teammates, parents, coaches, the CGC Booster Club, and **Carolina Gymnastics Center**.
3. Please show proper respect to all Officials and Coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason – to support your child’s interest in gymnastics. Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after a meet (*judges, score keepers, etc.*). If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child’s scores, you must contact your coach. The coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet but must submit an inquiry through the Meet Director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.
4. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You NEVER KNOW who is sitting near you (*i.e. parents of the gymnast you just made a remark about*).
5. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to talk or have contact with their parents until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with FOCUS. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach’s job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast’s condition and teach him/her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms them down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps them up and motivates them to do their best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be over-confident. A terrible bar routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on their coach’s advice, not distractions coming from something not on the competitive floor.
6. As coaches, we know that you mean well with your comments, but they may not be appropriate for the long-term training of your gymnast. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, talk to the coach **after you have returned to your gym and you have first had time to reflect.**
7. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator’s area. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet if a parent is in the competitor’s area.
8. In case of injury during warm-up or competition, **YOU MUST** stay in the spectator area until your coach flags you onto the floor. Every meet has medical staff capable of handling your child’s injury.
9. **DO NOT** coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnast’s focus away from the coach’s technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences.
10. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera well in advance. Many cameras come with an automatic flash that will go off if it detects low light levels. If you cannot manually disable this device, please do not take pictures during the competition.
11. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about three hours prior to the actual competition. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary, a gymnast may carry fruit juices and pieces of fruit in their gym bag to curb hunger pains.
12. All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not. They need to cheer all award recipients - especially their teammates.

Expectations

Many gyms across this country in various sports found one of the prime areas for problems is the parent's involvement in their child's sport. You may have coached a Little League or some other youth sport and have the unique perspective of seeing this phenomenon from the other side. If not, the problems that arise can be confusing, frustrating and at times infuriating.

Why?

The parent at times has one of the most difficult roles on the Parent-Athlete-Coach team because they have the smallest role in actually controlling performance. At the same time the parent feels a much higher sense of personal attachment to this performance. They ride a roller coaster at times of feeling the failures and successes of their children personally and feeling a greater responsibility for these. This high emotional stake in a performance that they have so little direct control of causes **STRESS!** Many times this stress causes them to lose sight of their role on the team and attempt to work beyond their limits. This many times causes the coach and/or gymnast **STRESS**, as well as reduces the effectiveness of this three-person team.

Examples?

What do we mean by parent's going beyond their roles? The most common ones are of course the parent that begins to coach their child. This is the parent that begins to try to make technical corrections on the way a skill is being done, or attempts to make decisions on what skills should be in a routine, or feels they know which group their child should be in or actually is giving corrections to their child at a competition. To these parents these actions do not seem to be out of their responsibility. Why do they feel this way? Most likely because they want their child to do so well (so does the coach and the child) that they feel that the correction is being missed and the most importantly that it be made. If you step back and look at this they are basically saying that the right thing is not being done and it needs to be. Have you ever played a team sport where one player consistently takes other players shots, plays out of position and generally runs around attempting to play the whole game themselves? Does it work? Of course not! To gain a better perspective on this let's see what it would be like if other members 'played out of position'. In gymnastics many times the coach feels or knows that they could actually do a skill or routine better than the currently competing gymnast. For the betterment of the team should the coach go out and do that skill or routine (some wouldn't even be able to get on the leotard)? Of course not! For a less extreme example what if the child was responsible for paying their own training costs. They would not be able to attend school or have the energy to do the training itself from trying to earn the money. This has actually been a problem with some USA National Team members that wanted to train after leaving High School or College, it didn't work. What if the coach was responsible for paying these costs - quick trip to bankruptcy for the gym.

It won't work!!

For a team to work, each member must reserve all of their energies for their roles and responsibilities. This is especially true in this country where gymnastics is not state-supported and not a high money spectator sport. It takes a lot of work! This work must be spread out and each team member must limit themselves to their own role. Attempting to do one of the other member's **jobs will not work!**

Some Guidelines for the Parent:

DANGER SIGNS: Watch for these, they indicate the parent needs to re-evaluate their actions and attitudes

- Observing every practice - intently
- Attending every competition - intently
- Learning as much as possible about technique, and applying it (unless you would like to apply to coach)
- Comparing your child and their progress to others in their group or competition
- Verbally abusing the gym, its coaches, its facilities yet remaining in the program (this usually demonstrates deeper frustration or problem - IDENTIFY THE REAL PROBLEM)
- Video taping every meet and requiring your child to review it at home with you

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

(for gymnastics parents)

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child.

Remember that gymnastics is your child's activity and she/he will progress at her/his own speed. It can never be a positive thing when a parent is forcing a child to do a sport that she/he does not want to do. The best part about gymnastics is that it does not matter whether you finish first or last, rather the wonderful lessons each girl or boy will learn as she/he strives to do her/his best.

2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child, "Did YOU have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate."

3. Thou shalt not coach thy child.

You have taken your child to a professional coach do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your role is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or skill selection. That is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that gymnast/coach bond from forming.

4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at competitions.

If you are going to attend a gymnastics meet, you should cheer and applaud. Never criticize your child, her/his teammates or her/his coaches.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.

It is a normal human reaction for a child to be scared when attempting new skills or competing. Do not yell or belittle your child. Just assure her/him that the coach would not have her/him attempt the skill or put it in the routine if he/she was not ready for it.

6. Thou shalt not criticize the judges.

There is much more to judging than you think and each judge has had to take grueling tests to do what he or she does. There are many routine requirements that the general spectator is completely unaware of that have a factor in the final score. No one is perfect, but it is without question that the judges know more than you do.

7. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and gymnast is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as enjoyment. Do not criticize the coach in your child's presence because it will only add to the many distractions he/she must already deal with during gymnastics training and performance.

8. Thou shalt not jump from club to club.

The floor exercise carpet always seems to be bluer at another gym. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children that switch from gym to gym are often ostracized by teammates they leave behind. Often times, gymnasts who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the "bluer carpet." However, one club will not please everyone and you need to find the one club where you will fit the best.

9. Thou shalt have other goals besides winning.

Encourage your child to do his/her best. Giving an honest effort – no matter the outcome – is much more important than winning.

10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are more than 55,000 athletes participating in competitive gymnastics. There are only 7 spots available for the Olympic team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in 114,350. You can understand how difficult it is to become an Olympian because the odds are you have never been one yourself even though you, at one point as a child, probably wanted to be. Gymnastics is much more than the Olympics. Chances are your child's coach was not an Olympian but still received enough out of gymnastics that they wanted to pass their love for the sport onto others. Gymnastics teaches so many virtues while building self-esteem, life long friendships and much, much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Gymnastics builds good people and you should be happy that your child wants to participate.

INCORRECT

You beat Susie, alright!

Did you do your (current difficult skill) today?

It's okay, a 3.5's not that bad.

(Overheard in Lobby) That coach is not doing the right skills with my child!

If you win today there's \$20.00 in it for you!

That judge never has liked you!

She's been at this level for 3 years. It's time to move up!

CORRECT

You beat your highest all-around!

How was practice?

Bummer!

I'm not sure why they are doing that skill. Of course, I'm not the coach. I'm sure they are doing the right thing. I'll ask.

Do your best!

Work hard. You'll do better next time.

As long as he/she is progressing (even slowly), happy and safe, I'm happy

Our Parent Expectations

We want and need you as a parent to be part of this 'team'. You have a very important role. It is not to perform; it is not to coach; it is to support. Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what he/she can do better, that would lessen the effect of this "victory" for him or her. The week after the meet, your son or daughter's coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate him/her on the elements he/she competed correctly. Any score he/she receives during a competition is no reflection on you as a parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Every one has good days and bad days, and it is how he/she learns to react to them that shows his/her development as a person. Always remember that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

Taken from *Balancing Acts*

by Christina Lessa

Shannon Miller

“Dare to dream, but be prepared to follow those dreams with hard work, dedication and persistence.”

Peter Vidmar

“In gymnastics and in life, if you take the risk to be yourself you will earn the most respect.”

Amy Chow

“Gymnastics made me feel unique—I like being able to do things that most people couldn’t.”

Lilia Podkopayeva

“When I am in front of an audience, I see nothing around me—I just perform.”

Amanda Borden

“Jaycie and I are like sisters, We’ve been training together every day for almost 4 years, and we’ve never been competitive with each other. Friendship is more important.”

John Roethlisberger

“I was willing to work hard. And I was willing to be patient.”

Svetlana Boginskaya

“My training taught me much more than acrobatics. It taught me compassion, humility and sportsmanship.”

Julianna McNamara

“Gymnastics is all about being honest with yourself and becoming stronger than your fears.”

Julianna McNamara

“I’ve learned through experience that the quicker you let go of failure, and learn from it the more likely you are to succeed.”

Gymnastics Guide for Parents

VAULT, BARS, BEAM, FLOOR: Gymnastics competitions for girls involve performances on four apparatuses called “events”.

FLOOR, POMMEL HORSE, STILL RINGS, VAULT, PARALLEL BARS, HIGH BAR: Gymnastics competitions for boys involve performances on six apparatuses called “events”.

COMPULSORY OR OPTIONAL ROUTINES: Depending on the level, athletes either compete compulsory or optional exercises (routines). Compulsory routines are developed for each nation by the national governing body (USA Gymnastics in the United States). The compulsory routines are developed with varying levels of difficulty so the athletes use the compulsories to develop their skills progressively. Optional routines are choreographed (i.e., put together) by the gymnast and/or the coach. Optional routines are usually unique to each particular gymnast while compulsories are performed by all gymnasts in much the same manner. Scoring for compulsories and optionals is similar except that the gymnast must follow a prescribed sequence of skills in compulsories.

LEVEL 1 TO LEVEL 10 GIRLS: The girls start competing at Level 1 and go up to Level 10. Levels 1-6 are compulsory levels. Levels 8, 9, and 10 are optional levels. Level 7 is an optional level with certain compulsory skills required on each event.

LEVEL 4 TO LEVEL 10 BOYS: The boys start with competing Level 4 and go up to Level 10. Levels 4-7 are compulsory levels. Levels 8-10 are optional levels with certain compulsory skills required on each event.

WARM UP: A competition will begin with a “warm up” time. Although it is called a “warm up”, these periods closely resemble a workout. During the pre-competition “warm up”, the gymnasts will begin stretching and doing other activities and then move to the apparatus for pre-competition skill and routine rehearsal. The gymnasts will usually rotate from event to event during the warm up with strictly applied time limits for each athlete or team so that everyone gets the same amount of time to practice.

MARCH IN: Following the warm up, the athletes will assemble at some designated place and will have changed into their competitive attire. Each athlete or team will generally march to music onto the floor area to be introduced. The judges are also introduced. This is a long standing gymnastics tradition. Then the National Anthem will be played. All will stand and hats removed.

30-SECOND TOUCH: Following the march in, the gymnasts will disperse to their first competition event. They will first stop to pay greet the judges as a rotation group. After acknowledging the judges, the optional level gymnasts will normally warm up yet again. Yes, it is exhausting. One reason practices have to be so long and tough is to condition the gymnasts so they can survive the warm up period in a typical meet. This second warm up period is called the “30-second touch”. This is true even though the gymnasts receive 50 seconds on the uneven bars and can perform three vaults no matter how long it takes. The compulsory level gymnasts do not get to “touch” the equipment again. Perhaps, being relative beginners, they have not yet developed the need for further practice as their routines tend to be shorter and easier.

TIME TO COMPETE: After all the marching, touching and rehearsing, it's now time to compete. Parents will quickly determine that during the 4-5 hours they will typically spend watching a gymnastics meet, their child will actually compete a total of 5 minutes.

JUDGES: Judges spend a long time studying and they are tested for each level of gymnastics that they judge. Judges watch each routine and write down everything that happens during the routine (both good and bad) using shorthand.

Few sports reinvent their rules every four years. Judges evaluate these routines based on rules developed by the “FIG” which is a French acronym for International Gymnastics Federation. The FIG publishes a new set of rules every four years following the Olympic Games. This is one of the reasons gymnastics is so hard to understand. There are few sports that reinvent their rules every four years. To make matters worse, there are interpretations of these rules, and then interpretations of the interpretations. Some meets go by one interpretation some go by another.

Gym Bag Necessities

(for meets)

GIRLS TEAM:

At the end of your last practice before leaving for a competition each gymnast must make sure the following items are in her gym bag:

- ** Uneven bar grips, wrist bands, gymnastics tape
- ** A copy of your floor music (if you're an Optional or Prep Opt girl)
- ** Team warm-up leotard
- ** Team competition leotard with matching briefs & appropriate bra
- ** Team march-in suit
- ** Hair care, make-up and personal hygiene items
(i.e. hair spray, hair accessories, deodorant, feminine items, hand lotion)
- ** Any medical braces, supports or bandages
- ** Medical Release Form, necessary medicines and emergency phone numbers
- ** **MAP & PHONE NUMBER OF THE MEET SITE**

BOYS TEAM:

At the end of your last practice before leaving for a competition each gymnast must make sure the following items are in his gym bag:

- ** High bar grips
- ** Ring grips
- ** Team pants, shorts, singlet
- ** Any medical braces, supports or bandages
- ** Medical Release Form, necessary medicines, and emergency phone numbers.
- ** **MAP AND PHONE NUMBER OF MEET SITE**

The following are optional items the gymnasts may wish to have with him/her during away meets:

- ** An extra leotard/uniform (clean)
- ** Gym sandals
- ** Hand towel (especially when it's hot)
- ** Water in unbreakable container (mostly necessary during hot/humid weather)
- ** Small first aid kit for the care of rips, scrapes, etc.
- ** Sneakers or running shoes and Peds (gymnastics socks)
- ** Spiral bound pad and pen, leisure reading book, cards, iPod or video game (with headphones).
- ** Dried fruit slices to snack on when the meet runs long

DAY OF THE MEET (Boys and Girls)

- ** Arrive at the meet site no less than 15 minutes prior to start time and report to your coach
- ** **WEAR APPROPRIATE ATTIRE WITH HAIR ALREADY UP AND FIXED**
- ** Be well groomed in your appearance
- ** Listen and be focused on the instructions of your coach
- ** Do not leave the competition area without permission from your coach
- ** March in with confidence and pride
- ** Always act in a sportsman-like manner
- ** Dress appropriately for the awards ceremony (competition uniform/leotard and/or march-in suit)
- ** Leave your jewelry at home — you may only wear post earrings

Glossary of Gymnastic Terms

AAU - American Athletic Union

ACTIVE - A gymnast in good standing who is current in payment of **Carolina Gymnastics Center** fees and CGC Booster Club fees, and attends all regularly scheduled training sessions.

ALL-AROUND SCORE (AA) - A gymnast's total score from all events (I.E. vault, bars, beam, and floor).

CGC BOOSTER CLUB - A non-profit club involved in furthering the participation of young people in the sport of gymnastics and defraying the costs of the competitive gymnastics team at Carolina Gymnastics Center.

COMPULSORY ROUTINES - A series of skills on each event that are put together with clearly marked timing, amplitude and body position. The USAG develops a set of routines for Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. All these level gymnasts compete using the routines developed by USA Gymnastics.

ELIGIBLE - An active gymnast, current with USAG, club, and CGC Booster Club fees, who, with a coach's approval, may participate in all activities including meets and exhibitions.

INACTIVE - A gymnast who has officially dropped or voluntarily chosen not to compete, or whose Carolina Gymnastics Center fees are 30 days delinquent.

INELIGIBLE - A gymnast who is not current with the CGC Booster Club, Carolina Gymnastics Center fees, or USAG fees, has had some disciplinary problems or is considered not ready by the coach.

INVITATIONAL MEET - A meet, usually with a specific theme, hosted by any gymnastics club. These may or may not be qualifying meets for state championships, but scores may usually be used to move a gymnast from one level to the next.

MOBILITY SCORE - The score needed to move from one competitive level to the next. For example, a score of 31.00 all-round may be needed to move from girls Level 4 to Level 5. The mobility score should not be confused with a "qualifying score" even if they are numerically the same.

OPTIONAL ROUTINES - Routines developed and choreographed by the coaches for each gymnast to be used primarily in levels 7, 8, 9, 10, & Elite. The routines will be individualized for each gymnast's strength, style, and difficulty.

QUALIFYING MEET - A sanctioned meet where the scores are used to qualify for the State Meet. The number of meets actually scheduled will be determined by a gymnast's ability to successfully complete the appropriate level routines and receive the score necessary for state competition.

QUALIFYING SCORE - The all around score needed for entry into the state competition. Normally this score is determined by USA Gymnastics, but in some cases may be changed according to a particular state or region's needs.

STATE MEET - In most cases, the season finale, where qualified gymnasts compete with other gymnasts from all over the state. Higher level gymnasts may go on to compete in regional or national level competitions.

USAG - USA Gymnastics

A Brief Description of the Women's Levels

ELITE ~ LEVELS 1-10 ~ PREP OPT

ELITE: This is the top level in gymnastics. Perhaps .001% of all gymnasts compete at this level. Gymnasts compete up to the National and International level and represent the USA in most international competitions including the Olympics.

LEVEL 10: Gymnasts compete optional routines only. This is the highest level in the USAG age group program. Competition is at the local, state, regional and national levels. The gymnast must have reached her 9th birthday in order to participate at this level.

LEVEL 9: This is an optional only level. Competition is at the local, state, regional and at Eastern or Western Nationals. The gymnast must have reached her 8th birthday in order to participate at this level.

LEVEL 8: This is an optional level. There are restrictions on difficulty. Competition is at the local, state, and regional levels. The gymnast must have reached her 8th birthday in order to participate at this level.

LEVEL 7: This is the beginner/optional level. The gymnasts create their own routines but must include certain elements. Gymnasts can no longer skip this level under new USAG guidelines. Competition is at the local, state and regional level. The gymnast must have reached her 7th birthday in order to participate at this level.

LEVEL 6: This is a compulsory only level. That is, all the gymnasts compete the exact same routines to the same music which are designed to develop required skills and technique. The gymnast must have reached her 7th birthday in order to participate at this level.

LEVEL 5: This is a beginning competition level; compulsory only. These routines are simplified versions of the Level 6 routines. The gymnast must have reached her 7th birthday in order to participate.

LEVEL 4: This is a beginning competition level; compulsory only. These routines are simplified versions of the Level 5 routines. The gymnast must have reached her 6th birthday in order to participate.

LEVEL 3: This is a developmental level of competition; compulsory only. This is the level prior to mastering Level 4 skills. The gymnast must have reached her 5th birthday.

LEVEL 2 & LEVEL 1: This is a developmental level of competition for the young child, compulsory only. This level is designed to introduce the young child into low-level, fun-oriented competition. The gymnast must have reached her 4th birthday.

PREP OPTIONAL: This level is designed for the gymnast who does not want to continue in USAG Levels 4-10. There are 4 Prep Opt levels – Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Prep Opts compete optional routines with skill requirements being general in nature – leaving more choice to the coach and gymnast. The focus is on less time commitment in the gym. Competition is at the local, state and regional level.

A Brief Description of the Competitions

INVITATIONALS: These are meets hosted by individual clubs and they generally offer team as well as individual competition. The meets are sanctioned by USA Gymnastics and the meets must follow the rules and policies dictated by USA Gymnastics. These meets are important in their own right and they can serve as qualifying meets for states.

QUALIFYING MEETS: These competitions are so named because the gymnast may only compete at the subsequent meet if she achieves a certain score or places in the qualifier. In order to compete at the State Championships the gymnast must achieve a certain minimum score in a designated meet as the State Board requires such a meet. The qualifying score and the designated meets are generally determined by the State Administrative Committee and USA Gymnastics prior to the start of the competition season.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS: State Championships will be offered at Levels 4 through 10 and Prep Opt. With Levels 2 & 3 there is no direct competition between gymnasts but they do have a state meet to attend.

REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS: Regional Championships involve the best gymnasts from each state within the region based on the gymnasts' scores at the state meets. There are eight regions in the United States. Carolina Gymnastics Center is located in Region VIII and our Regional Championship involves gymnasts from the following states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. At Level 7 & 8, the Regional Board of Directors determines the qualifying procedure to the Regional Championships. At Level 9 and 10, qualification is by score.

EAST/WEST NATIONALS: USA Gymnastics offers two National Championship meets for Level 9 gymnasts called either the Eastern or Western Nationals depending on which side of the Mississippi you live.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS: There are National Championships offered for Level 10 and Elite gymnasts through USA Gymnastics. In both cases the girls must qualify for these events through a qualifying process. At Level 10, the Junior Olympic Nationals, the gymnasts must place in the top of their age group at Regionals. At the Elite level the gymnasts must achieve a certain minimum score in order to advance to the Classic Nationals. From these meets a limited number are taken to Championships of the USA where our National Team is determined.

A Brief Description of Men's Gymnastics

Men's Apparatus: Below are brief descriptions of men's competitive gymnastics events and routines. The routines are set forth by USA gymnastics under the Junior Olympic program rules.

Floor Exercise: The entire floor area must be used during the exercise, which primarily consists of tumbling passes performed in different directions. Acrobatic (tumbling) series must be performed, including at least one forward and one backward, all of which cannot be repeated more than one time during the entire routine. There must also be a balance element on one leg or one arm held for two seconds with a minimum of "B" value. Transitional skills, gymnastics movements performed in between tumbling and acrobatic passes, should be executed with proper rhythm and harmony. The exercise must last between 50 to 70 seconds.

Pommel Horse: The gymnast must cover all three areas of the horse, the middle and both ends, while performing continuous circular movements interrupted only by the required scissors elements. Swinging through the handstand position with or without turns is allowed. The only part of the body which should touch the apparatus is the hands. The entire exercise should flow with steady, controlled rhythm. Considered by many to be the most difficult of all men's gymnastics events, the pommel horse is also the most subtle. Each move is defined by complex hand placements and body positions.

Still Rings: The still rings must include at least two handstands - one executed with front swing, the other through back swing. At least one element of strength must be held for two seconds. Examples of strength elements include a cross, an inverted cross or a planche. A cross is performed in a straight body or L position with the body perpendicular to the floor and arms stretched perpendicular to the body, while an inverted cross is executed in an inverted handstand position with arms stretched perpendicular to the body. A planche is a straight body position parallel to the floor above the rings. The rings must remain still throughout the routine. Deductions will be taken for unnecessary swings and instability of all positions.

Vault: Each individual vault is categorized in the Code of Points, the official text giving the relevant value or each skill performed. During the pre-flight from the springboard to the horse, the gymnast must demonstrate a rise in height of his body after pushing off the horse, travel the minimum distance (2.5m) and not deviate from the extended axis of the horse. The landing should be firm without extra steps and in line with the horse, springboard and runway.

Parallel Bars: A parallel bar routine consists of predominantly swing and flight elements. Strength parts may be used, although they are not required and the gymnast should make sure that there are no more than three stops or hold parts during the routine. The gymnast is required to execute two swinging elements – one in support and one from hang. The gymnast is also required to perform a skill in which both hands release and re-grasp the bars commonly referred to as a release move.

Horizontal Bar: The routine on horizontal bar consists exclusively of swinging parts without stops. The parts are generally called giant swings with more specific terms applying to changes in grip, direction and body position. The gymnast is required to execute at least one move in which he releases and re-grasps the bar, and to perform at least one element passing through the lower vertical with both hands in L-grip or in a rearways hang; dorsal hang position used in inverted and German giant swings or with an eagle grip in which the wrists are rolled outward until the thumbs are on the outside of the grip, pointing away from each other. The gymnast is also required to perform an in-bar skill like a stalder circle. The higher the level routine will have multiple release moves. Gymnasts receive bonus points for connecting higher level difficulty skills. Look for high flying dismounts with multiple somersaults and twists.

Scoring: Levels 4–7 are compulsory levels meaning means that all boys will perform the same routine. These routines all have the same start value with the possibility of a bonus. The bonus is up to the judges but is usually given for amplitude and virtuosity. Scoring on these routines is determined by how well each boy performs the skills in the routine and to what degree of perfection is achieved. Levels 8, 9 and 10 are optional levels and the start value of these routines is dependent upon the difficulty of the skills performed.

Winning Nutrition for Athletes

Now that we are beginning our fall season, children will be making food choices in the school cafeteria or you may send them to school with a prepared lunch. Either way, the food that your child chooses to eat will have an affect on his/her practice and performance in the gym. Gymnastics is a sport that demands both mental and physical readiness. Therefore, it is very important that your child eats a healthy snack or meal before coming to practice. We hope the following information will help you and your child get ready for great workouts in the gym.

✓Healthy snack choices:

fruits, vegetables, crackers, pretzels, sandwich, bagel, yogurt, granola bar, power bar – Of course you are not limited to this list, but these are a few suggestions. They are foods high in carbohydrates that help maintain energy levels for a longer period of time. It is critical to drink plenty of water before practice to keep your muscles hydrated.

✗Snacks that should be avoided before practice:

candy, cookies, donuts, soda, tea, milk shake or ice cream, fast food – These may decrease your energy level and your mental preparation. Carbonated and caffeinated beverages can cause dehydration.

✓During practice, it is important to replenish fluids. Try to drink water every 20 minutes or so to avoid dehydration, especially if the gym is warm. If your practice is over 90 minutes long and is hard and continuous, drinking a sports drink like Gatorade will add fuel and water to your muscles that are being exercised.

✓After practice, it is important to drink plenty of water and eat a nutritious, balanced meal that has lots of carbohydrate-rich foods such as grains, pastas, potatoes, vegetables and fruits.

✓All athletes need a diet that provides enough energy in the form of carbohydrates and fats as well as essential protein, vitamins, and minerals.

✓It is necessary that you eat a variety of foods every day – grains, vegetables, fruits, beans, meats and dairy products.

✓Some muscles develop from training and exercise – a balanced diet that includes two or three servings from the meat/bean/egg group and two to three servings of dairy daily will supply all of the protein that the muscles need.

✓Calcium is needed for strong bones and proper muscle function. Dairy foods are the best sources of calcium. Female athletes who do not get enough calcium may be at risk for stress fractures. When they are older, they can then be at risk for osteoporosis – which is irreversible.

Healthy Snacks

<u>Fruit Ideas</u>	<u>Dairy/Non-dairy Choices</u>	<u>Starches</u>	<u>Other</u>
Fruit and Vegetable juices	String cheese	Ginger snap cookies	English muffin pizza
Frozen banana or grapes	Farmer cheese	Angel food cake	Black bean burrito
Freeze fruit chunks in low fat yogurt - in ice cube trays	Soy milk drinks	Breadsticks (especially ones with sesame seeds)	Waffles with fruit
Fruit and cheese kabobs	Soft serve ice cream (usually ice milk)	Oyster crackers	Peanut butter and banana sandwich
Sherbet	Ice cream sandwiches	Cinnamon or regular graham crackers	Baby carrots
Dried Fruit	Yogurt	Pretzels	Peanut butter pretzels
	Frozen yogurt	Baked chips	
	Milk	Bagel	
		Popcorn	
		Fig bars	

Pre-Meet Meal

- ❖ What and when you eat before a meet can affect your performance.
- ❖ Your performance depends on your everyday nutritional intake and sensible eating practices just before exercise.
- ❖ The purpose of the pre-meet meal is to add to the body's energy reserves and prevent hunger pains – without causing an upset stomach.
- ❖ The pre-meet meal should be high in carbohydrates and low in fat and protein.
- ❖ It is advised that you eat a small meal about two to three hours before warm-ups. If you are hungry when the meet starts, it is recommended that you eat a snack like crackers, yogurt, fruit or a bagel.
- ❖ What you drink immediately before, during and after the meet is as important as what you eat. Water is the best source to drink, but you may drink something like Gatorade or Powerade to boost your energy. You need to drink fluids even if you don't feel thirsty, especially if the gym is warm
- ❖ Your pre-competition meal should be:
 - High in carbohydrate —Low in fat
 - Low in protein —Low in fiber
 - Not too bulky —Enjoyable and familiar
 - Easy to digest —Accompanied by a drink

Examples of what to eat for a pre-meet meal:

- ❖ A cup of soup; a turkey or chicken bagel sandwich; a piece of fruit; juice, milk or water
- ❖ One or two slices of pizza with little or no meat; a small tossed salad; juice, milk or water
- ❖ Spaghetti with tomato sauce with little or no meat; a roll; a small tossed salad; juice, milk or water