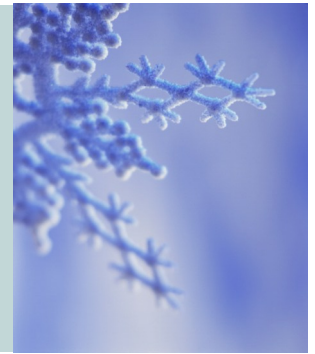




2012 Winter Newsletter



News from the President

Competitive cheer season is well underway as we welcome in a new year. With each new season we can reconnect with old friends as well as meet new officials. We are very lucky as competitive cheer officials since our community of official's is smaller than, say, a basketball official organization. We truly are a family for many reasons, one being that we become concerned about an official who is late to an event. It is not that the officiating team would be short an official but rather the safety of that official. Please call one of your fellow officials if you're running late. This will allow the officiating team to help prepare your paperwork so the competition can begin on time. Open communication with all officials, particularly the newer officials, to make them more comfortable to ask questions is also important. The more questions we ask, the more we will improve everyone's skills. When at the competition, never leave an official alone during or at the end of the competition. Just as you would protect your family, protect your officiating colleagues. As we ring in the New Year, I count my blessings for having such a wonderful group of cheer family and friends.



Happy 2012,

Cindy



What's Your Call?

In Round Three two girls do a one hand cartwheel while holding hands with the opposite hand (pinwheel cartwheel) is this legal?

When referencing page 49 this would not be legal. The manual states: Floor skills as independent skills, must be able to be performed without the needed assistance of another person.

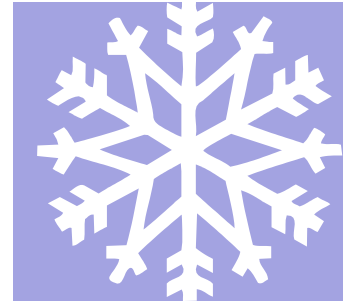
In Round One a team performs a pike jump on an angle?

Panel official judges the jump. The jump can be performed at the team's discretion as long as it is in unison.

MCJA Breakout Sessions

Monday January 16, 2012

Please note time and date of each location



Lansing/Mid-state

Marilyn Bowker/ Mary Kay Gavitt
Coral Gables-Lansing at 6:30PM
contact: cheersmbw@aol.com
517-349-9233

Kalamazoo/Southwest

Karla Koviak/ Jill Lansky
TGI Fridays-West Main at 6:30PM
contact: kkoviak@yahoo.com
269-628-4423

Grand Rapids/West side

Jane Plaisted/ Stacy Smith
Malarky's - Beltline at 6:00PM
contact: jplaisted@sbcglobal.net
616-676-0192

East Side

Susan Wood
Hamlin Pub – Vandyke & 25 Mile at 6:30PM
contact: swood@rochester.k12.mi.us
248-656-1053

Southeast

Jann Stahr
Applebees-Belleville at 6:30PM
contact: Jstahr22@yahoo.com
734-365-9230

Northern

Phyllis Olszewski
LaSeniorita- Gaylord
SUNDAY January 15 at 3:00PM
contact: bpolszewski@att.net
231-536-3142

East Side/Northeast

Juli Brown
Applebees
18115 Silver Parkway
Fenton, MI 48430
Contact: jbrowncheer@gmail.com
810-623-9372



If you find yourself repeatedly feeling like you have to let the official know he's made a bad call, sign up to officiate next season."

~ Liberty Mutual, Weekly Tip

It is our hope that many of you will elect to participate as we look forward to a time of networking and lively conversation!





Marcy Moore

Marcy's son, Jon has recently become engaged to his girlfriend, Jamie. Wedding planning is now underway for August 18, 2012! YAY!

Mary Kuk-Wieber

Mary is expecting another baby girl late March 2012! And, her step-daughter Lauren, made the Varsity Cheer Team at Kenowa Hills High School as a Freshman! We are so happy and proud for you both!

Kayla Anderson

Something new is her name!!! She got married on October 15, 2011 and her new name has been changed from Kayla Anderson to Kayla Dennert!

Krista Hoxie and Sue Richardson

Mother and daughter, former coaches, now enjoy judging and working together. They opened a new business called "de Tree design": an in-house, family owned business. They design wedding invitations/packages, invitations for all occasions, event decor, stationery, notecards, memorial cards, holiday cards and so much more! In September 2011, they had the honor of creating the reception decor for Carter Oosterhouse and Amy Smart - 3 of the 11 items created were recently featured on Rachel Ray by Carter and Amy. What a thrill! They are in the midst of designing Christmas cards and gift givers for their clients, and getting ready for the first bridal show of the season on January 8, 2012 at the Downtown Traverse City Bridal Show!

Benefits of being an MCJA member:

As a member you are entitled to Official's trainings that are offered twice per year.



You as a member are offered training in your area any time during the season or year, when you have assembled 10 participants.

As a member you are offered to be a part of an email list that will receive periodic updates throughout the season.

Additionally, "Judges Needed" emails are sent ALL through the season.

con-sist-ent (adjective)



1. Archaic : possessing firmness or coherence
2. (a) marked by harmony, regularity, or steady continuity : free from variation or contradiction <a consistent style in painting>

(b) marked by agreement : compatible <statements not consistent with the truth>

(c) showing steady conformity to character, profession, belief, or custom <a consistent patriot>
3. Tending to be arbitrarily close to the true value of the parameter estimated as the sample becomes large <a consistent statistical estimator>

{<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consistent>}

One of the biggest concerns that we hear from coaches is that the cheer officials need to be consistent. As a former coach, I remember what it felt like to have a couple of score sheets with scores similar to one another, and a third score sheet either significantly lower or significantly higher than the other score sheets. It took me a little while to learn that “consistency” in scoring does not necessarily mean “same (or even close) scores.” We all officiate through a different set of eyes—we see different things and come from different experiences. Is it still possible for us to be consistent? **Absolutely.**

We must first educate our coaches (and maybe ourselves) that being consistent does NOT mean that our scores should be within a certain parameter of the other judges' scores. Instead, we will maintain consistency within our own judging when use our knowledge and experience to adhere to our personal judging style and philosophy throughout any given competition—from beginning to end. Simple, right?

What are some ways we might ensure consistency?

- ◆ Try to go with your first instinct. Also-take as many “notes” as you can during each round so that if a coach does ask you about your scores, you can offer some meaningful data.
- ◆ Try to avoid causing other judges to second-guess themselves: you gave **that** a nine? Wow. I only gave it a six.
- ◆ Don't change your judging style or philosophy mid-competition. Perhaps you learn a new deduction technique in quick conversation between rounds. Stay the course you started—at least until the end of the competition.
- ◆ If you miss something, DO check with the other judges to help inform you about what score you should assess.
- ◆ I have said it before sitting at the panel table: “I must be the low judge today.” Instead of worrying about being the “low” judge, I know I need to focus on being a “consistent” judge.
- ◆ Review the manual. From a coach's standpoint, it shows a high level professionalism when you can consult the manual. For example, the descriptions of deductions are very helpful in consulting with a coach on a Round 3 execution score.
- ◆ Take your time.

One final note—we are all human and we cannot possibly see every deduction. But we **can** strive to be as consistent as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Ramm
Panel Official

Michigan Cheer Judges Association

DECEMBER, 2011 NEWSLETTER



Kathy Vruggink Westdorp, MHSAA Assistant Director

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer season has started with several competitions already underway! MHSAA Districts may be held either Friday, February 17 or Saturday, February 18, 2012 and all times and locations are provided at mhsaa.com. Regionals are held on Saturday, February 25 with the Finals set for Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3, 2012.

As a judge, you are no longer able to receive "credit" for a 2011-12 Competitive Cheer Rules Meeting. The online meeting was available for almost nine weeks (October 10 – December 8, 2011), twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. The slides are now available for review on the MHSAA Website (Competitive Cheer page). To be considered for MHSAA Tournaments, all judges needed to complete an online rules meeting **OR** attend one of the other two available "in-person" meetings and needed to submit a schedule to the MHSAA by December 8, 2011. Schedules will be utilized by the Selection Committee to determine where the judge has officiated; the quantity of times a judge has officiated as well as whether the judge has officiated a predominance of the season as a safety or panel judge. Please make certain that your schedule is sent and that it is accurate. If you contract additional competitions, please send in another schedule and indicate that your schedule has been updated.

The new Competitive Cheer Inserts are located at mhsaa.com on the Competitive Cheer page. The changes that were approved through Committee have been included within the insert. These are:

1. *Requirement for competitive cheer team members to wear athletic shoes in all rounds of competition.*
2. *Allowance for one-legged flairs above the flyer's waist performed at extension level, to receive 8 points.*
3. *Allowance for all preps and entrances with flairs (except the 1 & 2 footed hop-and-go and standard step-up) to receive 4 difficulty points and no variety points.*
4. *Allowance for an extended double-braced liberty for middle school with the use of a front and back spot.*
5. *Due to the similarity between Competitive Cheer and sideline cheerleading, a school which sponsors MHSAA Competitive Cheer may not hold any cheer activities from the end of winter sports – the last Monday of March (03/26/12) through the 3rd Friday in May (05/18/12). This restriction prohibits coaches or cheerleading advisors from working with more than four students from the school district grades 7-12 in cheer-related activities including but not limited to tumbling, gymnastics, instruction, routine development, tryouts, etc.*

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Insert also provides emphasis for concussion protocol which includes: *"Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional." This language reflects a strengthening of rules regarding the safety of athletes suspected of having a concussion. This new language reflects an increasing focus on safety, given that the vast majority of concussions do not involve a loss of consciousness. This protocol is intended to provide the mechanics to follow during the course of contests when an athlete sustains an apparent concussion.*

1. The officials will have no role in determining concussion other than the obvious one where a player is either unconscious or apparently unconscious as is provided for under the current rule. Officials will merely point out to a coach that a player is apparently injured and advise that the player should be examined by a health care provider for an exact determination of the extent of the injury.
2. If it is confirmed by the school's designated health care professional that the student did not sustain a concussion, the head coach may so advise the officials during an appropriate stoppage of play and the athlete may re-enter competition pursuant to the contest rules.
3. Otherwise, if competition continues while the athlete is withheld for an apparent concussion, that athlete may not be returned to competition that day but is subject to the return to play protocol.
 - A. Only an MD or DO may clear the individual to return to competition.
 - B. The clearance must be in writing.
 - C. The clearance may not be on the same date on which the athlete was removed from play.
4. Following the contest, an Officials Report shall be filed with a removed player's school and the MHSAA.
5. In cases where an assigned MHSAA tournament physician (MD/DO) is present, his or her decision to not allow an athlete to return to competition may not be overruled.

Further emphasis within the rules meeting information includes the uniform and emblem requirements for judges of Competitive Cheer. Judges are required to wear a solid white blouse/shirt or top and solid black skirt or dress slacks. Any additional garments such as a blazer shall be black. Judges must wear their MHSAA Officials Emblem on the left chest pocket area of the blouse or jacket/blazer or suspended by a black lanyard around the neck.

The MHSAA 2011-12 Officials Guidebook includes this information on page 7 under “Conflict of Interest –MHSAA Tournaments & Regular Season”.

In all cases, officials must be neutral and may not officiate in any contest involving relatives or other similar close relationships. It is the official's responsibility to notify tournament management as soon as possible of a conflict of interest so that a possible switch may occur.

Official's son/daughter attends or is a recent graduate (1-5 years) of a participating school.

Official (or an immediate family member) is a current or former staff member (teacher, coach, employee or board member) at a participating school.

Official has a close connection or relationship to the coach of a participating school.

Official is a recent graduate (1-5 years) or connected alumni or a participating school.

In all sports, it will be considered a “conflict of interest” for any MHSAA registered official to be hired or employed by a member school or coach to provide a sport-specific clinic or training session for students at that school when that official later officiates contests involving that school for the next 12 calendar months.

An example would be a competitive cheer official who is hired by a school or coach to provide a training session or clinic by which the official prepares the rounds of competition or provides judging, coaching, skill assessment to a school coach or athletes. If this occurs, it is considered a conflict of interest for that official to officiate any contests at any level for the school(s) involved for the next 12 calendar months during both regular season and MHSAA tournament competition.

This policy is not intended to discourage officials from participating in preseason sportsmanship programs which may involve coaches, students or parents or from officiating preseason scrimmages (intersquad and intrasquad).

Officiating is an honorable avocation. Remember the many athletes and coaches who are watching you. Hold to and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include honesty, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion and tactfulness. Clothes and behaviors do influence the perceived image of the official and help to build confidence with players, coaches and spectators. And, don't forget that Competitive Cheer judges have the responsibility to review the Round 3 Routine Description Form.

As you proceed throughout the year, don't forget the great lessons that are learned from the GEESE which were provided at the MCJA Fall Conference. Let's look at them once again:

Fact 1: As each goose flaps its wings it creates an “uplift” for the birds that follow. By flying in a “V” formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of purpose can get there more quickly.

Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are inter-dependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents, or resources.

Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core values of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact 5: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

So, how do these lessons pertain to you in MCJA? Review the above lessons once again and think about their relevance in your role and responsibility as a judge in Competitive Cheer. Don't be afraid to “honk” a little! It is a great time to be involved in Competitive Cheer – enjoy the season and continue to be a part of MCJA!





I did not want to write this article. You know the story, holidays, busy, work, family, and on and on. Then I received a letter from our president asking us to please submit an article even if it was something brief about the committee you chaired. Still did not want to do it. Later in the day I received an e-mail updating the staff at work about a 15 year old student at our school who is in the fight of his life against Cancer. I then knew I must take a few moments out of my day to write this. You see, I chair the Officials for Kids committee which supports the Children's Miracle Network and this is why I needed to submit this article.

First let me start by telling you about this organization. The Children's Miracle Network (CMN) was established nationally in 1983 to help children by actively supporting improved health care for millions of young people around the world. CMN's mission is to generate funds and awareness programs for the benefit of children served by its associated hospitals, now numbering more than 174 nationwide. In the state of Michigan there are four hospitals which support and raise funds for CMN, Sparrow Hospital in Lansing, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids, William Beaumont in the Detroit area, and Hurley Medical in Flint. The Official's For Kid's program has three primary objectives for the children's hospitals in Michigan. First, to promote healthy habits and lifestyle choices for Michigan youth. Second, to support outstanding healthcare for Michigan children, and third to enhance the public image of sports officials across the state.

After working for many years in the healthcare field, I had the opportunity to see how Sparrow Hospital created a culture of understanding and compassion for children with catastrophic illnesses or diseases. Many people have benefited in some way by the excellent care CMN hospitals provide; whether they themselves received treatment, or they have a child, niece, nephew, neighbor, or family friend. My moment of real understanding was the day my daughter was injured in an automobile accident. I repeatedly over the years have experienced what miracles can be made when dedicated people work together for the good of a group or organization. This year for me, it is the student who hangs on fighting every day of his life. He does not get mad because he has chemo every month, misses the opportunity to be on the football team, hang out with friends, traveling to Indianapolis to see specialist regularly, or missing time just being a regular teenager. Sparrow Hospital has provided him and so many other children like him, the chance to survive.

Without donations from people like us or people in a position to help spread the word about CMN, these important hospitals cannot prosper and become a healing place for children and their families. I am blessed to have a healthy child and grandchildren, not everyone will be so lucky this holiday season or in the coming year. Thank you Cindy for making me write this article, because I am blessed for the incredible people in my life. Happy 2012 to all!



If you wish to make a donation, please check the information on our website, "Officials For Kid's". You may also e-mail me at lifemattersplus@comcast.net

Mary Kay Gavitt
MCJA Officials For Kid's Chairperson
The Official Fashion Police

Age is not a barrier. It's a limitation you put on your mind. -Jackie Joyner-Kersey



SPORTS

Will Competitive Cheerleading Become the Next NCAA-Sanctioned Sport?

By **Erin Skarda** | [@ErinLeighSkarda](#) | May 24, 2011 | Time Magazine

What do you get when you remove pompons, sidelines, megaphones and actual cheering from cheerleading? A new type of stunt and acrobatic hybrid that could become the next collegiate sport. Now, before you jump to the conclusion that cheerleading in any form is not or could never be a sport, consider this: Can you toss someone your size in the air and catch her with ease? Can you tumble like a gymnast or balance gracefully (and with a smile) on one leg, 10-feet above ground? Do you train like a runner, but have the strength of a football player?

A competitive cheerleader can do all this and more, which has prompted the NCAA to consider two variances of cheerleading for “emerging sport” status — a move that will not only legitimize the athleticism that is required for certain aspects of cheerleading, but also help universities comply with Title IX, the federal law that bans gender discrimination at educational institutions. While cheerleading’s traditional roots are seeded in “cheering” for other sports teams, such as football or basketball, the cheerleading hybrids that have been proposed for NCAA status are purely competitive — no megaphones, poms or “crowd-leading” here — yet both are uniquely different and are effectively competing against each other for the same goal: to become a legitimate sport.

One group, the National Collegiate Acrobatics and Tumbling Association, is comprised of teams from six well-known universities, including the University of Maryland and Quinnipiac University, and has been hosting competitive “acrobatics and tumbling” meets for the past few years. These competitions are sanctioned by USA Gymnastics, include six events each and are judged on a standardized scoring system.

The other group, USA Cheer, has created STUNT, which focuses on the athletic components of cheerleading — partner stunts, pyramids, basket tosses, jumps and tumbling. Each event consists of four quarters, with teams competing head-to-head on a standardized scoring system that focuses on evaluating a squad’s execution of predetermined skills. STUNT also consists of a set season, with eight regulation “games” and a championship tournament hosted in April.

If one of these acrobatic sports are given “emerging sport” status, it would not only allow these athletes to receive the same benefits as other athletes on college campuses, but will also change the face of women’s sports forever.

As TIME writer Sean Gregory recently pointed out, it’s time to let go of the stereotype of cheerleaders in short skirts and ponytails and recognize the athletic, academic and financial opportunities that participation in competitive cheerleading (or any variance of such) can offer young, female athletes and their universities.

Read more: <http://newsfeed.time.com/2011/05/24/will-competitive-cheerleading-become-the-next-ncaa-sanctioned-sport/#ixzz1iFGT9rIZ>



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All Great achievements require time. —David Joseph

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2011 MCJA Official of the Year-Karla Koviak

