

THE UNITED GYMNASTIX GIRLS COMPETITIVE TEAM HANDBOOK 2009-2010

Dear Parents and Gymnasts,

Welcome to all new and returning parents and gymnasts to the United Gymnastix Girls Team program. Thank you for your patronage and the commitment you are about to make to our establishment; we look forward to having you as part of United's family.

The Team Handbook is a document created to facilitate communication between the families of our gymnasts, the coaching staff, and the gym's management. Please read it carefully before signing and submitting the final page. Policies may, at the discretion of the management and coaching staff, be altered in the best interest of the gymnasts competing for United, but use this Handbook as a basic guide; we suggest that you keep it in a convenient place for easy reference.

Sincerely,

The Coaching and Administrative Staff at United Gymnastix

General Information

Team Philosophy

The two fundamental philosophies of United's competitive program are "quality of performance" and "pursuit of excellence." During workouts and competitions both themes are emphasized and reinforced. These two ideals help gymnasts develop the mental, emotional, and physical strength needed for the high standards of performance expected of them for competition, and help nurture personal qualities that last a lifetime.

Team Teaching Philosophy

The coaching staff at United understands that gymnastics is an individual sport, and so each gymnast is treated as an individual. Gymnasts will be given appropriate guidance to build self-confidence, positive self-image and critical thinking. Coaches will respect the balance between working out and taking care of our bodies, and the regard for physical and psychological needs of each gymnast will be modeled so that gymnasts may strive for quality and excellence at her own pace. In this way, we hope that our athletes will retain the love for the sport that motivated them to become gymnasts.

Benefits of the Team Program

- Strength
- Coordination
- Time Management
- Kinesthetic Awareness
- Setting and Achieving Goals
- Physical, Mental, and Emotional Control
- Flexibility
- Muscular Endurance
- Weight Control
- Friendships and Team Participation
- Managing and Controlling Stress

Description of Our Competitive Gymnastics Team

United follows the Junior Olympic (J.O.) Program for developmental skill progression and competition as outlined by USA Gymnastics (USAG). USAG is the governing body that oversees the largest competitive gymnastics program in the United States. All members of United's competitive teams must also be registered with USAG in order to compete in sanctioned meets. (Registration is taken care of by the staff.) Women's artistic gymnastics is comprised of four different events: Vault (V), Uneven Bars (UB), Balance Beam (BB) and Floor Exercise (FX). The sum of all the event scores determines the All-Around (AA) competition. United Gymnasts compete on all four events, although one or more events may be "scratched" (omitted) at the coaches' discretion due to injury or unreadiness. There is no reimbursement of meet expenses for scratched events.

Level 4 – 6 Compulsory Teams

Level 4 is the first level of competition for gymnasts in Maryland following the USAG program. All gymnasts are required to perform the same routines on each event and are evaluated against prescribed text and technique. Level 5 and Level 6 also use uniform (though different and progressively more complex) compulsory routines. The primary purpose of is the mastery of fundamental gymnastics skills that will provide a basis for further development.

Level 7 – 10 Optional Teams

Levels 7 to level 10 are the optional levels of gymnastics competition. Routines are composed individually for each gymnast fulfilling minimum requirements developed by USAG. Again, the difficulty and complexity of the routines increases with each level of optional competition.

Advancing to Higher Levels

Gymnasts must be proficient at all prior routines before moving to the next level. But acquisition of skills, by itself, will not justify movement. Advancements are made at the discretion of the coaches and management. Before a gymnast may advance, all gym tuition and GTPO financial obligations must be current. In addition to meeting the minimum scores to move up under USAG rules, the coaching staff will look to the following factors when determining level placement:

- Work ethic.
- Acquisition of skills.
- Attendance.
- Success at the current USAG level.
- Psychological readiness.
- Potential for success at the higher USAG level.
- Parental support.
- Ability to handle financial and time commitments at the higher level.
- Individual confidence and courage.

Gymnasts' Responsibilities

- To attend scheduled practices.
- To call the coach/gym if you cannot make a practice or will be late.
- To **BE ON TIME** to all practices.
- To wear appropriate practice clothing with long hair tied back, away from face.
- To be attentive, polite and cooperative to the coaches and staff.
- To complete all training assignments before leaving the gym.
- To assist, cooperate with, and respect fellow teammates.
- To participate in exhibitions, demonstrations, and clinics as determined by UGI and the coaching staff.
- To assist in cleaning/upkeep of gym.
- To be safety conscious for themselves and fellow teammates.
- To keep their personal workout gear in a gym bag to be taken home after each practice; e.g. grips, wristbands, tape, etc.

Gymnasts' Behavior and Practice Rules

Improper types of behavior by the gymnast during practice or competition will result in loss of practice time or other disciplinary actions. Examples of such behavior:

- Arguing with a coach.
- Breaking gym rules.
- Unwillingness or "cheating" to complete assignments.
- Creating dissension among teammates.

The coach may take disciplinary action or remove a gymnast from practice for any reason that inhibits safe practice and performance, and/or hinders chances for progression during the practice session.

Neatness and Organization

- All gymnasts must keep their personal workout gear in a gym bag or cubbies.
- Water bottles are allowed in the gym area; however no juice, Gatorade or other drinks with added coloring or sugar are permitted past the lobby doors.
- No food is allowed in the gym area.
- During practice, water breaks and bathroom breaks are allowed **ONLY** with coach's permission.

Gymnasts' Behavior at Competitions

- The gymnast should not communicate with parents or friends once she has entered the competition area. Focus and attention must be on teammates and coaches.
- The gymnast must stay with the team at all times unless dismissed by the coach.
- The coach can remove a gymnast from competition, practice, or warm-ups for any reason that may inhibit their ability to perform safely.
- No cell phones are allowed on the competition floor.

Disciplinary Action

If behavior becomes a problem or any of the above rules are broken, it is the coaches' prerogative to take the following disciplinary actions:

- Exercise activities.
- Removal from practice.
- Parental conference.
- Suspension from the team, without refund of fees and dues.
- Dismissal from the team, without refund of fees or dues.
- **If a gymnast misses any practices during the week before a meet, whether due to injury, outside activities, or disciplinary action taken by the coaches, her participation at or withdrawal from that meet is at the coaches' discretion for health and safety reasons.**

Parents' Responsibilities

Girls Team Parent Organization

The Girls Team Parent Organization is the mechanism by which families of gymnasts support the training and competitive experiences of United gymnasts USAG Level 4- Level 10. Participation in GTPO is mandatory for all team parents. The primary function of GTPO is to raise funds which are used to pay for meet registration, coaching fees and expenses. The majority of the funds are raised through the payment of monthly dues. However, the GTPO also engages in fundraising opportunities that are used to reduce dues. If the GTPO hosts a meet, it is mandatory that all gymnasts' families participate; likewise, participation in any fundraisers that benefit the entire team are expected and encouraged.

GTPO Dues

Monthly dues for GTPO are **IN ADDITION** to gym tuition fees. Payments are scaled by the gymnast's level of competition. Payments should be made the first of each month by...

New competitors at Level 4: September through May
Returning competitors at Level 4-10: August through April

Gymnasts transferring to United from other gym schools will receive a one-month grace period from GTPO fees as a "trial," though they must pay for meet registration fees and other meet expenses if they compete for United Gymnastix during that time.

The GTPO will provide payment booklets, and statements will be distributed on the 10th of each month. **GTPO payments that are 30 days or more past-due will result in your gymnast being withdrawn from competition.**

Time and Financial Commitment

Gymnasts are expected to attend practice year 'round in order to remain on United's competitive team roster. Although competition is seasonal, it is imperative that the gymnast maintain and build upon her fitness and skill level through constant and consistent practice. The athlete's presence in the gym critical to personal safety and success.

Newly team participants (Level 4 and "transfers") are subject to a one-month trial period during which time the gym and the gymnast can determine whether United's program is a good fit.

Tuition Guidelines

Families are responsible for paying UGI tuition on the first day of the month. (Gym tuition is different than GTPO fees.) If payment is not made by the 10th of the month, a \$10 late fee will be assessed. Regular payments will prevent suspension from gym activities. Pro-rating tuition due to severe injury or illness is at the discretion of the gym management, coaching staff, and GTPO, and must be accompanied by a doctor's note. **Pro-rating due to vacation or excessive absence is not permitted — there are NO exceptions.** Make-up practices are not offered for team workouts missed by the individual gymnasts.

The Competitive Team Uniform

- All items considered part of the competitive team uniform will be purchased by the individual gymnast's family, although team fundraisers may be provided to offset the cost.
- Team uniform items must be brought or worn to each competitive function.
- Lost items must be replaced as soon as possible.
- Items must be kept clean and used only for competition.
- A newly designed competitive leotard and warm up suit may be purchased every year, at the coaches' discretion.
- The team uniform design is determined by UGI and the head coach.
- Grips, athletic tape, and other incidental needs for competition or practice are to be purchased by the family of the gymnast.

Practice Rules for Parents

- Parents and siblings are not allowed into the gym area unless invited by a coach or to quickly check your child's mail folder.
- Parents' behavior should never interfere with gym activities or active coaching. **Do not attempt to coach your child from the waiting room!**
- Parents are expected to provide timely and safe transportation to and from all practices and competitions.
- If habitual lateness in picking up your child after practice becomes a problem, a \$15 late pick-up fee will be added to your monthly tuition payment.
- If your gymnast is sick or has a fever, contagious illness or skin ailment, a viral or bacterial infection of any kind, please keep her at home until released by a medical doctor.
- Gymnasts that have a prolonged injury necessitating missed practices will require a doctors note releasing them to again participate in full practices.
- **Please do not try to coach your child at home.** This undermines coaching goals and deprives your child of the necessary time off from the gym. If you have questions about your child's development outside the gym, please see her coach.

Competitive Behavior for Parents and Spectators

- Parents and spectators are not allowed to enter the competitive area. They must use only the area designated for the public.
- Do not try to get your gymnasts attention during the meet or communicate scores, etc.
Your child's "parent" at meets is her coach, and the coach will let you know if your help is required.
- Parents and spectators shall not disturb the order of the meet, its competitors and its officials. Individuals causing violations will be asked to leave the competition site.
- Parents and spectators shall not attempt to intimidate, embarrass, or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition.

Communication

- If you would like to speak with a coach, please call the gym at 410-526-3527. The staff will make every effort to return the call in a timely fashion, as it is often impossible for instructors to leave the gym floor while they are working. Or, call ahead to schedule a time to meet with the coach before or after a practice; talking to a coach during practice time is unfair to the gymnasts and creates an unsafe environment.
- Information like account invoices, meet schedules and other gym activities will be placed in the mail folders, located next to the girls' team cubbies. Gymnasts should check their folder after each practice.
- There is a bulletin board in the lobby for the girls' competitive team. Messages and other information are posted on the board to emphasize the news in gymnasts' mail-folders. Parents should check the bulletin board each time they come in.
- Make sure your e-mail address is current; it is the quickest and most effective way for the gym to communicate with you.
- GTPO will distribute a calendar of events to keep each family apprised of meets, social activities, etc.

Contact Information

Gym Phone: (410) 526-3527
Gym Fax: (410) 526-3529
Gym E-mail: unitedgym@unitedgym.net
Gym web-site: www.UnitedGym.net

UNITED GIRLS TEAM REGISTRATION FORM

MOTHER'S NAME _____ HOME PHONE _____

FATHER'S NAME _____ MOM WORK PHONE _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ DAD WORK PHONE _____

CITY STATE AND ZIP _____ MOM CELL _____

GYMNAST NAME _____ DAD CELL _____

GYMNAST DOB _____ EMERGENCY CONTACT _____

HEALTH CONCERNS _____ EMERGENCY PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PERMISSION STATEMENT & MODEL RELEASE My child/ren has permission to participate at United Gymnastix Inc. I confirm this student(s) is in good health. I am also fully aware of and appreciate the risk of serious accidental injury, including head and neck injuries and accidental death, associated with participation in a gymnastics class or event. I hereby give my permission for United Gymnastix Inc. officials to call a doctor and/or the parents for treatment in the event of an emergency. I further agree not to hold any United Gymnastix official or staff member responsible for any possible illness, accident, injury, or death which may occur in training or class; nor any other damages, losses, or theft on United Gymnastix Inc.'s premises. I do here verify that I fully understand and accept the above statements and the guidelines set forth in this brochure. I understand there will be no refunds after the first class. Upon signing, I give my permission to United Gymnastix Inc. for photographs or video imaging of my child to be used for promotional purposes in print or internet publications, and/or other formats that could expose a recognizable member of my family to the public.

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of the information in this Girls' Team Handbook. Please sign the bottom of the page verifying that you have completed the following:

- My child(ren) and I have read this team handbook and understand the contents.
- I have filled out the registration form on prior page will return it with this signed form.
- I clearly understand that my GTPO payments are a yearly commitment, regardless of injury or cessation of my child's participation as a United Gymnastix competitor.

Gymnast's Name _____

Parent or Guardian's Name _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____

Please submit this signed sheet along with the registration form to the office staff of United Gymnastix. Thank you!