

# General Participation Requirements

## Practices

BE ON TIME and stay for the entire practices. Attend the required number of full practices for your level to maintain eligibility of team. If an extenuating circumstance does occur, it is the responsibility of the gymnast to let their coach know before the beginning of practice that they must leave early. Again, school sports and other extracurricular activities (including dance) do not excuse an athlete from the minimum required time commitment to Team. The warm up is mandatory and is done right at the beginning of practice. Athletes are required to sign in and out. Consistent attendance is necessary for the athlete's physical, mental and emotional preparation. Consequently, coaches may withdraw athletes from competitions when they have not participated in sufficient practice time to be prepared and safe. Consistent tardiness or missed practices may result in loss of team privilege.

## Participation in other sports

At this time we will support an athlete's choice to play two sports at once; however we want you to understand the challenges and risks involved in this type of commitment. When committing to participate on the Gliders Gymnastics Team for the competition season, an athlete and their parents commit to a full season (through YMCA Regional and USAG State Championships). This commitment includes attending the required number of practices every week, on time and remaining for the duration of the practice (not leaving early). Failure to maintain this commitment may result in the head coach's option to withdraw the athlete from competitions. In our experience, we have found that though an athlete may be able to "handle" the physical stress of participating in two sports there are some sports that can contribute to nagging chronic pain such as shin splints & Achilles tendonitis. The greatest concern is for the athlete's mental and emotional wellbeing. Gymnastics is a sport which requires an element of mental toughness and emotional stability that can be depleted by physical and mental exhaustion. We have seen these athletes break down in tears during practices over the frustration of their being more fearful than normal, not being able to focus, stressed over getting homework done before practice and so on. For the 2011-12 season, we have not ruled against allowing participation in other sports during the competition season, but we do not recommend it.

## REQUIRED PRACTICE TIME

Athletes must maintain the minimum required stipulations, as follows, in order to maintain their team member status. Minimum practices = **arriving on time** and **staying for the duration**.

- Level 3- Attend team practice plus 1 level 3 class per week
- Level 4- Minimum 2x per week
- Level 5, 6, 7, & 8- Minimum 3x per week (level 8 should attend 4x)
- Level 9- Minimum 4x per week
- Prep- 2x per week & a good work ethic (though this is a recreational level, it is required to maintain the same work ethic and attitude of teachability at all levels of participation).

Though allowances will be made for school concerts, regents testing and final exams, illness and family emergencies, athletes are expected to plan and prepare for school projects in advance and plan accordingly to accommodate their commitments.

## Athlete Conduct

Athletes and their parents must read and sign the code of conduct. You cannot participate in team without this agreement and the other signed paperwork including waivers, contract and any applicable membership forms. We reserve the right to send an athlete home on any given evening or suspend team privileges. Verbal or physical violence toward others and blatant disrespect to coaches will absolutely not be tolerated.

### **Attire for practices:**

- NO socks. Bare feet or tumbling slippers (specially made for this purpose) are permitted.
- Athletes are expected to maintain a crisp, clean look. All wisps should be pinned back for safety.
- Absolutely NO jewelry of any kind is permitted in the gym during workouts.
- You may keep your grips and braces in the grip bucket. A bag is recommended. Grips should be worn for all athletes level 5 and higher. Dowel grips for level 6 and higher. (Double buckles).
- NO spaghetti straps or low cut leotards. NO two piece outfits. NO team uniforms during practice.
- Sports bras and deodorant should be worn for developing girls. A day bra should not be visible.
- Gymnastics shorts are required for practices.
- Washing hands after using the restroom is mandatory.

### **Snacks and Water Bottles**

It is most beneficial to your athlete to snack **before** practice. We will not take snack breaks, and food or drinks other than water are not permitted in the facility except in the Game Room.

Athletes should bring water bottles with their name on (to keep in the gym with them) and use the bathroom before practice to maximize their practice time.

### **Parent Drop off and Pick up**

Practice starts and ends promptly as per the scheduled time allotted. We thank you for your understanding in this matter. If you know that your child gets easily sidetracked, please come in and ensure they get to practice on time. We strongly discourage parents from allowing athletes to wait alone outside for someone to pick them up. For your convenience, please note back lobby hours if you use the back parking lot.

### **Observing practices**

Parents are welcome to watch their gymnasts practice from the lobby area during any of our practices on occasion, but coaches cannot remain after practice so that gymnasts can show off new skills or get extra practice in. We respectfully ask that parents refrain from watching every practice so that athletes can concentrate on their skills and not be concerned with their performance while drilling or attempting new skills. Mental focus is one of the many things we work on during practice, and your support is needed to help cut down on distractions for our athletes as they learn.

### **Parent Coaching**

Please leave the coaching and critiquing to the coaches. The best support a parent can provide their athlete is unconditional love and acceptance. This kind of support will contribute to your athlete's self esteem and, therefore, their success. With this in mind, we do not recommend that family members give rewards for achieving scores, but rather for something related to character growth.

### **IMPORTANT!**

**Forms in this packet need to be returned to Tammy by September 1<sup>ST</sup>.  
USAG membership fees and uniform fees (see uniforms) are due September 1<sup>st</sup> (see attached forms).**