

Bath Area Family YMCA Gymnastic Team Handbook 2017-2018



Table of Contents

Introduction p.3

Practices p.5

Behavior p.8

Other Fees p.14

Floor Music p. 14

Moving Up a Level p. 17

Meets p. 17

Training at Home p. 23

Welcome to the Bath Area Family YMCA Gymnastics Team.

This handbook was designed to give gymnasts and parents a better understanding of the Bath Area Family YMCA Gymnastics team. Information contained in this handbook will help gymnasts and parents ensure that the gymnastics experience a positive one.

The YMCA: For youth development, for healthy living, for social responsibility.

Objectives: The purpose of any YMCA program is to help participants grow spiritually, mentally, and physically. There are seven objectives that characterize all YMCA programs:

***Grow personally:** A positive competitive gymnastics team experience can build a child's self-esteem and self-confidence.

***Learn values:** Honesty, respect, caring, and responsibility.

***Improve personal relations:** Gymnasts learn to care and communicate with teammates.

***Appreciate diversity:** Gymnasts learn to respect people regardless of age, abilities, incomes, race, religion, culture, or beliefs.

***Become better leaders:** Gymnasts learn the give and take necessary to work toward the common good.

***Develop specific skills:** Gymnast will train skills and progressions necessary to help them succeed in the sport.

***Have fun:** Fun and humor are vital to a quality competitive gymnastics team experience.

Coaches

Gerry Bellemare is the head coach and gymnastics director. He will attend all practices and meets. Kym Granger is an assistant coach, full time 6th grade teacher. Our other coaches include Robin Newell, Maya Kosak, Kayla Soucy, Gabriella Taylor, and Rachel Poulton.

We view our relationship with your child as a trusted adult, concerned with the whole child: athletically, socially, emotionally, academically and nutritionally. Please feel free to use us to help with anything we can help with.

We can be contacted at via phone or email, Gerry: (207) 213-0641 or gerrybellemare98@gmail.com; Kym: (207) 837-4574 or email: kksg@comcast.net (Kym). Texting works very well.

Priorities for gymnasts

Family first, academics second, gymnastics third. There will be sacrifices. There will be times when athletes will have to pass on dances, parties, and sleepovers in favor of practices and meets. This is part of the commitment the athlete makes to herself, her family, and her team. However, above all, gymnastics must be fun!!!

Practice Times

Practices will be held from September 18 through Regionals in mid-May.

*PRACTICE NIGHTS AND FEES

If your athlete is practicing only two nights per week, please follow this schedule:

Levels 4, 5, 6, and Gold: Tuesday and Thursday

Levels 2, 3, and Silver: Monday and Wednesday

If your athlete is practicing three nights per week, please follow this schedule:

Levels 4, 5, 6, and Gold: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Levels 2, 3, and Silver: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Of course, those practicing four nights per week will come each night.

Skills Class: Gerry will continue to offer the Friday night 5:30-7:30 skills class.

The fee is \$70 in six week sessions. If Friday nights are your preferred third or fourth night, this is fine, but *it isn't calculated in your team fee, nor can it be used as a make up for practice.*

Athletes may practice two, three, or four times a week, with commensurate team fees.

Gymnastics Team fees 2017-2018	Full Fee	Monthly payments
2 practices per week	\$1050.00	\$131.25
3 practices per week	\$1150.00	\$143.75
4 practices per week	\$1200.00	\$150.00

If the Y closes for a holiday, there will be no practices. There are no make-up sessions for missed practices.

Attendance at Practice

It is expected that gymnasts will attend all scheduled practices. If a gymnast will be missing practice please email or call Kym or Gerry and let us know. Acceptable excuses are illness, family event, school function such as a concert or play, or inclement weather. Homework is only an excuse if you regularly manage your time. Do not wait until the last minute to work on those long-term projects.

Before You Get To Practice

You need to eat before practice. If you are planning on eating supper after practice, you need to have a substantial snack before practice begins. This may be just what the busy gymnast needs to meet nutritional needs. No gum at practice, ever! We do not want you to choke. Meals will not be eaten during practice.

Practice Attire

The only appropriate workout wear for girls is a leotard. Spandex bike shorts/gymnastics workout shorts may be worn as well, as can a shorts unitard. Looser shorts or pants are NOT allowed during practice. Please be sure your athlete has a leotard or two, and if she is self-conscious, spandex bike shorts. It would be a good idea to leave a set of tight shorts and a leotard in your bag. Team competition leotards may not be worn at practice. **NO LEOTARD=NO PRACTICE.**

Gymnasts should be in their leotards at the beginning of practice. Please change at home if you will be late. *You may not wait on the side or at the front door for a teammate to arrive/change, or run over as she arrives.*

Participation at Practice

Gymnasts need to be on time, dressed for practice when they arrive, including having hair done, when practice begins and stay until the end of practice. Full participation in stretching is expected. You need to begin on time even if you are waiting for a teammate to arrive. If you are late, join the stretch that the group is doing and finish the stretching you missed at the beginning of the first event. Gymnasts are expected to stay in the gym and active for the duration of practice, leaving only to get a drink or use the restroom.

Personal Items during practice

Please place personal items in your gym bag, and leave your gym bag out of the way of people and equipment. Grips, hair elastics, leotards, and tape are the athlete's responsibility, and the athlete's alone. Parents do not use these items, so they are not expected to remember them. If your hair is longer than your ears, you need barrettes or elastics to keep your hair up.

Please be sure your gymnast has athletic tape—particularly if she is having something taped.

It's frustrating for other families to have their gymnast be out of tape when she isn't using it up herself.

If you forget needed personal equipment, you will have 30 push-ups for each item forgotten. If you forget your grips, you will not go on bars. If you forget your hair elastic, you must find one to borrow before practicing. If you forget your leotard, you will not be practicing.

Leave your cell phone in your gym bag at your own risk. We will not be ensuring or insuring that your cell won't get broken.

Stay off your phone during practice. If you wish to video yourself, please use the old gymnastics iTouch (the navy and green one). You may not text during practice. Coaches may ask to see the phone; if you choose not to show the to whom you are sending messages, *the phone will need to stay with a coach and be returned to the parent at the end of practice.* If athletes use their phone, coaches reserve the right to take phones and put them on the "cubes" during practice.

If your child calls you that she needs to come home, insist that she bring her phone to a coach to ensure that we know she's calling you to go home. We have had instances of athletes being upset with teammates, or having an injury or pain and not alerting coaches.

Safety

From the USA Gymnastics Safety Handbook:

“By the very nature of the activity, gymnastics carries a risk of physical injury. No matter how careful the gymnast and coach are, no matter how many spotters are used, no matter what height is used or what landing surface exists, the risk can NOT be eliminated. Risk can be reduced, but never eliminated. The risk of injury includes minor injuries such as bruises and more serious injuries such as broken bones, dislocations, and muscle pulls. The risk also includes catastrophic injuries, such as permanent paralysis or even death from landings or falling the back, neck, or head.”

Spotting

From USA Gymnastics Safety Handbook: “The primary purposes of spotting include: physically demonstrating proper body positions, physically identifying important changes of body position or transitions, providing reminders or cues to the athlete-use of light touch and/or verbal cues, physically assisting the performance of the whole skill or part of a skill or series, motivation-to alleviate fear and build confidence, providing a safety spot-ready to assist if necessary.” Also keep in mind “Realize that the goal is for the gymnast to be able to perform the skill alone. **It is advisable to avoid creating a dependence on spotting the gymnast. Dependence on spotting can actually slow a student's progress. Most gymnastics skills can be safely developed and learned through the use of progressions that require minimal or no spotting.** The use of pits, skill builder mats, and progressions permits the coach to develop the athlete's skill repertoire while reducing spotting. Spotting should be considered as just one of many techniques available to coaches for skill development.” Spotting of skills in competition has severe score penalties.

Cell Phone Numbers

As we the majority of parents are available by cell phone, it becomes more important that we know the fastest way to reach you. We will keep a list on the wall of the office to tell us how to best reach you during practice times in case of injury or illness with your child.

Physical and Mental Health

Please tell us verbally any conditions your child has that may be important to know. It is imperative that we know if your child has asthma, even if he/she doesn't carry an inhaler. It's helpful to know if your child is being treated for ADD or psychiatric conditions; if there is any coach you're comfortable talking with about this, we're glad to be brought in the loop. Allergies or food limitations are extremely helpful for us to know as well. If your child is going through a tough time at school or at home, please know that you can share that information with us. We care and will help as we are able. We want to assist in the development of the whole child.

Conversely, when we hear your child complaining of the same thing over a few nights, we will let you know as well. It may be a nagging injury, or it may be an annoying used-to-be friend at school. If we hear it repeatedly, we'll let you know about it.

Practice Structure

We will begin practice with some cardiovascular work (running, etc.) and stretching. Basic tumbling and event work will follow. Conditioning may occur at the beginning or end.

Moving Equipment

It is expected that all gymnasts will assist in moving equipment whenever necessary. Gymnasts are expected to continue moving equipment until all the needed equipment is at the right place. Gymnasts are required to maintain eye contact and communicate as necessary with each other moving the mats until the moving is complete. We need to work together at the end of practice to be sure the gym is secure and that Keep Off signs are posted. Please do not leave until the gym is secure, or until a coach dismisses you, whichever comes first. Plan to put away two items before leaving each practice if you leave early. No one leaves practice until all items are put away. Parents are allowed to help, if desired.

Teammates may be asked to help move equipment for teammates in another level. Please be cooperative, rather than complaining or disappearing into the closet or bathroom.

Parents, if you are in the gym and see a coach or athlete struggling with equipment, feel free to jump in and help. It will always be appreciated.

Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen

If you would like coaches to give gymnasts over the counter pain relievers, please write and sign a note give the coaches permission to dispense medicine. Please include the dosage. If you deem your child responsible enough to keep medications in his/her bag, that's fine with us.

Gym Behavior

We ask only that you have a positive attitude (can't = 10 pushups), come to practice with the intention of working, and work together with teammates. We'll only chase a gymnast back into the gym once before we give up for the night.

We use appropriate language in the gym. We do not say anything worse than "be quiet" to teammates (a meaner way of saying this will result in 10 pushups).

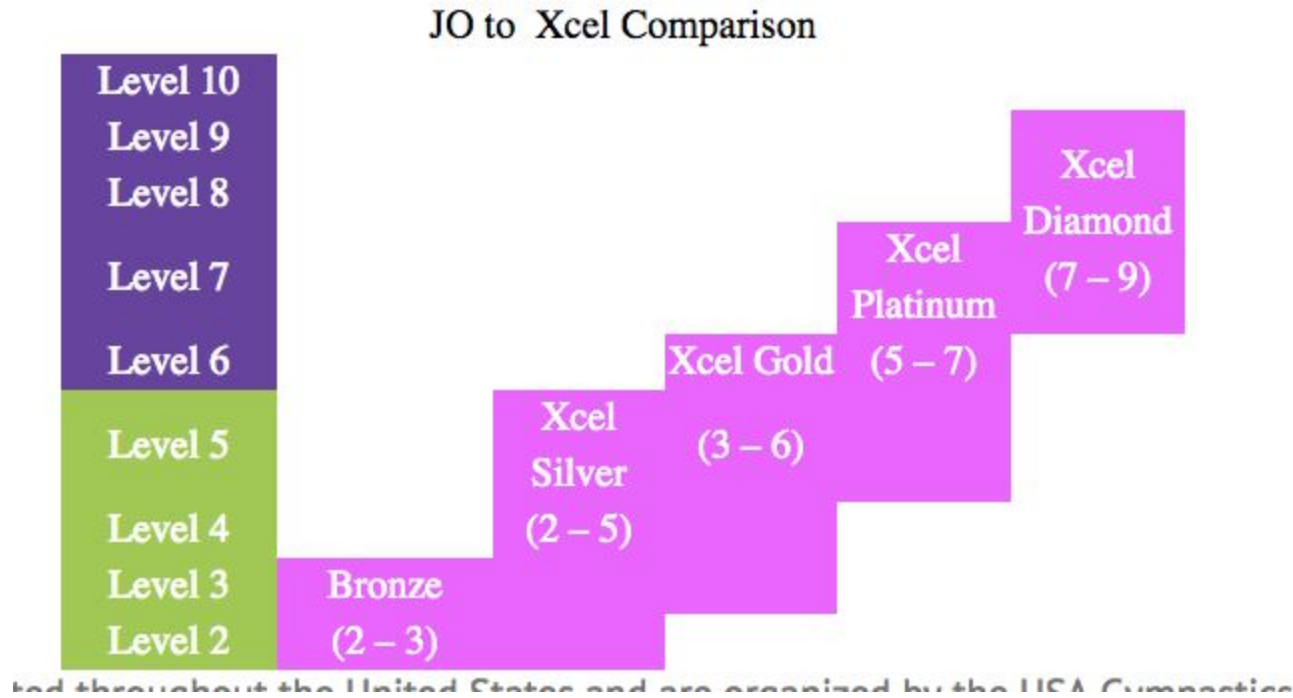
Crying

Crying is a powerful physical response to strong feelings. Crying is a healthy response to frustration, sadness, anger, and disappointment. Crying is also a personal emotion that does not need to be shared with onlookers and bystanders. Learning to control one's emotions is an important skill. In reality, an uninjured gymnast crying looks like a spoiled brat, a crybaby, or both. For this reason, there is no crying in the gym unless you are injured. If you need to cry, leave the gym and go the bathroom. You may take a friend. You may take a coach if you need to. We have no problem with crying in our gymnastics program so long as it takes place in a private, personal spot.

What level?

Our athletes either compete in the JO program (the numbers), or the Xcel program (the metals).

Here is a chart showing the comparisons.



Levels 2-5 are compulsory levels; all of the athletes do the same routine. Levels 6 and up, and all Xcel are optional routines, where there are some required elements, but the athlete is able to select skills that best show her proficiencies.

Our younger athletes begin at level 2, and our older ones begin at Silver. If this is your child's first year on the team, she will be one of these. As their skill level increases, and passing scores are achieved, athletes move up at the end of season. More information about the requirements will be included later in the handbook.

Parents

Be supportive of your child. YMCA youth sports are a chance for your child to grow and develop in a safe, fun environment. Cheer and encourage all gymnasts, and above all be positive. Model good sportsmanship. Officials and coaches are trying to provide a positive and enjoyable gymnastics experience for all athletes. Youth sports at the Y are for the kids. Let them practice, compete, have fun, and make mistakes and don't put pressure on them to be the next Simone Biles, Gabby Douglas, or Aly Raisman.

When questions or concerns do arise, ***please understand that complaining to other parents cannot solve your problems.*** In addition, problems cannot be solved if we do not know about them. *If you have concerns that warrant conversation, please voice them with a coach, not the other parents in the gym.*

Please know that we have your child's best interests at heart. Decisions are made with what we as gymnastics professionals feel will best help your child to be happy, healthy, and successful.

Provide unconditional love, encouragement and support to your young athlete. Please do not compare your child with other athletes. Each athlete is different with differing strengths

and weaknesses. It is unfair to you and your child to compare her to another athlete. Rather, look for the progress your child is making and celebrate it.

Parent-gymnasts interactions during practice

Parents are always welcome to watch practice. Please either stand on the other side of the wall, or sit on the bleachers.

Please support your child before and after practice, but please do not allow her to linger with you on the sidelines, and please do not call her over. If she is tired or sick, please take her home. If she is frustrated, please leave it to coaches to support her during practice.

Please do not discipline another athlete besides your own. Children have squabbles and conflicts they need to work through. It's part of growing up and learning to negotiate social situations. Please do not get involved. In all the years of coaching between us, we have yet to see a circumstance that was improved by parents getting involved the disagreement of children. All too frequently these either blow up or cause a current of discomfort between all adults who have knowledge of the situation.

It is our experience that gymnast disagreements resolve more quickly and completely when parents do not get involved

Issues and Concerns

If a parent or gymnast has a question or concern relating to potentially controversial or confidential subjects, it is asked that an appointment be made. During a meet or practice is not the time for an in depth discussion. Please avoid berating athletes (even your own) or coaches publicly. It is disrespectful, hurtful, and makes everyone uncomfortable. If you are not satisfied with the way an issue or concern has been addressed after speaking with the coaches, please contact our Executive Director, Sabrina Murphy.

Support for the program

If there should come a time when your athlete needs to either leave the team or the sport, please let us know. We want to be able to say goodbye, and to part on good terms. There are many good reasons for leaving our program or sport. If your athlete leaves, and decides he/she wants to return or visit, things will be comfortable for everyone.

If you remain with our program, we expect you to support it. If you cannot, you need to leave. If you choose to conduct yourself in a way that brings shame, embarrassment, or disgrace to our program, you and your athlete will need to leave the program.

Facebook and other social networks and computer mediated communication

We have a Bath YMCA Gymnastics group on Facebook. If you would like to be a member, please search for the group and request membership. Some teams have had significant issues with Facebook. Parents have "trash talked" other athletes, coaches, and gyms. Families have changed gyms under poor interpersonal conditions with disastrous, even litigious results. We want to avoid this. Please post with care.

Remember:

*Many of our athletes are Facebook Friends with athletes from other teams.

*Facebook changes its privacy controls all the time and without notice. You might think someone can't see it, but they may be able to without your knowledge.

*Basically, don't say anything online that you don't want your grandmother, school principal, or coaches seeing.

Social networks and texts between athletes

More and more, we are finding that we are asked to intervene over issues at least partly happening through texts, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. Please know, **that we will do what we can**, but often the worst of this happens, or is documented to have happened, on the phone/computer. If the athletes go to school together, please consult with the school. They may, or may not be able to help. The solution that those of us in schools are forced to give is this: **take it to law enforcement.**

Parents: Please consider following the law that states that children under 13 MAY NOT be on social networks, including the currently popular Instagram and Snapchat. This law is **Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule ("COPPA")**. I know it's hard, and it's unpopular, but the kids really aren't supposed to be on many forms of social media.

Please remember that YOU HAVE A CHOICE. You can say no. You can take the phone away. Please, please, please, take those phones at bedtime. Do not let your child be deprived of sleep because another child won't go to sleep. I know it will be hard, but once you've opened that Pandora's Box, you've opened your family to all sorts of things.

Here's something that was posted on Facebook recently. It's a very heartfelt and honest point of view from the mother of a middle school student:

Imagine that some (not all) of your child's friends got together for a sleepover, or went around town for a day. Normal behavior. It's okay. Not everyone can be included all of the time.

Then imagine that those same kids took photos, and came to your child, flaunting the photos, and told her (or him) all about what a great time was had without your child?

Does it break your heart to think about someone showing a photo to your child and saying "We had fun without you"?

That's instagram. That's Snapchat.

That's what it is, when a crowd of girls at a sleepover posts "Love These Girls!" It also says: "Look where I am! And where you aren't!"

As a parent, THIS SUCKS. For a kid, IT REALLY SUCKS!

If you are a parent, for the love of God monitor what your children post. I try my best to see what my kids post, and regularly, DAILY, I remind them that they never want anyone to feel hurt by a photo. Do we really need to document our every social interaction?

My middle schoolers don't have social media. It's hard enough for the high schoolers to handle it. The little one wanted it. I tell her: "We don't need to invite the girls having the sleepover that you weren't invited to into our living room."

Be responsible for your children. Talk to them. Teach them. Sure, stuff will get by. I'm not in a glass house. I'm not throwing stones. I am certain my daughters have posted something that has hurt someone else's feelings. I don't like that thought, but I know it's true. AND THAT IS A REFLECTION OF ME. But my intention is to bring light to a real issue that causes depression and anxiety in children.

We must and should take the time to be vigilant about our children's social media use until they are 18. It takes a lifetime of effort to instill values of consideration in a child.

Monitor. Teach. Do it. Please.

Gymnasts:

Screenshot everything. Anything a friend or frenemy posts that makes you uncomfortable, screenshot it. If someone is being a jerk to you, screenshot it. Share it with your parents. Share it with me. When we have evidence, we can do something about it.

Don't involve yourself. **Don't insert yourself into other people's drama.** I don't care if it's your best friend. Get them help, don't spread it, or gang up on another person. Before you know it, you will write something you'll regret, and then you're in trouble, too. Screenshot, sent it to a trusted adult, and then let it go.

People send your coaches things. You never know who will do it, and you will often be surprised who does it. We've received things from teammates who have long left the team, but are worried about you. If it leads one to believe that you are being bullied, in danger, or engaging in risky behavior, it's likely to be found eventually.

Bullying Prevention Policy

The Bath Area Family YMCA believes it is very important for all people to feel safe in our facilities and programs. We have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. We will do everything possible to ensure a safe and healthy environment is created and maintained for your family.

The Bath Area Family YMCA will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any participant. A gymnast shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another participant through words or actions.

Bullying is any single incident or pattern of behavior directed at another person that results in that person feeling intimidated, frightened, or harassed or results in physical or emotional injury of the person.

Four types of bullying:

1. Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things.

Verbal bullying includes:

- a. Teasing
- b. Name calling
- c. Inappropriate sexual comments
- d. Taunting
- e. Threatening to cause harm

2. Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships.

Social bullying includes:

- a. Excluding someone out on purpose
- b. Telling other children not to be friends with someone, or other shunning behavior
- c. Spreading rumors about someone
- d. Embarrassing someone in public
- e. The "Silent Treatment"

3. Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions.

Physical bullying includes:

- a. Hitting/kicking/pinching
- b. Spitting
- c. Tripping/pushing
- d. Taking or damaging someone's property
- e. Making mean or rude hand gestures

4. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

The Bath Area Family YMCA expects participants, family members and staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Head or Assistant Gymnastics Coach. Staff who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated and documented.

This policy applies to gymnasts at Bath Area Family YMCA sponsored activities, including all practices and meets, or at the Bath Area Family YMCA facilities. It also applies to all off-site meets.

The Bath Area Family YMCA will make reasonable efforts to keep a report of bullying and the results of investigation confidential.

YMCA staff will discuss this policy with their participants in age-appropriate ways and will assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. gymnasts who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the program.

If there is a violation of this policy, the following disciplinary actions will be taken:

First event: Warning- Y Staff will immediately take child aside, and review the bullying policy, and redirect that child. Solutions will be developed by the child and Y Staff to prevent similar behaviors in the future. The incident will be documented.

Second Incident: Meeting with the Coach- Parents will be notified and a meeting scheduled before the child returns to the program. The child and his/her parent(s) will meet with the Head or Assistant Gymnastics Coach to discuss the problem behavior and solutions to the problem.

Third Incident: In cases of severe or repeated bullying, the child will receive a consequence, which will include time spent away from the YMCA and all team activities.

Separation: In the event of dangerous bullying (such as serious physical violence or threats), or where repeated efforts to address a chronic problem have failed, the child may be asked to leave the program and/or forfeit participation in the YMCA

In the event of a serious episode, the Executive Director may choose to immediately remove the participant from the YMCA and all programming.

Class

Gymnasts are expected to conduct themselves with class. This means role model behavior (especially in public) and control of emotions (cry in front of people only when injured). You represent not only yourself, but your family, your team, and your community. Be sure to act accordingly.

Competition among teammates

While it is good to have someone who keeps you motivated because he/she is a little better than you, please do not concentrate on "beating" each other. You are a team. Behave as one. Let your teammate inspire you rather than you berating her.

Bath YMCA Gymnastics Team Parent Group

We have an active parent group, and encourage all parents to become involved in its activities. The goal of the group is to support the gymnastics team in achieving its goals. This includes, but is not limited to assisting in the administration of home competitions, fundraising, organizing celebrations, assembling flowers for special meets, etc. The parent group collects money for all meets not covered by the team fee as well as for various uniforms. The group meets monthly. **If you are in the building during a parent meeting, you are expected to attend the meeting.**

The parent group collects money for leotards, meet fees, etc. Please make checks out to the Bath YMCA Gymnastics Parents Group or **BYGPG**.

Fees

Membership and team fees are mandatory. The membership is an annual fee and will give you a discount on camps in the summer as well as unlimited youth Y use. The team fee covers all practices including vacations, and coaching at YMCA league meets from the first practice until the YMCA regional meet. If an athlete has an illness or injury lasting more than a month and a doctor's note indicating that an extended layoff is necessary for the safety of the athlete may have 1/9th of the team fee refunded (or waived if the fee is not yet fully paid) for each full month missed.

Athletes who do not attend practice for a month or more due to other activities (e.g. Participation in another sport, extended family vacation) will not be eligible for a refund or waiver of fees.

Team Fees

Please see the payment agreement for current fees

Covered in the team fee: Coaching and practices at meets.

NOT COVERED IN THE TEAM FEE:

Meet fees

The checks for regular season meet fees will be written by the parent group. Each athlete will need to have \$56 in her account with the parent group by November 30. Parents can either pay the \$56 directly, or the money may be fundraised.

Here's one way to do it:

We'll hold the Cartwheel-a-thon the week before Thanksgiving. Whatever funds an individual athlete raises will go first to raise her account to \$56, and then the rest will go to the equipment fund.

Other Financial Obligations

Team leotard, briefs, and shipping and handling: \$103.75

Late orders will be assessed a hefty charge by the production company, and may not arrive on time for events.

Team warm up: About \$70 A team order will be organized. We keep the same warm up until the company stops carrying it.

Grips and wristbands: approximately \$12 for palm guards, \$50 for dowels. All athletes need to wear grips. If your child needs her first pair of grips (palm guards for our new team members), please order them. They are available at websites like ten-o.com and gymsupply.com. A Google search will likely show up other options and

allow you to comparison shop. Please follow the directions on the web site to for sizing information. Gymnasts also need wristbands to wear underneath. There are neoprene ones available online, and most athletes are happier with terrycloth wrist bands available at Wal Mart or Olympia Sports or other similar stores. Well stocked workout bag: expense variable.

Optional cost: Tiger Paws-recommended for gymnasts with persistent, but non-damaging wrist pain: \$55 Your athlete may complain of sore wrists, especially if she is nine years old or older, just learning back handsprings, and also if she'd tumbling a lot. The pain tends to come from the wrist being hyperextended if the athlete is not getting to vertical when her hands hit. Ordering Tiger Paws or Golden Paws will help, and in most cases, eliminate the pain. These can also be ordered online.

Other expenses include: Item for food table brought to each home meet: expense variable. Transportation, meals, etc, to and from meets. Families may have to pay admission at meets, but usually not for regular season meets.

We may purchase matching bags this year...or not.

Compulsory Floor:

Compulsory gymnasts may need to meet with Kym on a separate occasion as well because the routines are new, and we WILL NOT be learning the whole thing at once, rather we will learn the routines in sections. We will do our best to learn during practice. All athletes use the same music. Our team will use the same track: the piano version of each level.

Optional Floor Music and Routines:

CHOREOGRAPHY: Optional athletes will need to find a Friday night or weekend time to meet with Kym sometime on weekends between Columbus Day and Veterans Day to put together routines. It will take 1-2 hours, and is best if two kids are working together at once.

Selecting floor music:

Floor music may not have words, and must follow a certain structure. It starts with a few moments of music which serves as a sound check for the athlete. As the music continues, it will have faster parts for tumbling, and slower parts for getting on the floor and catching your breath. If you choose to NOT purchase floor music, your music will more likely have a challenging arrangement, and probably have an abrupt ending. I'd like to strongly encourage you to purchase music, or select something from our collection which was purchased by another gymnast in another season. Here's our website to browse our limited, but free, options: <https://sites.google.com/site/bathyfloormusic/> .

Choosing floor music is either something families love or hate. There typically isn't any middle ground. Here are some guidelines that you might find helpful.

*Floor music can be expensive. You get what you pay for. Want to cut it yourself? Try this guide: <http://www.wikihow.com/Edit-Music-for-a-Gymnastics-Floor-Routine>

If you want it pre-cut, you can find many illegal and a few legal downloads on YouTube and use a YouTube to mp3 converter.

Willing to pay? There are pieces for \$0.99 on iTunes. Then you're up to the big money websites. Do a search for "gymnastics floor music" and you'll find a number of companies that will charge up to \$60, but you will have music. The quality is variable. The better site is floorexpressmusic.com.

I have a few pieces from past years, but unless you are a Platinum Xcel, it will need to be cut.

*Floor music lengths; these are MAXIMUMS

Xcel Platinum, Diamonds, Level 7 and up: 1:30 (one minute, 30 seconds) Level 6: 1:15

Xcel Silver, Gold: 1 minute

*We can do this one of two ways, either your athlete shares three pieces she would like, or I share three pieces I think would be good for her. Then the listener picks her favorite from the sharer's preference.

*The majority of coaches are women over age 30. If the music gives them a headache, the score will likely reflect that. This is one reason techno styles should be used sparingly.

*Parents: your opinion on floor music is likely to be as well-received as your opinion on clothes. Tread carefully. It is more important for her to love her music than you.

*The athlete's personality must be considered. If she doesn't like to be on stage or the center of attention, she needs something classical or movie themed—but NOT Disney. If she's a real ham, Broadway or pop songs are good. If she's cutesy, Disney themes can work.

*Skill counts too. If she is a powerful tumbler: sky high saltos in both directions, twisting layouts, than she can have powerful music. If she isn't, the music will be what's noticeable, and the fact that the athlete is totally overpowered. If her form is a concern, avoid slow music, which will only magnify the issues.

*Have your music approved by Kym NO LATER than Columbus Day weekend. We need to get routines choreographed by Veterans Day.

Moving up to team or up a level

We cannot guarantee a gymnast will move up even if she achieves the minimum score to pass. We need to determine level by the gymnast's proficiency with skills in the new routines. Gymnasts who have achieved the needed score must have ALL skills AND requirements before competing at the next level. The gymnast will also need to demonstrate that she is competitive at the present level. Your level will be determined by mid-November. Our goal this year is for each athlete to qualify for Regionals.

Moving an athlete to a different level is ultimately a coaching decision.

Moving a gymnast to a different level before she has achieved consistency and proficiency may give the gymnast a temporary confidence boost, but will ultimately do more damage to the gymnast's development.

The Xcel program, in our gym, is for gymnasts who are in grade six or above, or have had at least two seasons of compulsory competition. The purpose of this program is to provide an alternative optional level of competition to serve any of the following athletes: Those who have competed on the team at the compulsory level and would like to experience a basic

optional program. Those who have never been involved in competitive gymnastics, program but would really like to try optional gymnastics, rather than beginning at level 4. Those who have competed as an optional, but no longer have time to train for level 8 year round. Xcel gymnasts cannot move back to levels, but there ARE levels in Xcel.

Xcel gymnasts CAN be a walk on for a college team. Xcel is not a closed door, it is simply a different pathway. We can expect to see more Xcel gymnasts from other teams again this year.

The Xcel program has divisions, where the JO program has levels.

The compulsory levels require a score of 34 or higher at least once per season to pass to the next level for the next season.

Our level guidelines:

A gymnast has the skill when she can:

*do it five times consecutively

*do it on two different days

*no spot at all

Level 3: bars: front hip, good glide, good (flat hip) underswing dismount; beam: split leap, cross handstand hold, handstand quarter turn dismount; floor: round off-back handspring, straight arm backward roll to push up.

Level 4: vault: handspring over table; bars: glide kip, squat on to high bar, long hang kip; beam: cross handstand hold 2 secs, cartwheel, split leap with height and 120 degree split; straight and split jumps upper calf high; floor: front handspring with flat hips and rebound, round off-2 back handsprings connected with good form; smooth back walkover with split and straight legs upside down, full turn on toe, straight arm back extension.

Level 5: bars: flyaway, long hang pullover to underswing with flat hips, clear hip (no touching hips or thighs at all, consistent cast above horizontal; beam: back walkover, split jump to sissone, full turn; floor: back tuck (no whip), front tuck, two front handsprings connected with rebound.

Gold: vault: handspring over table; bars: squat on to high bar, long hang pullover, beam: full turn, cartwheel; floor: salto (somie), round off 2 back handsprings or two front handsprings

Platinum: bars: two of three: uprise, clear hip, or giant, kip; beam: two acro series, two B dance skills, floor: front pike OR layout ½, two different tumbling passes of three skills of which one is a salto, two B dance skills.

MEETS!

Meet attire

Team leotards are required. A measuring guide will be given to parents.

Payment will be due September 22. Bras cannot show underneath the leotard. Your leotard should hang in a safe closet at home with the brief and scrunchie over the neck of the hanger. Team leotards may not be worn to practice.

Team warm up must be worn to march into all meets.

Parent Volunteers

We need volunteers to work on the food table, score table, and as timers.

Volunteer for something you want to do before being plucked out of the stands five minutes before the meet starts. We need at least one volunteer per family.

Participation in meets

It is expected that all team members will participate in all meets, including the state meet. You must compete in three meets to be eligible by league rules to compete in the state meet

Behavior during meets

Gymnasts are expected to stay with their own squad for the duration of a meet. Gymnasts may not be in the stands and must let a coach know if they leave the competition floor to use the bathroom, etc. Gymnasts absolutely may not leave their designated area (squad) to sit with friends or family. You would not expect a baseball player to be anywhere but the dugout or the field. You would not expect a basketball player anywhere but the court or bench. You can celebrate your accomplishments at the conclusion of the meet.

Meet Length

The average meet can take as long as six hours. Many are about 2 and half hours for the competition, after a 1.5 hour warm up, with 45 minutes for awards. Most competitions run in a format similar to the ones listed below.

Gymnasts are expected to stay at the meet (on the floor mat) until all awards for all participants have been given out. It is rude and disrespectful to other competitors to do otherwise. Gymnasts should cheer on those getting awards. Gymnasts must wear team leotards to receive awards unless told otherwise at the conclusion of the meet.

Parents: please be aware that your child will need to be at the gym five to six hours for a meet, from warm ups to awards. Please plan accordingly.

Traditional Format

Gym opens/stretching: This is the general stretching and warm-up period. Gymnasts also have this time to get bar settings.

Warm Up - The athlete will warm up prior to competing. This time is for general stretching and practicing routines. Athletes will warm up with the other athletes with whom they will compete (competition group). The number of times athletes are allowed to practice skills varies by skill level and equipment. Teams will often "block" their time to include all gymnasts on their team.

Competition - After entire competition group has completed warm up they will march in. This is the traditional Olympic-type procession for teams to present themselves to the spectators. Teams are introduced and stand at attention for announcements and the National Anthem.

Gymnasts will be grouped according to their competitive level and go to each event. Just so you know, Olympic rotation is vault, bars, beam, floor. Usually the highest level athletes have this rotation, but there are many variations.

Awards - Awards are distributed after the entire competition group has competed. If the organization running the meet is organized, you may only have to wait for five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out; however, it has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. You may leave the competition after ALL age groups and levels have received their awards.

Warm up-Compete format

Gymnasts have a general stretching period, and warm up skills on their first event. The gymnasts march in. Next, gymnasts will compete on the event they warmed up on. After the rotation finishes, gymnasts will march to the next event and immediately begin to warm up for that event, and then compete. This will happen until all events are completed.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

* Athletes will treat your coaches and teammates with respect. Be kind to those athletes younger than you, and do not hold yourself out as better than others. There is no place in the gym for rude or belittling comments, displays of anger or disgust, or talking back. .

Athletes should be in uniform and ready to compete when they arrive. . Athletes will wait with their parents until a coach arrives and directs them to stretch on the floor mat.

* Athletes must remain in the designated competition area throughout the course of warm-ups and competition.

. Each athlete should accept his/her place in the line-up and the scores he/she receives with dignity and without criticism. A meet is no place for crying and uncontrolled emotions. Athletes cannot control the scores they get nor can they control the performances of any other athlete.

. Athletes should not keep track of their event scores or placement during the competition.

*Athletes' concentration should center on their performance.

Cheer loudly and often, but do so in a courteous manner. Obnoxious screaming may be acceptable for other teams, but not for us.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

. Be courteous, respectful and polite to all meet officials, hosts, competitors and coaches.

*Spirit is a big help. Wear the team colors if you wish.

Cheer loudly and often, but do so in a courteous manner. Obnoxious screaming may be acceptable for other teams, but not for us.

Please show proper respect to all officials and coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason, to support your child's interests. Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keepers, etc.)

*If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores, please speak with a coach. It would be an unusual situation in which a coach would ask a judge why a score is low (a formal, rather contentious process called an inquiry. It would be even more unusual for the judge to agree and change the score. There is no instant replay in gymnastics.

. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You NEVER KNOW who is sitting near you.

. 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.

. In case of injury during warm-up or competition, please stay in the spectator area until your child's coach flags you onto the floor.

. 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. . NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera 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.

*Please do not compare the performance of your child to other parents' children. Nothing makes a parent an enemy of other parents faster than, "My Susie was so much better than your Sally, but got a lower score. Can you believe it? I mean, did you see Susie's routine? My Susie only fell once and your Sally fell twice! Plus, my Susie is better in general and you know it! Oh, my Susie's gonna be upset with your Sally. She's gonna be mad at her! I mean, how can I explain this to Susie? ." Do not badmouth any children or their performances in the stands. Please support all the athletes. Act the way you want your children to act.

*Please know that we have your child's best interests at heart. Decisions are made with what we as gymnastics professionals feel will best help your child to be happy, healthy, and successful.

*Provide unconditional love, encouragement and support to your young athlete. Please do not compare your child with other athletes. Each athlete is different with differing strengths and weaknesses. It is unfair to you and your child to compare her to another athlete. Rather, look for the progress your child is making and celebrate it.

Awards

All athletes will be called up and stand on the podium according to their all around score. They will remain in their spot for all events. Ribbons will be handed out for the correct placement, but athletes will not move.

Judges

Gymnasts and parents may not have any discussion with judges relating to routines and scores at any time. Please see a coach at the next practice or after the meeting if you have a question. If you are interested in becoming a judge, please see Kym. We are always in need of interested people.

Meet set up and take down

Parents are needed to set up the gym the before and after meets. This takes about twenty minutes prior to meet warm ups and following the awards ceremony. It's pretty painless, but we do need some assistance

The following is from USA Gymnastics Rules and Policies:

II. THE GYMNAST IS OBLIGATED TO:

D. Perform to the best of her ability in the meet.

E. Be familiar with the rules of the meet and schedule of the meet events and lineup.

F. Be present at the site of the meet for sufficient warm-up.

G. Remain in the area of competition designated for gymnasts, as competitors or as observers.

H. Obey warm-up regulations and rotation schedules. Conform to the regulations of the meet. Upon violating its

rules, she may be warned by the Meet Referee once; the second time she shall be told that her right to continue

competition is terminated for the remainder of the meet.

I. Present herself in the proper attire (No bare midriffs, backless leotards, leotards with "spaghetti" straps, T-shirts or Boxer shorts). NO underwear (including sport bras) should be exposed. The leg opening on competitive

leotards must NOT be cut or rolled above the gymnast's hipbone. A deduction for inappropriate attire will be

applied for any infraction. Sleeveless leotards and unitards, as well as gymnastics footwear, are permitted for

competition. Leotard and/or warm-up uniform should be worn for opening, award, and closing ceremonies.

J. Be well groomed in her appearance:

1. Clean attire.

2. Hair secured away from the face.

3. No jewelry, with the exception of one pair of stud earrings (one in each ear).

K. Accept the received score without criticism or comment.

L. Remain in the areas designated for competitors at all times while not performing, with all of her belongings in her competition bag neatly placed out of sight.

M. Eat or drink outside of the competition area (exception; water bottles should be allowed, or a water fountain should be accessible in order for athletes to stay hydrated.)

N. Be courteous, respectful and polite to all meet officials, coaches, hostesses, competitors and associated persons.

- Turn off cell phone (or set to vibrate mode) while in the "field of play" to avoid disturbing the competition.

O. Exhibit self-control and calmness in the case of a fall or injury.

P. Be aware that infringement of obligations could lead to deduction and/or expulsion by the jury.

Other information

Donations

We freely accept donations of bags of ice, baggies, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, bandages, athletic tape, and hair elastics.

Backyard Trampolines

Most parents and gymnasts know the risks involved with this sort of toy. Please, if you choose to go on a backyard trampoline, please do not practice back somies. Learning it without coaching on a backyard trampoline usually results in very poor technique which tends to take many months to correct.

Bars at Recess

Gymnasts who play excessively on bars at school will end up with rips even faster than those who don't. Please choose wisely. **STAY OFF THE BARS!** I know it's hard, because you can do better and fancier tricks than the other kids, but you **MUST** stay off those bars.

Piercings, Tattoos, and Hair Dye

Pierced ears are fine (one hole). Other piercings and tattoos must be located so that they cannot be seen when the athlete is wearing the team leotard, either at practice and at meets. Hair needs to be a color that occurs naturally on humans.

Training at Home

Our athletes have very limited practice time. Athletes who spend time training strength and flexibility outside of practice time are able to make much more effective use of their hours skill training in the gym. Please use this list to help you select exercises to work on at home. It would be best if athletes tried to work on these things for twenty minutes a day. A chin up bar and an ab roller (the wheel thing) would be useful.

Splits held for 1 minute, bridges

Start with three sets of 10 Hollow rocks

Arch rocks Push ups

Handstand push up dips

On a chinning bar: tuck knees to belly Pike leg lifts

Mountain climbers (legs) Ankle raises

Tuck jumps Sit ups

Start with three sets of 5

Handstand push ups all the way down

On a chinning bar: pull ups/chin ups (hands forward) Straddle leg lifts

Wall sits-hold 30, then 45, then 60 seconds-take a break in between Handstand touch shoulders

Handstands of all kinds: facing wall, facing away from the wall, regular handstands

Hold splits at least one minute

Jump rope fast-1 minute jump, 1 minute rest, try to do three times

With permission, make a tape beam on the floor (of the living room?) and practice skills.

Copyright September 2017 Kym Granger