

**Parent & Gymnast Team Handbook**

**Welcome to the Team!**

Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics (BRAG) would like to welcome your family to our competitive team program. Providing a fantastic gymnastics experience is what BRAG is all about. Our goal is to create the mental and physical discipline needed for competition within a framework of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Learning to be comfortable in a competitive situation is a positive experience and aids in a child's emotional development. We are here to support each child in their hopes, dreams, and dedication towards excellence in the sport of gymnastics. Competitive gymnastics is challenging and there are numerous positive aspects of the sport that are transferable to your child’s future pursuits in life.

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

**T**ogether

**E**veryone

**A**chieves

**M**ore

There is no "I" in TEAM. This does not mean your child or you are not important to us. It simply means the whole is stronger than the sum of its parts. Working together toward a common objective, we have a greater chance of achieving something significant with our competitive program.

The purpose of this team handbook is to give you a better idea of what our goals are and how we operate as a TEAM. If you have any questions about any aspect of the program please feel free to ask and we will be more than happy to answer.

Once again, we are excited to have you as part of our TEAM.

**Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics’ Competitive Program is to inspire and train individuals who have the interest, desire, and ability to participate in the sport of gymnastics at the competitive level.

**INTENT**

Purpose - Maximize each individual's gymnastics potential in a safe and enjoyable atmosphere.

Method - Our highly-trained gymnastics staff will use specific gymnastics progressions to teach the correct fundamentals and basic skills. These fundamentals help the gymnast gain the knowledge and ability to safely progress to the maximum level possible within the United States of America Gymnastics’ standards.

Endstate - Through competitive gymnastics, BRAG will help each child gain greater self-confidence and self-image. We will also aid in the life lessons transferable to all pursuits in their future.

**COACHING STAFF:**

Competitive Program Director: Wayne Boyd

Optional Head Coach: Wayne Boyd

Compulsory Head Coach: Mallorie White

Xcel Head Coach: Quianna Foulke

**INTRODUCTION**

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

Competitive gymnastics is a unique sport which requires the full support of the family for any gymnast to be successful.

Life changes for families to keep in mind:

At the beginner team levels, Xcel Bronze, Silver, and Gold and Junior Olympic (JO) Level 3, 4, and 5, the number of hours of practice per week are relatively few. As your daughter progresses up the competitive ladder, the hours and days of practice per week will continue to increase. During the summer, we may add additional hours to their training schedules. Some of the practices may be held during the day, as opposed to the evening, to take advantage of the increased availability of space and equipment.

You may need to adjust your schedule to be available to drive your gymnast to and from practice. We understand in many cases both parents work and carpooling is a very common transportation alternative.

Several weekends during the competition season will be dedicated to competitions (meets). The competition season length is dependent upon the competitive program and level. Generally ranging from December through May.

Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life.

Gymnasts must develop good study habits and homework will need to be done efficiently due to practice schedules. It has been the experience of most teachers that students who are involved in a team program, such as gymnastics, tend to have good grades and learn to manage their time more effectively.

**COMPETITIVE PROGRAM POLICIES**

**Trial phase**

All incoming competitive gymnasts will be observed and evaluated by the team coaching staff for acceptance and placement in the competitive program. Coaches may also request a month's probation in some instances.

**Team guidelines**

1. Gymnastics training is exclusive to BRAG. Gymnasts may not train at any other gym or camp while competing and/or representing this facility unless approved by her head coach. They may not participate in private lessons from anyone who is not part of BRAG’s coaching staff. However, gymnasts may be allowed to train at another facility when on an extended vacation.

2. Each gymnast is expected to be on time and attend all scheduled practices to maintain team status. Gymnasts are expected to be on the floor ready to work out when practice begins. If you anticipate being late or absent, you are to notify the office via a phone call or e-mail before the class starts so your coach can plan team workouts accordingly.

3. Please keep in mind there is no childcare provided at the gym, so we ask your gymnast to arrive no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the beginning of practice unless accompanied by an adult. They should remain quietly in the front lobby area or the café area. There will be no tumbling, horseplay, running, etc. anywhere in or outside the gym. Absolutely no one is to use the equipment before their scheduled class time (or during break time). Gymnasts must be picked up no later than 10 minutes after class ends.

4. Proper workout attire is required. A properly fitting leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. No shorts, biketards, shirts, pajamas, etc., however, fitted bike shorts or leggings (during the winter months) are acceptable. Hair should be appropriately tied and/or clipped back so as not to interfere in any way during the practice. No jewelry of any kind may be worn during practice. All competitive gymnasts are required to use deodorant at each practice.

5. All gymnasts are required to bring a gym bag with the appropriate equipment as listed by the coaching staff to each practice. Gym bags are to be stored in the cubbies during practice.

6. Only healthy snacks are permitted and they must remain in the gym bags or refrigerator until ready to eat in the designated break areas. Please no vending machine snacks during practice time, however, the glass front BRBC fridge stocks approved snacks. Water is the only beverage allowed during practice (with the gymnast’s name marked clearly on the bottle) and must remain in their gym bag or BRAG Cafe refrigerator when not in use. Each gymnast is responsible for cleaning up their own trash/mess. **Absolutely no gum, candy, food, or drink is permitted on the workout floor.** Spills degrade equipment, while also creating insect and rodent issues. All food and beverages in the refrigerator are thrown away at the end of the week.

7. Gymnasts may not leave the workout area or competition floor without the expressed permission of the coaching staff.

8. Interaction between gymnast and parents (visually or verbally) during workouts or at competitions is not allowed. A distracted gymnast is a prime candidate for injury. Contact the front office staff if you need to communicate with a gymnast on the workout floor. Remember

Commandment No, 3 of "The Ten Commandments for Gymnastics Parents."

*"Thou shalt not coach your child ... You have taken your child to a*

*professional coach. Your role is to support, love and hug your daughter.*

*The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not*

*offer advice on technique or skill selection. This is not your area. This will*

*only serve to confuse your child and prevent the*

*gymnast/coach bond from forming."*

9. All injuries, no matter how small, must be promptly reported to the coaching staff by the gymnast at the time of the injury. Open communication between the coach and gymnast is extremely important, the gymnast needs to learn to communicate directly to the coach, not through the parent.

10. Coaching technique and discipline are not subject to compromise with parents or gymnasts. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters, as they are ultimately responsible for each child's well-being at practice and competitions.

11. All competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. Gymnasts must attend every workout the week prior to any competition. Special situations must be discussed with the coach well in advance of the competition.

12. BRAG is a place for training and focusing on gymnastics. It is not a place for gossiping or discussing social events. This behavior is disruptive to the workout of others trying to focus and train. A warning will be given to the gymnast disrupting practice. If it continues, they will be sent home early.

13. If you wish to discuss an issue or have questions for the coaches you must contact the coach by e-mail at team@bragnow.com. An appointment must be scheduled if you wish to discuss anything regarding your child’s skill level. Do not approach the coaches during warm-up, break, or practice as this disrupts the focus of the workout. Please keep in mind the coaches may have obligations after practice and cannot stay to address questions and/or concerns. If your gymnast and/or family needs immediate help for serious conflicts, important issues, or problems regarding another gymnast, coach, family, please notify Wayne, Mallorie, or Quianna immediately to assist in resolving the problem at hand.

14. Private lessons are not allowed to replace/makeup for regular class time. All private lessons are to be paid for prior to the lesson. Privates lessons with any person not affiliated with BRAG are not allowed and is a reason for immediate dismissal from the team.

15. Cell phones/electronics are not to be used during practice or competitions. If you need to reach your daughter before practice is finished, please call the front office. Cell phones can only be used with permission from her coach during practice.

16. A parent must notify the front desk, prior to the beginning of practice, if their child needs to leave early. This also pertains to all gymnasts that drive themselves. Gymnasts are not allowed to leave the gym for any reason during practice. If she needs to retrieve something out of her car, she needs to let an office staff know and someone will accompany them to ensure their safety. All visitors must wait until after practice to talk to your child.

17. Gymnasts are required to change in the bathroom, not in the lobby or gym area.

18. Rumor, innuendo, and criticism is not acceptable behavior from a gymnast or parents and will be cause for immediate dismissal from the team. BRAG strives to create a positive, competitive environment. Drama and negativity has no place in BRAG’s competitive program.

19. Do not allow your child to go to the pool/sunbathe before practice or competition. This is very draining and can increase the risk of injury when exhausted during practice.

**Termination of Enrollment**

The coaching staff has the right to suspend or ask a parent to terminate enrollment due to disciplinary problems, especially when their actions impair the safety and progress of the other gymnasts.

Gymnasts may be dismissed from the team for the following reasons:

1. Excessive unexcused absences (average of 2 or more per month)
2. Refusal to participate to the fullest extent of their ability
3. Gossiping, bullying, socializing, or horseplay during practice
4. Excessive tardiness
5. Continuous poor attitude
6. Training at another facility without permission from the Competitive Program Director
7. Participation in sports/activities which conflict with gymnastics training
8. Non-payment of tuition or booster fees
9. Poor sportsmanship of gymnast or family members
10. Disrespect from gymnasts or parents towards coaches, staff, or other gymnasts
11. Foul language
12. Inappropriate use of social media

If violation of rules or policies results in the dismissal from the team, all fees and tuition payments are forfeited and no refunds will be issued.

**Competitive Team Participation is a Year-Round Commitment**

The competitive program tuition is determined on a yearly basis; however, payments are made on a monthly schedule. Payments must be received by the front office on the first of each month. Payments made after the tenth of each month must include a $25.00 late fee. Competitive program accounts must be current and paid in full for your gymnast to participate in the competitive season. Summer sessions may be combined into one payment.

Notice of intent to cancel enrollment must be made in writing via e-mail or by completion of a Drop Notice Form 30 days prior to the gymnast’s final workout. If a family fails to notify the front office, they are responsible for the following months tuition. Written notification must also be given to the Bull Run Booster Club Treasurer.

There are no make-ups, discounts, or pro-rating of accounts due to an absence. The competitive program is greatly discounted in comparison to other programs. Any cancelled classes by BRAG due to coach’s training, competitions, etc. will not be made up. Team often has practices when the gym is closed for recreational classes. A doctor’s note is required if the gymnast has an injury that requires her to sit out of practice. Injured gymnasts are expected to come to practice, but will follow a conditioning guide adapted to her injury. To return to a full workout, we must receive a doctor’s note noting a full return. Please contact the front office as soon as a return date is set. Booster fees are still due during a medical hold.

Each gymnast must be up to date with their USAG athlete registration and VA membership. These fees are renewed yearly each June/July through the BRBC.

Gymnasts are required to obtain team competition and exhibition leotards, warm ups, etc. as part of the competitive team program. All team leotards and warm up are selected by BRAG. In addition, gymnasts are required to carry a gym bag with pre-designated items to each practice.

As a member of BRAG’s competitive program, all gymnasts are required to attend and be actively involved in all gymnastic activities related to this facility (fundraising projects, exhibitions, meets, Spring Fling, etc.).

**Parent Commitment**

1. Make sure gymnast attends all scheduled workouts, meets, exhibitions, and special functions/fundraising activities on time.

2. Do not leave gymnasts unattended at BRAG more than 10 minutes prior to practice starting nor pick them up later than 10 minutes after practice ends.

3. Membership in the Bull Run Booster Club (BRBC) is highly recommended. Families should attend BRBC meetings to stay abreast of BRBC activities. Meeting notices are posted in the gym and reminders sent via e-mail.

4. Pay attention to practice schedules and emails when distributed.

**Choreography**

BRAG will approve each gymnast’s floor music and determine the composition of routine. Routines will be choreographed for all Xcel levels and JO Levels 6 and above. These will be done during the summer session. For Gold, Platinum, and all JO levels a special session is required at an additional cost. BRAG will coordinate choreography session dates and times through the team@bragnow.com email address.

**Grips**

JO levels 4-10 and Xcel Gold and Platinum gymnasts will be asked to purchase a pair of grips. Levels 8-10 are required to buy second pair of grips. We recommend the “Just Right” grips, either buckle or Velcro, from Gibson Athletics (gibsonathletics.com). If these are too small, we recommend “Blues Buckle Uneven Bar Grips” from Ten-o (www.ten-o.com). The gymnast’s hands need to be measured before ordering grips. Please consult a coach before ordering if you are unsure of what to get. If your gymnast is required to have two sets of grips they both need to be “usable” as both pairs need to be ready to use in case of problems. Matching Gibson wristbands can be purchased as well, in white, black, or navy only for competition.

**Meet Information**

Before the beginning of each competitive season a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be handed out to the parents. Meets may be added, changed, or cancelled by coaches only. All gymnasts are expected to attend all regular season meets and will be billed accordingly by the BRBC.

One to two weeks prior to a competition, parents will receive an email that includes the meet location, session times, and host hotel information (if required). This information is provided by the host gym and is forwarded once it is available. Families are responsible for their own travel and hotel arrangements. It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out meet information late or make last minute changes. At no time is a parent or family member allowed to contact the host gym for any information. Any questions you have may be emailed to team@bragnow.com

Most competitions run in "**Capital Cup**" format.

**Open Stretch Up** - Between 20 to 30 minutes. This time is for general stretching and warming up.

**March In** - All teams line up and are presented to the audience and judges, which may be followed by the playing of the National Anthem. This takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

**Timed Warm Up/Competition** - Gymnasts go to their first event and warm up their routines. This can range from 15 to 30 minutes. Once warmed up each gymnast will perform their routine. When this is done, the team rotates to the next event and repeat the process until all four events are finished.

**Awards** - Once the competition is finished host prepares the awards. This can take 15 to 30 minutes before awards are ready. The awards ceremony typically lasts 30 to 60 minutes.

Occasionally meets run in the "**Traditional Format**". This is when all four events are warmed up prior to competing.

**Requirements for Competition**

1. **Eligibility** - Gymnast must have all necessary fees paid and be considered an active and eligible gymnast.

2. **Performance Level** - Mastery of skills is based on performance in workouts. A gymnast will not be allowed to compete an event unless she can perform ALL required skills as per compulsory and/or optional guidelines published by USA Gymnastics guidelines at least 2 weeks prior to the meet.

3. **Attendance** - Gymnasts arriving late/leaving early consistently or missing an excessive number of practices may be scratched from the upcoming competition. Gymnasts must have perfect attendance of all practices the week prior to a meet or may be removed from competition. Please notify the coach via e-mail in advance regarding extenuating circumstances. (Note: Meet fees are not refunded when a gymnast is scratched from a meet.)

4. **Attitude** - A positive attitude is important and showing proper respect to coaches and teammates is a requirement. Gymnasts must be emotionally ready for the competitive arena. A gymnast who has a poor attitude and/or refuses to participate in drills or attempt skills will be scratched from competition.

5. **Scheduled Meets** – On average five to ten meets will be scheduled during the competitive season. Off season or extra meets are by the coach's discretion only. All team gymnasts are expected compete in all scheduled meets unless sick or injured.

6. **Missing Meets** - Gymnasts canceling or becoming ineligible for a meet will be subject to a loss of monies the BRBC has already spent on entry fees.

7. **Expenses** - Each gymnast is responsible for paying her own meet entry fee. These entry fees will vary and the BRBC will bill you accordingly. Meet fees are generally between $80.00 - $115.00 per meet and are payable to BRBC. Each gymnast is responsible for her own transportation to and from the competition, hotel (if needed), and meals. The coach's hotel fees, food and travel expenses are billed and paid for by the BRBC. These expenses will be determined at a later date.

**Moving from Level to Level**

All gymnasts repeat a level sometime during their career. This can be very beneficial and must not be seen as a “failure.” A second-year gymnast is extremely competitive and is an opportunity for their self-confidence to grow. It is extremely important a gymnast practice at the level consistent with her skills. Expecting a gymnast to train at a level she is not physically or mentally ready for can be detrimental to her self-confidence.

Moving up from a level is decided by the coaches and is based upon:

1. Coachability

2. Attendance

3. Mastery of skills

4. Attitude

5. Work ethic

6. All Around scores

Although meet scores are used as a criteria guideline to advance levels it is not a guarantee. The decision to advance to the next level will be made in the best interest of the gymnast and team. As a gymnast moves up, her responsibility to work out and participate in competitions increase.

**Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts**

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

Come prepared and presentable:

* No nail polish
* Post earrings only
  + Only one pair is allowed by USAG
* No excessive makeup, glitter, etc.
* Be on time
* Arrive with appropriate meet hair
* Arrive in competition leotard and warm ups.
  + There is not always time or a room to change.

Do not spend the evening before competition at the pool.

You are representing Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics, be friendly, courteous, and display good sportsmanship always.

Stay focused on the competition. Talking with parents, relatives or friends is inappropriate and unacceptable during the meets. This could cause a loss of points for your team and possible dismissal from the team.

During practice and competition, full attention must remain on the instructions of your coach, not friends or family.

Gymnasts are required to stay on the competition floor until completion of the awards ceremony.

You should never leave the competition facility without permission from your coach. You should always be accompanied by another team member or coach when leaving the facility.

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

If you are staying to watch another teammate compete or if you arrived early for warm ups, stay seated in the bleachers; do not wander out onto the competition floor. As per USAG regulations, only competitors in that session are allowed on the floor.

Gymnasts must stay in their rotation group sitting quietly until the last competitor has finished.

Warm ups, grips, and any other items you brought should be kept in your gym bag and near you or under your chair (not with Mom and Dad).

The meet is not complete until all awards have been handed out. The other gymnasts have waited patiently to receive their awards and have applauded your efforts. You owe them the same consideration. Coaches will also attend award ceremonies if time allows. At NO point is cell phone usage allowed during awards. They are a distraction. You may use your phone after awards are finished.

It is important to remember a score for any routine is an evaluation of one single performance in your career as a gymnast, not a permanent label defining you or your abilities. Each meet teaches you more about your abilities as a gymnast, competitor, and human being which are necessary ingredients for success at higher levels of competition. Learning to deal with success and “failure” is a huge part of gymnastics. You will win some and you will lose some, it’s how you deal with each that is a life lesson we strive to help you learn.

Regardless of the outcome of a routine or overall competition, crying is not an appropriate response. Please refrain from this type of behavior, it affects your team.

**Meet Etiquette for Parents**

1. Team Spirit is a big help. Wear the team colors, or better yet, one of our BRAG shirts or hoodies.

2. Your gymnast is part of the Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics team. She competes not only for herself, but for Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics, her teammates, and coaches.

3. Please show proper respect to all officials and coaches at every competition. Under NO circumstance should you attempt to contact any official (judges, score keepers, meet director, VAUSAG, etc.) on the competition floor during or after a meet. If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you should contact your coach. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the Meet Director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast, but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.

4. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You never know who is sitting near you (i.e. parents of the gymnast you just made a remark about). We want all gymnasts to be successful and applaud their hard work and dedication to the sport as we do our own children.

5. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, they are not allowed to have contact with family or friends until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with focus. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach's job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and teach her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms her own. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps her up and motivates her to do her best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be over-confident. A terrible bar routine may provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on her coach's advice, not a distraction from off the competitive floor. Even a disappointed look or action/reaction from her parents could be detrimental to the rest of her performance.

6. As coaches, we know you mean well with your comments, but they may not be appropriate for the long-term training of your gymnast. Be supportive, but do not add additional pressures to the gymnast before or during a competition.

7. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives are not allowed onto the competition floor. You must remain in the spectator area.

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

9. No flash photography is permitted during a meet.

10. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about 1-2 hours prior to the competition. Each gymnast should carry a small snack (crackers, fruit, granola bars) and water in her gym bag. No junk food (i.e. chips, candy bars, etc.) and no colored beverages.

11. All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not. They need to cheer all award recipients-especially their teammates.

Please remember your child’s success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are. But, having a child who is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient, and tries their best IS a direct reflection of your parenting.

**GYM BAG PACKING LIST**

• Grips and wrist bands (level 8-10 - two broken-in pairs)

• A copy of her floor music (Xcel gold-platinum and all JO optional levels)

• Competitive leotard

• Tape and pre-wrap

• Hair repair items

• Deodorant and personal hygiene items

• Any braces or supports needed

• Necessary medicines (Coaches must be made aware)

• Water bottle

• Nail clippers

• Good luck buddy/item

• Money for meals

**GLOSSARY OF GYMNASTICS TERMS**

**Active** - A gymnast is considered active when they are current in their payment of Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics fees, Bull Run Booster Club fees, and attends regularly scheduled practices.

**All Around Score** - A gymnast's total score from all four events.

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

**Eligible** - A gymnast who is current with the BRBC, Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics, and USAG fees, has not had disciplinary problems, and is considered ready by the coach.

**Inactive** - A gymnast who has officially dropped or whose Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics fees are 30 or more days delinquent.

**Ineligible** - A gymnast who is not current with the BRBC, Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics, or USAG fees, has had disciplinary problems, or is considered not ready by the coach.

**Invitational Meet** - A meet, usually with a specific theme, hosted by any gymnastic club.

**Optional Routines** - Routines developed and choreographed by the coaches or by a choreographer the coach has recommended and/or approved for each gymnast to be used in all Xcel and JO levels 6-10, and Elite. The routines will be individualized for each gymnast's strength, style, and difficulty. No choreography takes place without consent/recommendation of the coach. Choreography must be done in the summer session to learn and perfect the routine. The selection of music for each individual gymnast's routine is primarily up to the team coach(es).

**Qualifying Score** - The all-around score needed for entry into State Championship, Regional and National competitions. Normally this score is determined by USA Gymnastics but in some cases, may be changed according to a particular state's or region's needs.

**State Championship** - In most cases, the season finale, where qualified gymnasts compete with other gymnasts throughout the state. Higher level gymnasts may go on to compete in Regional or National level competitions.

**USAG** - USA Gymnastics

**Xcel** - A program designed to offer a broad-based, affordable, competitive experience outside the traditional Junior Olympic program to attract and retain a diverse group of athletes.

**COMPETITION LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS**

**Junior Olympic Program**

**Level 3** - The first major compulsory competitive level. If decided to do so by individual gyms, USAG Invitational and local sanctioned meets may be attended. Gymnasts receive awards based on scores earned on each event in their age, level, and division. Level 3 is the stepping stone to future higher levels.

**Levels 4 and 5** - A continuation of the compulsory competitive level with training on more advanced optional skills. Gymnasts will compete at USAG Invitational meets receiving awards based on scores earned on each event in their age, level, and division.

**Level 6** - This level is called "modified optional." At this level, the gymnasts are expected to perform specific compulsory requirements, as well as skills that highlight their personal strengths and style of dance and movement on beam and floor.

**Level 7** - Beginner optional

**Level 8 and 9** - Intermediate optional

**Level 10** - Advanced optional-the level needed to be considered for a college scholarship

**Xcel Program**

**Bronze** - Beginner level of competition where gymnast work basic skills as a foundation for further gymnastics progression. This level is “optional” in that the coach chooses the skills that are best for the gymnast.

**Silver** - Advanced-beginner level of competition focusing on more advanced techniques. This level is also an “optional” level.

**Gold** - Intermediate level of competition requiring gymnasts to have powerful tumbling and vaults, and farther advanced skills in bars and beam. This level is also “optional,” but this will be the first level where gymnasts will get their own routines on balance beam and floor exercise, choreographed to their personal style.

**Platinum & Diamond** - Advanced Xcel levels.

## Top Ten Commandments for Gymnastics Parents

## Source: USA Gymnastics National TOPS Parent Seminar

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on the child

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

2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what

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

3. Thou shalt not coach your child

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

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

If you are going to attend a gymnastics meet you should cheer and applaud but never criticize your daughter or her coach.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears

It is normal human reaction for a child to be scared when attempting new skills or competing. Do not yell or belittle your daughter, just assure her that her coach would not have her attempt the skill or put her in a competition is she was not ready for it.

6. Thou shalt not criticize the judges

There is much more to judging than you think, and each judge has had to pass a test to do what he/she does. There are many routine requirements the general spectator is completely unaware of that certainly have a factor on the final score. No one is perfect, but it is without question that they know more than you.

7. Honor thy child's coach

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

8. Thou shalt not jump from club to club

The floor exercise carpet always seems bluer at another gym. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. A successful gymnastics experience is the result of the relationship established between teammates, parents and coaches while utilizing communication through the good times and the bad.

9. Thou shalt have goals besides winning

Encourage your daughter to do her best. Giving an honest effort no matter what the outcome is much more important than winning.

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

For example, if there are over 75,000 athletes participating in competitive gymnastics. There are only 5 spots available for the Olympic Team every 4 years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 15,000:1. You can understand how difficult it is to become an Olympian because the odds are that you have never been one yourself, even though you, as a child, probably wanted to be. Gymnastics is much more than the Olympics! Chances are your daughter's coach was not an Olympian, but still received enough out of gymnastics that they want to pass their love for the sport onto others. Gymnastics teaches so many virtues, while building self-esteem, lifelong friendships and much more. Olympians will tell you these intangibles far outweigh any medals they may have won. Gymnastics builds good people, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

**Parent and Gymnast Acknowledgement**

I have read the handbook document titled "Welcome to the Team!" from cover to cover and understand and agree to the guidelines set forth.

I understand the policies and procedures in the abovementioned handbook may change through the year. Modifications to this handbook may be made via letters or communications from the Team Coach and/or Gym Owner.

Additionally, I also understand this handbook is in addition to rules and policies agreed upon by all students registered at Bull Run Academy of Gymnastics.

Should I have any questions regarding any policies or procedures, I understand that I should contact the Team Coach and/or Gym Owner for the appropriate answers.

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Printed Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gymnast Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gymnast Printed Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_