



Team Manual

2014-2015

Welcome to Competitive Edge Gymnastics and our competitive team program. We look forward to working with your child as they pursue their dream of becoming a competitive gymnast. Gymnastics is a difficult sport, but it is a very exciting and satisfying one. Your gymnast will acquire, develop and hone many characteristics including confidence, poise, mental and physical discipline, an appreciation of hard work and self-respect. In addition, gymnastics is one of the best sports to develop their physical attributes including strength, flexibility, agility, power, coordination, grace and overall body and muscular control.

We hope your child's involvement in gymnastics with Competitive Edge will be a long and rewarding one. And above all, we hope it will be fun!

PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE

Our purpose in writing this team manual was to try and answer most questions/concerns that a "new" team parent and gymnast might have upon entering the team program. Each Gymnast, Parent and Coach must understand and agree to the guidelines of the team manual expectations and make a seasonal commitment in writing.

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

Competitive Edge Gymnastics is committed to fostering a positive, healthy learning environment for all students regardless of their abilities. Our Coaches are capable of providing each individual with instruction that will advance their capabilities from beginner to elite gymnasts.

Our goal is to create a fun, caring, and disciplined approach to recreational and competitive athletes while enhancing their self-esteem.

INVITATION TO TEAM PROGRAMS

Competitive Programs are by invitation only. Unlike our recreational class program where gymnasts may sign up at any time, space and ability concerns limit the number of gymnasts who can be on team.

Gymnasts get onto the team programs by several avenues:

- Already on a team program elsewhere; they are screened and evaluated during one of our team workouts and are placed accordingly.
- “Spotted” in our class program who are ready for team and are extended an invitation to workout with the team.
- Parent or gymnast asks to be evaluated prior to the start of the season.

All invitations to team should be viewed as a temporary position until a probationary period has passed (approx. 1-2 months). This will allow the coaching staff a longer time to fully evaluate the gymnast, as to how they cope with training (team) versus working out (recreational class program), their mental approach, how they handle stress, fear, etc.

Team is considered to be a year round commitment and summer camp is a requirement.

DESCRIPTION OF COMPETITIVE EDGE TEAMS

Competitive Edge offers girls, boys, and excel competitive team programs.

- Pre-competitive Team (Training Team)
- Xcel: different levels include BRONZE, SILVER, GOLD, PLATNIUM AND DIAMOND.
- Competitive Teams: USAG Girls /USAG Boys
- Level 3 (Compulsory Only)
- Level 4 (Compulsory Only)
- Level 5 (Compulsory Only)
- Level 6 (Modified Only)
- Level 7 (Optional Only)
- Level 8 (Optional Only)
- Level 9 (Optional Only)
- Level 10 (Optional Only)

The competitive team programs compete against other clubs in and out of the state in their respective ability and age groupings. Some of the upper competitive levels have the opportunity to advance on to regional and national competitions.

WORKOUT LOADS

The amount and intensity of the workouts vary for the different teams. Generally, at the lower levels the number of days and hours is low and increases as the gymnast matures and improves. The intensity of workouts and level of expectations also increase as they move up in levels. At the lower levels, the girls are mostly doing single skills and trying to master the “gross” motor movements. As they improve, they begin working skill sequences and full routines as well as improving the “fine” movements (hands, toes, fingers, etc.), style and presentation.

The schedule is set and does not usually change for the school year (September through June). During the summer months, we modify the schedule to give everyone the weekends off. During the school year we all work too many weekends (parents, coaches, and gymnasts). This time in the summer is an opportunity for all of us to “re-charge”. The team practices in the mornings on weekdays during the summer schedule.

TEAM FEES (Owed to CEG)

Team fees are based on a yearly tuition. Payments are made monthly, but should not be interpreted as monthly tuition. For example, if the yearly tuition is \$1200, the monthly fee would be \$100/month. February’s fee is not less than March’s because there are fewer days in February. Team is considered a yearly commitment. The gymnast is expected to finish out the season once it has started and continue until the end of May/beginning of June (for the Gym Show; except under extenuating circumstances). Due to this commitment, May’s tuition payment will be due earlier in the season. Half of May’s payment will be due in February and the other half in March. Therefore, no payment will be due in May. This amount is non-refundable. Adjustments to team fees may be made because of extended illness or injuries. In the case of injuries, it is expected of the gymnast to attend most practices to condition and stretch. Due to less time in the gym as usual due to the injury, tuition will be adjusted accordingly. As a guideline, for every month missed, tuition will be lowered by 3/4 of the months regular tuition. Please speak to Tammy to arrange the final price. There are no reductions for a single day of sickness or for gym closings due to holidays or such. **If you wish to pay for multiple months at a time via credit/debit/PayPal**, we will have to enforce a 2.4% additional fee that we get charged from our processing company. We do not want to do this, but we cannot afford to take that loss after already providing monthly discounts. We will still take cash/check for multiple months with no additional fee, and there will not be a fee to pay via card for a single month.

Team fees are due by the 7th of the current month (i.e. October’s fee is due no later than October 7th). Please refer to the current schedule for the cost of tuition.

In addition to regular annual tuition, there is a yearly Competitive Edge registration fee of \$40. Competitive Edge Gymnastics purchases for everyone in our program secondary medical insurance. This insurance covers them during practices and other activities (clinics, exhibitions, etc.). For USAG competitions there is a different insurance coverage purchased when you register as a USAG athlete at the national office.

USAG ATHLETE REGISTRATION

In order to compete in a USAG competition, all athletes, as well as coaches and judges must be registered with the national office with yearly registration fee. All athlete memberships expire on July 31st.. Coaches and judges are required to register as professional members. Athlete registration provides other benefits as well as the right to compete: Secondary medical insurance coverage in the event of an injury at a USAG sanctioned competition. Subscription to the USAG bi-monthly publication, "USA Gymnastics"

MEDICAL HISTORY FORMS & PHYSICAL EXAMS

Gymnast who are on the team program and who will be competing and traveling to competitions are required to complete a medical history form and to get a physical exam by a physician. We require that the "Medical Cover" letter be updated yearly. We DO NOT require that the history form and physical be updated yearly. We would like to ask that if there is a change to your child's medical history that you update our records and as you schedule their periodic medical exams you also update and complete a new physical exam form.

HOLIDAYS & VACATION GYM CLOSINGS

Several times during the year, Competitive Edge Gymnastics will be closed for vacations and holidays. These closings do not affect the monthly team payment amounts. Generally, we are closed: Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas week, Spring Break, Apple Blossom Weekend, Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day. On occasion, the gym may be opened during these closings for workouts. Please check team emails for these updates on scheduling.

TEAM COMMUNICATION

The team communicates through mass emails. Please check it regularly for updates, changes, and important information regarding team. You can also check our website cegymnastics.com or "like" us on Facebook for additional information. During the Fall Session, a monthly newsletter will be printed for the Recreational gymnasts. It goes out monthly September through June. The newsletter is an attempt to keep everyone (coaches, gymnasts, and parents) posted on what is happening at the gym and about upcoming competitions and events. It is also used as a forum to educate the gymnasts and their parents about the sport.

COACHES / PARENTS MEETING

Every fall, usually in late September or early October we have a general coaches/parent meeting. This is an opportunity for the coaching staff to explain some of the esoteric rules and nuances of the sport. This

is an optional attendance meeting. Parents are welcome to ask any questions, general or specific about the sport, Competitive Edge Gymnastics, USAG, training, judging, etc. Individual parent/coach meetings are scheduled as needed.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES & CAMP

Besides our practices and competitions we often schedule special activities with the gymnast on team. We always have a Team Holiday party in December with refreshments. Each year the Booster Club votes on exchanging presents, giving a gift from the Booster Club or both. Our annual Team banquet will be held in late May or early June. In the past it has been held at Tammy's house as a pool party along with refreshments. This is a time to commend everyone for their hard work throughout the season and have some fun. The Booster Club also votes on whether a gift is given to each gymnast at the banquet.

We also may do some clinics, either at our gym or elsewhere. They are scheduled as they occur. On occasion, we do some exhibitions at local schools, parades, festivals, etc. We have also held sleepovers throughout the year.

Every competitive gymnast MUST attend Competitive Edge Gym Camp in July

Camp is always held the third week of July and costs approximately \$450.00. July's monthly tuition is pro-rated.

CRITERIA FOR MOVING FROM ONE USAG LEVEL TO ANOTHER

Our goal is to develop happy, healthy and confident gymnast. One way we can try to accomplish this is at a competitive level where they can be happy, safe and confident. What this means is that every gymnast must be able to perform the skills and routines required at a given level comfortably. The skills should not be at the edge of or beyond their ability level. We can never ask or expect our athletes to perform skills or routines in a competition which they cannot perform consistently in practice. As a policy, we try to have our gymnast compete at a level of difficulty below their current training level. Competitive Edge Gymnastics staff may impose additional requirements on the gymnast to move up.

Placement at a level and advancement to a higher level is dependent on many variables, some of which include:

- Current skill level - success at current level - individual desire
- coachability
- Competitive experience
- Age
- Current status of USAG 4 year cycle
- Attendance
- Mental attitude
- Potential for success at higher level - individual confidence and courage

- Team orientation and spirit - work ethic
- Physical abilities – strength/flexibility
- Parental support

The USAG has “minimum” scores for each level that a gymnast must obtain before advancing to the next level. It seems rather simplistic to think that merely achieving a minimum “move up” score will indicate an athlete’s readiness to achieve success at the next level. A score is meaningless without mastery of the underlying skills. The gymnasts will eventually “hit the wall” if the basics are not mastered.

Advancement to a higher level does not mean a gymnast is necessarily better (to paraphrase Shakespeare, “A rose by any other name, still smells as sweet.”) Initial placement and subsequent advancement from one team level to the next will be determined by the coaching staff at Competitive Edge Gymnastics. Where possible, objective measures of learning potential will be used. However, subjective predictors such as courage, commitment, desire, coachability as well as other determinants will be considered. Competitive Edge Gymnastics will not only use an arbitrary score established by someone in the national office who does not know your child as our only criteria for moving a gymnast up a level.

GYMNASTIC COMPETITIONS – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Gymnastic competitions for girls involve performances on four apparatuses or events. They include: vault, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise. Our competitive season begins in mid-late November. Our official meet schedule is handed out in September. The athletes, compete either compulsory (level 3-5) or optional (level 6-10) exercises (in some cases they may do modified optionals). Compulsory exercises (also called routines) are developed for each nation by the national governing body (in our country it is USA Gymnastics). The compulsory routines are developed with varying levels of difficulty so the athletes use the compulsories to develop their skills progressively. Optional routines are choreographed (i.e. put together) by the gymnast and/or coach. Optional routines are usually unique to each particular gymnast while compulsories are performed by all gymnasts in much the same manner. In an attempt to bridge the gap from compulsories to optionals, the girls programs have levels that perform modified optionals. These routines must include certain skills around which the gymnasts can make their “own” optional routines. Scoring for compulsories and optional is similar except that in compulsories the gymnast must follow a prescribed sequence of skills.

The competition will begin with a “warm up”. Although it is called a “warm up” these periods often resemble a workout. During the pre-competition “warm up” the gymnasts will begin stretching and other activities and then move to the apparatus for pre-competition skill and routine rehearsal. The gymnasts will usually rotate from event to event during the warm up with strictly applied time limits for each athlete or team so that everyone gets the same amount of time to practice. Following the warm up the athletes will assemble at some designated place. They will have changed into their competitive attire. They will then march in. Each athlete or team will generally march to music onto the floor area to be introduced. The judges are also introduced. This is a long standing gymnastic tradition. Then the national anthem will be played. Following the march in, the gymnasts will disperse to their first competition event. They will first stop to pay their respect to the judges by presenting themselves at the judge’s station. After acknowledging the judges, the compulsory level gymnasts will begin competition.

At many optional level meets, the athletes will get another warm up, usually called a “30 second touch”. After the warm ups, marching, presenting and “touching of the equipment”, it is now time to compete. Parents will quickly discover that during a four to five hour meet, your daughter will actually compete about three minutes!! Judges will evaluate your gymnasts routines based on rules developed by the FIG, International Gymnastics Federation. These rules are sometimes “soften” by the national governing bodies of gymnastics in each country for their internal age group developmental programs. The FIG publishes a new set of rules every four years following the Olympic Games. This is one reason why gymnastics is so difficult to understand. There are few sports that re-invent their rules every four years. To make matters worse, there are interpretations of these rules, and then interpretations of the interpretations. Some meets go by one interpretation, some by another (i.e. FIG, USAG Jr. and Sr. elite, USAG JO program, high school, YMCA, AAU, NCAA). Gymnastics is an interesting sport where it seems the officials often outnumber the gymnasts. For more information go to usagym.org

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMPETITIONS

There are many different types of competitions. Some require mandatory participation, in that one needs to attend in order to qualify to “higher” level competitions (i.e. sectional, state or regional, etc.). Other meets are invitational in nature. Host clubs send out information and clubs pick and choose which meets they want to go to. A brief description follows:

Qualifying meets - These competitions are so named because the gymnast may only compete at the subsequent meet if she achieves a certain score or place in the qualifier. In order to compete at the State Championships the gymnast must achieve a certain minimum score in a designated sectional meet (if the state board requires such a meet). Depending on the number of athletes in a state, different states have different procedures for qualifying to the state meet.

State Championships – States are allowed (by USAG) the discretion to determine whether or not to offer a state championships at levels 3 and 4 (Virginia does). State championships will be offered at levels 6 through 10.

***It is mandatory for all gymnasts who qualify for their state meet to attend.**

Regional Championships – Regional championships are for levels 8-10 and involve the best gymnasts from each state within the region. There are eight regions in the United States. Competitive Edge Gymnastics is in Region 7 and our regional championships include gymnasts from these states: -Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, & Washington D.C. East/West Nationals – USA Gymnastics offers two National Championships meets for Level 9 girls called either the Eastern or Western Nationals depending on which side of the Mississippi line you live on.

National Championships – There are National Championships offered for level 10 and elite gymnasts. In both cases the girls must qualify for these competitions through a qualifying process.

Invitationals – These are meets hosted by individual clubs and often they offer team as well as individual competition. These meets (as well as all the above listed meets) are sanctioned by USA Gymnastics and the meets must follow the rules and policies dictated by USA Gymnastics.

INJURIES

Gymnastics can be an extremely competitive sport and unfortunately injuries are sometimes unavoidable. When an injury occurs, active communication from the parent and/or gymnast to the coaching staff will help to prevent further injury. Please note: all athletes must present a letter of release from his or her physician before they are allowed to participate.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Competitive Edge prides itself on not only its talent, but on the class and dignity of its members. The Code of Conduct is a set of conventional principles and expectations for **athletes, parents, staff and coaches** to follow. Competitive Edge coaches and staff have the right to dismiss a gymnast from the program due to inappropriate behavior in violation to the Code of Conduct. All competitive gymnasts, parents, staff and coaches at Competitive Edge are bound to the policies outlined below:

- Demonstrate good sportsmanship before, during, and after competitive meets. Treat all athletes and coaches with *respect*.
- Be modest when successful and gracious in defeat.
- Respect the privilege of the use of our facility.
- Gymnasts are required to attend all meets registered for. Skipping a Meet will result in dismissal.
- If you are running late to practice please notify the gym.
- No food, gum, candy or sodas are permitted in the gym area. Only water and Gatorade are allowed.
- No jewelry in practice or in meets.
- Formal practice attire will be worn to all designated practices. Please do not come in loose-fitting t-shirts or shorts. This is a safety issue to our instructors and gymnast.
- Have hair pulled back or clipped out of the face during practice, female gymnast must have hair in a high bun during meets.
- Gymnast is not permitted on gym equipment while waiting for practice to start.
- If you have any questions or concerns that need immediate attention, please talk to your coach after practice or talk to the gym owner.
- Work as hard as you can; do not goof off. Remember, practice is not a time for socializing.
- Be prepared, physically and mentally for practices and competitions.

- Leave your problems (school/family/personal, etc.) at the door when you come to practice. Bringing them into the gym will adversely affect your workouts. Staying focused on gym, helps gymnasts to stay safe. A few hours of “problem free” workouts will give you a break from your concerns and can often help you handle them.
- Injuries or illness should be reported to the coaching staff right away.

Code of Conduct (Continued)

- Gymnasts who come to practice late must complete their stretching and warm-ups and any compulsory routine assignments before they join their group.
- The office and telephone area are off limits and are not to be used without getting permissions first.
- If you set up equipment for a special trick or progression, please put the gym back to its original set up when finished.
- Please help the coaching staff at the end of practice clean up and return mats and such where they belong. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM COACHES
- Always show respect towards coaches, fellow gymnast, athletes, parents, judges, officials and spectators. **Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal.**
- During practice your opinion does not count. Decisions are the desertion of the coaches.
- Every year we go through the losses and additions of team members. The dismissal/addition of a team member is solely the coach’s decision.
- Practices may be added or changed at any time during the season with proper notice.
- No athlete or parent may post inappropriate messages on social media platform about another program, individual or about Competitive Edge. In doing so it could result in dismissal from the program.
- Parents, relatives, friends and athletes are never allowed to speak with competition officials for any reason.
- The Competitive Edge logo and team name are copyrighted. No one can print our logo or team names on any apparel or other items for sale.
- Anyone threatening to quit or pull their child from the program will be dismissed from the program.
- No Team videos are allowed to be posted online without permission.
- No Soliciting. The sale or distribution of any outside products is not allowed at our facility without permission from Tammy.
- Vacations and excused absences must be submitted to the gym in writing.
- The CE schedule is the gymnast first priority, exceptions are handled on an individual basis.
- The use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and abusive language are prohibited and unacceptable from athletes, coaches, parents, family and friends. No excuses or exceptions.
- Place the well-being of the gymnast and their team before any personal desire to win.

- The gym viewing area is a privilege. Please respect our athletes and staff and refrain from negative comments.
- Our Staff and Booster Club Officers will handle all communications with meet directors. Parents direct all questions and concerns to the Competitive Edge Meet Coordinator.
- No parents, family or friends are permitted in the training area without permission from CE staff.

Code of Conduct (continued)

- Competitive Edge discourages pettiness, gossip, cliques and attempts to slander the Competitive Edge reputation. Individuals displaying improper behavior will be dismissed from the program.
- **Interactions with gymnasts during training from the viewing area are prohibited.**
- It is the parent and gymnasts responsibility at the gym, check your emails, the website, and folders regularly.

Coaches Code of Conduct

As a member of the Competitive Edge coaching staff, certain guidelines must be followed:

- Coaches and staff are expected to be on time and ready for each scheduled practice. Improper notice may result in termination.
- Coaches and staff are to refrain from the use of inappropriate language and conversations.
- Coaches are to be punctual and prepared to all assigned meets.
- Coaches are required to create a fun, positive learning environment for all athletes. They are to give ample time to each gymnast during competition and practices.
- Coaches are required to wear Competitive Edge logo attire in order for parents and gymnast to identify them. They are to be dressed appropriately at practice and meets.
- Coaches are to act professionally towards parents, other coaches, and judges.
- Coaches are to take every precaution when it comes to the safety of all gymnasts.
- Coaches are to stay current with safety certification and new training techniques.

Please understand the coaches have your child's best interest at heart. Safety is always first on our mind. Spending many hours in the gym with your child; understand there are times when we need to push them and be tough on them, and other moments to let them be kids.

ABSENCES

Absences will be reviewed on an individual basis. Anything beyond 3 unexcused absences is highly frowned upon and may be grounds for dismissal from the program. A master absence log will be kept throughout the year for record of all absences. All summer absences due to family visitation rights must be made known immediately.

Excused absences include, but not limited to:

- Death in family
- School related event that reflects a grade.
- A contagious illness

Please submit all planned vacations and absences in writing to your coaches at the beginning of the season. You may not be absent during mandatory camps and events.

COMPETITION ETIQUETTE

At competitions there is expected and proper behavior that we would like our gymnasts to practice:

- Be on time for stretch and warm up, typically we ask that you arrive at least 10-15min early.
- Come prepared including apparel, grips, shoes, etc.
- Be respectful of other gymnasts, coaches, and judges.
- Understand the rules during warm up and be fair; don't monopolize the equipment if other teams are in your rotation.
- Help your teammates and other teams if you can with mats and equipment settings.
- Be aware of your teammate's performances as well as your own.
- Be supportive, clap and cheer for your teammates as well as other good performances by gymnasts from other teams.
- Do not interrupt a judge to get your score; you'll find out soon enough what you received. Neither gymnast nor parent should ever approach a judge during a meet to question a score.
- Do not leave the competition floor to eat or see your parents, etc. unless you have permission from your coach. Wait until the meet is over.
- Let your coach know when you go to the bathroom or to get a drink or water. It may be an appropriate time, or you might be the next gymnast up on the apparatus.
- Stay off the equipment and out of their pits, etc.
- When the meet is over, don't run wild. Stay with your group until dismissed by your coach to go to your parents to wait for the award ceremony.
- Be courteous on the awards stand; shake hands with your competitors.
- If your age group is first up for awards, be courteous enough to stay a few minutes for the other group's awards.
- Always wear your competitive attire for awards, no street clothes, no gymnastics shorts.
- Maintain your composure during the competitions: Don't cry, Don't throw a tantrum, Don't use any profanity
- Remember to address the judge before and after your routine.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

In the event that there are problems or major rule infractions, it may become necessary to impose some disciplinary actions in an attempt to improve the situation. It is impossible to list everything that can or will be done, but here are some general practices that we have used in the past:

- Gymnast may not “rotate” with their group at the designated time, but will be asked to stay at the event to finish their work.
- Gymnast/parent/coach may need to have a meeting to discuss inappropriate behavior (i.e. missed practices, bad attitude, etc.).
- Gymnast may be denied opportunity to go to a meet.
- Gymnast may be asked to go home early.
- Gymnast may be suspended for a period of time.
- Gymnast may be asked to leave the program if we cannot work out the problem.

The development of the coach/gymnast relationship is an important one. We cannot and will not run to the parents every time we have a problem. We will attempt to build our own relationships with our athletes based on our shared time together, a shared dream and value system regarding work and gymnastics and mutual respect for each other

REASON FOR DISMISSAL

Over the years, we have had to ask only a very small number of gymnasts to leave the program. Some of the factors that might contribute to this action include:

- Continued bad attitude in practice with no attempt for improvement - Refusal to do normal and expected workloads and exercises
- Extreme difficult interactions between parent and coach. This usually occurs when the parent becomes “the coach” and actively works in opposition to the coach’s decisions.

Estimated GENERAL TEAM EXPENSES

LONG-SLEEVE TEAM LEO \$190, Xcel Leo \$65, Boys Leo \$100

TEAM BAG \$35

Girls warm-up \$135.00 Boys warm-up \$110

TEAM CAMP \$450.00 (due in June/July)

Prices are estimated and subject to change

It may be possible to acquire a team leo or warm up from another gymnast that has out grown theirs.

Other estimated expenses include:

Meet fees - Approximately \$75 - \$100 per meet, depending on the meet. Depending on which program and level we attend approximately 5-10 meets per year

Coaches Fees – Approximately \$300 per gymnast to cover payment for sessions and travel expenses for meets.

Grips - Beginner grips \$16.00 (optional for levels 4 or 5)

Dowel grips \$47.50 (level 6-10)

Wrist bands for under grips \$8.00

Overnight trip expenses: Depending on the time and location of the meet you may need to stay overnight. Approximately 3-4 overnight trips are possible.

We try to keep travel time under 2hrs when choosing regular meets to attend; however, state meet and regional meet locations are chosen by the state.

*Please refer to CE Booster Information Packet on when Meet and Coaches fees are due throughout the season. Stay up to date at monthly booster meetings with account statements and treasure report.

Attn: Parents and Gymnast,

Upon receipt and review of the Competitive Edge Team Manual please sign and return gymnast agreements to the front desk prior to the start of the competition season.