

We have had such an amazing start to the traditional portion of the season! I want to applaud all the coaches and athletes out there, working hard to get their routines worked out. In the first couple of weekends in December we did see some patterns emerging, that we are hoping to knock out before we get too deep within our season. Below are items that the safety judges wanted to bring forth.

**OCCA Game Day Division Restrictions**

- There have been deductions at every competition thus far this season by not following the Game Day division guidelines. These guidelines apply to all divisions offered. Please review this quick guide again for reference:

*Any violation of the Game Day Division skills listed below will result in a **5pt** deduction.*

	<b>Band Dance</b>	<b>Situational Chant</b>	<b>Crowd leading Cheer</b>	<b>Fight Song</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Performance should consist of sideline dances and may be repeated.	Following the band dance element, the announcer will give teams a game scenario indicating an offense or defense situation.	Following the situational chant element, teams will transition to their crowd leading cheer element.	Following the crowd leading cheer element, teams will transition to their fight song.
<b>Allowed Skills</b>	Jumps and kicks are allowed	Skills should be utilized to lead the crowd and include stunts, tumbling jumps, and kicks. Any number of skills can be performed and used to encourage crowd response. Certain skills are not required but at least one skill is required to be performed during this element.		
<b>Stunting</b>	No stunting allowed in this element, including prior to the music beginning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses are permitted.</li> <li>• No inversions are allowed.</li> <li>• No twisting released dismounts are allowed.</li> <li>• Single leg stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.</li> </ul>		
<b>Tumbling</b>	No tumbling allowed in this element, <i>including prior to the music beginning.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No running tumbling is allowed.</li> <li>• Standing tumbling is limited to one tumbling skill and a back tuck is the most elite tumbling skill allowed.</li> </ul>		
<b>Time</b>	All elements together as one performance should not exceed <b>3 minutes</b> . Timing will begin with the first note of music for band dance.			

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## OCCA Rec Team Restrictions

- Safety rule reminders pulled directly from the OCCA Rec Guidelines and Rules document (revised in June 2024)
  - Rec teams will follow the NFHS Spirit Rules across all divisions with the following exceptions:
    - Junior and Senior level teams only: Basket tosses, sponge tosses, elevator tosses, or similar multi based tosses are limited to a straight ride toss for the 2024-25 season.
    - Tiny, Mini, and Youth level teams, basket tosses, sponge tosses, elevator tosses, or similar multi based tosses are not allowed.
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## Rhinestones

- We have already seen rhinestones in hair and on faces this year, both illegal. Please be aware of this rule.

### Rule 3.1.1 - Page 15

“Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.”

### Situational example - Page 15

“Cheerleaders are wearing: (a) rhinestones woven into their hair; (b) rhinestones glued on their faces; (c) uniforms with rhinestones sewn, punched, or glued on.

Ruling: (a) and (b) illegal; (c) legal”

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## Glitter

- This has also been seen several times this year. An easy way to know if it is legal or illegal is to run your hands over the glitter that’s been applied, if you see it now on your hand, it is illegal. This rule also does not clarify glitter size; so whether it is fine glitter or coarse, this rule is applied the same.

### Rule 3.1.5 - Page 15

“Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, body, uniform or costume is not permitted”

### Situational example - Page 16

“A participant is wearing: (a) loose glitter sprinkled in the hair; (b) glitter-infused makeup that does not easily flake off; (c) glittery eye shadow.

Ruling: (a) illegal; (b) and (c) legal”

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## Section 10 - Props

- This is a common deduction and typically not intentional. Please remember the rules around discarding props and completing skills around props. Below are the rules and reminders that have been shared already this season. Be sure to share these rules with your athletes, so hopefully they are aware in the moment.

### Rule 3.10.1 - Page 32

“When using props made of hard materials or have sharp corners/edges (includes megaphones) the following conditions must be met:

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- a. Top person may not release the props to the ground
- b. Person on the ground must gently toss or place prop on the ground
- c. Cannot throw a prop from one person to another person"

- Be sure that flyers hand off props made of hard materials or with sharp corners/edges to a team member that is not required in the stunt or anyone else on the performing surface.
- Ensure to either place props or gently toss in a downward motion (no flick of the wrist).

### **Rule 3.10.3 - Page 32**

**"A participant cannot step on a prop (soft or hard) while being a required spotter or while executing or landing from a stunt, jump, or tumbling skill."**

- Stepping on a prop during transition/walking is no longer a fault unless it causes a fall itself.
- Make sure to keep props far enough so the athletes do not step on during a skill. Please note, this includes anyone required in a stunt as well. For example, a required spotter in a single based stunt (i.e. toss to hands), even though the spotter is not actually touching the stunt, they are required and must follow all spotter rules (Rules 3.2.4 to 3.2.8)

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### **Choreographing Tumbling**

- We have had some collisions and near misses with our standing and cross tumbling. Be careful when choreographing tumbling into your routine to keep the athletes safe and minimize risk of accidents. We all love a great visual, but just be mindful.

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### **Time Deductions**

- We had 3 time deductions by a drastic amount this last weekend and multiple other minor time deductions over the last several competitions. The issues are primarily seen in the traditional and game day divisions.
- It is the responsibility of the coach or team representative to ensure the routine is performed in the time allowed. There will be no warnings for time deductions throughout the entire season. --*Times are always double checked before deducting.*
- Reminders on time limits:
  - Traditional – 2 minutes and 30 seconds - Timing for these divisions begin with the first movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.
  - Game Day – 3 minutes - Timing will begin with the first note of music for band dance.

If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed:

- 1-3 seconds over = 3-point deduction from the final score.
- 4-6 seconds over = 5-point deduction from the final score.
- More than 6 seconds over = 10-point deduction from the final score

**Times will not be stopped if there is an issue with the music mid-performance. Please plan accordingly and teach the athletes what to do if this situation occurs.**

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As always, feel free to reach out for any questions or legality inquiries to the SRI email or via the Google form (QR code below). Please allow up to 3 days for a response and know that this response may not include the final determination if a creative stunt has to be sent to NFHS for clarification.

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Google form QR for all stunt legality / safety inquiries



*Spirit Bulletin #5*

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