

**Minutes of the 2024-25 IHSA Competitive Cheerleading Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 5, 2025**

The IHSA [Competitive Cheerleading Advisory Committee](#) meeting was conducted with the following voting members in attendance: [IHSA Division 1](#) Coach - Chris Rouvas, Chicago (Taft); IHSA Division 2 Coach - Christina Schweinebraten, Hoffman Estates (Conant) High School; IHSA Division 4 Coach – Alexis Ihonde, Rockford (Guilford) High School; IHSA Division 5 Athletic Director – Steve Evans, Normal (University) High School; IHSA Division 7 Coach – Linda Drust, Carterville High School, and IHSA Official Representative Lance Emery. Other liaisons in attendance included: Head IHSA Clinician Sara Flanigan; John Powers, [CCOI](#); and Tim Babin, [IHSCCO](#). Division 3 Coach - Amy Cook, Bradley Bourbonnais High School, and IHSA Division 6 Principal – Karen Stevens, Washington High School were unable to attend. Cindy Rueter, [ICCA](#) was also unable to attend and submitted a written update. IHSA Assistant Executive Director, Susie Knoblauch, conducted the meeting.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendation: I. School Classification A) Divisions: ~~Large-3A~~ Medium 2A ~~Small-1A~~

Rationale: The nomenclature of small team, medium team, and large team divisions to Class 1A (formally small), Class 2A (formally medium), and Class 3A (formally large) will align with the other IHSA programs, specifically dance. 1A, 2A, 3A is the correct label because it aligns with school enrollment size.

2. Recommendation: I. School Classification

- A) ~~1. 24 rostered participants with 20...~~
~~2. 20 rostered participants with 16...~~
~~3. 16 rostered participants with 12...~~

add new B) Roster and Participants: All teams may have up to 26 rostered participants with no more than 20 and no less than 12 participants in the 3A division; 8 in the 2A division; and 5 in the 1A division allowed on the competition floor.

In the Coed Division, all teams may have up to 26 rostered participants and the minimum number required on the competition floor will be based on the schools' initial enrollment.

Note: A mascot is considered part of a team and will be counted towards the maximum number of cheerleaders allowed on the competition floor.

Rationale: This proposal is better aligning the allowable number of participants between competitive dance and cheer.

3. Recommendation: VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules F) Competition Disruption:

Tournament management reserves the right to cease competition under the following conditions:

1) At the sectional and state preliminary rounds IHSA licensed officials reserve the right to stop a routine due to an obvious injury/bodily fluid.

- a. If an injury/bodily fluid causes the team's routine to be interrupted during a performance, the head official and tournament management shall determine the time for the team to feed back into the warm-up and competition order to complete their performance. ~~This time should not exceed 30 (thirty) minutes for the team to perform their routine again.~~ The time for injury disruption should not exceed 30 (thirty) minutes for the team to perform their routine again. In the event of bodily fluid disruption tournament management shall determine the best time to rotate the team back into warm up. Judging will resume from the point at which the injury/~~interruption~~ bodily fluid interruption occurred as determined by the head official. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning. All point deductions accumulated to the point of injury/bodily fluid will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine, at the coaches' discretion, they may take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in that category. ~~If multiple injuries occur, the same process will be in effect.~~ If a team's routine is stopped a second time due to injury/bodily fluid the team will take the score they have received up to that point. Note: If an athlete leaves the performance surface due to injury/bodily fluid, the out of bounds deduction will not be assessed and the routine shall continue. When able and safe, the athlete may return to the performance surface.

Rationale: Currently the terms and conditions do not address protocols for the presences of bodily fluids on the competition floor. This language will set consistent practices at competitions.

4. Recommendation: IX. Tournament Policies A). *(Adjust other letters accordingly)*
State Final Passes: For the State Final each team will receive a maximum of thirty-two (32) passes for its participants, coaches, manager, videographer, athletic trainer, and/or other team personnel.

Rationale: By providing the competing school with an allowable number of credentials for the state final, they have the autonomy to determine how they want to allocate the credentials between participants, bench, coaches, and team personnel.

5. Recommendation: VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules I. State Final Performance Order:

4. In case of a tie for 5th place at a sectional, an additional entry will be added at the end of the order of the 5th place spots.

5. In case of a tie for any place at a sectional, the teams will perform in the opposite order in the state finals. For example, at sectional A, two teams tie for 2nd (and 3rd) place. In the chart, the order assigned to A-2 is #18. The order assigned to A-3 is #14. Reversing the order, the team that performed first in the sectional is assigned order #18. The team that performed last in the sectional is assigned order #14.

| Order | Sectional | Place | |
|-------|-----------|-------|----------|
| 1 | A | 5 | |
| 2 | B | 4 | <u>5</u> |
| 3 | C | 3 | <u>5</u> |
| 4 | D | 2 | <u>5</u> |
| 5 | E | 1 | <u>5</u> |
| 6 | B | 5 | <u>4</u> |
| 7 | C | 4 | |
| 8 | D | 3 | <u>4</u> |
| 9 | E | 2 | <u>4</u> |
| 10 | A | 1 | <u>4</u> |
| 11 | C | 5 | <u>3</u> |
| 12 | D | 4 | <u>3</u> |
| 13 | E | 3 | |
| 14 | A | 2 | <u>3</u> |
| 15 | B | 1 | <u>3</u> |
| 16 | D | 5 | <u>2</u> |
| 17 | E | 4 | <u>2</u> |
| 18 | A | 3 | <u>2</u> |
| 19 | B | 2 | |
| 20 | C | 1 | <u>2</u> |
| 21 | E | 5 | <u>1</u> |
| 22 | A | 4 | <u>1</u> |
| 23 | B | 3 | <u>1</u> |
| 24 | C | 2 | <u>1</u> |
| 25 | D | 1 | |

Rationale: Builds to a culminating event and aids in comparative scoring.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

Scoresheet, Rubric, Legality and Deductions

1. Develop an Ad Hoc Committee to review the score sheet and rubric.

Rationale: With changes to the NFHS Spirit Rules, the IHSA scoring instruments and documents need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. There has not been a review audit since 2016.

2. Adjust the Pyramid section to reflect the following:

Level 4: 9-10

Pyramid must include:

- Three extended single leg structures
- A variety of top people in extended single leg positions and release moves
- Three release transitions - release moves must include at least one inversion and one that ends in an extended single leg position.

and/or

-Three skills toss including a twist

Rationale: Current rubric requirements for achieving Level 4 in pyramids is not elite compared to other rubric categories. While the additional requirements may not separate teams further, it does increase the difficulty while still minimizing risk required to get into Level 4. This will now require more than one athlete to perform a release transition and will require three release transitions. Three release transitions would be a gradual progression increase in requirements from previous levels. A small (*IA*) team could still achieve Level 4 just as they do now with a variety of top people.

3. Editorial Revision

I. School Classification A) Division:

Schools shall be categorized for participation in the Competitive Cheerleading State Series based on the following:

...Team Division: School enrollment of 1600.01 and over

...Team Division: School enrollment between 700.01 to 1600.00

...Team Division: School enrollment up to 700.00

Coed Team Division: Two males or more on the competition floor is an open division regardless of school size ...

VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules D) Coaches Meeting: An in-person coaches' meeting ~~will~~ may be conducted prior to each division of competition at sectional as outlined in the performance schedule. This meeting is optional for a coach (or a school representative) from each school must to attend. ~~this meeting.~~ The purpose of the meeting is to review any facility and logistical information regarding the event. Questions regarding policies, procedures and rules governing the conduct of the event should be directed to the IHSA. Coaches will be responsible for the information covered at the meeting.

1. The sectional manager or appointed manager can ~~shall~~ conduct an in-person the meeting for coaches prior to each division at the sectional tournament on the Saturday of sectionals.
2. The sectional manager will introduce the head official/officiating crew and any other competition personnel that they deem necessary to introduce to the coaches. The sectional manager will discuss items on the sectional agenda/tournament logistics and answer any questions regarding the competition venue.
- 3. Sectional managers have the option to prerecord or send out this information to qualifying schools in lieu of an in-person coaches meeting.**

VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules E. Warm-up Time: 2. Schools entered in the competition will only be allowed warm-up/practice time as scheduled by the IHSA. Mats should be provided for all three warm-up stations: ~~stretching~~— 2 mats, ~~tumbling~~— 3 mats, ~~full warm-up~~— 9 mats (full-floor), with no skill restrictions at any station per NFHS rules.

Discussion Items

1. The committee heard updates from ICCA, IHSCCO, and CCOI.
2. The committee reviewed and discussed topics from the post-season coaches' meetings.
3. The committee reviewed the 2024-25 competitive cheer state series. Knoblauch acknowledged and thanked the sectional host sites. Any school interested in hosting an IHSA cheer sectional can contact Knoblauch at the IHSA and/or complete the Host Availability Survey/Facility survey via their school admin. in the IHSA Schools Center.
4. The committee discussed sectional sites and assignments, withdrawals/drops, balance, travel, and splits for sites that run two of the same divisions.
5. The committee reviewed warm-up areas, warm-up schedule times, and procedural formats.
6. The committee discussed the need for consistency in sectional sites such professional DJs and classrooms for teams to prep.
7. The committee reviewed the State Final Venue.
8. The committee discussed the sectional warm-up time moving from 7-8 minutes, the use of full floor mats at all stations/rotations, and the transition time from warm up to the competition floor.
9. The committee recommended "Top 10" state cut out signs be presented to teams advancing from Prelims on Friday to Saturday of the State Finals.
10. The committee discussed eliminating pictures from warm-ups and the use of full mats in the warm-up area at the state finals.

11. The committee discussed official vs. coach stoppage of routines and scoring for teams that do not finish their routine.

12. The IHSA thanked Amy Cook, Linda Drust and Lance Emery for their service on the IHSA Competitive Cheer Advisory Committee as their term expired.