

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND YOUTH FOOTBALL CONFERENCE



CHEERING RULES

LATEST REVISION APRIL 2021



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I. CHEERING RULES

A. Cheerleader Eligibility a) Participation

- b) Cheerleaders must cheer for a league that is a current member of the SNEYFC. All eligible cheerleaders shall cheer for a minimum of 6 regular season games in their league's Senior, Junior, Micro, or Mini division for the current playing season to be eligible to compete in that season's SNEYFC sponsored competition(s). A cheerleader may not compete in more than one division for any SNEYFC sponsored competition within the playing season. Failure to provide documentation and forms as required by and within the time frames defined by these Cheering rules or the SNEYFC bylaws will result in disqualification of the entire cheering squad or the cheerleader in question from the current season's competition, at the discretion of the Executive Board.
- c) It is the responsibility of each league's cheerleading director/delegate to keep attendance of participants cheering at all regular season games in order to determine competition eligibility. Attendance is to be recorded on the conference attendance sheet. **APPENDIX A**
- d) All cheerleading teams are expected to cheer for playoff and championship games.

2. Age Limits

- a) Senior cheerleaders should have achieved their twelfth (12th) birthday but should not have achieved their fifteenth (15th) birthday prior to June 1st of the current calendar year and/OR should be in 7th or 8th Grade.
- b) Junior cheerleaders should have achieved their tenth (10th) birthday but should not have achieved their thirteenth (13th) birthday prior to June 1st of the current calendar year and/OR should be in 5th or 6th Grade.



- c) Micro cheerleaders should not have achieved their eleventh (11th) birthday prior to June 1st of the current calendar year and/OR should be in 3rd or 4th Grade.
- d) Mini cheerleaders should have achieved their 5th birthday in the current calendar year in order to compete and should not have achieved their 8th birthday prior to June 1st of the current calendar year and should be in Kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grade.
- e) All competing cheerleaders must have achieved their fifth (5th) birthday by June 1st of the current calendar year.
- f) Exceptions to age for competing cheerleaders will be considered by the Executive Board on a case-by-case basis. Requests for waivers of age requirements must be submitted in writing and signed by the league President. Included with the request shall be a justification for the request, a copy of the cheerleader's birth certificate, and the league's registration form. These requests shall be submitted to the roster validation committee prior to the August meeting. The competition committee will review the requests and forward them to the Executive Board with their recommendation.

3. Grade Limits:

A cheerleader must be in the eighth (8th) grade or lower to participate in Conference activities.

4. Roster Submissions

- a) Rosters and supporting documentation shall be submitted in accordance with the by-laws.
- b) A coach's roster listing a minimum of the head coach name, email, and phone number shall be submitted at the June Conference meeting.

B. Safety Rules

1. Rules Meeting

A mandatory meeting will be held in the month of September of each year. Mandatory is defined as the director/delegate from each town. Coaches listed on validated rosters may also attend. The meeting will be to review with all of the directors/delegates/coaches the rules of the NFHS spirit book, the SNEYFC Cheerleading rules, and the coaches code of conduct.



2. General Safety Rules

- a) An adequate warm up period including stretching shall precede all tryouts, practices, games, and competitions.
- b) Jewelry is prohibited with the exception of religious or medical medals. If such medals are worn, they shall be taped to the body.
- c) Corsages may not be worn while cheering, or pins of any kind may not be worn on the uniform.
- d) Hair devices, which are safe and adequately secured, may be worn to keep hair away from a cheerleader's eyes and face. Prong type fasteners are PROHIBITED.
- e) Cheerleaders shall wear sneakers that are appropriate for cheerleading activities. Laces shall be tied.

3. NFHS Rules

All SNEYFC leagues shall follow the current year's National Federation of State High School Associations Spirit Rules. The SNEYFC shall provide 5 copies of the current rulebook to each member league. Exceptions that are safety related for the different divisions of the SNEYFC are contained in Appendix B. Where there is a conflict between the NFHS rules and the rules contained herein the SNEYFC rules shall prevail. It is the responsibility of the director to be knowledgeable of the NFHS and the SNEYFC Cheer rules and to ensure that the coaches/coaches assistants are appropriately familiar with both sets of rules. ALL squads are required to comply with Appendix B at ALL times including tryouts, practice, games, and competitions. Failure to comply with these rules may result in suspension of the coach, cheerleader, squad or entire league as determined by the Executive Board.

4. AACCA Certification

All SNEYFC leagues shall submit a list of personnel in June, who have a current AACCA certification and who are either coaching or assisting that league for the current year. Leagues shall have a minimum of one (1) AACCA certified person as required by the SNEYFC by-laws.

5. Coaches Clinic

All SNEYFC leagues shall ensure that the Cheer Director/Delegate attends the SNEYFC sponsored and/or approved coaching clinic. Any adult coaches are encouraged to attend. The attending adult coaches



must be listed on the coaching roster that is to be submitted to the Executive Board no later than the June meeting. Leagues who fail to have the Cheer

Director/Delegate attend the current season's SNEYFC sponsored (or an

approved) coaches clinic will be disqualified from the SNEYFC Competition and from doing any stunting at any SNEYFC function (games,practices,etc)

6. Stunt Limitations

Refer to APPENDIX B

C. Competition Rules

1. Competition Suspensions or Stoppage

Any member of the SNEYFC competition committee who is present at the competition shall be authorized to stop the competition or a leagues routine for an emergency. The competition committee shall decide if the competition shall continue and if a routine was interrupted where that routine will continue from (i.e. from the beginning, or from another logical point).

2. Coaching Rosters

- a) Leagues shall submit a finalized roster of coaches for each participating division at the August meeting of the roster validation committee. There shall be a maximum of five (5) coaches per division allowed. This may be the same roster submitted earlier in the year.
- b) All coaches listed on the roster must have read, and signed the coach's code of conduct contained in APPENDIX C of the playing rules. Signed copies of the code of conduct shall be submitted with the team season roster at validation.
- c) Only the coaches on the roster shall be allowed to enter the competition free and enter the practice gym.
- d) Failure to submit the proper roster information including the signed coach's code of conduct may result in the disqualification of the coaches in question or the entire squad as determined by the Executive Board.



3. Squad Size

- a) Teams may compete in either a small division (1-11); medium division (12-18); or large (19-25), each town can only compete in 1 division.
- b) There must be a total of 3 teams competing in each division to have small, medium and large. If there are less than 3 in any division, they will be placed into small and large (1-15, 16-25). If less than 4 teams for either small or large, there will be 1 division (1-25)
 - b) Alternates are not allowed.

4. Spotting

- a) Spotters shall be considered part of the squad and count towards the 25 member limit.

5. Judging

- a) The VP of cheering and one other competition committee member shall brief the judges on the SNEYFC cheer rules prior to the start of the competition.
- b) Stunting questions for the judges may be submitted from each league no later than two weeks prior to the competition date. All stunting questions must be submitted by video to the VP of cheering. All questions will be answered in writing prior to the competition
- c) Judges

We select judges with the finest qualifications and with a variety of backgrounds, styles and affiliations.

- d) Head Judge

A panel of Judges will be selected by the VP of Cheer to judge the SNEYFC Competition(s). A Head Judge will oversee the panel to be sure ranges are achieved by each category judge.

- e) Judges decisions

The decisions of the judges regarding competition/scoring are final.

6. Scheduling/Facility



- a) The SNEYFC competition shall be scheduled for a date after the end of the SNEYFC regular season. It shall consist of four different sessions for each of the four divisions participating (Seniors, Juniors, Micros and Minis).
- b) It shall be scheduled at an indoor facility that has sufficient space for the performance of competition routines and warmups/practices. The SNEYFC board of directors shall approve the location submitted by the competition committee.
- c) Practice time shall be determined by order of appearance. Actual order of appearance for each division shall be determined by a blind draw at the competition meeting (October).
- d) Competition shall be performed on a mat measuring a minimum of 42 feet by 42 feet.

7. Timing

- a) All squads shall perform on the cheering surface provided.
- b) Each cheerleading squad member shall start with at least one foot on the cheer surface.
- c) Each team shall have no less than two (2) minutes and no more than two minutes, thirty seconds (2:30) to perform.
- d) Timing will begin with the first movement, the first beat of music, or the first word spoken by any member of the cheering squad after the announcer has stated, "you may begin".
- e) All squads are allowed music in their routines. The music segment must not exceed 90 seconds.
- f) Timing will stop when a squad gives a hand/vocal signal that the routine is complete.
- g) Time shall be kept by designated cheer competition members.

8. General Competition Rules

- a) The only props allowed will be signs, poms and megaphones. Signs may be no larger than 2' X 3' and must be made of fabric, foam board or cardboard. No glitter is allowed and props may not be worn or attached to cheerleaders. Props may be used



providing they are not hazardous and do not leave hazardous foreign matter behind.

- b) Glitter is allowed if it is SEALED
- c) No squad shall pay for choreography by any professional for SNEYFC Competition.
- d) Make up, stickers and/or temporary tattoos on cheerleaders during competition are PROHIBITED.
- e) Entire cheer routine must be performed on the competition mat.
- f) A penalty deduction will be assessed for unsafe falls to the performing surface, (an unsafe fall is where the trunk/torso or head of the top person touches the mat)
- g) A penalty deduction will be assessed for performing on poms, props or any other accessories on the performance mat.
- h) All NFHS Rules MUST be adhered to with the herein additional limitations/level restrictions.

D. Competition Scoring

1. Scoring Categories

Each squad shall be judged in ten (10) categories, (Voice, Expression, Partner Stunts, Pyramids, Formations, Transitions, Jumps, Tumbling, Motion & Dance). Judges will be assigned to score on specific categories. The table below shows the judge assignments and the maximum points that can be awarded for each of the categories.

2. Scoring Method

Each Judge scores a specific category for the routine. This allows the routine to be scored in its entirety by each judge for accuracy and difficulty. Penalty judges are separate and watch for infractions. Each routine is scored against the score sheet and its criteria. The final scores, once totaled should accurately reflect the proper placement of each team.

3. Scoring Consistency

Each judge's view of perfection will be different which translates into scoring inconsistencies. To make scoring more consistent, the Judges



will score according to the guidelines on the official SNEYFC score sheet known as **TABLE 1**

The VP of Cheer/Advisor and the Penalty Judge will review penalties that are assessed before finalizing scores.

4. Penalties

- a) Penalty Judges will record rule and guideline infractions during performance.
- b) Points will be deducted for any SNEYFC and or NFHS infraction
- c) Timers will assess penalties for not complying with overall routine/music time.
- d) Penalties are assessed solely at the discretion of the penalty judges or times.
- e) **Table 2** summarizes penalty points.

5. Final Score Tally

The Vice President of cheering will designate personnel to compile the final scores encompassing the judges scoring sheets, penalty sheets, and the time sheets for music and total routine time.

No other persons are to view the score sheets for the competition other than the Executive Board and/or Tallying personnel. No discussions of the scoring sheets shall take place before the final decisions are awarded at the end of each division's competition session.

6. Ties

In the event of a tie, the "overall category" will be totaled from each judge for the tying teams to declare placement

7. Awards

Awards will be provided in accordance with the By-Laws. Additional token awards such as participation pins or certificates may also be awarded as budgets allow or are approved.