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We welcome your family to Olympia Gymnastics. Thank you for your interest in our competitive team program. It is our goal to provide an opportunity for your child to learn, grow, develop, and mature into an outstanding young adult. Gymnasts will learn to work hard, to set and achieve goals, to take initiative, the meaning and worth of dedicated effort, how to work through frustrations and setbacks, to take risks, and how to work with a wide variety of people.

Gymnasts will develop confidence that comes with the knowledge that they can accomplish amazing things if they put their minds to it.

Participating on our competitive teams is a lot of fun, but it requires a huge commitment for both the athlete and his or her family. We want to be sure that you have the information you need to make this important decision. This manual will provide information and insight into how the program operates and will answer many of your questions.

Providing a fantastic gymnastic experience is our first and foremost goal. We are committed to assisting your child in his or her pursuit of excellence in the sport of gymnastics. To make this a reality, the gymnast, parents, and coaches must function together as a team.

If you still have questions or concerns regarding your child's program after reading this manual, please ask questions.

Reminder, email is always the best way to communicate with us. Emails allow all pertinent personnel to review your question or comment and ensure a reply is handled in a timely manner.

Competitive Gymnastics

– Is it right for our family?

We believe that gymnastics is the greatest overall body conditioning activity in which your child can be involved. Mental discipline, in addition to the obvious physical benefits, prepares these young athletes to become confident, capable young adults with an arsenal of lifetime skills such as time management, dedication, understanding how to overcome fear and defeat, and/or how to handle disappointment. In this age of high-tech instant gratification, teaching children how to accept delayed gratification for the attainment of a worthy ideal is challenging. Being involved in Olympia's competitive program will require your child to commit to many hours of training, but it will also offer her or him the opportunity to learn personal discipline and to gain tremendous self-confidence as he or she builds individualized goals and accomplishments.

Possible Adjustments to Consider

Families must provide transportation to and from the gym and meet locations. As your athlete progresses up the competitive ladder, the hours and days of scheduled practice will continue to grow, as will the fees.

Gymnastic meets will consume several weekends during the competitive season. Time management skills are a necessity in all areas of your child's life as well as the family's. Your child will have less time at home and less time to spend with friends outside the sphere of gymnastics influence. Homework will need to be done with more efficiency and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available.

Competitive Team Philosophy

To understand and appreciate what goes into the development of a competitive gymnast, one must understand exactly what it is we are trying to achieve during training. Four fundamental areas are addressed during training: strength, flexibility, skills, and mental aspects.

1. *Strength training* is a very important part of gymnastics as it also can play a role in the reduction of injuries. We use many varieties of conditioning in order to keep it challenging and hopefully a fun part of training.
2. *Flexibility* is also critical to the long-term success of the gymnast. Flexibility adds to the aesthetic appeal of the performance, allows the athlete to master skills more easily, and plays a role in reducing the frequency and seriousness of injuries.
3. *Skill development* falls into 2 categories: basics and new skills. Basics are the foundation of gymnastics. If a gymnast does not have strong basics, his or her entire performance is weakened. These core skills must be continually refined in order to move on to more difficult skills and to improve performance. New skills are introduced as the coaches see fit.

4. *Mental training* is used to try to create the competitive atmosphere during practice. Visualization techniques are practiced to reduce or eliminate anxiety that may occur at competition.

Level Evaluations: Determining Practice Levels

Level evaluations may be held periodically outside of regular class hours. If so, there will be a \$25 fee per gymnast per evaluation. Level evaluations ensure your child is practicing and competing to the best of their ability.

Team coaches have the right to make a determination if the gymnast is not improving or is not behaving as a team gymnast. If this occurs, the team coaches have the right to move a gymnast down a level, or not allow them to compete. Also, the team coaches may move a gymnast up if they are excelling in their level and have great work ethic.

A gymnast cannot compete for more than 3 years at the same level unless deemed necessary by the team coaches. Exceptions are only made if a gymnast has suffered an injury or missed seasons.

Competitive Program Policies

Parent Guidelines

A family's role in team gymnastics is a key to a successful team experience.

- ❖ Private lessons will be required if you have more than two unexcused absences or 4 excused absences during any given month. You will not be allowed to make up a missed practice by joining another practice group.
Private lessons will be an additional cost of \$30 per hour.
- ❖ Clock your gymnast in/out at the office for every practice.
- ❖ Ensure that your child gets enough sleep and proper nutrition, gets to and from the gym on time and has proper clothing and equipment.
- ❖ Please make arrangements to have your child picked up on time. Our coaches and staff have family and personal commitments after work to which they need to attend.
- ❖ If your child is not picked up within 15 minutes after their scheduled class time, you will be charged \$5 per every 15 minutes.

- ❖ Please call the gym (843-899-1680) or send an email to office@olympiagymnastics.net if your child is going to miss his or her practice.
- ❖ Check your e-mail regularly to stay current with team activities.
E-mail is going to be our first form of communication.
You may give us as many e-mail addresses as you like.
If you are not receiving at least one email from us per week, let us know.
- ❖ Parents or siblings of a participant may not enter the gym or use any equipment before, during, or after a participant's workout.
Our insurance policy does not cover unregistered athletes.
- ❖ Registered gymnasts are only allowed in the gym area during their appropriate class time, Unless notified otherwise.
- ❖ Provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support to your gymnast.
Let the coaches do the coaching.
- ❖ Understand that practice schedules, skill drills, and daily routines are determined in advance. While you may not agree with the methods employed, you must trust and respect the coaches.
- ❖ Gymnasts are not permitted to train at other facilities. Failure to comply could result in removal from the program. Private lessons are available upon request.
- ❖ If you need to speak with your child's coach, please schedule a time in the office to do so.
Do not interrupt the coach before, during, or after practice. This includes stopping a coach as they walk through the office/hall as they must get back to coaching promptly.
- ❖ Please make every effort to play a positive support role in your gymnast's competitive career. Negativity will not be allowed during practice, at a competition, or anywhere on the premises. This could result in immediate dismissal.
- ❖ Attending team parent meetings are mandatory and for your benefit.

*Gymnast Guidelines were removed, but will be reviewed with each gymnast.

Social Media

- ❖ Negative social media posts cause unnecessary tension between gymnasts. If an argument stems from social media, please do not expect the coaching staff to resolve the issue. You may be called in if an issue arises.

- ❖ If you or your child makes a negative post about Olympia on social media, your child will be dismissed from our program, and all contract monies will still be due. Also, legal action may be taken. Inappropriate posts are not permitted. Our team gymnasts are expected to separate themselves from this type of behavior. They have been verbally warned as a team already and are reminded regularly.

Discipline Policy

It is imperative that students follow these Gym Rules. USAG requires written rules and policies. Students who do not obey these rules are subject to progressive discipline including, but not limited to, the following:

- Coach to gymnast warning.
- Parents will be notified.
- Gymnast will be sent out and not allowed to participate at the next scheduled practice. (In-Gym Suspension) The gymnast will attend practice but must observe and not participate.
- Suspended from gym for two weeks; contract monies still due.
- Suspended from the team for the rest of the season; contract monies still due.

If these measures are not effective, then you will be asked to leave the team. Please keep in mind that this discipline policy is designed to correlate with minor-moderate infractions. Major infractions are subject to immediate dismissal.

Priorities

The coaching staff believes that the order of importance always needs to be (1) God, (2) Family, (3) Education, and (4) Gymnastics. If you choose to be a member of this program, it is assumed that you have allowed appropriate time for family functions and that your child's study habits and schoolwork is of exemplary quality. Routine family or school-work responsibilities are not appropriate reasons to miss practice. If you find that your child is unable to make the commitment this program requires, we can provide other levels that would fit better into your family's needs.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. If a gymnast is going to miss a practice, call or email the gym. Attendance involves arriving on time and staying for the entire practice. Gymnasts will not be permitted to leave early unless prior arrangements have been made with the coach. Gymnasts who habitually arrive late and leave early from practice will have trouble performing to their highest potential at meets. In addition, gymnasts arriving late, leaving early are a distraction to the rest of the team (or current group).

A sick child should not be in the gym. You will receive a phone call from the office if the coaches feel it is necessary for your child to be picked up.

Summer is a very important time for practice. We understand that this is a busy vacation time. Gymnasts have finished the competitive season and continue to work on learning new skills and improving strength and flexibility during the “less pressurized” noncompetitive season. Every effort should be made to maintain good attendance year-round.

Gymnasts who miss more than four weeks of practice may be asked to work out and compete at a lower level. This policy is recommended by USAG to prevent injuries to a gymnast that may be caused by a lack of conditioning.

Attendance by team members at all gym related events are mandatory unless otherwise notified. This includes, but is not limited to, special performances at town events, meets, level evaluations, and recitals. You will still be responsible for any fees related to mandatory events, even if your gymnast does not attend.

A gymnast must not accumulate more than 1 unexcused absence within 3 weeks. Two late arrivals/early departures equal one unexcused absence.

Financial Policy

You are responsible for knowing if your account is in arrears.

Note that all gym fees: after school, team tuition, recital fees, and any other gym associated fees must be up to date for your child to be registered for upcoming meets. If the balance becomes current, we will do everything we can to get your child registered. However, you will be responsible for any late charges incurred.

If your account is 15 days past due your child will not be allowed to practice with the team until all accounts are current. Those in the after-school program will be put into the after-school rotations.

All monies paid will be credited towards tuition (after school and team) first, and then to competition fees.

The team budget is based on the average number of contracts signed. You will be expected to pay your fees in their entirety regardless of attendance. If you default on your contract, appropriate legal action may be taken. Defaulting on your contract may result in the other team families having to pay the difference in fees since these are split evenly by the number of team members based on the number of contracts signed.

Gymnasts who leave Olympia during the competition season, for any reason are **required to pay their competition fees and tuition in accordance with the contract.**

Choreography

Gymnasts level 5 and up will have choreography fees for floor routines when deemed necessary by the coaching staff. The coaching staff will let the parents know who needs

a new floor routine. Floor routines will be choreographed by a choreography specialist. These fees will run from \$60 - \$100.

Cancellations

Each year, you can expect to have a limited number of practices cancelled due to holidays, meets, rest days, etc. We will notify you of the changes via email and will post them on our Facebook page when appropriate. Please understand that sometimes these cancellations will be made on short notice (especially when meet or illness related).

There will be no practice the day after a meet weekend. Gymnasts on the Prep-team will not practice the week of a meet that they will not be attending.

Additional Fees for Team Gymnasts

Uniforms: All athletes will have a team uniform that may be upgraded each season at the coaches' discretion.

Female Prep Team uniform consists of a tank leo, capris, and a bag for \$120

Female All-Star Team uniform consists of a $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve leo, capris, and a backpack for \$205 (warm-up jacket is optional for an additional \$65)

***AAU State Leotard will be required for all female gymnasts this year. (Approximately \$75)**

Male gymnasts' team competition uniform consists of:

Step In - \$75

Shorts - \$25

Pommel Pants - \$40

Warm-up pants - \$75

Jacket - \$100

****These prices are estimates and subject to change****

Black Adidas Slides- to be worn with uniform to each meet for both boys and girls.

Grips- Girls Gold and up and boys Level 6 and up will be required to replace their grips at least once per year to prevent injury.

Ankle Weights- All gymnasts will be required to have their own pair of ankle weights.

***There are no refunds of money.**

Family Commitment Plan

❖ It is expected that all families contribute time to the gymnastics program in some way. This is a family commitment and we appreciate our gym families!

Work Days- There will be days that you will be required to help to improve your child's practice facility. We will have 2 work days, one on November 9th and one on May 22nd. We will have improvements that need to be made including creativity, building, repairs, etc. There will be a job for everyone. If you do not attend one of the two workdays, you will be invoiced \$50.

Recital- There will be 3 times to help out with each recital (December 7th and August Date TBA). If you choose not to help with one of these events, you will be invoiced \$100 per occurrence. These events include moving equipment the Thursday prior to recital, one session on the day of recital, and clean up after the last recital session.

Recital

- ❖ All team parents are required to assist in set up, clean-up, and at least one session of recitals. Failure to assist in any event will result in a \$100 fee per occurrence.
 - Set up-Thursday night (moving equipment, etc.)
 - Assist with at least one recital session
 - Clean up- Saturday after the last recital session
- ❖ Buy or sell a full-page ad in the program.
- ❖ These events are fundraisers and require a tremendous amount of work and preparation. It is your children that benefit from these events. When everyone participates, the work goes quickly and smoothly.
- ❖ All team parents are encouraged to participate in any fundraiser hosted by Olympia.
Example: selling donuts and banners, flip a thon, etc.

Competitive Season Information

Meet Scheduling

During each competitive season, there will be a number of meets that the team will plan on attending. Host clubs set deadlines for meet entries. After this date, the host club will set the final meet schedule depending on the number of entrants. There is sometimes a tentative schedule posted on a meet website, but often, most of the day and session times are not received until a week before the meet. Once we receive the FINAL schedule from the host gym, we will send it out to you. It is not appropriate to call a gym to see if they have posted this information. Please let our office handle communications with the host gyms. It is a good idea to clear the whole weekend of a meet on the chance that there will be last minute changes that could conflict with your previous plans. Also, be aware that due to the size of the meet, some sessions may be held on Fridays/Mondays and may require you to pull your child out of school. You are under no obligation to do so, if the occasion presents itself, **no refunds will be given in such cases.**

Meet Fees and Travel Expenses

All team member registration fees are \$150 per year and due immediately. Meet registration fees and coaches' expenses are paid for by the team. The coaches' expenses are shared equally among team members. Meet registration and coaches' fees are paid monthly. Gymnasts are also responsible for their own transportation to the competition, hotel reservations if needed, and food. If a problem arises and you can not get your gymnast to a meet, please contact the staff as soon as you are aware of the conflict. In most cases we can help find your gymnast a way to the meet.

Spectators should be prepared to pay an admission fee (\$10-20 cash per person) at meets.

****Regional and National competitions** will be an additional fee for registration.

These competitions are not included in the team fee budget for boys or girls' team. This is due to the qualification requirements to attend these competitions.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

- ❖ Athletes should arrive at the competition site 10 – 15 minutes before open stretch is scheduled to begin. Have a seat in the bleachers/stands until open stretch begins.
- ❖ Athletes should be in uniform and well-groomed and report to the floor when open stretch time is called.

Make sure undergarments cannot be seen outside of uniform.

No nail polish or toenail polish is allowed.

Any make-up that is worn must be kept natural.

- ❖ Athletes must remain in the designated competition area throughout the course of warm-ups and competition and obey all warm-up regulations and procedures.
- ❖ Athletes should stay with the team until the competition is over and the coach releases them
- ❖ Be courteous, respectful, and polite to all meet officials, hosts, competitors, and coaches. Remember that you are not just representing yourself, you are representing Olympia as well. Disrespect will result in the gymnast being scratched from the remainder of the event and escorted from the competition area. In addition, they will be suspended from practice for no less than five practice days.
- ❖ Gymnasts should have a competition bag in which all of their belongings will be kept during the meet. Things needed in gym bag:

Bronze: Warmups, shoes, mini bottle of water and grips (if needed) and a notebook only in bag

Silver & Up:

- Kleenex
- Tape
- Water bottle
- Grips
- Wrist supports
- Ace Bandage
- Notebook & Pen/Pencil

Coaches are not responsible for gym bags or any items brought on the floor by the gymnast - including: shoes, warm ups, etc. Generally, session run back to back and coaches will not have time to search for missing items.

- ❖ Gymnasts should remain in Olympia uniform/warm-up throughout the award ceremony. USAG rules state that each athlete must be in competition attire during awards. Please do not put on t-shirts or hoodies provided by the host gym.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

- ❖ Team spirit is a huge help. Please be sure to cheer for all the Olympia gymnasts.
- ❖ Please show proper respect to all officials and coaches at every competition. They are all there to support your child's interest in gymnastics. Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the

meet (judges, score keepers, etc.). If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores, you must contact your coach after the competition. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.

- ❖ Please be respectful and considerate of all competitors.
- ❖ Once gymnasts have walked into the competition area for warm-up, they are not allowed to talk to or have contact with the parents until the competition is over. This is a USAG rule and, as a bonus, helps keep your child focused.
- ❖ In any competition, parents, friends, and/or relatives of the gymnast are not allowed onto the competitive floor. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet as a result of infraction of this rule. You must remain in the spectator's area along with all other relatives and friends. Olympia can be penalized as well as team members.
- ❖ In case of injury during warm-up or competition, you must stay in the spectator area until your coach flags you onto the floor.
- ❖ Please do not coach your child from the sidelines. Coaches should coach and everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from taking the gymnast's focus away from the coach's technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences. In addition, you know what your child struggles with, the judges do not. Do Not point it out to them!
- ❖ No flash photography is permitted during a meet. Please check your camera and cell phone in advance. This applies to power lights on video cameras as well. Many cameras come with a focus assist light that illuminates even when the flash is off. Please make sure to disable this function as well.
- ❖ On the day of competition, your child should eat a well-balanced meal one – two hours prior to the actual competition. This energy should carry him or her through the entire competition. Your child may bring a small snack-size pack of goldfish or granola bar for AFTER the competition when a meet is running long.
- ❖ All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not and should remain in Olympia attire throughout the ceremony. They need to cheer all award recipients – especially teammates.

A gymnastics competition usually runs 3 - 5 hrs. During this time, your child will only compete for 4-12 minutes. It is imperative that you and your gymnast are prepared for a long but exciting day.

Please be advised of the following when attending meets:

- ❖ Bring plenty of cash. Concessions can be expensive. In addition to admissions, parents might choose to purchase a program (typically \$3-\$7), concessions, or congratulatory gifts for their gymnast (cash only). There are usually various vendors at the meets selling t-shirts, gifts, and professional photographs of your child taken during the competition. These vendors may or may not accept credit cards.
- ❖ Most meets are held in gym-type facilities; therefore, seating is usually crowded and uncomfortable. Plan accordingly. Alternative seating such as cushions, donuts, chairs with back support, etc. are very helpful.
- ❖ Dress in layers. Gyms can become warm and stuffy even when the gym is running their A/C at full force. T-shirts, jeans, and shoes that will allow you to climb bleachers are recommended.
- ❖ If the weekend of a meet you should have a question please contact the designated meet contact. Please do not try to contact the coaches. They work 14 hours a day during a meet without a break. If you call or text them they will be distracted from the gymnasts who are competing at that time.

If your child becomes ill and will not be able to attend the meet, or if you will be late, please text the coach, but do not expect an immediate response.

Regarding Judges

There is much more to judging than you may think. Judges put a great deal of time into learning and studying the sport. They are tested rigorously on skills, technique, and evaluation. The general spectator is often completely unaware of special requirements, rules, and skill values that are factored into the final score. Coaches can give more detail outside of the competition if parents have questions about scoring.

On the other hand, *judging in gymnastics is subjective*. Different judges tend to focus on different aspects of performance. Try not to compare scores from one meet to another. Focus on your child's improvements in performance and achievements during the season.

As stated earlier, please do not approach a judge, either during or after a meet, about a score awarded to a gymnast. Coaches will handle all inquiries and appeals as deemed necessary. Coaches cannot question the judges based solely on score. There must be a start value discrepancy.