



# **GIAA GAME DAY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **A. GAME DAY FORMAT**

The total number of participants for a school team is determined by counting all spirit-leading participants including cheerleaders, mascots, and flag runners. The use of live band and/or drum line to supplement the Game Day environment is not permitted.

Schools are responsible for registering their squad in the appropriate division based on conference classification. Flag runners and/or mascots cannot be involved in the execution of cheer skills.

Each school team will be allowed to enter one (1) school team division.

## **B. SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AND TEAM PARTICIPATION**

The school team will consist of students that meet the requirements according to the GIAA Rules and Guidelines.

1. One SIDELINE team per school will be allowed to enter the GIAA Game Day State Championship.
2. All participants must be academically eligible students of the school in which they represent and must be designated by school officials as spirit representatives for participation purposes.
3. The individual students representing a school team may vary in the qualifying round provided each performance does not exceed the maximum number of participants.
4. For teams advancing to the State Championship round, participants that enter the floor must remain the entire length of the State Championship performance. Substituting individuals on and off the floor for the different sections of the State Championship round is not permitted.
5. It is the responsibility of the school coach that each team member, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the school conduct themselves in the appropriate manner.
6. School teams must refrain from taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.

## **C. UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES**

1. Traditional game day uniform is required.
2. All National Federation of State High Schools (NFHS) uniform rules apply.
3. School teams must display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school in regards to grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, conservative make-up, and uniformity.
4. The use of signs, poms, flags, and megaphones are allowed and encouraged for performances. The use of additional props is not permitted.

## **D. COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA**

1. Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips).
2. The GIAA Game Day State Championship will comply with the NFHS competition surface rule.
3. Signs or props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area. See Section IV, E for deductions association with out of bounds.



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## E. MUSIC

1. Schools must use recorded marching band music for the fight song and Band Chant categories.
2. All use of music must be compliant with U.S. Copyright Laws.
3. *Neither the GIAA nor Varsity Spirit is responsible for obtaining any necessary permission or licensing of the recorded music used by a school team during the GIAA Game Day State Championship.*
4. Fight Song /Band Music
  - a. If a high school marching band records their school's **original** fight song, they will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording.
  - b. If a team legally acquires a recording of a band playing a popular recording from an authorized provider (iTunes, Amazon, etc.), the song can be used as long as no edits are made to the music (other than for timing purposes).
  - c. A team cannot use a recording of their band playing a popular song (a cover) or other music without the proper permissions or the band becoming a preferred provider.  
See [Varsity.com/music](http://Varsity.com/music) for more information about preferred providers.

## F. HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

1. GIAA rules require cheer and spirit performances shall be in accordance with safety standards prescribed by the National Federation High School Spirit Rules.
2. The GIAA Constitution and Contest Rules section 1208(x)(y) required annual education and training applied to any person designated by the school as a cheerleading coach, supervisor or sponsor.
3. School participants must comply with the GIAA Constitution and Contest Rules section 1205(a)(6) GIAA Concussion Acknowledgment Form and file it with the school district personnel for the current school year.
4. Any student participating in a GIAA member school cheerleading program, suspected of having a concussion, must be evaluated by his or her treating physician. The participant's treating physician must provide a written statement that in his or her professional judgment it is safe for the student to return-to-play before the participant may begin the school districts COT return-to-play designated protocol.

## G. COVID-19 COMPETITION RULES

Safety is our priority for your competition experience. We are deeply committed to the safety and well-being of athletes, coaches and spectators. We are prepared to administer a competition that will meet the state, local and facility guidelines related to COVID-19 at the time of the event. While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), federal, state and local guidance, please be assured that we are committed to delivering the same quality of competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require.



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## II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Teams will be evaluated on their ability to lead the crowd, proper skill incorporations and performance, motions, dance and overall routine. Game Day practicality is heavily emphasized. Performances should be prepared as they would for sideline leading at a school sporting event.

### A. GAME DAY ROUTINES

The competition will consist of three categories. There should be no “organized” entrances when taking the floor for any of the performances.

#### 1 - Band Chant:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Recorded marching band music or drum cadence performance that encourages crowd interaction
- QUALIFYING ROUND - teams will be announced, take the floor, with timing beginning with the first beat of music or organized movement
- No stunts or tumbling are permitted in this section. Jumps and kicks are allowed.

#### 2 - Crowd Leading:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Sideline cheerleading that engages crowd response
- QUALIFYING ROUND - teams will take the floor following the sound of a BUZZER. Timing begins when the buzzer sounds and teams are encouraged to lead the crowd as they take the floor and continue the crowd-leading section
- There will **not** be a buzzer to signify the end of this section
- Skill restrictions:
  - No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed (cradles are considered dismounts, not tosses). Coed and “quick” tosses are permitted.
  - No inversions
  - No twisting dismounts from stunts
  - Single-leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches
  - No running tumbling
  - Standing tumbling is limited to one tumbling skill at a time. A back tuck is the most elite standing tumbling skill allowed.

#### 3 - Fight Song:

- One-minute time LIMIT
- Traditional school fight song performed to recorded marching band music
- QUALIFYING ROUND - teams will be announced, take the floor, with timing beginning with the first beat of music or organized movement
- Up to three **CONSECUTIVE** eight-counts may be incorporated (skills added) with stunts, tumbling and/or jumps. The incorporation can take place at any point in the performance and can (but does not have to be) be repeated once if desired. IF the incorporation is repeated (to accompany the repetition of the fight song), the incorporation must repeat exactly as initially performed. To properly count your incorporation, start counting the 8-counts with the “dips” of the added skill(s)—the dip to jump, dip to tumble, dip of top person to load stunt, etc.). **REGARDLESS OF WHEN THE MUSIC ENDS**, counting will continue until the **routine** is complete or the skills are completed and back on the ground.



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**QUALIFYING ROUND** - Each performance will consist of one of the three identified categories above. Each element will have a time limit of one (1) minute. Each of the three qualifying round performances will be preceded by a designated warm-up session. *\*May be modified to a single rotation, if necessary, to meet COVID guidelines at the time of the event. Each element would still be timed and scored individually.*

**STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND** - Teams with the highest cumulative scores from the three qualifying round performances will advance to State Championship. The number of teams advancing to State Championship will be determined based on the number of teams participating in the qualifying round in each conference. The State Championship performance will be preceded by a designated warm-up session.

Each STATE CHAMPIONSHIP performance will have an overall maximum performance time limit of three (3) minutes and will be performed in the following order:

1. Band Chant
2. Situational Response (see description below)
3. Crowd Leading
4. Fight Song

The entire performance will be executed in a continuous order. To continue the feel of a Game Day environment, **spirited crowd-leading interaction between each section is encouraged.**

**SITUATIONAL RESPONSE:** Each team will respond to audio cues by a game announcer, as heard at football and basketball games. In order to imitate the Game Day environment, audio cues will include an announcer-lead situational cue to which the team will show a definitive OFFENSE or DEFENSE response. A general response would not meet the criteria.

## **B. SCORES AND RANKINGS**

1. In the qualifying round, each team will be scored by multiple judges in each of the three categories.
2. The official results and team placements will be determined by the cumulative scores from the STATE CHAMPIONSHIP round only. Qualifying round scores will not carry over to determine final team standings. However, if a tie occurs in the State Championship round, the cumulative qualifying round scores will be utilized to break any ties.
3. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches as follows:
  - Qualifying Round - score sheets will be made available to all teams following the qualifying round.
  - State Championship scores and rankings will be posted on the GISA website following the conclusion of the competition.
4. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the GISA Game Day State Championship score sheet.
5. All scores and judges decisions are considered final.



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## C. TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Acknowledging the potential variance in sound system and timing devices, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of three (3) seconds over the time limit.
2. It is recommended that all teams practice and time performances prior to competition to allow for variations in sound equipment.
3. Introductions and exits:
  - a. All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place backstage before a team is in the “on deck” or next to perform position.
  - b. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures i.e. teams must refrain from chest bumps, hugs, and handshakes.
  - c. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team’s performance.
  - d. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

## III. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

### A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team’s routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected will be directed to **STOP** the routine.
2. If directed to stop a routine, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.

### B. FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team’s routine is interrupted because of failure of the team’s own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.

### C. INJURY

1. All participants must follow the GIAA safety regulations identified in this document. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are: a) competition officials, or b) the school coach from the team performing.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety, but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless the competition officials receive clearance from the on-site medical personnel and the school head coach of the competing team.
4. Any injured participant suspected of a concussion is required to follow the GIAA Concussion Policy regarding the treatment of concussions and must be removed immediately from the competition.



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## **IV. INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS**

### **A. RULES & PROCEDURES**

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the school coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance.

The GIAA Game Day State Championship Rules Committee will consist of a designated Competition Director, Head Judge and GIAA staff. The school team and school coach must abide by all decisions made by the judges and Rules Committee. Any interpretation of the GIAA Game Day State Championship rules and regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee.

### **B. AWARDS**

Each conference or division will receive the following:

1. A first place plaque will be awarded to the top team score in band chant, crowd leading and fight song categories.
2. The top teams will be awarded and designated with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place with a runner-up silver trophy and 1<sup>st</sup> place with a championship gold trophy.
3. Each team member of the top three teams and one school coach will be awarded an individual medal first place - gold, second place – silver.

### **C. JUDGING PANELS**

Judges will be provided by the GIAA and they will be responsible for scoring each school performance according to the GIAA competition score sheets.

1. Head Judge - The Head Judge is responsible for overseeing the entire Judging Panel that consists of Panel Judges, Point Deduction Judge, and Safety Judge. The Head Judge will also fill out his/her own score sheet for each performance.
2. Panel Judge - Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the GISA score sheets. Each Panel Judge will fill out a score sheet for each performance.
3. Safety Judge - The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all safety violations, time violations, and boundary violations.
4. Judging Coordinator/Quality Judge

### **5. ALL JUDGES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL.**

### **D. DISQUALIFICATION**

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of the GIAA Game Day State Championship rules and regulations defined in this document will be subject to disqualification from the competition and will automatically forfeit any award.



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## E. DEDUCTIONS

Deduction points will be subtracted from the final score.

Area	Specific	Deduction Points
Participant allowance (Section I, A)	Exceed maximum participants	Disqualification from contest
Music licensing (Section I, E)	Failure to meet licensing requirement	Disqualification from contest
NFHS Spirit Rules (Section I, F, 1)	Utilization of skill or stunt not permitted by rule	5 points per rule violation
Time limit* *3 second window to allow for variance (Section II, C)	Each violation	3 points for 1-5 seconds over limit 5 points for 6-10 seconds over limit 7 points for 11 seconds or more over limit
Time limit (Section II, C)	Excessive celebration or organized entrance or exit	1 point
Performance floor (Section I, D, 3)	Any team member stepping with both feet outside the designated performance area	.5 Half of one point
Procedure or General Rule Violation (not a safety violation)	Team exceeds 8-count allowances in fight song Team adds stunts or tumbling in Band Chant	3 points per rule violation