

TEAM HANDBOOK

2009-2010

Please take the time to thoroughly read this handbook as it will answer many questions you may have now, or in the future.

First of all, WELCOME!

Congratulations on becoming a Top Dog All Star! You are now a part of an exciting program in which athletes train and compete at a nationally recognized level. Our experience in the industry far surpasses any program around. With a little hard work and dedication, you can become the athlete you have always wanted to be. Our former athletes can be found on the sidelines at U of Alabama, Auburn, U of Hawai'i, Ole Miss, South Alabama, Faulkner State, Navarro College, Wallace State, Hawai'i Pacific and several others. We pride ourselves in helping with your future. Athletes come from all over the world requesting OUR help getting them in to college cheer programs as well as training them to compete for college cheer scholarships. We have a proven track record of producing great athletes! With your dedication and hard work, we can help you unlock your athletic potential!

Whether you are brand new to the sport of All Star cheerleading or you have many years experience, we can help you improve on every aspect of cheerleading!

Thank you for choosing Top Dog Cheer. We will have a great experience this year.

Thank you,

Darren McCoy
Head Coach

TOP DOG CHEER
WHERE THE
BEST
BECOME
BETTER!

WELCOME TO THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

2009-2010 ENROLLMENT FORM

Student Name: _____ Home Phone: _____
(Please Print) Last First

AGE **ON AUG 31, 2009:** _____ GRADE **IN FALL OF 2009:** _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Male ____ Female ____ Child lives with: Mother ____ Father ____ Both ____
Mo/ Day /Year

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Mailing Address _____
(If different from Street Address) City State Zip

E-Mail: _____ (parent) _____ (participant)

Current Cheerleading Squad Name (if currently cheering): _____

Father: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell/Beeper: _____
Last First

Father's Social Security Number: _____

Mother: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell/Beeper: _____
Last First

Mother's Social Security Number: _____

Guardian: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell/Beeper: _____
Last First

Guardian's Social Security Number: _____

Guardian's Relationship to Child: _____

Medical Insurance Company Name: _____ Policy No.: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Medical Doctor: _____ Phone Number: _____

Dentist: _____ Phone Number: _____

In regards to the above mentioned person please check all that apply. Provide explanation on back of form if needed.

- () Allergies to foods, medications, etc
- () Asthma
- () Diabetes
- () Heart Trouble
- () Contact Lenses
- () Migraine Headaches
- () Other: _____
- () Hypertension
- () Convulsions
- () Epilepsy
- () Fainting Spells
- () Conditions Currently Under Treatment
- () Medications Currently Taking

Daily Medication Schedule: _____

School Name: _____

Other Siblings Enrolled in Program: _____

T-Shirt Size: CXS CS CM CL AS AM AL AXL T-Shirt Rec'd: _____ Date ____/____/____
Month/Day/Year

_____ I understand that all fees are due by the 10th of each month, and will continue until the current competitive season ends. These fees are incurred even if I do not attend. Late fees will be added to delinquent accounts. Accounts will be credited as paid on date received by this facility.

Waiver and Release of Liability

_____ In consideration of Top Dog Cheer, furnishing training and/or equipment to enable my daughter/son/myself to participate in cheer programs, I agree as follows:
_____ I fully understand and acknowledge that cheerleading activities have inherent risks, dangers and hazards, and that my participation in such activities and/or use of such equipment may result in injury including, but not limited to bodily injury, strains, fractures and other serious disabilities.

_____ I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives and my heirs, hereby voluntarily agree to release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, defend and indemnify Top Dog Cheer, and its owners, agents, officers and contract employees from any and all claims, actions or losses for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death or otherwise which may arise out of my use of equipment or my daughter/son/myself participation in cheer related activities. I specifically understand that I am releasing, discharging and waiving any claims or actions that I may have presently or in the future for the negligent acts of other conduct by the owner, agents, officers, or employees of Top Dog Cheer.

_____ I understand and acknowledge that no medical insurance benefits will be provided to me during this activity and that I will be responsible for any medical bills that may result from my daughter/son/me participating in cheer related activities.

_____ I, being the parent or guardian of the student, do hereby authorize Top Dog Cheer and its coaches, trainers, or any member of its staff, to obtain emergency medical treatment from any physician, hospital, or other qualified medical personnel or facility as needed in the event of accident or injury. I also agree to be responsible for all the costs of said emergency treatment.

_____ I, being the parent or guardian of the student, do hereby authorize Top Dog Cheer and its coaches, trainers, or any member of its staff to place my child's full name and/or photograph on the Top Dog Cheer website or any printed materials for informational or promotional purposes.

Please Initial Above and Sign Below

_____ (PARTICIPANT) _____ (PARENT)

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF YOUR SUMMER VACATION/CAMP/SCHOOL/PRACTICE SCHEDULE.

Description of the Top Dog All-Star Program:

All squads are strictly competition and performance groups. The squads' primary focus is to prepare for and compete in national competitions. In addition to National competitions, the squads will participate in several local and regional competitions as well as several demonstrations and exhibitions. During the course of the year, the squads will focus on all of the components of cheerleading including tumbling, jumps, motions, pyramids, partner stunts, dance and sportsmanship.

Here at TOP DOG CHEER, we are dedicated to the advancement of the sport of competitive cheer and dance. Though our coaching methods are just one of thousands of different styles, we feel that it is the best way to progress through this highly competitive activity. As you will soon find out, this is not a recreational hobby. We at TOP DOG take cheerleading to heart. We will dedicate ourselves in assuring the success of the competitive teams.

If at any time you feel the competitive road is not for you, we do offer recreational classes. TOP DOG teams practice very hard and are very dedicated to the program. Please understand that parents are as much a part of the program as the athletes. Over the course of the season, you will be required to make many trips to the gym for team and individual practices.

As head coach of the TOP DOG competitive teams, I want to reassure that you and your child's best interest are at the forefront of our rules and regulations. The following pages have been revised and modified to pledge our guarantee to a fair and unbiased season. If you have any concerns about a rule, or anything else, please don't hesitate to call.

Darren

Staff Description

Darren McCoy is the head coach for the entire All-Star program. He is the primary person responsible for recruiting new athletes, providing support for the coaching staff, making decisions about which camps and competitions the squads attend, and all business dealings for Top Dog Cheer. He is also the main contact person for parents and athletes regarding our program.

Darren McCoy, Jim Gorsuch, Matt Skorcz, Tony Huntley Kat Hamblin and Alex Crews are the coaches for all of our teams and classes. They make the majority of the decisions involving choreography and placement for routines and provide active coaching and recruiting throughout the season.

Lorie Tanner is the Main All-Star Coordinator for Top Dog Cheer. If you have any questions regarding competitions, classes, practices, (or most anything else other than coaching related questions) please direct your questions to her.

Every Top Dog Team will have a team mom for the 2008-2009 competition season. Darren and Vanetta will appoint each team mom. If you are interested in this position please contact Lorie as soon as possible and your name will be placed on a list for them to choose from. The team mom will also be responsible for making sure that every team member receives any updates and newsletters. This person will not be in charge of collecting money or be given access to any financial information.

Team Moms

One to two team moms per team and helpers as needed.

Responsibilities:

1. Take sizes and distribute (or collect) clothing, uniforms
2. Distribute updates, newsletters, all-star information to cheerleaders & parents
3. Relay info to and from Main All-Star Coordinator.
4. Recruit helpers to assist with children at competitions (restroom breaks, snacks, general guidance to ensure all children are accounted for at all times

Please note that these positions are entirely voluntary and no compensation is provided.

Teams/Divisions

Top Dog consists of several different teams. Teams may be added/deleted/combined as necessary, and if done may result in a change of practice schedule as well as competition schedule and cost. The coaching staff will make the decision as to which divisions the All-Star program competes in. The coaching staff will make the decision on who competes as well as which team they compete on. The head coach will always make the final judgment. All decisions are final.

Tryouts

Generally, most members will be chosen at the spring tryouts. Squad members, parents, and coaches can recruit other members throughout the year. In order for All-Stars to become stronger, we must continuously recruit new athletes. Any squad member with a prospect in mind should bring the prospect to a practice (we use practice as their tryout). If the squad members and parents recruit, they are more likely to choose people they'll work well with. However, only coaches make any decisions about who makes the squad.

Participation

Everyone in the All-Star program has an equal opportunity to participate. However, please note that no athlete has an absolute guarantee of a competition or performance spot. Please note that athletes may be removed from our program at any time for any reason. Before dismissal the squad member and his/her parents would be notified of a problem so that we can attempt to resolve the situation.

General Booster Information

Purpose:

1. 75% Provide fundraising to help cheerleaders raise money for Competition fees, Travel fees, Tuition, etc.
2. 10% Organize social events to promote squad bonding, such as Christmas/End of Year parties, birthdays, etc.
3. 10% Organize travel (hotel, transportation, chaperones, etc.) to different events. Also look for and organize exhibitions in the community (e.g. Frazier Memorial Church Easter Extravaganza) as well as finding venues to publicize Top Dog achievements (newspaper, Montgomery Sports Beat, etc.)
4. 5% Help look for opportunities for scholarships (“American Cheerleader” magazine Cheerleader of the Month, Cheer Ltd. Cheerleader of the Year, UCA Cheerleader of the Month, Jr. Miss Alabama, etc.) for high school age All-Star Cheerleaders, as well as trying to see if Top Dog Cheer Booster Club will be available to provide all graduating seniors of the All-Star program scholarships.

Positions:

Fundraising Coordinator: Dee Wild (wild0219@yahoo.com)

Social Coordinator: Team Mom for each team

Travel Coordinator: TBD

Please note that these positions are voluntary and no compensation is provided

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

The philosophy of the Top Dog program is to teach out athletes how to “win.” By our definition, winning is giving everything you’ve got to the task at hand. We want our athletes to become winners not just in cheerleading, but in any endeavor they choose. We want to impart work habits that will lead them to excellence throughout their lives. Most of all, we want to teach them the value of 1) self-discipline 2) confidence 3) persistence and 4) teamwork. In order for someone to be a Top Dog, they must be sure of their ability to learn new skills, be prepared to pursue those skills until they succeed, and subvert the ego in the service of a higher cause. Once they learn the importance of these values, they can accomplish anything.

Team member objectives

“The law of the jungle is this...the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack.”

-The Jungle Book

What should the team member’s primary objective be? To achieve All-American honors and a position on a college squad? No, those are individual accomplishments that should be the by-product rather than the goal of genuine teamwork. The squad member’s primary objective is quite simple: To contribute as much as possible to the success of :

1) the program 2) their team and 3) themselves. As a Top Dog All-Star, team members should ask themselves the following questions before making any decisions or taking any action:

- 1) “Will this benefit the Top Dog Program?” (meaning all the teams)
- 2) “Will this benefit the team I am on?”
- 3) “Will this benefit me?”

Work Ethic

“The harder I work, the luckier I seem to get.”

In regard to work ethic and self discipline, the philosophy of Top Dog Cheer and it's administration is that "It's easier to make a good cheerleader out of a hard worker than it is to make a hard worker out of a good cheerleader." The harder you work, the easier it is for us to help you improve. Of course, a good cheerleader with a strong work ethic is best.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship and team unity are very important to our organization. Please be courteous and considerate to all teams and athletes. This includes other cheer programs and other Top Dog Teams. Please don't speak negatively about any person, decision, or result. We strive to teach our athletes respect and sportsmanship. Anyone who behaves in a manner we view as inappropriate may be asked to leave the program.

Choreography

All Music, cheers, dances, stunts and any choreography or ideas presented to athletes during practices are to remain confidential and should not be discussed, taught, or given to others outside our program. The coaching staff puts great effort in creating original material for our teams and we do not wish for it to be shared with friends, school teammates, athletes, or parents of other programs. You may not use our material for any other squad.

Trademark/Logo

"Top Dog Cheer" and the TDC logo are property of Top Dog Cheer. Permission is required before anyone may sell a product that uses or displays our team name and logo. All sales of Top Dog Cheer merchandise must go through Top Dog Cheer. No one may sell anything with the words "Top Dog Cheer" or the logo without our expressed permission.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Responsibilities of the coach:

- To prepare the athletes both as a group and individually to perform and present our program in the best possible light
- To do the above in the safest manner possible, and adhere to all safety guidelines
- To keep the best interest of the athletes at heart and care for them as people as well as athletes
- To stress the value of God, academics, and the value of healthy lifestyle choices and to be a good role model
- To support parental discipline
- To recruit new athletes to the program so that our family may grow
- To teach the athletes the value of self-discipline, confidence, persistence, and teamwork
- To give 100% of what we're capable of every day to helping the athletes be the best they can be
- To make decisions and take action based upon 1) the good of the program 2) the good of the team they coach 3) the good of the individual athletes and 4) our own personal good

Responsibilities of the Athlete

- To make healthy lifestyle choices and approach the coach or parent if they have concerns about the choices available to them
- To be at every practice possible
- To give 100% of themselves at every practice and to do their best to leave their "outside world" problems outside practice
- To approach parents or coaches if they need help and guidance with these outside problems
- To recruit new athletes to the program so that our family may grow
- To accept coach and parental discipline as final and to accept responsibility for their actions
- To be totally responsible for the amount of fun they have at practice
- To support their teammates 100% in whatever they are capable of every day so their team can be the best that it can be

- To have respect for the hosting facility and not play or practice on any equipment other than the practice floor without the expressed verbal consent of the coaching staff
- To not occupy any equipment when currently in use by another class
- To be quiet when classes are in session
- To completely obey the coaches during the practice session
- To not tumble at any other gym unless mandated by their school. (we at Top Dog have a tried and true method for teaching our athletes. We do not want to confuse our athletes with different methods. Also, we do not believe in the “hurry up” approach. The athlete should show mastery of a trick before being allowed to attempt it on his/her own. This is for the athlete’s safety as well as having tumblers who are consistent with their tricks. Before giving up on our system, make sure you have taken full advantage of your practice times and the facility as well as conditioning at home and speaking with the coaches about what you can do to accelerate your child’s learning. Be very reasonable about your child’s learning abilities—in my experience, it takes a minimum of 1 full year for the **average** person to obtain a back handspring and round-off back handspring, and 2 years to fully master the tricks, then yet another year for every new trick after that. **Your child may be above or below the curve**).
- To clean the gym of any debris left by the cheerleading squad prior to leaving the practice area
- To not sit during practice times unless told by an instructor to do so
- To NOT consume alcoholic beverages, or use drugs or nicotine **EVER**
- To work as a team and not allow friendships or non-friendships have a negative effect on the team
- To make decisions and take action based upon 1) the good of the program 2) the good of the team and 3) his/her own good

Responsibilities of the Parent

- To be the #1 fans of the Top Dog All-Stars
- To let the coaches do all the coaching and to be QUIET SPECTATORS at practice
- To contact the main coach or head coach if they have an issue that needs to be addressed, and to address that issue ONLY with the coaching staff
- To waive the right to attend Top Dog functions if the coaching staff perceives them as “chronic complainers” who have not taken up their issues with the staff but continue to take up these issues with others
- To support coach discipline
- To recruit new parents to the program so our family may grow
- To support their child 100% in what they are capable of so the child can be the best he or she can be
- To make decisions and take action based upon 1) the good of the program 2) the good of the team their child is on 3) the good of their child and 4) their own personal good
- To make sure you check and see what is going on from week to week!

PLEASE NOTE:

A serious violation of the rules or repeated violations shall result in a parent/coach conference.

Persistent violations could result in dismissal from the squad with **NO REFUND**

Top Dog Cheer reserves the right, at any time and without warning, to dismiss cheerleaders from practice sessions, warm-ups, performances, etc. Dismissal can last for any length of time and is determined by the head coach.

Coaches will not discuss, entertain, or solicit suggestions from parents involving routine placement (who goes in front, etc.), who stunts where, or what squad each individual competes on. Any parent approaching a coach, coordinator or staff member with questions regarding these issues will be cut off immediately. Any parent found to be complaining/discussing these issues with other parents will be asked to pull their child from the program.

Parents also need to be aware that at this level of competition, there will be many times where your child will come home frustrated with not just his/her team members but with him/herself, as well as the unfairness of the coaches, teammates and life. Frustration, anger, crying, and grumbling are unfortunately what every competitive team goes through. Realize that these emotions are a result of wanting to achieve a certain level and not being able to attain that level—yet.

Anyone deciding to sit through practices needs to be aware that there will be times that you will want to take your child and leave. There will be yelling and screaming at times and conditioning is usually given as discipline.

The coaches will decide at what level each team will compete at in competition
During practice, your opinion does not count. All team and routine decisions are left to the discretion of the coaches.

Any new team item or suggestion will go before Darren.

Anyone threatening to quit or pull their child from the team will be dismissed from the program.

Open practices for parents are a privilege. The coaches reserve the right to close any and all practices throughout the season.

Parents are NOT allowed on the practice floor. If a parent needs to speak with a coach, either call or make an appointment.

Practice/class time is NOT an appropriate time to contact Darren or any of the Top Dog coaches.

Every year we go through the loss and addition of athletes. The expulsion and addition of anyone is DARREN'S CHOICE.

A coach may change, add or subtract any rule throughout the season, and the Head coach/owner may change any portion of this handbook at any time in order to benefit any or all teams. Top Dog is an All-Star squad and does not ever compete against high school, Pop-Warner, or other "non all-star" teams. Participation in an All-Star program is not, never has been, and never will be a "conflict of interest" with any school related, Pop Warner, or any other outside cheer squad (except other all-star teams). Anyone who tells you that you may not be a part of their squad (including school teams) because of your involvement in another cheer group or tells or tells you that you must choose one or the other is violating your rights under federal law (Freedom of assembly) and they can be subject to legal action.

Cheerleaders and parents should know that the purpose of the All-Star program is to help and not hurt their cheerleading career. With this in mind, parents, cheerleaders and other interested parties are to understand the All-Star program encourages participation in outside cheerleading (school squad, Pop Warner, etc). However, it is the squad member's responsibility to coordinate the details of attendance with any other extracurricular activity.

INJURIES/ILLNESS

Any illness or injury shall be reported to the head coach immediately

Any injury suffered during practices, performances, or other functions will be treated by the individual's personal physician. All expenses for such shall be paid by the squad member's personal insurance. The individual will provide all expenses for treatment beyond insurance coverage. New squad members are required to provide the All Star program with proof of medical insurance before their first practice. Individuals without insurance will not be allowed to join the All-Star program. Squad members are also required to notify the office of insurance plan changes.

If an injury or illness incapacitates a squad member, he/she shall not be permitted to practice and cheer for a period of time as determined by his/her personal physician. Squad members are required to inform the head coach verbally of an injury within 24 hours of seeing the doctor. Generally, another member will replace the injured/ill member until he/she is fully recovered. His/her personal physician will determine when it is appropriate to return to participation. For the health of athletes, any cheerleader missing a practice due to injury or illness will not be allowed to practice without a written clearance (to be kept on file with Top Dog) from a doctor. This rule holds true even for the smallest illnesses.

If the squad member's personal physician recommends that a squad member no longer cheer due to injury or a health problem, the squad member shall be removed from the squad. If chronic injury or illness causes a squad member to miss performances or practices repeatedly, the squad member may be removed from the squad by the head coach.

SAFETY

The increased athletic activity in cheerleading has resulted in an increased concern for safety. Cheerleading involves a variety of gymnastics, motions, partner stunts, rotations, pyramids, dance and heights; participation in cheerleading involves a certain amount of danger of personal injury. In becoming a participant in this program, a cheerleader voluntarily assumes the risk involved by participating in cheerleading practices, performances, and other activities.

The All-Star program has adopted the USASF. Safety guidelines. Copies are readily available for review on the internet.

COMPETITION ETIQUETTE

During Competition times:

- ❖ All cheerleaders and dancers will be required to wear certain clothing while in attendance
- ❖ Absolutely no jewelry of any kind is to be worn
- ❖ All cheerleaders and dancers will stay with their team during the competition
- ❖ No boyfriends or girlfriends are allowed to sit with or near the athletes during the competition (this includes teammates)
- ❖ While in uniform all athletes must be on their best behavior. Rude or vulgar behavior, gestures or language will not be tolerated
- ❖ Anyone caught speaking with the competition officials can jeopardize our scoring and relationship with that company and will be expelled from the program
- ❖ Anyone arguing with or questioning the staff during a competition will be dismissed from the program

Again, it is not unheard of for a team to get anything from point deductions to disqualification for either of the last two offenses.

While attending a competition function:

- ❖ All athletes will be required to wear certain clothing while in attendance
- ❖ All athletes will stay with their team during the function unless told otherwise by the coach
- ❖ All signs of affection will be kept to a minimum (i.e. holding hands or arms around each other are acceptable)
- ❖ While at a competition function all athletes must be on their best behavior. Rude or vulgar behavior, gestures or language will not be tolerated

Communication Information

We all like to know our schedules in advance, however, no matter how well we plan changes almost always must be made. It is essential that we be able to contact you in the event that we need to pass along important information.

Please make sure the gym secretary and your team mom have a current phone number and e-mail address on file. If you move or change anything please let them know.

Our primary means of communication are **E-MAIL & TEXT**; however if you don't have access to a computer on a daily basis, please let your team mom know AND pair up with another parent who is willing to call you and notify you of changes. Please remember it is YOUR responsibility to ask questions and know what is going on with your child's team. Also we will post important info on the gym website at www.topdogcheer.com under your team's page. Hopefully before the end of this season we will mainstream all information through team pages on the website to greatly minimize the amount of paper we go through. Please check the website regularly for changes in class times/open gyms/competition info/directions, meeting times, etc.

It is your responsibility to make sure you check our website and/or your e-mail so that you stay informed about everything from extra practices to gym closings.

Be prepared to attend parent meetings from time to time. We try to schedule these just before or after practice to make it convenient for you to attend. If you must miss the meeting please send a representative (NOT your child) to take notes for you.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

The All-Star season runs from May through April. Each All-Star team will practice weekly based upon upcoming events, team preparedness, age group and gym availability. The length and number of practices as well as practice schedules may change as we enter new phases of our season. Some months may have more or longer practices than others.

Squad members will arrive at practice 10-15 minutes early to check-in, pay fees, tape up, stretch, etc. Please be sure your child is prepared for practice (*hair pulled back, proper practice uniform, shoes, etc*). He/she should also plan on staying 10-15 minutes after practice for meetings, extra practice, etc. All squad members should coordinate transportation accordingly. Please note that towards competition time, practices may run late and extra practices may be scheduled. We try to keep this to a minimum.

No food or snacks are allowed during practice unless needed for medical conditions. All drinks must be purchased prior to practice, as we will not allow time to buy drinks during practice. Plan on getting 1 drink per hour unless the AC is off and we are really sweating. Hydrate yourself before practice accordingly.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

An absence is an absence whether excusable or not. If you wish to keep your spot on the team (and improve your skills) attendance is crucial. **Not showing up for practice for ANY reason may cause you to lose your spot and be placed on alternate status.** No other activity (social or school functions) takes precedence over your attendance here. **The two weeks of practices leading up to competition must be attended.** If you miss any one of these you may (at the coach's discretion) immediately be placed on alternate status and not be permitted to attend the competition! If you are planning a mini vacation around a competition, please plan to do so AFTER the competition to avoid missing practices leading up to competition! Any absence other than for illness (you MUST provide a DOCTOR'S note) will be punished with conditioning at the next practice. Tardiness to any practice is unacceptable. Punishment for tardiness is also conditioning.

Being a Top Dog All-Star cheerleader is mentally as well as physically demanding. The staff at Top Dog wants (and expects) our athletes to be good students. Please learn to manage your time wisely and be diligent in completing homework, projects, papers, and studying ahead of time so you can attend all practices and continue to pursue your athletic dreams.

DRESS CODE

Cheerleaders will be required to wear certain clothing at practice (purchased as part of your package). Hair should be in a SECURED ponytail (**not needing to be fixed every 2 minutes during practice**) off the collar. **ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY OF ANY KIND IS ALLOWED IN PRACTICE OR DURING COMPETITION.** White cheer shoes with white low or no-show socks are to be worn-NO BARE FEET OR SOCKS ONLY! If a cheerleader chooses to violate this dress code in any manner your child may be asked to sit out of practice, OR punishment may be given in the form of conditioning at the end of practice, performance or competition, whichever is applicable.

**ABSOLUTELY NO GUM CHEWING IN THE GYM AT ALL
ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY OF ANY KIND!**

CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING PRACTICE!

COMPETITION INFORMATION

“We aren’t afraid to lose. If we win, great... But win or lose, it is the competition which gives us pleasure.”
-Joe Paterno

The All-Star program is a competitive cheer program. We primarily compete in Regional or National Championships. All squad members preparing to compete with us must be able to take off from school and all other obligations the two days preceding and following any major event.

Local Events

From time to time, cheerleaders will attend special local events, performances, etc. In these instances, the coaching staff will endeavor to give members as much prior notice as possible. **However, please expect last minute changes.** Cheerleaders should understand that every performance goes towards their personal improvement as a cheerleader and the improvement of the squad as a whole.

Who Participates

Sometimes a squad member will involuntarily not be selected for a certain performance, routine, etc. The main coach will make this decision with input from the assistants. The head coach will make the final judgment. In such instances, these individuals will be considered alternates. The role of the alternate is to attend every function, practice, performance, etc. to take responsibility for improving his/her skills, and to support the team. The last thing an alternate should do is miss a practice or performance because they are “not in the routine.” When possible, coaches will be provided to assist the alternates not performing with the squad. In terms of travel, alternates are strongly encouraged to go with the team. This gives the alternate a chance to participate in the event of routine change, illness, or injury

Competition Attendance:

All athletes must be present at ALL TOP DOG competition times. NO EXCEPTIONS! All cheerleaders and dancers will be given a time and place to meet to warm-up for their performance, **do not be late.** All functions deemed mandatory by coaches are as important as competitions and will be treated as such. Choosing not to attend these functions will be like choosing not to attend competition and could cause you to lose your spot on the team.

In order to assure that all athletes arrive on time it would be wise for parents or guardians to walk or drive to the competition venue ahead of time to find the specified meeting place.

All athletes are to be at the designated meeting place on time ready to compete. This means: hair and make-up done, uniform and cheer shoes on, ready to warm up and practice. If you need to arrive early to do hair and make-up, that’s fine, but be ready to go when it’s time.

FUNDRAISING

Contact: DEE WILD (wild0219@yahoo.com)

You will have the opportunity to participate in fundraising activities. We also encourage you to go out and solicit donations or fundraise for yourself. All donations/fundraising solicited by an individual will go to paying for that person's expenses. Any donations you solicit for your squad will be divided evenly among the squad. The fundraising opportunities will be set up so as to allow the cheerleader to offset costs as much or as little as he/she wishes. Those choosing not to fundraise are still responsible for paying all expenses according to the payment schedule.

Top Dog does not promise to offer fundraisers in regular intervals. It is our primary focus to ready your child(ren) and their respective teams for competition. The staff makes every effort to offer fundraisers when time permits, as we want very much to have as many participants in our program as possible, however we cannot guarantee that they will be offered at everyone's convenience. If you are interested in being the fundraising coordinator PLEASE let Lorie know! It would be to everyone's benefit to have a fundraising coordinator, as this will greatly increase the number of fundraiser activities. Please note that this position is entirely voluntary and no compensation is provided, though it can be of great benefit to you.

Our first fundraiser of the season is our sponsorship fundraiser. Sponsorship sheets can be printed from the "Forms" page on our website, and you can print or copy as many as you need. Pass them out to family, friends, co-workers and anyone else you know. You can accept donations in any amount you wish and the sponsors will be listed on a sponsorship t-shirt/banner/book/website depending on the level of the donation. If you know someone who owns a business, this is a great way for him or her to get inexpensive advertisement. All sponsorships are due in by June 25, 2009.

Top Dog is not classified as a not-for-profit organization, so any sponsorship made cannot be deducted as a charitable contribution (it can, however, be written off as an advertising expense). We are open to suggestions so if you have any ideas, please contact a staff member to set up an appointment.

Fee Breakdown:

Fees charged for All-Star and Tuition accounts have been combined into ONE convenient payment but are still used for different purposes.

Tuition is charged to each All-Star member to cover your coaching for team practices, tumbling/skills classes and open gyms.

When you join an All-Star team, your monthly tuition may include weekly team practices, skill/tumbling class(es), and all open gyms. If you are interested in adding additional weekly classes for an additional fee, **please log into your customer account and go to the “registrations” tab.**

In order to improve your skills, private/semi-private lessons are also available for \$25/\$35 per ½ hour, respectively. You can schedule these as often as you like (coach’s schedule permitting). **Please log into your customer account and go to the “registrations” tab to set up a private lesson.**

All-Star Account fees are charged to cover the cost of operating the office as well as competition, uniform, chorography and coaches travel fees.

We have included payment coupons for payments. Just follow the instructions on the coupons and you should stay on track with all of your payments. See the payment coupons to determine the amount of your payment. **If you would like to pay by credit card, just bring your coupon(s) in and see Lorie to process your payment or simply login to your account and pay.** Payments not received by the due date will be charged to the **card on file.** If you have any questions or find an error on your monthly statement, please let us know and we will work with you to resolve it.

You can pay all fees in advance on your credit card (your minimum monthly payment may be cheaper than our outlined fee schedule). We are unable to offer a discount on All-Star account fees since we do not get discounts on competition fees. **Late payments or unpaid accounts affect everyone by forcing us to cancel competitions.** Please pay all account fees on time or your child may be asked to sit out of practice/class until your accounts are brought up to date! Anyone carrying a balance or paying late will not be allowed to sign up for extra classes or private lessons.

***there is a \$50 service fee for all returned checks and a \$20 service fee for declined credit cards and late payments!**

In the event that a squad member must leave the squad for any reason, all previously paid fees are NON-REFUNDABLE regardless of the number of practices, competitions or events attended. You will still be required to pay all remaining fees for the year to fund a replacement for your child. This includes any sponsorship or fundraised monies.

If you decide to quit the Top Dog team at any point during the season, you must put a letter in writing into the payment box so that the staff no longer bills your account. There is a \$150 reinstatement fee for anyone who quits the program mid-season and wants to rejoin at any time. Also, any payments for unused services, apparel, competitions, etc as well as any deposits will not be refunded. All payments and merchandise then become the property of Top Dog Cheer and will be used for your child’s replacement. You will also be required to return your uniform and deduct that amount, less a rental fee, from the remaining fees for the season.

In the event of injury, the squad member is still required to pay all monthly fees and attend all practices possible during the injury to continue fitness training and remain up-to-speed for when he/she returns to practice. The **ONLY** exception to this is in the event of a communicable illness such as chicken pox or flu. In this case, the athlete will not be allowed to attend practice even to watch. This also applies to squad members on alternate status.

Travel

All maps/meeting times/competition/venue info will be posted on the Top Dog website as information becomes available.

Competition hotel and food costs are NOT included in your fees. These are your responsibility. In the event that we book and pay for rooms ahead of time, you will be billed and must pay by the specified due date in order to keep your room.

If your child is traveling with a coach or chaperone, please make arrangements well in advance (deadlines will be given) and be sure to send with him/her (or the chaperone)

- **Enough money to cover you child's share of the hotel room**
- **Enough money to cover your child's share of the transportation cost**
- **At least \$50 per day for food/souvenir shopping/unexpected expenses for supplies left at home (such as shampoo, bloomers, hair accessories, etc).**

BE ADVISED: Just so there is NO confusion whatsoever, this is how it works: Our chaperones do not incur any cost for transporting or rooming with your child. The room/gas/parking is split between the kids, period. We always overestimate the amount in case of a last minute drop out, and will either happily refund your balance or credit it to your booster account-your choice. If you have any problems with this whatsoever, please make your own arrangements.

*Please note that food and drinks at competitions are very expensive. The amounts suggested may or may not be enough for your child. Please send enough money with your child to ensure that you do not place any financial hardship on the chaperone caring for your child. Chaperones are on a budget also and many times cannot afford the extra money required if you don't send enough. We can always bring back your change!

Parents and spectators are responsible for making their own travel and lodging arrangements when travelling to watch the squad perform. Do not expect the Gym Staff or Team Moms to do this for you.

An itinerary of events for each trip will be posted on the website and/or emailed. This itinerary will include approximate performance times and special events that parents/spectators are welcome to attend (dinners, parties, practices, etc.) as well as times of departure, arrival, etc., telephone number(s), hotel(s) appropriate articles of clothing, etc. Squad members shall adhere to the itinerary. Cheerleaders are responsible for forwarding this itinerary to their parents.

Final authority of all decisions made while traveling shall rest with the head coach; decisions may be made with the advice of the coaching staff.

Once at the venue the competitor is not allowed to leave until the entire team has been dismissed. Any athlete who breaks these rules is subject to expulsion.

If you have any questions about package prices (or anything else) please inquire at the front desk or call us at 273-8002 during office hours (Monday—Thursday, 4:00 pm—9:00 pm)

We will make every effort to block rooms for all team members when possible. Once rooms are blocked, you will then call the hotel and give your credit card number to hold your room. Because of the successful growth and size of our all-star program, we are financially unable to make deposits on hotels and airlines without collecting payments from you first. We pledge that these costs are based strictly on our costs and are not marked up.

TOP DOG CHEER
2009-2010 PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND ESTIMATED COSTS

ALL COSTS LISTED BELOW ARE GOOD FAITH ESTIMATES AND ARE INCLUDED IN YOUR PAYMENT SCHEDULE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. Although we try to be accurate, it is impossible to foresee some costs. Overages in some areas may be made up for in areas where we overestimate costs.

Monthly gym tuition (May 2008-April 2009) \$125/month (includes team practices, 1 tumbling class, stretch and conditioning-when available, invitation only classes if applicable)

Choreography fee	\$250
Uniform fee	\$215
Practice Uniform fee	\$75
Competition fees	\$600
Coaches fees	\$220
Accessories & Incidentals	\$150
Admin Fees	\$54
Annual Registration Fee	\$36

You are responsible for purchasing:

BLACK Bloomers

BLACK sports bra

WHITE cheer shoes

STUNTMEN pay only \$50 per month plus travel expenses. You are to provide your own under armor top and cheer shoes.

- ◇ 2nd child discount: \$50 off monthly fee-applies to siblings on a team only
- 3rd child discount: \$50 off monthly fee-applies to siblings on a team only
- ◇ We plan to use the same uniform for the 2009-2010 season as last year. If you do not need a new uniform, or are able to purchase a used uniform you will not be charged for a uniform. If you only need one piece of the uniform you will be billed only for that item.
- ◇ Top Dog will pay for all competition entry fees for Team Members during the 2008-2009 season with the exception of those requiring purchase of a package. If a package purchase is required, you will be given all info needed along with a deadline to provide proof of purchase.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE for ALL fees listed above (including tuition) except those noted "You are responsible for"

Any payment date that falls on a day we are closed must be made the business day prior!

DEPOSIT DUE MAY 3, 2009	\$600 (EST) (if you already have a uniform your deposit will be less)
PAYMENT DUE JUNE 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE JULY 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE AUG 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE SEPT 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE OCT 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE NOV 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE DEC 10, 2009	\$250
PAYMENT DUE JAN 10, 2010	\$250
PAYMENT DUE FEB 10, 2010	\$250
PAYMENT DUE MAR 10, 2010	\$125
PAYMENT DUE APR 10, 2010	\$125

***If you would like to start fundraising now you can see Dee Wild for a sponsorship form. We will not accept any fundraising money until the first parent meeting. Fees are not pro-rated at any point in the season. If you join late, you pay fees for the entire season!

2009-2010 All Star Contract

We understand the commitment that we are making as a family to the Top Dog Cheer coaches and other team members. We intend to participate for the entire year from May 2009 until the end of April 2010. If for some reason circumstances occur which require our departure from the program, we do not expect any refund of paid fees and understand that we are required to pay at that time 1/2 of the remaining tuition fees owed and all All-Star Account fees owed to fund a replacement for the team member leaving. We understand that fees are due as outlined in the payment schedule. We understand that if payment is not made according to the payment schedule, then Top Dog Cheer has the right to use an electronic method of collecting payment and/or place the team member on alternate status until the account is brought current. If the account is past due Top Dog Cheer also has the right to turn the account over to a collection agency. We also understand that a minimum of two days of school from the entire year may need to be missed in order to attend competitions. In addition, we understand that consistent negative conversation will not be tolerated and if it becomes a detriment to team unity and chemistry whoever participates will either be dismissed from the program or prohibited from attending practices.

We also understand that this team handbook and the information therein are considered trade secrets and are the property of Top Dog Cheer. With this in mind, I will not disclose this team handbook nor discuss any of the policies and procedures herein with anyone not involved in the Top Dog program or use it to develop or promote any existing cheer programs or to create new cheer programs.

AGREEMENT TO PAY: The undersigned accepts the fees charged as a lawful debt and promises to pay said fees including the cost of collection, attorney fees, and court costs if such be necessary, waiving now and forever the right to claim exemption under the constitution and laws of the State of Alabama, or any other state.

Although we ask for your credit card/payment information during online registration, PLEASE NOTE your account is NOT charged at this time. When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When using information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day you make your payment, and you may not receive your check back from your financial institution. Returned checks carry a minimum fee of \$50. If a check is returned we will attempt to charge the card on file for the amount of the check along with the returned check charge. If accounts remain unpaid on the due date, you authorize Top Dog to charge your bank account or card on file. If the account still remains unpaid due to credit card rejections or no card on file, a late payment and declined card/no card on file fee is imposed.

By signing below I acknowledge that I have read and understand the terms and conditions of the Top Dog Cheer Handbook and all time and financial commitments set forth herein.

Signatures

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Team Member: _____ Date: _____

(Please sign the above and make a copy of this page and turn in the original to the head coach. Please keep the team handbook for your reference).

Deposit Due May 3, 2009 New All-Stars pay \$600 Returners pay \$385 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Returners-If you pay \$385 we will not order you a new uniform! Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due June 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due July 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Aug 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Sept 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Oct 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Nov 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Dec 10, 2009 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Jan 10, 2010 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition/All-Star Payment Due Feb 10, 2010 Amt Due: \$250 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition Payment Due March 10, 2010 Amt Due: \$125 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name:
Tuition Payment Due April 10, 2010 Amt Due: \$125 Boys pay \$50	Make check payable to Top Dog Cheer and place in CLEAR payment box. Child's Name: