

Teams from all kinds of youth organizations attend the New England Cheer and Dance Competition so we try to make the division options as broad as possible while still attempting to offer a somewhat level playing field. The divisions and levels at this competition may not match those of your particular organization so please use the guidelines below to help you determine how to register your team. Our goal is to have a fun, relaxed atmosphere, yet provide an exciting venue where teams get to compete against someone other than who they traditionally come up against at their league or regional tournament.

To decide which division to enter, a coach should look at what grades the majority of cheerleaders on their roster are in. If, for example, the majority of them are in 3rd or 4th grade, they would enter the Mites division. If the majority of them are in 7th, 8th or 9th grade they would enter the Midget division. If it's evenly split between, say, 4th and 5th graders, the coach can decide which division to enter based on the amount of experience her team has. If most of them are new this year, it might be best to enter them as Mites, while if many are returners they could go into the Pee Wees division.

There are three different levels to choose from, based on the difficulty of the elements in their routine. Please note the use of the words 'primarily' and 'majority' in the descriptions, as the guidelines do not flat-out prohibit various skills at the different levels, they are merely explaining what the judges will be expecting to see from that division. We just ask that the coach examine the elements in their team's routine compared to the description of the three levels to see which one will be the best fit.

Here are some frequently asked questions about the levels:

Q) "Most of our stunts and pyramids are done at shoulder height or below. We have 3 of our 15 cheerleaders doing standing back-handsprings. Can we still enter the Bronze level since most of our stunts are thigh and shoulder level?"

A) Yes, 3 is nowhere near a majority, and therefore this will not elevate your tumbling score greatly enough to be an unfair advantage over other teams in that division who may be performing only beginning level tumbling.

Q) "Our team has 20 cheerleaders. Our tumbling includes about half the team doing backhandsprings or round-off back handsprings and most of our stunts are at shoulder level with a few extensions. We have one stunt group doing a free-standing liberty, do we have to enter the Gold level?"

A) No, as the stunt score is based not only on execution but on percentage of team involvement, that one liberty will not vault your team into first place, and with the difficulty level of the majority of your stunts and tumbling being in the Silver level, that is where you should enter your team.

Q) "Our team of 16 has great stunting, we have 4 groups twisting from extended

heel stretches and a cool release transitional pyramid. Unfortunately we don't have strong tumbling, only 7 have backhandsprings and 5 have round-off backhandspring back tucks. The rest of the team is doing cartwheels and forward rolls. Should we change our stunts to be at shoulder level and enter Silver?"

A) No, you should keep in the skills you've worked so hard on. Tumbling is only worth 5 points and since it's category judging, that's from just one judge. If what they do is well executed and creatively choreographed, your score won't be so far behind a team with more advanced tumbling that you can't make it up in the other 95 points up for grabs on the scoresheet.

Please call Lisa Moskow at 413-517-3998 with any questions!