

Maximizing your Scores by KNOWING the Scoresheet!

Goal:

- Not to remove the subjectivity from cheerleading judging. Subjectivity is one of the things that keeps cheerleading a growing activity. If cheerleading judging were purely objective, there would be no need for a panel of judges, rather than 1 person to determine the winner
- As cheer coaches, our ultimate objective is set our teams up for success at competitions, and in order to do so, we need to KNOW what we're being judged on.

Typical Scoring:

- Judged by a panel (used to minimize bias) to create a fair consensus
- A good choreographer/coach will choreograph for the score sheet
- Judges' job is to judge teams against the competition's ideal squad per the point totals on the score sheet
- The fairest way to judge a routine is to have a team "attain" points. Each time the squad fulfills a score sheet requirement, they gain points.

General Scoring Categories & How to Max out in each one!

- Voice
 - o Clear, Natural and LOUD
 - o Watch "sync" of words
 - o Keep volume and inflection during skills
- Motions
 - o Correct Levels, Placement, Wrists, Timing
 - o Should be SHARP and in sync in all categories
 - o Need to make each motion "distinct" and not float through each one
- Dance
 - o Needs footwork, formations, levels, and must work with music
 - o Keep high energy and fast paced
 - o Visual impact and rhythm are highly important
 - o Be sure all moves are age-appropriate
- Tumbling
 - o Standing vs. Running
 - o Try to show maximum amount of skills in minimum amount of time
 - o Highlight the skills with creative formations/ ripples
 - o Legs together, good set, proper landings
 - o Don't "overdo" gymnastics if it is not as highly rewarded as other categories
- Stunts
 - o Need variety in entry / dismount / body position

- Focus on synchronization and technique in entire sequence
- Generally, Difficult AND Execution are evaluated by judges, so you must keep on the fine line of doing the most difficult skill set as cleanly as possible
- Pyramids
 - Look to have inversions, switch feet spin(s), release moves and varied structures
 - Great opportunity to do something memorable
- Formations/Spacing
 - Variety is key
 - Transitions play a major role, don't neglect practicing this
- Jumps
 - Variety, Technique and Height are all important
 - Maximize score by doing most difficult sequence you can as cleanly as possible
- Synchronization
 - Should be essential in ALL routine elements
 - From the simplest of motions to the unity of partner stunts: synchronization is a key factor and must be practiced
- Difficulty
 - Usually a key determinant in a squad's ranking
 - Look at your team's overall skill strengths and try to "build up" difficulty in your team's better categories first
- Crowd Appeal/Choreography
 - Give the routine a creative and original flair --- "a sense of the unexpected"
 - Look at the cohesiveness, unity and completeness of the music & cheer portions
- Practicality
 - Typically, this refers to the practical use of words, signs and skills in the cheer portion of the routine.
 - Use the basic rule of thumb of "Music vs. No-music standard. If the cheer looks like it would better suited for music, it may not be appropriate from a practicality standpoint
- Sportsmanship
 - Do not bring attention to an individual only....should be on squad as whole
 - Cheerleading is a team effort rather than a personal spotlight.
 - It is your job as a coach to ALWAYS get maximum sportsmanship points
- Final Thoughts
 - In cheerleading, the "more skilled" team doesn't always win.....it's more often the team that best fulfills the score sheet with their skills
 - The more knowledgeable and prepared you are going into a competition, the more likely your team will be successful