



CHEER STARS

A development-focused competition model
for Mini & Primary divisions in Performance Cheer
Pom & Hip Hop



WHY CHEER STARS?

CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Competition pressure at a young age
- Focus on rankings rather than development
- Difficulty is often rewarded over proper fundamentals
- Limited recognition for growth and progress

A DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

- Teams earn recognition for specific development goals
- Teams are not ranked against one another
- Technique and safe progression matters more than difficulty
- Coaches receive clearer feedback for future training

OUR GOAL

Create a positive competition environment that encourages:



Safety



Development



Teamwork



Long-term athlete growth



Enjoyment of the sport



Less drop out

OUR PHILOSOPHY

FROM RANKING TO DEVELOPMENT

INSTEAD OF ASKING:



**Who is
better?**

WE ASK:



**What has this team
achieved?**

Teams are not ranked against one another. Instead, they earn stars based on predefined development goals.

THE SEVEN STARS



Safety

Legal and safe routine



Complete Routine

All discipline-specific components



Technique

Correct and controlled execution



Creativity

Creative routine



Synchronization

Shared timing and coordination



Performance

Sustained engagement



Hit Clean

No clear listed errors

**Each star has its own criteria.
One result does not automatically decide another.**

SAFETY STAR

PURPOSE

Promote safe participation through legal, age-appropriate choreography under ICU safety rules

AWARDED WHEN



No illegal skills or elements are performed



No safety deductions or warnings are issued

EVALUATED BY

Official legality judge



COMPLETE ROUTINE STAR

POM

PURPOSE

Encourage teams to demonstrate the fundamental components of their discipline.

AWARDED WHEN THE ROUTINE CONTAINS

Pom
motions

Turns

Formations

Jumps

Flexibility

Level
variations

MINIMUM PARTICPATION

At least half of the team must complete each element. Failed or incomplete attempts do not count.



COMPLETE ROUTINE STAR

HIP HOP

PURPOSE

Encourage teams to demonstrate the fundamental components of their discipline.

AWARDED WHEN THE ROUTINE CONTAINS

Hip Hop
movements

Groove

Footwork

Formations

Levels/
floor work

Dynamics /
Musicality

MINIMUM PARTICPATION

At least half of the team must complete each element. Failed or incomplete attempts do not count.



TECHNIQUE STAR

POM

PURPOSE

Reward correct execution, body control, and stable technique across the routine

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Pom control – secure grip and clear pathways
- ✓ Arm placement – full extension and consistent angles
- ✓ Body positions – posture, alignment, and controlled shapes
- ✓ Footwork – clear placement and weight transfer
- ✓ Turns – centered rotation and controlled finish
- ✓ Jumps – clear shape and controlled landing
- ✓ Flexibility – safe alignment and controlled entry and exit

KEY PRINCIPLE

A simple skill performed correctly is more valuable than a difficult skill performed incorrectly.



TECHNIQUE STAR

HIP HOP

PURPOSE

Reward correct execution, body control, and stable technique across the routine

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Grounding and groove – connected to pulse and rhythm
- ✓ Weight transfer – clear, balanced, and controlled
- ✓ Footwork – deliberate steps and rhythmic clarity
- ✓ Isolations and body control – intentional and controlled
- ✓ Coordination – upper and lower body work together
- ✓ Dynamics and texture – controlled changes in energy
- ✓ Floorwork – safe entry, movement, and exit

KEY PRINCIPLE

A simple skill performed correctly is more valuable than a difficult skill performed incorrectly.



SYNCHRONIZATION STAR

PURPOSE

Reward team timing, coordinated movement, and team unity

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Timing — movements start, accent, and finish together
- ✓ Uniformity — matching placement, levels, and shapes
- ✓ Precision — clear pathways and completed movements

KEY PRINCIPLE

Judge the overall team picture; one minor isolated difference is not decisive.



PERFORMANCE STAR

PURPOSE

Reward an engaging performance from start to finish

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Energy — sustained and appropriate to the age group and style
- ✓ Natural expression — confident and age-appropriate, not forced
- ✓ Audience engagement — focus reaches beyond the team
- ✓ Projection — movement and intention remain visible

KEY PRINCIPLE

Athletes perform throughout, including transitions.



PURPOSE

Encourage purposeful and age-appropriate creativity in choreography.

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Formations and space — varied and purposeful floor use
- ✓ Levels and visual variety — clear contrasts in height and direction
- ✓ Transitions — original, smooth, and fully completed
- ✓ Musical interpretation — movement reflects rhythm and accents
- ✓ Originality — recognizable choices suited to the athletes



HIT CLEAN STAR

PURPOSE

Recognize clean, repeatable performances

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ No timing errors
- ✓ No prop drops, where applicable
- ✓ No interruptions or loss of choreography
- ✓ No major execution errors
- ✓ No formation errors



RESULTS & STAR PRESENTATION



Written feedback from ICU judges via email



Paper certificate with the stars you've earned

HOW COACHES CAN PREPARE



Build a complete, level-appropriate routine



Prioritize safe technique and suitable progression



Check the required athlete participation in every section



Explain the positive, development-focused model to athletes and parents

