

FARMINGTON TWIST 'N' TUMBLE

DYNAMITE TEAM HANDBOOK

2015-2016

Table of Contents

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO TNT TEAM GYMNASTICS

Welcome to the Team!	3
DYNAMITE Team Philosophy	3
Training Content	3
Team Selection and Movement	4
Participation in other Activities	4
Descriptions of USAG Xcel Levels.....	4

Part 2: Competitive Program Policies

Team Guidelines	5
Parent Commitment	6
Disciplinary Actions.....	6
Photo Release	7
High School Gymnasts Eligibility	7

Part 3: Competitive Season Information

Meet Scheduling & Information Sheets.....	7
The Meet Takes How Long?	8
Requirements for Competitive Eligibility	8
Gymnast Selection Criteria for Meet Invitations	8
Participation in Scheduled Meets	9
Meet Fees & Travel Expenses	9
Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts	9
Meet Etiquette for Parents	10
Expectations.....	11
Some Guidelines for Parents Feeling Stress.....	11
Insight to Judges at a Competition	12
TNT Dynamite Gymnastics USAG Team Program	13
TNT Dynamite Gymnastics—Gymnast & Parent Acknowledgement	14

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE TWIST 'N' TUMBLE DYNAMITE TEAM

Welcome to the Team!

Dynamite Gymnastics would like to welcome your family to our club. If you are reading this team manual then your daughter has already impressed us with her gymnastics talent and potential. Through this team manual, we hope to give you more insight into how our program operates and answer many of your questions.

We look forward to working with your daughter as she pursues her dream of being a competitive gymnast. As a member of the team you will watch your daughter mature with the characteristics of a gymnast: *DRIVE, CONFIDENCE, SELF DISCIPLINE and the APPRECIATION OF HARD WORK*. Our goal is to make your daughter's experience at Dynamite fun, positive and successful. To ensure that we accomplish this it is important that the gymnast, coaches and parents are able to function as one Team.

DYNAMITE Team Philosophy

Dynamite Team is meant to give every gymnast an opportunity to excel not only in gymnastics but in life. When properly taught, gymnastics teaches self-esteem, self-motivation, self-discipline, dedication, determination, work ethic, time management, teamwork, team spirit, leadership, sportsmanship, respect, poise and grace. When our students are done turning cartwheels, they will have established a base of life skills that will undoubtedly assist them through all of their non-flipping years.

Training Content

In order to understand and appreciate what goes into the development of a competitive gymnast, one must understand exactly what it is we are trying to achieve during training. There are four fundamental areas of development, which need to be addressed during the training: (1) Strength, (2) Flexibility, (3) Skills, (4) Discipline.

- (1) Strength Development – As with all sports one objective of the training is to make the difficult look easy. This is much easier to accomplish if the athlete has the strength required to master the skills. In most cases, the stronger the better. This is certainly true of gymnastics. It is also true that strength training can also play a role in the reduction of injuries.
Strength development at the beginning or compulsory level focuses on building a base on which to build as the gymnast advances. Sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, running and so on are used to achieve this goal. While it may appear that the gymnasts simply repeat these basic exercises over and over again through the course of the year, in fact there are subtle and at times not so subtle variations in the performance of these exercises. Technique may be changed or improved, the number of repetitions change, resistance is altered, the range of motion is increased, and the athlete is continually challenged to complete his/her assignment.
- (2) Flexibility Development – Flexibility development is also critical to the long-term success of the gymnast. Superior flexibility adds to the aesthetic appeal of the performance, allows the athlete to master skills more easily and play a role in reducing the frequency and seriousness of injuries.
- (3) Skill Development – Skill development falls into two distinct, but related categories: Basics and New Skills. Basics are like the ABC's of gymnastics. The gymnast uses these ABC's to compose their gymnastics sequences and routine. If any of these basic building blocks is missing or defective, the entire performance is weakened. These basic skills, the building blocks of the sport, must be continually refined in order to permit the gymnast

and her coaches to **continually** improve their performances. That is why we continually review and drill the basics.

- (4) Discipline – Just like strength, flexibility and skill development, discipline plays an integral role when training. Training requires discipline from both the coaches and athletes. The coaches must be constantly keeping all athletes focused and training hard in order to allow them to continually improve their performance. Gymnasts must also keep themselves disciplined by forcing themselves to train harder when they get discouraged and keep focused when they get excited. Without discipline, the strength, flexibility and skills do not come.

Team Selection and Movement

Initial placement and subsequent advancement from one team level to the next will be determined by the Dynamite Gymnastics coaching staff. In all cases a trial period of one or two months will be offered in order to assess the gymnasts' placement, readiness for training, parental support, and compatibility with the team.

Keep in mind that team participation is by invitation only. *Remaining on team is also by invitation only* and is dependent upon the athlete and parent's attitude and behavior, athlete work habits, and coach-ability. All decisions are made in the best interest of the child. As a gymnast moves up, her responsibility to work out and to participate in scheduled meets increases.

Participation in other Activities

We encourage young athletes to participate in other athletic activities during the off-season of gymnastics. Please speak to your child's coach if you have scheduling conflicts. **However, once your child has become a member of the Dynamite Team, she is NOT allowed to participate in gymnastics at another facility on a regular continuous basis.**

Descriptions of USAG Xcel Levels

Bronze: Gymnasts competing at this level must have reached their 5th birthday on or before the first competition of the season. This is the level our training team competes at towards the end of the season. Most bronze routines are comprised of 4 to 5 "A" level elements that must include certain requirements as set out in the Xcel Code of Points. Dynamite Training Team members will create routines on bars, beam and floor. They will all also compete the required vault for Bronze.

Silver: Gymnasts competing at this level must have reached their 6th birthday on or before the first competition of the season. Dynamite Gym's Silver team competes in approximately 4-6 competitions throughout the season beginning in December. These gymnasts have the option of competing at State, regional and national level competitions as well. At this level gymnasts are more serious and focused than bronze. Skills begin to get more advanced and a few flight skills are introduced. It is also the most important level to solidify form and body shape in basic skills. Silver Routines are comprised of 5-6 "A" level elements that must include certain requirements as set out in the Xcel Code of Points. There are multiple difficulty restrictions once your gymnast reaches this level. In order to advance to the next level, gymnasts must score above a 35.00 all-around score in more than 1 competition AND have the skills required for the gold team and/or at the discretion of the coach.

Gold: Gymnasts competing at this level must have reached their 7th birthday on or before the first competition of the season. Dynamite Gym's Gold team competes in approximately 6 competitions throughout the season beginning in December. These gymnasts have the option of competing at the state, regional and national level competitions as well. At this level gymnasts have progressed through basic skills, shapes and forms of gymnastics. Gymnasts on the Gold Team practice for approximately 9 hours/week in the gym and their practices get a little more intense than silver. In

order for gymnasts at this level to continue to develop more complex skills, conditioning will be a large part of practice. Gold routines are comprised of 6 or more “A” and “B” level skills requiring at least 1 “B” level skill per routine. There are difficulty restrictions at this level as well as bonus point combination capabilities. Most gymnasts will stay at this level for multiple years in order to achieve the mobility requirements for the Platinum level.

Platinum & Diamond: These levels are the last two in the USAG family. Currently TNT does not host a team at this level. As our current gymnasts grow to this level we will create a team. Platinum and diamond level gymnasts must have reached their 8th birthday on or before the first competition of the season. Gymnasts at either of these levels would be practicing 12 hours per week and are required to obtain at least 5 “B” level skills prior to competing at this level.

Part 2: Competitive Program Policies

Team Guidelines

The decision to join the Dynamite Gymnastics Team program is a big one and reflects a commitment to the team for an entire season. Team members do not move on and off the team based on illness, injury, conflicts or the like. **YOU ARE EITHER ON THE TEAM OR NOT.** Following are guidelines which ALL team members are expected to follow:

1. Each gymnast is required to attend all regularly scheduled workouts. Be on time to all workouts. That means on the floor ready to work out when your workout begins, not talking in the bathroom or hanging around in the hall. If for some reason you will be late or absent you are required to call the office and notify the coaches so that they may adjust the workout accordingly.
2. Each gymnast is required to be at EVERY practice the week of a meet. The coaches will let families know ahead of time if a workout will be cancelled due to travel needs.
3. Proper workout attire is a MUST. A properly fitting leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. Tight fitting workout shorts will be allowed. No shirts or loose clothing. No jewelry, other than stud earrings, may be worn during the workout. For the courtesy of the coaches and other athletes, proper and appropriate hygiene is appreciated.
4. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during the workout. This means hair in a pony (so it cannot get into the eyes!) Clippys and hair bands should be used as necessary but should not come off to distract the gymnast.
5. No food, drink (except water bottles), or candy is permitted on the workout floor. All snacks must remain in the cubby area.
6. Work hard and try your best. This is all that we will ever ask of you and this is always what you should demand of yourself. Do not compare yourself with other gymnasts. You are all different and will advance at different rates. Only concern yourself with things that YOU can control which are YOUR ATTITUDE, YOUR EFFORT...YOUR GYMNASTICS!
7. Gymnasts may not leave the workout or competition floor without expressed permission of the coaching staff.
8. Alert your coach when your body is telling you to slow down or stop. If you are sick, on medication, or are injured we need to know, and you need to listen to your body. Pain is your body’s way of telling you to stop. In addition, alert your coach if you have engaged in any strenuous activity prior to the start of practice.
9. Treat your coaches and teammates with respect. Be kind to those gymnasts younger than you are; do not hold yourself out as better than other gymnasts. THERE IS NO PLACE IN THE GYM FOR RUDE OR BELITTLING COMMENTS, DISPLAYS OF ANGER OR DISGUST, OR TALKING BACK TO COACHES OR OTHER ADULTS.
10. Be honest. Cheating is the ugliest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your coaches, your parents, and, most importantly, to yourself. If you cannot or will not complete an assignment be honest about it.

11. Maintain a positive attitude when facing fears and frustrations. Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. All athletes suffer setbacks, frustration, fear and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them and overcome them. Set high goals and achieve them step by step.
12. NO TEAM MEMBER IS ALLOWED TO USE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS! We spend many hours together trying to be the best we can be. All of that work is a complete waste of time if an athlete uses drugs or alcohol.

The way you act in the gym is a reflection of your respect for yourself, for teammates, and for Dynamite Gymnastics. Only the highest standard of behavior will be acceptable. The following actions show respect and are expected of a Dynamite Gymnastics Team Member.

Parent Commitment

1. Make sure gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets and special functions. If your gymnast must miss a workout for any reason, please call or text your daughter's coach.
2. Communicate with the coaches regarding ANY problems. We are in business to serve you and your child. Your thoughts are important to us. COMPLAINING TO OTHER PARENTS CANNOT SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM, NOR CAN WE SOLVE THEM IF WE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT THEM. We feel that the support of our team parents is important for team morale and unity. We will come to you if we hear that you have been making negative comments regarding the team program. Please come to us first if you have concerns! **Please talk to Krystal or Andrea regarding any team issues.**
3. Check the table, bulletin board and your e-mail regularly to stay current with team activities. Please give us as many e-mail addresses as you like!
4. A representative from each competitive team member's family is required to volunteer for at least one activity throughout the season. There are many volunteer opportunities available and will be released at the beginning of the season for parents to sign up for.
5. Ensure that your gymnast gets enough sleep, proper nutrition, gets to and from the gym on time and has proper clothing and equipment.
6. Provide unconditional love, encouragement and support to your young athlete. **Please do not compare your athlete with other athletes.** Each gymnast is different with differing strengths and weaknesses. It is unfair to you and your child to compare her to another athlete. Rather, try to look for the progress your child is making in gymnastics and celebrate it!
7. **Please do NOT coach your child.** Your comments detract from what the coach is doing by giving the gymnast another thing to think about; it interferes with the development of the coach/athlete relationship which is critical for long-term success.
8. Please let a coach know before practice if you think your child might have a problem due to illness, medication or injury.
9. Please attend team parent meeting which will be held two or three times per year. The meetings are an opportunity for coaches to communicate detailed information with plenty of time for questions and answers.

Disciplinary Actions

The rules and policies which govern the gymnasts and their parents have been outlined here in the TNT Team Handbook. In the event that there is an ongoing pattern of disruption or there are major rule infractions, it may become necessary to impose some disciplinary action in an attempt to improve the situation.

The list and procedures noted below are not intended to be all-inclusive. They are presented as an expression of our beliefs as to what disciplinary actions are necessary and appropriate. We will treat all of our gymnasts and gym parents as individuals and will seek to impose the most effective disciplinary actions based on each unique set of circumstances.

1. The gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with her group at the designated time. She will have to stay and finish or repeat an assignment on a particular piece of equipment.
2. The gymnast may be asked to sit and watch. Or the gymnast may be given appropriate conditioning to perform which will help focus their attention and build strength to accomplish the task at hand.
3. The gymnast may be asked to leave the gym and go home early.
4. The coach may request a meeting with a parent.
5. The gymnast may be suspended from the team for one or more days or may be scratched from a competition. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, a poor work ethic or a negative attitude, any fees already paid are nonrefundable.

The first three items on the above list are fairly common and we will not generally communicate these disciplinary actions to the parent of the gymnast. The development of the coach/gymnast relationship is paramount. We cannot and will not run to the parents every time we have a problem. We will attempt to build our own relationships with our athletes. Those relationships are built on time shared, belief in the same dreams and values, work performed together and the emotional ups and downs that are part of all important ventures. The fourth item, requesting a conference, signifies a need to work outside the coach/athlete relationship. In this instance, we need your help to overcome a challenge that is too large for us to accomplish on our own.

The final item on the list are reserved for the most serious violations of our rules and policies. They are seldom used. They are reserved primarily for those times when there is an ongoing problem with disruption and disrespect within the gym that has proven resistant to improvement. We will not let the bad attitude of one gymnast bring down the spirit and work ethic of an entire group.

It is also possible that a gymnast will have to leave our program because of the actions or inaction of her parents. **While we never want to punish a child for the actions of her parent(s), we will not tolerate parents who, by their words or actions, do not support the policies and values of our team program.**

Photo Release

I understand and acknowledge that from time to time my child's picture or video might be taken while participating in practices, meets or functions involving Dynamite Gymnastics. These pictures or videos may be used for the purpose of illustration, advertisement and publication in any pertaining to Dynamite Gymnastics.

High School Gymnasts Eligibility

High School Gymnasts may enroll in TNT Dynamite's Team Program and compete at a level deemed appropriate by the TNT Coaching staff and according to USAG Rules & Regulations. There is no regulation in USAG that prohibits a high school gymnast from competing at the club level post high school season. Please contact coach Lund or Coach Sedwick with questions involving participation in both teams.

Part 3: Competitive Season Information

Meet Scheduling & Information Sheets

At the beginning of each season (September), a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be handed out to the gymnasts. Meets may be added, changed or cancelled.

Approximately 2-4 weeks prior to a competition, eligible gymnasts will receive a meet information sheet that includes meet location, projected costs and fee due dates and host hotel information (if needed). Gymnasts invited to a meet will be given only one notice regarding fees and due dates. No other reminders will be given.

Host clubs will set a deadline for meet entries. After this date the host club will set the final meet schedule depending on the number of entrants. It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out final meet information late or make last minute changes. Information in many instances is not received until a few days before a competition. It is a good idea to clear the whole weekend of a meet on the chance that there will be last minute changes that could conflict with your previous plans.

The Meet Takes How Long?

The average meet can take as little as 3 ½ hours or as long as 6! I suggest that you bring reading material or some other project with you to help pass the time while at one of your child's competitions.

Most competitions run in a format similar to the one listed below.

Open Warm-up: Usually a half-hour long. This time is for general stretching and getting equipment setting specific to the gymnast.

Timed Warm-up: Every gymnast present warms up on each of the apparatus. This procedure can take from an hour to an hour and a half, sometimes more.

March In: All the gymnasts line up and march in to the gym to be presented to the audience and judges; the National Anthem is played. This usually takes 15 minutes.

Competition: The gymnasts now actually compete and receive scores from the judges at each event. This may take 2-3 hours as one-touch warm-ups are necessary.

Awards: If the organization running the meet is on the ball, you may only have to wait five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out. It has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. Once they are prepared, it can take 15-30 minutes to hand out awards.

Requirements for Competitive Eligibility

1. USAG Athlete membership. The athlete should be prepared to show her membership card at all sanctioned events. This membership must be renewed yearly and increases dependent upon the level or your gymnast.
2. Gymnasts must be current on all TNT financial obligations.
3. Attendance: Missed practices can mean missed competitive opportunities.
4. Athletes must be physically, emotionally and mentally prepared for competition. The coaching team will determine when each athlete is competition-ready and relay this information to the parent.

Keep in mind that the coaching team is always thinking with the child's best interest in mind, and that there are multiple reasons, including safety that could prohibit a gymnast from competition.

Gymnast Selection Criteria for Meet Invitations

All gymnasts do not go to every meet. Meets should be a positive experience and therefore gymnast selection is made very carefully. Coaches make the decision on giving meet invitations based on the following criteria:

1. **Eligibility:** Gymnast must have all necessary fees paid, be current on tuition and be considered an active & eligible gymnast.
2. **Performance Level:** Mastery of skills is based on performance in workouts. A gymnast will not be sent to a meet unless she can perform ALL required skills at the time of entry. Gymnasts who are new to a level may be allowed to enter a meet even if they are not prepared on all four events. However, this decision will be made by the coaching staff and will largely be determined by the athlete's attendance, attitude and effort in workouts.

3. **Attendance:** Gymnasts missing an excessive number of practices may not be selected for competition. The same could be true for gymnasts that consistently arrive late or leave early from workouts. **Gymnasts must have perfect attendance the week prior to a meet. Missed practices could result in a gymnast being removed from competition.** Please see coaches well in advance if you know your daughter will be missing a practice or meet.
4. **Attitude:** A positive attitude and showing respect to coaches and teammates is important. Gymnasts must be emotionally ready for the competitive arena.

Participation in Scheduled Meets

Part of what we try to teach each gymnast at TNT Dynamite is commitment. As a member of a team, each team member is important and should participate in every scheduled meet they are able. We understand the dynamics of balancing kids, family, work, vacation, etc. If you need help getting your gymnast to a meet just ask! There may be a solution we can come up with together.

Gymnasts who are unable to attend a scheduled meet should contact the coach as soon as possible. Please provide written notice via email or a note at practice. Gymnasts cancelling after the meet commitment deadline may be subject to loss of moneys already spent on entry fees and travel arrangements.

Meets have different meanings and the training for each will differ accordingly. In some meets in the early part of the season the focus may only be on **gaining competitive experience and developing confidence.** The goal is for the athletes to get their feet wet and familiarize themselves with competition.

Another meet might be used to earn a **qualifying score.** The athlete may be trying to qualify to a state, regional or national level competition. The goal here is to exhibit more polish and consistency.

Mobility meets are set up for a gymnast to obtain a specific score so she can move to the next competitive level. The coach may not be focusing on awards in such a meet.

Finally, there is the meet which everyone hopes the coach and gymnast will pull out all the stops—**Championship Meets** (could be states, regionals or Nationals), where everyone hopes their efforts from the past year will culminate in success.

Meet Fees & Travel Expenses

Each individual gymnast is responsible for her own meet fees and travel expenses. Meet fees vary depending upon the level of meet and location. Most invitational meets are between \$60-\$100/gymnast. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from each meet. More specific information will be available on a meet by meet basis.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

- Arrive at the competition site ½ hour before open stretch time. Being late could jeopardize your daughters' ability to compete in the meet.
- Athletes should be in uniform, well-groomed and report to their coach immediately after arriving at the gym.
- Athletes must remain in the designated competition area throughout the course of warm-ups and competition and obey all regulations & procedures.
- Each athlete should accept her place in the line-up and the scores she receives with dignity and without criticism. There is no place for crying and uncontrolled emotions during gymnastics' meets. Athletes cannot control the scores they receive nor can they control the performances of any other gymnast. Athletes can only control their own performances.
 - NOTE TO ATHLETES: If you do not do your best and receive a disappointing score, ask your coach about it when the meet is over. If you make mistakes and are disappointed in your performance, do not make matters worse by becoming emotional and jeopardizing your chances for good performances on upcoming events. Remember, too, that you are part of a team. The team needs you to be in control

and ready to perform. They do not need you bringing the spirit of the entire team down by wailing and whimpering.

- The gymnasts should not track their scores during the competition. Parents and coaches will keep track of those things. Athletes' concentration should center on their performance. There will be plenty of time to review scores later.
- Be courteous, respectful and polite to all meet officials, hosts and hostesses, competitors, and coaches. The only time you should approach a meet official is to thank them for hosting or judging the meet.
- Gymnasts should have a competition bag and keep all of their belongings in the bag during the meet.
- Stay with the team throughout the entire competition. Once the gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and her parents.
- Cheer for and show great sportsmanship for all Dynamite team members and other teams.
- Stay for awards dressed in your Dynamite Gymnastics warm-ups. As a participating athlete you **MUST** stay for all awards and to accept any presented to you with courtesy and gratitude. Remember that you are not just representing yourself, you are also representing Dynamite Gymnastics and your family.
- If the gymnast does not win an award, they must remain poised and have good sportsmanship, cheering for those who do win.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

1. Team spirit is a big help.....Wear the team colors or better yet a piece of club apparel.
2. Please show proper respect to all officials and coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason, to support your child's interest in gymnastics. Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keeper, etc.). If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you must contact your coach. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the meet director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.
3. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You **NEVER KNOW** who is sitting near you (I.E. parent of the gymnast you just made a remark about)
4. Once a gymnast has walked onto the competition area for warm-up, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to talk or have contact with her parents until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with **FOCUS**. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach's job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and teach her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms her down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps her up and motivates her to do her best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be overconfident. A terrible bar routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times, the gymnast need to focus on her coach's advice, not distractions from off the competitive floor.
As coaches, we know that you mean well with your comments, but they may not be appropriate for the long-term training of your gymnast. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, talk to the coach after you have returned to the gym and you have had time to reflect.
5. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator's area along with all other relatives and friends. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet if a parent is in the competitor's area.
6. In case of injury during warm-up or competition, **YOU MUST** stay in the spectator area until your coach flags you onto the floor.
7. Please **DO NOT** coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnast's focus away from the coach's technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences.
8. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera in advance. Many cameras come with an automatic flash that will go off if it

detects low light levels. If you cannot manually disable this device, please do not take pictures during the competition.

9. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about three hours prior to the actual competition. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary, a gymnast may carry fruit juices and pieces of fruit or other healthy item in their gym bag to curb any hunger. Gymnasts will NOT be allowed to eat anything unhealthy or messy even if they pack it.
10. All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not. They need to cheer all award recipients—especially their teammates.

Expectations

Problems occur when a parent expects too much from an athlete who is new to the competitive arena. **New is defined as having only competed for 2-3 years.* It takes a number of years of quality competition for a gymnast to develop the poise and grace to continuously take top honors in a gymnastics competition.

Some parents seem to have developed their own system of evaluating the scores their children earn during a gymnastics competition. When their child earns a 9.0 or better in the meet, the parents tend to walk around with the look and attitude, “YES, my kid is hot!”. If their child receives an 8.0, the parents are still happy and feel their child is a very good competitor, however, if a child gets a mark around a 7.0, the parents start to wonder what needs to be fixed in the routine or why the coach doesn’t pay more attention to their child. As the scores get lower than a 7.0, the gymnasts parents hide in the bleachers and hope that no one they know will see them.

Obviously this is an over-simplification of what happens and not all parents react in this manner. The key is to recognize when your child is working up to her potential. If she completes all her skills for the first time, without a fall, that is a winning routine regardless of what score she receives. Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what she can do better, that would lessen the effect of this “victory” for her. The week after the meet your daughter’s coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate her on the elements she competed correctly.

Any score she receives during a competition is no reflection on you as a parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Everyone has good days and bad days and it is how she learns to react to that that illustrates her development as a competitor.

Remember that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

Some Guidelines for Parents Feeling Stress

We know that you are excited about your child’s participation in gymnastics and want her to be successful, but as a parent you actually have the least amount of control over your gymnast’s performance. This combination of high emotional stake in the performance with little or no direct control over the outcome can produce stress and can lead to some bizarre behavior.

Danger Signs: Watch for these. If you recognize yourself in these descriptions, you probably need to reevaluate your actions, your role, and your attitudes.

*Wanting to observe every practice intently. (You are always welcome at practice, but watching every move your child/the coach makes and nit picking will not help anyone)

*Praising or punishing your child for what you see during observations of workout.

*Finding your sense of worth and happiness dependent on the success of your gymnast.

*Constantly comparing your child and her progress to others in the group, on the team or in competition.

*Verbally abusing the gym, the coaches, and the program while still placing your child under their control.

Inappropriate Comments

“You finally beat Sally”

“How many (current difficult skill) did you make today?”

“I’ll give you \$20 if you win today”

“That judge always scores you low”

“I cannot believe they moved Sally up and not you!”

Appropriate Comments

“You scored your highest yet!”

“How was practice?”

“Do your best and have fun!”

“Work hard and next time you’ll do better.”

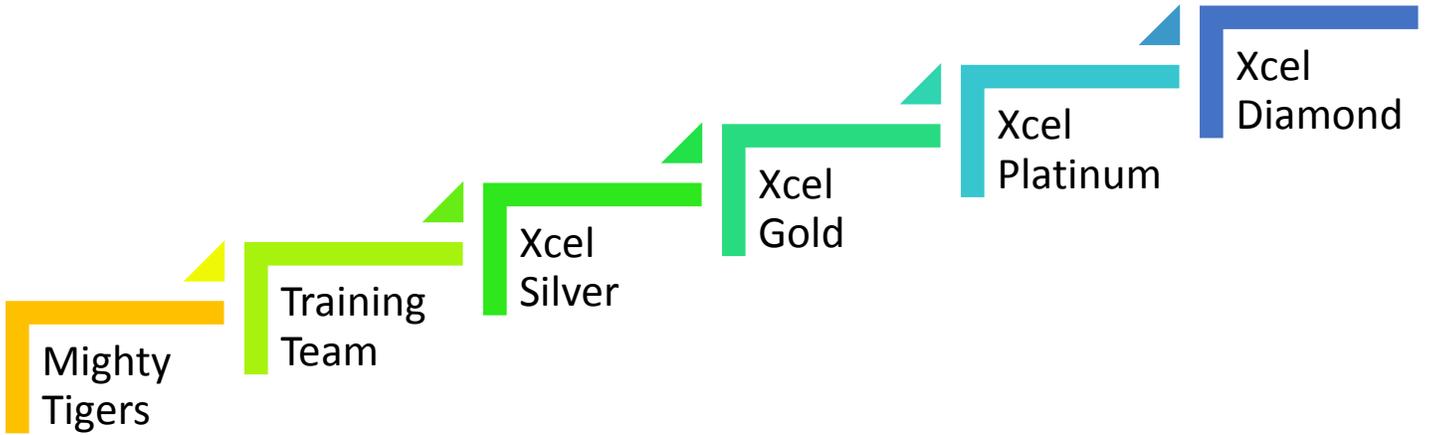
“As long as you are happy, safe, and progressing. I’m Happy.”

Insight to Judges at a Competition

Scoring at a gymnastics competition can sometimes not be the easiest thing to figure out. Here are some pointers to remember:

- All judges are different. This is a very subjective sport. Your gymnast’s scores from meet to meet can vary greatly, even if the routine they perform similarly. It is very hard to compare scores from meet to meet since it can vary on how hard or easy the judge is, the level of other competitors and sometimes for no reason at all. It is better to focus on your gymnast’s performance and if they improved.
- Optional Gymnast routines have different start values. This start value depends on what skills are in your gymnast’s routines. Each level has different requirements that the gymnast must fulfill in order to get the maximum start value. Gold, Platinum & Diamond also can receive bonus points.
- Once the gymnast starts her routine judges will then take tenths away from the gymnast’s start value. Examples of items that the judges can deduct for:
 - Falling
 - Stopping (if it is not supposed to in the routine)
 - Bent Arms
 - Bent Legs
 - Flex Feet
 - Spotting
 - Not performing a skill
 - Not completing a skill
 - Head position
 - And many more!
- If you have any questions on what your gymnast needs to improve on to increase her scores talk to her coach. It is best to talk to your gymnast’s coach at the gym where it will not be as hectic.

TNT Dynamite Gymnastics USAG Team Program



*TNT Dynamite Gymnasts also have the option of moving to the Farmington High School Team or other High School Team when they reach grade 7.

TNT Dynamite Gymnastics—Gymnast & Parent Acknowledgement

Thank you for taking the time to read this team handbook and reviewing with your gymnast. We take great pride in our team program and look forward to giving your child a wonderfully positive athletic experience!

Please Sign Below to acknowledge that you have received and read this handbook.

Detach at the dotted line and hand in the bottom part of this page to Your Childs Team Coach.

I have read the document titled “TNT Dynamite Team Handbook” from cover to cover and understand and agree to the guidelines set forth.

I also understand that the policies and procedures may change throughout the year. Modifications to this document may be made via letters, e-mails or communications from the Team Coaches and/or Gym Director.

Should I have any questions regarding any policies or procedures, I understand that I should contact the Team Coach or Gym Director for the appropriate answers.

X

G y m n a s t ' s P a r e n t

X

G y m n a s t