

Spirit Rules Changes - 2024-25

By NFHS on March 12, 2024

spirit

Rule 1 - The definition of jewelry was added for clarification.

Rationale: A definition for jewelry is needed as the line between adornments allowed and not allowed.

3-2-10 - New language added to Rule 3 to permit a top person in a T-lift to move over a participant in a nugget position.

Rationale: This skill is allowed in dance and has a basic skill progression which should be allowed in cheer.

3-3-5c/d - New language added to clarify a bracer may release the top person or move to a load position during a flip inversion when the top is descending and goes to a cradle.

Rationale: This change allows the bracers in a braced flip to descend into a load as the braced flip is coming down. They are not needed for stability at that time. We allow the top in a braced flip to release from the bracers when descending. It still requires them to be in the preps at the beginning of the flip.

3-3-6c3 - Permits an inverted top person to be moved to the performing surface.

Rationale: This rule was initially written to prohibit a prep from back arching to the ground in a handstand, called a "waterfall". This change would still prohibit that skill while allowing other skills like inversions to lower to the performing surface. These do not have the downward speed that is the concern coming from the prep and back arching.

3-5-5 - Separates and clarifies braced and non-braced releases to make it easier to locate.

Rationale: This change separates out releases in a pyramid (braced) and standalone releases (non-braced) to make it easier to find for coaches and officials instead of standalone releases being hidden as an exception in 3.5.5.c.3.

3-5-6 - New language added to permit stunts to be released to or from a vertical piked/seated position to a stunt at any level.

Rationale: The initial restriction on seated body positions during releases was initially due to the imbalance of a Teddy Bear sit that twisted around back to a Teddy Bear sit. This imbalance shows up primarily in this specific skill. If the seated position is only one end of the skill, then the body can be in alignment during any twisting phase and would not increase risk. This change allows those skills while specifically prohibiting remaining in the piked positions throughout the release.

3-7-2 - Removed requirement of a spotter on dismounts to the performing surface from prep level or above.

Rationale: The situation "3.7.2 SITUATION A", (b) clarifies that the second person doesn't have to make contact when performing a skill to the ground. In a double based dismount, both are going to catch on the sides of the top naturally. However, in single based catches that happen at the waist with the top grabbing the bases' hands, the second spotter that is currently required can't really get in to help without getting in the way of the main catch and they don't really serve any purpose. If the main catcher for some reason doesn't do a good job of catching, the secondary spotter isn't going to be able to assist at that point.

3-8-2 - New language added to permit soft props to be held during airborne tumbling.

Rationale: This uses Rule 4 Dance language, which allows all soft props to be in the non-support hand. Cheer restricts it to only poms. With Game Day activities, teams often have other soft props in their hand such as crumpled up flags, bandanas, etc. which should be allowed as they do not increase risk.

3-10 - Several items have been moved from 2-1, 3-1, and 4-1 to align prop rules and provide clarity on the use of props.

Rationale: Many of the rulings regarding props utilize the situations from a rule regarding performance areas. Having a section specific to props that outlines restrictions as rules instead of interpretations will help coaches and officials.

4-1-3 - Expanded the exceptions for footwear during airborne tumbling to allow for kip ups and headsprings.

Rationale: The impact of the kip ups and headsprings do not pose a significant risk since they are not airborne in approach, but only in descent.

4-4-8 - Deleted rules that were redundant.

Rationale: Since dance is not allowed to do vertical extended stunts like extensions and liberties, the only connected extended stunts they can perform are flatback or prone skills. In these skills, the connection is not related to balance and therefore does not need this restriction.

4-4-10 - Deleted rules that were redundant.

Rationale: Dance is not allowed to perform these types of extended stunts already by rule 4-4-2.

4-4-11 - Deleted rules that were redundant.

Rationale: Dance is not allowed to perform these types of extended stunts already by rule 4-4-2.

4-5-3 - Prohibits non-braced release skills.

Rationale: If dance is not allowed to perform braced releases, they shouldn't be doing non-braced releases since doing a release while braced is usually a lead-up skill.

4-10 - Several items have been moved from 2-1, 3-1, and 4-1 to align prop rules and provide clarity on the use of props.

Rationale: Many of the rulings regarding props utilize the situations from a rule regarding performance areas. Having a section specific to props that outlines restrictions as rules instead of interpretations will help coaches and officials.

To read the press release, [click here](#).