

**Welcome to  
The SKY Family YMCA**



**2018-2019  
Information Packet**



# Empire Elite

Dear Athletes and Parents,

Thank you for your interest in the Empire Elite All-Star Cheerleading program. We hope you are as excited as we are to kick off our second season. We look forward to continuing to provide a competitive program to the community and surrounding areas. We cannot wait to get season two underway.

As coaches, we continue to learn and discover new ways of effectively developing our athletes. We understand that cheerleading should be used as a vehicle to help mold well-rounded individuals. We strive daily to ensure that not only are our athletes working hard but, also enjoying themselves as they do it. We believe in helping our athletes set goals and empowering them with the ability and tools to achieve them.

Our goal as a YMCA program is to maintain a certain level of competitiveness while instilling our organizations core values in our athletes. Our focus will be on the effort put in as oppose to the results. We believe that if we are focused on the effort and the process, the results take care of themselves.

We appreciate the opportunity to coach and help mold your athlete. We understand there are many choices to make while choosing an All-Star program to call home. We look forward to working with all our athletes and families this season and the seasons to come.

Thank you,

Danielle and Cory Brown

# **Empire Elite's Mission Statement**



Empire Elite is dedicated to molding well-rounded athletes and young adults on and off the mat. Through proper guidance and coaching, we will provide an atmosphere where athletes can thrive. Our goal is to create an environment where every athlete is rewarded for their effort and ensure that athletes learn the importance of hard work and dedication.

## **Values**

**Effort**– Total effort from everyone involved. Athletes, coaches, and parents!

**Motivate**– Encourage and build a program where athletes motivate each other!

**Passion**– Do what you love and love what you do!

**Integrity**– Take accountability for your actions. Do the right thing!

**Respect**– Treat others the way you wish to be treated!

**Empower**– Provide the tools and confidence for athletes to be successful!

## **YMCA MISSION STATEMENT**

The YMCA promotes Judeo-Christian principles through programs that build healthy mind, body, spirit for all.

## **YMCA CORE VALUES**

Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, Respect



# **Contact Information**

The official email is **EmpireElite@skyyymca.org**

The preferred method of communication will be through email. Having all of our communication in one area will help keep us organized. Danielle and Cory Brown are the head coaches and cheer coordinator. They are responsible for all your cheer team needs. Please contact them directly regarding cheer team, uniforms, practices, competitive schedules, and private lessons.

Empire Elite All-Star Cheer is a YMCA program so please contact Debbie Kotti, YMCA Gymnastics Director, in regards to your billing, payments, and registration needs.

## **Danielle Brown– All Star Cheer Coordinator**

EmpireElite@skyyymca.org

## **Cory Brown– All Star Cheer Head Coach**

EmpireElite@skyyymca.org

## **Debbie Kotti– YMCA Gymnastics Director**

Dkotti@veniceymca.org Pro-Shop Office: 941-375-9121

*\*contact regarding billing and payment needs.*

# Important Dates

We observe the Sarasota County School calendar regarding school breaks and days off. Practices are mandatory unless otherwise noted.

May 15-17	Tryouts
May 20	Team Reveals
May 21	Practices Start this week (YMCA Closed Monday, May 28th -Memorial Day)
June 8-10	Skills Camp & Team bonding
July 2-6	No Practice this week (YMCA Closed Wednesday, July 4th)
July 21-22	Stunt Choreography – Mandatory
August 13-17	First week of School (No Practice)
August 19	Sunday practices begin (If needed)
August 31-Sept 3	No Practices through Labor Day weekend (YMCA Closed Monday, September 3rd– Labor Day)
Sept 22-23	Routine Choreography - Mandatory
Oct 6	Mid-Season Camp
Oct 20	Sun Fiesta Parade (Tentative Date)
Nov 3	Team Pictures
Nov 11	Showcase
Nov 21-23	No Practice thru Thanksgiving Break (Resume Nov 25) (YMCA Closed Thursday, November 22nd)
Nov 24	Venice Holiday Parade
Dec 21– Jan 5	Off- Winter Break (Resume Jan 6)
Mar18-23	Off- Spring Break (Resume Mar 24)

# Competition Schedule

Below is a list of possible competitions we will be attending this season. The highlighted events are definite and on our permanent schedule. We will evaluate the different options and have a finalized schedule no later than June 1st.

WSF- Tampa	December 2, 2018
All American- Orlando	December 15-16, 2018
NCA- Kissimmee	January 27, 2019
American Sunsational- Kissimmee	February 2-3, 2019
Battle by The Bay- Tampa	February 9-10, 2019
All Out Nationals- Orlando	February 16-17, 2019
CheerSport Nationals- Atlanta	February 23-24, 2019
American Open- Orlando	March 16-17, 2019
NCA- Daytona	April 7, 2019
Tournament of Champions- Tampa	April 13-14, 2019
All Out Season Showdown- Orlando	April 27, 2019
Summit (Bid required)	May10-12, 2019

# Pricing & Payment Information

Below is a breakdown of fees separate from your monthly payment.

Uniform	\$400
Tryout Fee	\$50
Choreography	\$300

## Tiered Pricing

We have decided to introduce tiered pricing for multiple reasons. During competition season mainly from December - April, the cost of travel can be expensive. We have introduced this pricing to help offset those costs towards the end of the year. This also allows us to ensure competition fees are collected and paid before the competition season begins. Monthly fees include tuition, competition fees, practice attire, coaches fee, and miscellaneous fees. All team members are registered into every competition on your schedule. *\*No cheerleader will be allowed to practice or compete if a balance is past due on their account.*

**Your first monthly payment will be due May 25, 2018.**

June-August:	\$260 per month
September-December:	\$225 per month
January-April:	\$150 per month

## Tryout Payment

Tryout Payment must be made on or before the tryout date of **May 15, 2018.**

Tryout payment includes USASF fee and team T-Shirt.

## Choreography Payment

The Choreography payment of \$300 will be due on or before **June 15, 2018.** All fees and accounts must be current in order to be choreographed into the routine.

## Uniform Payment

The uniform cost includes the competitive uniform and a warm-up. There will be two payment options: (1) pay \$400 in full or (2) two equal installments of \$200.

These due dates will be **August 15, 2018** and **September 15, 2018.**

# Team Placement

Creating teams can be the most challenging part of a competitive cheer season. When creating teams, there are multiple factors that go into the formula. They are, but not limited to, age, skill level, attitude, position (base, flyer, backspot), and work ethic. To put it simply, **just because an athlete may possess a certain level of tumbling skills, does not automatically secure them a place on that level team.**

It is important that every athlete and parent understand the complexity and time spent putting teams together. While we hope to place every athlete on a team, there may be some cases where we are unable to do so. This could be due to many factors. Please understand that when an athlete is placed on a team, that athlete has accepted a position in the entire program. This means that the athlete can be moved from one team or another to better suite the needs of the program or the athlete. You will find that 99% of the time, those needs go hand in hand.

It is expected that athletes accept team placements with grace. Every team will be built to have the most competitive advantage possible at competition. In order to ensure team placements are accurate, we will be taking after the final evaluation to put teams together. This gives us the advantage of being able to revisit every placement multiple times.

Team placement is one of the most challenging things to handle both as an athlete and as a coach. Some factors that go into consideration when making teams are, but not limited to, tumbling skill level, stunting skill level, athlete role, age, and the overall good of the program. Setting teams up properly sets the tone for the entire season. We believe that empowering athletes to take accountability for their skills will help them excel regardless of team level.

# **Code of Conduct and Expectations**

## **Athlete & Parent**

### **General Expectations**

- All athletes will be expected to demonstrate respect and good sportsmanship at all times. Failing to do so will result in counseling and if not corrected, may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Athletes are to maintain a positive social media profile. Anything that could reflect on the program and the athletes in a negative manner will not be tolerated. This includes but not limited to poor sportsmanship, drug and alcohol use, inappropriate pictures in program attire, and negative comments about athletes, coaches, our program or other programs.
- We will refrain from gossip. If you are not a main character in the story, you should not be telling it.
- Athletes are expected to be at practice on time in the appropriate attire. If you are running late, call in to notify the coaches.
- Parents and spectators are not permitted to enter the practice area.

### **Practice Expectations**

- Cell phone use will not be permitted at practice.
- Hair must be worn up with a bow at all times.
- Nails should be trimmed short.
- Jewelry is not permitted.
- Be on time and in the correct practice attire
- Not following these expectations will result in conditioning at the end of practice.
- Parents agree to not use restriction from practice as a punishment.

### **Competition Expectations**

- Be on time to the appropriate reporting area.
- Athletes should not wear flip flops at the competition.
- Parents and athletes should not discuss competition results with coaches at the event.
- When accepting placements, accept with dignity. Sportsmanship is more important than any competition result.
- Athletes, parents, and coaches will be expected to show respect to all programs, staff, and spectators.
- Under no circumstance should a parent or athlete EVER approach a judge for ANY reason.
- Posting videos of routines publicly is not allowed. This is to help keep our routines and innovations exclusive to our athletes.

# Attendance

Practice is Mandatory. Attendance is directly related to the level of success a team will have. The team relies on having each member at practice ready to work. If your athlete is not at practice, it directly affects the progress and success of the team.

## Summer Attendance

As we all know, the summer is the time of year when many families travel or take vacation. We are very understanding of this. All we ask is that we are given notice in writing or via email. No other method of communicating absences will be accepted (i.e. texts, facebook posts, or verbally). Attendance will be taken at every practice, this allows us to keep our records organized and able to track absences.

## School Year Attendance

Once school begins, attendance will be monitored more strictly. Excessive absences can be detrimental to a team's success and lead to dismissal from the program. If an attendance issue is ongoing, we will request a parent meeting to figure out a solution. The last thing we want is to remove an athlete.

## Competition Policy

Competitions are mandatory. If an event is missed for ANY reason, payment cannot be refunded. Missing an event may lead to dismissal from the program. We do understand that illness and emergencies happen but entry fees are due two months prior to an event. The Event organizers do not refund therefore we will not refund. Some pending circumstances can be accommodated on a one-on-one basis. **Athletes must be present the two practices before a competition in order to compete.**

## Holiday Schedule

Please plan vacations around the holiday breaks. We will be adhering to the Sarasota County Schools calendar. There may be some exceptions based on our competition schedule.

## **Cross Competitors**

There may be an opportunity for athletes to compete on more than one team. There will be additional competition fees associated with this. If you decide this is something you are interested in, please feel free to contact us directly for more information.

## **Financial Obligation**

At Empire Elite, your monthly payment will cover competition fees, shoes, make up, bow, practice attire, music, and coaches' fees. Uniforms, USASF fee, and annual registration are not included in your monthly payment. Tuition payments will not change due to more or less practices in a month. Payment does not guarantee the right to perform at competition. Upon accepting team placement, you will be financially responsible for the entire coast of the season. No refunds can be issued on collected fees.

## **Athlete Injury**

Although we will exercise every precaution to keep your athletes safe, injuries are a part of every sport. If your athlete is injured, they will still be expected to attend every event and practice in the proper attire. Although the athlete may be physically unable to participate, they can still play a large role in motivating and helping the team and coaches. In the event of an injury, all financial obligations must still be met.

## **USASF**

The USASF is the governing body of All-Star Cheerleading. They are responsible for the rules, safety, and promoting a positive image for our sport. Every year athletes must register with the USASF for a \$30 fee. This fee includes secondary catastrophic injury insurance. It is important to have a governing body to help athletes remain safe as well as to legitimize the sport. If you want more information on the USASF, please visit [www.usasf.net](http://www.usasf.net).

# **Tiny & Half-Year**

In addition to our full year competitive teams, we will be offering Tiny and Half-Year Teams. Both of these teams will be offered later in the season.

Our Tiny Team is dedicated to athletes 4 to 6 years old. Our goal with Tinys is to teach the basics of the sport without putting any emphasis on competition. They will be an exhibition team and will exhibit later in the competition season. We plan to start this team after the 2018-2019 school year begins. More information regarding Tinys will be released in the near future.

Half-Year Teams are a great way to introduce the sport to athletes who may not have the ability to commit to a full year team. Typically, the Half-Year season begins as the Pop-Warner season comes to an end. Our Half-Year teams will compete in the All-Star Prep division.

Both of these programs will have different uniforms from our full season athletes as well as reduced practice time. With that comes reduced cost, as well. Detailed information will be released over the summer and throughout the year.

# Empire Elite All-Star Cheer

## **Athlete Contract**

In an effort to lessen the disparity between our team ideals and individual behavior, and to personalize these ideals in our athletic experience, Empire Elite adopts the following basic expectations of its members:

1. I will respect and abide by all SKY Family YMCA rules, policies, and procedures.
2. I will respect the dignity of all persons; therefore, I will not physically or mentally abuse or bully any person.
3. I will neither use nor support the use of illegal drugs or alcohol.
4. I will exhibit good sportsmanship on and off the mat.
5. I will comply with instructions from all coaches and staff members immediately.
6. I will respect the property of others; therefore, I will neither abuse nor tolerate the abuse of property.
7. I will use language that is socially acceptable. Profanity, vulgar talk and obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
8. I will cooperate with teammates, coaches, and officials.
9. I will be on time for practice and team scheduled events.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand this athletic contract. I know if any rules are broken; the coach has the right to take appropriate actions including the possibility of suspending me from the team for as long as he/she feels necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Athlete Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

As a parent of a candidate of Empire Elite All Star Cheerleading, a program affiliated with The SKY Family YMCA, I have read and understand the above policies. I approve of these policies and will help my son/daughter maintain these standards.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

# Media Release Form

I grant permission to Empire Elite and The SKY Family YMCA including videos, email blasts, recruiting brochures, newsletters, and magazines and to use my image in electronic versions of the same publications or on the Empire Elite or Sky Family YMCA website or other electronic forms of media.

I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the finished photographs or electronic matter that may be used in conjunction with them now or in the future, whether that use is known to me or unknown, and I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising from or related to the use of the image.

Please check the paragraph below which is applicable to your present situation:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am 18 years of age or older and I am competent to contract in my own name. I have read this release before signing below, and I fully understand the contents, meaning and impact of this release. I understand that I am free to address any specific questions regarding this release by submitting those questions in writing prior to signing, and I agree that my failure to do so will be interpreted as a free and knowledgeable acceptance of the terms of this release.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am the parent or legal guardian of the below named child. I have read this release before signing below, and I fully understand the contents, meaning and impact of this release. I understand that I am free to address any specific questions regarding this release by submitting those questions in writing prior to signing, and I agree that my failure to do so will be interpreted as a free and knowledgeable acceptance of the terms of this release.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please print information below:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(or Participant if 18yrs or older)

# **Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

I have thoroughly read, understand, and agree to the terms and conditions of being a member of the Empire Elite Cheer program. I understand the expectations as a parent as well as the expectations for my athlete. Failure to adhere to the rules and guidelines throughout the packet may result in dismissal from the program.

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Signature

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Date

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Printed Name

# **Registration Checklist**

- Registration Form
- Financial Contract
- Conduct Contract
- Birth Certificate
- Bankdraft Form
- Insurance Card
- Photograph