

**EUROPEAN CHEERLEADING
ASSOCIATION®
Rules & Regulations Handbook©**

ECA Rules & Regulations

www.ecacheer.org

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 DATES

The European Cheerleading Championship®, hereafter called ECC, and the Junior European Cheerleading Championship®, hereafter called JECC will take place annually in June or July, preferred date being first Saturday and Sunday of July each year, decided by the host together with ECA board.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY

- 1) All European national cheerleading organisations that are members of ECA are eligible.
- 2) All squads must be members of their 'Official National Cheerleading Organisation/Federation'.
- 3) Competitors from each country must possess that countries passport or, have proof of permanent residency of at least 6 months in the country that they are representing.
- 4) The 1st & 2nd place winners of each country Nationals are eligible according to the various divisions (maximum two squads per country per division). Should the 1st & 2nd place squads be unable to attend, the countries Association/Federation may decide who will represent them at the ECC/JECC.

If a country does not have a certain division in their National Championship, the Association/Federation may decide who will represent them at the ECC/JECC.

1.3 ENTRIES

1) *Registration forms*

Official Competition Registration forms need to be completed for all competing squads, showing competitor individual names, ages, Nationality. Only competitors, substitutes and coaches who have been registered on the original entry form are permitted to compete in the ECC/JECC.

2) *Deadlines*

Competition Registration & Indemnity forms must be sent by registered post or by e-mail with valid hand-written or electronic signature to the ECA office and e-mail copies to both ECA & the host country as specified in the Championship invitation in accordance to the ECA board.

The ECA and ECC/JECC host country will not be liable for entry forms not received.

The invitation will be sent from the host minimum 2 months before the competition date.

The country representative is responsible for sending all Registration/Indemnity forms.

3) *Fees*

The correct fees and bank charges in the correct currency must be paid into the ECA bank account/host bank account as specified in the competition invitation.

Please note that both registration and payment must be paid within the date specified in the competition invitation.

4) *Identification*

An official travel document, meaning passport with photo or another official photo ID valid for travelling must be available for registration for the ECC/JECC. Each coach is responsible for the availability of his or her competitor's travel document on registration and during competition day. In case of **force majeure**, other means of identification can be accepted if agreed by the majority of the ECA board. Proof of permanent residency (where applicable) must be sent in together with the original Registration/Indemnity forms.

5) *Number of registrations*

A Cheer All Female, Cheer Mixed or Cheer Dance squad may register maximum 20

competitors, 5 substitutes and 2 coaches.

Group Stunt or Group Stunt Mixed must register 5 competitors, 1 spotter and may register 1 coach and 1 substitute per group.

Partner Stunt must register 2 competitors, 1 spotter and may register 1 coach per couple.

Substitutes

The substitutes may only replace a cheerleader in their related division and category. A sick/injured cheerleader who has been replaced is prohibited to re-enter the competition at any time. Coaches may also be registered as substitutes.

No substitute is allowed in Partner Stunt division.

Spotters

A country may also register a maximum of 6 spotters per country in addition to the spotters in partner stunts. The country's teams must use these spotters in that capacity during the competition (later called backup spotters).

6) *Banned from competition*

If a competitor has received a ban from any countries anti-doping organization or the ECA, the competitor is not eligible to enter the ECC/JECC according to the specified ban administered by these said organizations.

1.4 INSURANCE

Each participant/squad must have a personal- and/or squad insurance. This also applies to coaches and spotters. Each squad will have to hand in a signed Indemnity form prior to the Championship.

The host country or the ECA **will not be responsible** for any injuries sustained at this event, on the understanding that all ECA guidelines, Rules, Regulations and safety standards are complied with. The host country must also ensure that they have sufficient insurance cover for the event.

1.5 DOPING

The use of any kind of illegal substance as specified by the World Anti-Doping Agency is prohibited in any competition organized by the ECA and related practise situations.

All matters in this section will be handled according to the World Anti-Doping Code provided by the World Anti-Doping Agency. <http://www.wada-ama.org>

1.6 WITHDRAWAL

Squads/participants who can not participate at the championships should let the ECA & the host know as soon as possible by phone/fax/e-mail and back-up their withdrawal **in writing**.

N.B. Entry fees are **non-refundable** and must be paid if the team/competitor withdraws from the competition after the deadline for registering.

1.7 COMPLAINTS

All complaints and/or criticism about the organisational part of the ECC/JECC have to be filed **in writing within two weeks after** the ECC/JECC to the host Championship Director and the ECA President.

Complaints about other squads/countries need to be filed **in writing within two weeks after** the ECC/JECC to the host Championship Director, ECA President and country's head of association concerned. Complaints are only received if accompanied by the fee of € 100, which will be refunded if the complaint is accepted.

All complaints will be handled by the ECA Board or a specific ECA committee if the Board so chooses.

Judges decisions are final.

1.8. JUDGES

1.8.1 General

Only ECA approved judges are eligible to judge at the ECC/JECC.

1.8.2 Judge Panel/Panels

The panel/panels of judges are to be nominated by the Executive Committee of the ECA Judge Committee. A complete panel per category must consist of 5 Internationals.

1.8.3 Scoring

The scoring will be done on a separate score sheet approved by the ECA Judge Committee. The panel may not discuss the scoring while the team/competitor is competing on the floor. Judges decisions are final.

Score sheets of each category are available at the ECA web site.

2. COMPETITION GUIDE

2.1 GENERAL

In this chapter we cover all important issues about the competition itself and requirements for the routines

2.2 DIVISIONS AND AGE LIMITS

Junior

Participants must be 12 years old and under 17 years old on 31st of December of the year of competition.

Senior

Participants must be at least 16 years on 31st of December of the year of competition.

Division	Age of 31 st December	of competition year
	At least	At most
Junior: Cheer all female Cheer mixed Group stunt all female Group stunt mixed Cheer dance	12	16 + 364 days
Senior: Cheer all female Cheer mixed Group stunt all female Group stunt mixed Partner Stunt Cheer dance	16	N/A

2.3. CATEGORIES

Squads may only compete in the Divisions and Categories in which they qualified on national level. (E.g. If a squad qualifies in the junior dance category it may not compete at the ECC in the senior dance category.)

Competitors are not interchangeable and must decide when sending in the registration form, which Age division they will start. Competitors can ONLY compete in ONE age category. Eg. Junior dance and junior cheer – are acceptable. Junior dance and senior cheer – are not acceptable.

At the discretion of the host country *and the ECA board*, a minimum of 3 squads/groups/couples need to be entered in a division and category for a competition to go ahead.

Mixed Squads

Squads with participant from both gender (male and female) are considered Mixed.

Partner Stunt

A partner stunt consists of 2 competitors, one male and one female.

Number of participants

Categories	Minimum Participants	Maximum Participants
Cheer	12	20
Cheer Dance	8	20
Group Stunt	5	5
Partner Stunt	2	2

2.4. TIMING

Timing will begin on the first note of music, the first vocal command or the first movement and stop with the end of the cheer or last note of the music or when all squad members come to a stationary position.

CATEGORY	Minimum	Maximum
Cheer	2:15	2:30 (two minutes and thirty seconds)
Dance	2:15	2:30 (two minutes and thirty seconds)
Group Stunt	1:00	1:10 (one minute and ten seconds)
Partner Stunt	1:00	1:10 (one minute and ten seconds)

2.5 CLOTHING ETC.

2.5.1 Accessories

All accessories, e.g. scrunches, hair bands have to be secured tightly on the competitors. Only flat hairpins may be worn. (Accessories violation - see PENALTIES).

2.5.2 Dress Code

Uniform, pep dress, costumes must be appropriate for Cheerleading and Dance. Underwear must not be visible. No tear-away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed.

Juniors: In addition, skirts, shorts or pants (not hot pants) must be worn and midriff must be covered when arms at person's side in standing position. (Dress code violation - see PENALTIES).

2.5.3 Advertising/Sponsors

Only one advertising or sponsors patches, (credit card size) etc. may be displayed on any clothing worn during competition. In case of sportswear manufactures please check with the C&E Officer at least three weeks prior to the ECC. (Dress code violation - see PENALTIES).

2.5.4 Hair

All competitors whose hair is longer than shoulder length will have to tie it back from the face to secure a safe performance.

2.5.5 Jewellery

Jewellery **MAY NOT** be worn. (Safety - see PENALTIES).

2.5.6 Medical Items

Glasses (except flexi-glasses), hearing aids and/or other medical items may not be worn during performance. Please check with C&E Officer prior to the ECC/JECC for exemptions.

2.5.7 Shoes in Cheer

All competitors including spotters must wear shoes in the official practise and in the competition. All participants and spotters must wear proper, non-marking cheerleading shoes which are defined as 'shoes with solid sole and form'.

2.5.8 Shoes in Dance

All competitors must wear shoes in the official practise/competition. Jazz shoes, dance shoes, textile shoes, etc. are allowed in the dance categories. Shoes with high heels/soles are not permitted.

2.6 MUSIC

Music used for competition performances must be suitable for each age division and category. Unsuitable/offensive music (music with offensive sexual content, racist or vulgar lyrics) is not allowed (See: Penalties).

A sound system will be provided for the official practices and competition only.

Each squad must bring two (2) CDs, labelled with the name of the squad, country, coach and division. Music for each performance should begin at the start of the CD. One representative from each squad (i.e. coach/advisor) will need to meet at the audio desk two (2) performances ahead of their squads scheduled performance. The coach must have the back-up CD with them as they report. The representative will be in charge of playing and stopping the music (they will be able to pause and start the music during the routine as needed). The coach needs to be

accustomed to using a CD player. The coach running the music must stay throughout their squad's performance and take the CD with them when leaving.

NB: Should a problem occur with your music as a result of the audio equipment, your team would be allowed to start again. Should a problem occur as a result of your music, CD or operator, your team must continue their routine or withdraw from the competition.

The host is not responsible for a private sound system to be made available for practising squads.

2.7 SET UP TIME

Set up time

A maximum of 20 seconds is allowed for prop set up time. Timing begins when the first person steps onto the performance floor/mat inside the marked line and stops when the whole team comes to a standstill. Deductions will be made if squads/individuals exceed the time limit. Participants are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible.

2.8 THE ROUTINE

General

The following (a-b-c-d) is the same for all routines. Differences between the routines will be marked under next sections.

- a) **Performance Area:** You are not allowed outside the marked 12m x 12m area once your routine has started. (Area violation - see PENALTIES).

- b) **Beginning of Routine:** The routine can start with a command, movement and/or music. The routine must begin within the marked performance area. All squad members must come to a complete stand still before beginning their routine. Failure to do so will be penalised. (Time violation - see PENALTIES).

Ending of Routine: see point c) below.

- c) **Timing:** Timing will begin on the first note of music, the first vocal command or the first movement and stop with the end of the cheer, last note of the music or when all squad

members come to a stationary position. Prop set up time is limited to 20 seconds. (Time violation - see PENALTIES).

- d) **Music:** All squads must provide their CD and backup. They must be clearly labelled with the name of the squad, country, coach and division. A representative of your squad must start and stop your music.

-

2.8.1 Cheer Routine

(Junior All Female, Senior All female, Junior Mixed, Senior Mixed)

Compulsory elements

Minimum 1 (one) cheer, 1 (one) chant, 1 (one) stunt, 1 (one) cheer jump, 1 (one) pyramid, 1 (one) basic/advanced tumbling element and one cheer dance have to be performed in the routine.

All compulsory exercises have to be performed by **all participants** at the same time or in a ripple, excluding pyramids, stunts and tumbling.

The compulsory cheer and chant must be performed without music.

All squad members must start the routine with at least one foot on the ground.

Props allowed in Cheer

Banners, Signs, Megaphones, Flags and Pom-poms are the only props allowed. Props that may puncture the performance surface must not be used.

Backup Spotters

Backup spotters will be provided. If a country has registered its own spotters, these can also be used as back up spotters. However, active members of the competing squad must fulfil all compulsory spotting requirements.

(Safety Violation - see SAFETY GUIDELINE & PENALTIES).

Uniform must be worn.

2.8.2 Dance Routine

JUNIOR

Compulsory elements

Minimum 1 (one) pirouette, 1 (one) split, 1 (one) dance leap, 2 (two) cheer jumps and 2 (two) high-kicks have to be performed in the routine.

Poms (optional for males) must be used.

SENIOR

Compulsory elements

Minimum 1 (one) double pirouette, 1 (one) split, 2 (two) dance leaps, 2 (two) cheer jumps and 2 (two) high kicks have to be performed in the routine.

Poms (optional for males) must be used.

All compulsory exercises have to be performed by **all participants** at the same time or in a ripple.

Uniform/pep dress must be worn.

Props allowed in Dance

Only poms can be used in the Dance division.

Hats will not be considered a prop if they are kept on the head throughout the performance.

Prohibited: Cheers, chants, stunts, tumbling, pyramids, acrobatics and additional props.

2.8.3 Group Stunt Routine

(Junior All Female, Senior All Female, Junior Mixed, Senior Mixed)

Execute stunts of your choice in accordance with the Rules & Regulations.

All members must have at least one foot on the ground when they start the routine.

Backup Spotters

Backup spotters will be provided. If a country has registered its own spotters, these can also be used as back up spotters. However, active members of the competing squad must fulfil all compulsory spotting requirements.

(Safety Violation - see SAFETY GUIDELINE & PENALTIES).

Uniform must be worn.

Prohibited: Props

2.8.4 Partner Stunt Routine

Execute single-based partner stunts of your choice in accordance with the Rules & Regulations.

All members must have at least one foot on the ground when they start the routine.

Each couple must bring their own spotter to spot throughout the entire routine. The spotter's responsibility is to spot, to assist with cradling, but may not help toss or secure stunts within the routine.

Uniform must be worn.

Prohibited: Props

3. SAFETY GUIDELINE

3.1 GENERAL

In this chapter we cover all issues regarding safety and illegal performance.

3.2 DEFINITIONS

Stunt	Mount or lift with one top person, maximum two layers; or basket toss.
Pyramid	Stunts joined together or attempting to touch; Mount with more than one top person; Any mount with 3 layers
Transitional stunt	A continuous movement from one stunt into another; height/layer requirements may be exceeded momentarily during the transition
Tumbling	Cartwheels, handsprings and other gymnastics skills on the floor
Cradle	A method of catching where the flyer is caught in an open V position by one or more bases (base + spotter in partner stunt) as required.
Toss	Top person being free of continuous contact from the base(s). Does not include dismounts such as pop ups.
Pop-up	A dismount method of freeing the top person from contact with the bases in a stunt by pushing the top person forcefully off the bases' hands
Pop-down	A dismount method of freeing the top person from contact with the Bases directly to the floor
Dismount	Descending to ground or via a cradle to the ground from a stationary stunt/pyramid
Toe flip	A stunt or mount method where one or more bases use their hands as a stepping platform to toss the flyer up in the air, resulting in head over heels rotation (somersault)
Toe pitch	A mount method where one or more bases use their hands as a Stepping platform to toss the flyer up; can be used e.g. in a partner stunt or pyramid.
Base	Person who provides primary support for a top person/mounter.
Main base	Person with direct weight bearing contact with the performance surface.

- Catcher** A person responsible for catching the top person during the dismount.
- Top person (flyer)** Person without contact to the ground
- Spotter** A person primarily responsible for protecting the head-and-shoulders area of the top person. Internal Spotters may help control, but may not provide primary support for a pyramid or stunt. Spotters must maintain visual contact with the top person at all times and is responsible for their safe dismount.
- Acrobatics in Dance:** Any move where the weight of the performer is on their hands and the hips rotate /come up straight over the head without the support of one or both feet.
- Stunting in Dance:** Any move where the body weight is supported by another competitor, without the flyers foot/feet touching the ground.

3.3 HEIGHT LIMIT AND LAYERS

Layer

A unit to express how many layers of people there are in a stunt.

1 layer = a situation where at least one foot is stationed on the ground.

2 layers = a situation where half or more than half of the body weight is sustained by a 1st layer person.

3 layers = a situation where half or more than half of the body weight is sustained by 2nd layer person.

Height Limit

PYRAMIDS AND STUNTS 3 LAYERS 3 PERSONS HIGH AND OVER ARE PROHIBITED.

Division	Layers (max)	Height (max)
Junior cheer All female/ Mixed	2	2 ½
Senior Cheer All female/ Mixed	3	less than 3
Group Stunt	3	less than 3

Height and layer definitions of a number of legal/common stunts and pyramids

Stunt/Pyramid	Height	Layers
Thigh stand Flyer standing on bases thigh	1.5	2
Shoulder sit Flyer sitting on bases shoulders	1.5	2
Chair Flyer sitting on bases extended arm	1.5	2
Shoulder stand Flyer standing on base(s) shoulders	2	2
Elevator Flyer standing in bases hands (2-1) (flyers feet are at shoulder level of the bases)	2	2
Extension Flyer standing in bases hands while main bases have his/her/their extended (1-1 or 2-1) above their head.	2.5	2
High chair Flyer is standing in an elevator while holding (2-1-1) another flyer in a chair position.	2.5	3
A-frame pyramid Two flyers, standing in either an extension (2-2-1 or 4-2-1) prep or shoulder stand hold another flyer at their waist level. (1-1-1) Shoulder Stand, stand in the Hands under shoulder Level	2.5	3

3.4 SPOTTERS

A spotter's main job is to protect the top persons head, neck and shoulders. All required spotter positions must be filled from within the squad.(Internal spotters)

The host is responsible for the supply of qualified back-up spotters. There should be a minimum of 6 (six) back-up spotters available throughout the ECC/JECC and the official practise. Back-up spotters may not assist in building stunts and/or pyramids or performing any other movements.

The host is not responsible for back-up spotters in the designated practise area.

The country may use their own back up spotters (maximum 6 per country) in the competition, if the spotters have been registered with the ECC/JECC.

During the official practise and the ECC/JECC there must be 5 back – up spotters on the mat.

Back up spotters must wear proper sportswear, visible different from the team, and sport shoes.

No jewellery is allowed.

3.5 SAFETY RULES JUNIORS

3.5.1 General

- The main base must have at least one foot on the ground.
- The main base cannot assume a back-bend position.
- Use of mini-tramps, springboards or any height increasing prop/apparatus are not allowed
- All hanging pyramids ('Diamond Head' etc.) prohibited.
- Toe flips are prohibited.
- Pendulums may be performed if there is constant contact between a top person and at least one base.
- At least one person must spot each flyer **above 2 high**.
- Single based stunts **above 2 high** are prohibited.

3.5.2 Toss (basket toss)

- A basket toss or any other type of toss must be cradled by at least two of the original bases plus a spotter in place at the head and shoulder area.
- A toss should be directed vertically - over/under or through any pyramids/stunts are prohibited.
- A basket toss must be executed from ground level with the main bases' feet on the performing surface.
- Single vertical twist or single head over hips rotation are allowed if performed separately.

3.5.3 Dismounts

- Flyers higher than shoulder stand level (2 high) are prohibited to dismount in a direct drop (bear hug).
- up to two vertical rotations (twists, etc.) are allowed
- Suspended 'head-over-hip' rotations are allowed
- All cradle dismounts must have 3 catchers

3.6. SAFETY RULES SENIORS

3.6.1 General

- The main base must have at least one foot on the ground.
- The main base cannot assume a back-bend position.
- Use of mini-tramps, springboards or any height increasing prop/apparatus are not allowed
- Toe flips are prohibited.
- Pendulums may be performed if there is constant contact between a top person and at least one base.
- At least one person must spot each *3rd layer flyer* above 2 high.
- In a single based stunt every flyer over 2 high requires a spotter. In a double based stunt over 2 high, no spotter is required.

3.6.2 Toss (basket toss)

- A basket toss or any other type of toss must be cradled by at least two of the original bases plus a spotter in place at the head and shoulder area.
- A toss should be directed vertically - over/under or through any pyramids/stunts are prohibited.
- A basket toss must be executed from ground level with the main bases' feet on the performing surface.
- Exceeding two vertical twists or exceeding double head over hips rotation are prohibited.

3.6.3 Dismounts

- Twisting dismounts from stunts/pyramids exceeding 2 (two) rotations are prohibited

2nd layer

- All twisting dismounts or dismounts involving a jump or gymnastic skill or a head-over-hips rotation (e.g. a tuck, somersault) require 2 persons to cradle except in the partner stunt category where 1 base plus the designated spotter are needed.

3rd layer

- All cradle dismounts require two (2) catchers.
- No backward somersaults (without suspension) are allowed in dismounts.
- Pop down dismounts require at least two (2) catcher
- All twisting dismounts, head over hips rotation or dismounts involving a jump or gymnastic skill must be cradled.

3.7 SAFETY RULES DANCE

3.7.1 Acrobatics in Dance

Any move where the weight of the performer is on their hands and the hips rotate/come up straight over the head without the support of one or both feet.

- **Forbidden**

Handstands, cartwheels and other tumbling.

- **Allowed**

Forward/side/backward rolls, back bends, modified hand stand (hips are momentarily vertical with the shoulders), break dance moves such as "the worm", neck stand "candle"

3.7.2 Stunting in Dance

Any move where the body weight is supported by another competitor, without the flyers foot/feet touching the ground.

- **Allowed**

Pulling the competitor up from a sitting/crouching position on the ground; competitor leaning on another with at least one foot on the ground.

4. PENALTIES

4.1 GENERAL

Code of Conduct

Any vulgar, racist, suggestive language, appearance or movements of the competitors, substitutes, spotters, coaches or fans could result in disqualification of the team/competitor.

Please adhere to the SAFETY GUIDELINES.

4.2 WITHDRAWAL

Failure to notify the host of withdrawal from competing in the ECC/JECC prior to the Championship in writing will be penalised with the squad being banned from the next ECC/JECC.

Note: Entry fees are non-refundable and must be paid if the team/competitor withdrawal from the after the deadline for registration.

4.3 COMPETITION PENALTIES

INCORRECT AGE

DISQUALIFICATION

The squad will be penalised if information supplied is incorrect

COPIED MATERIAL

DISQUALIFICATION

Whole routine copied

TEAR AWAY CLOTHING

DISQUALIFICATION

OFFENSIVE CLOTHING

DISQUALIFICATION

Will not be allowed to start subject to ruling by the Head judge

COMPULSORY ELEMENTS

50 POINTS

Any compulsory element not performed/included

For each element

NB: Except in case of significant injury to a competitor causing the competitor to leave the area or unable to perform

EXCESSIVE ADVERTISING ON UNIFORM	10 POINTS
For each item	
SAFETY VIOLATION	10 POINTS
For each occurrence	
UNSUITABLE MUSIC	10 POINTS
JEWELLERY	5 POINTS
No jewellery to be worn	FOR EACH ITEM
MEDICAL ITEMS	5 POINTS
Not agreed with ECA Board	FOR EACH ITEM
DRESS CODE VIOLATION	1 POINT
For each item of clothing	
INCORRECT SHOES	1 POINT
	FOR EACH ITEM
DROPPED POMS	1 POINT
Choreographed throws will not be considered a drop	FOR EACH POM
ADDITIONAL PROPS	1 POINT
	FOR EACH ITEM
PERFORMANCE TIME VIOLATION	1 POINT
Disqualification after 10 seconds	For each second
SET UP TIME	1 POINT
After initial 20 sec set up –time	For each second
OUTSIDE AREA VIOLATION	1 POINT
Any movement that takes the competitor outside the marked area	
Step/fall/roll over the line	per person