

## AVOIDING RULE DEDUCTIONS AT STATE

The Iowa State Cheerleading Competition certainly showcases our talented Iowa high school cheerleaders. Unfortunately, some teams receive deductions for not adhering to the National Federation and/or the competition rules. Hopefully, this information will help clarify the legality of stunts, plus provide some suggestions for avoiding deductions in the future.

It's the coach's responsibility to be knowledgeable about the rules and make sure that a squad's routine is legal; don't assume choreographers know the rules. Every coach received a sheet at the rules meetings entitled "Interpreting the Legality of Stunts" plus it's also on the ICCA website. These checklists should be used to check whether braced dismounts, inverted mounts, and loss of contact transitions are legal.

If you still have questions about the legality of a stunt after **FIRST** having checked the **rules book and Interpreting the Legality of Stunts sheet**, you may send a video or DVD of the stunt in question to **Donna McKay**, 842 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE, Mason City, IA 50401. The legality of the stunt will be determined and the coach will be notified. Questions should only be asked if a stunt is questionable; coaches should not be sending in every single stunt for verification. **No rule verifications will be given after Friday, October 24.**

Videotapes/DVDs - The stunt does not have to be performance quality. The stunt needs to be shown from different angles so hand position, etc. can be ascertained. A note must be included with the tape/DVD providing the coach's email address and telephone number, plus a specific question about the stunt being shown. No tapes/DVDs will be returned.

The head tech judge keeps a record of each coach requesting a ruling on a stunt's legality along with the ruling given; each tech judge also receives a copy. Only specific stunts and the way they're performed on the video/DVD will be verified, not entire routines. Routines can be changed and/or stunts can be performed differently during competitions. This is why records are kept of the stunts and the rulings. If a coach changes how a stunt is performed and makes it illegal, it would then be called illegal at State since it was only verified legal if performed in the same way as when the ruling was made.

Hopefully, this information will help you be more aware of stunt legality issues and how to make sure you're complying with the rules to keep your cheerleaders safe. It's the coach's responsibility to read all rules carefully and to make sure a routine and/or stunt is legal.

### Clarification of Rules

These rules seemed to be the ones most consistently violated at State.

p. 16 2-4-4 Spotters need to focus on the flyer, not looking through the flyers' legs.

p. 16 2-4-7h An extended triple-base Swedish fall requires a separate spotter if all bases aren't facing the flyer.

p. 18 2-8-2 Check Interpreting the Legality of Stunts sheet.

p. 19 2-8-8a A flatback is legal if the flyer begins in a vertical position and is transitioned to a horizontal, straight body position between two original bases. If the flyer falls away from the original bases, it's a pendulum and needs three catchers.

p. 19 2-8-12, 2-8-13a, and 2-8-13b Check number of bases needed and flyer holding bases' hands.

p. 22 2-12-1 Check Interpreting the Legality of Stunts sheet.

p. 22 2-15-1 Be sure music words are clearly appropriate. Cheerleaders should keep skirts zipped at all times.

Comp rule – Cheerleaders need to begin the routine with at least one foot on the floor; they can't begin in a stunt. This includes cheerleaders participating in the stunt group division.

Comp rule – Stunt groups may not jump or dance. They may not tumble, unless going into a stunt legally.

Comp rule – Make sure routines/music finish at least a few seconds under the maximum time limit.