

## **NEW PARENT HANDBOOK**

### *WHAT IS THE BOOSTER CLUB?*

The Booster Club (BC) is a not-for-profit organization formed to benefit all competitive gymnasts at Sharp's Gymnastics Academy. It is run completely separately from the business of Sharp's Gymnastics, and the coaches and owner have no role in the BC. When your daughter becomes a member of the competitive team, you automatically become a member of the BC. The primary goal of the BC is to support the gymnasts financially through fees and fundraising. We also organize activities such as an end of the season party to promote the feeling of a "team".

### *INTRODUCING THE BOARD*

The BC is run by a six member board. The offices are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two At-Large positions.

These positions are filled by a vote that typically takes place in July. President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary are a two-year term, and the At-Large positions (Compulsory and Optional) are a one-year term. Every family that was a member of the BC in the previous season is entitled to vote for these positions, i.e. if your daughter starts on team in 2011, you will be eligible to vote in 2012.

### *BOOSTER FEES*

The Board sets the budget once each year, prior to the start of the competitive season. It is based on the number of gymnasts on the team, the level those gymnasts will compete at, and the number of meets they will attend. The Board factors in expected revenue that will off-set costs (such as hosting a meet or other fundraising) and then divides the remaining expenses to set the fees. There is a set Competitive Participation Fee for compulsory gymnasts and a separate set Competitive Participation Fee for optional, and as well, for Elite. This fee covers all meet entry fees and coaches travel expenses. It DOES NOT cover your daughter's travel expenses, annual USAG fee, competition leotard or warm-ups. There is also an Annual Dues assessment that is based on the number of gymnasts and coaches. This due is an annual fixed cost assessment. This non-refundable Annual Dues is assessed at the end of August at the start of the season.

In some years revenue is higher than what was estimated prior to the season. This can occur if fundraising exceeds expectations. In this circumstance, a rebate will be applied to the Competitive Participation Fee for the following season. For example, if we find that the fees for the 2011-2012 season were over-estimated, then the gymnasts will receive a rebate during the 2012-2013 season that will be applied towards the Competitive Participation Fee.

The BC Annual Dues and Competitive Participation Fee can change every year depending on the factors mentioned above. You will receive an Annual Dues statement in August at the start of the season. This must be paid whether your daughter competes or not. The Competitive Participation Fee statements will be sent out in six installments, September, October, November, December, January, and February. You may pay this fee all at once, if preferred. You must remain current on your Annual Dues and Competitive Participation Fee for your daughter to be eligible to compete.

Remember, this money goes towards meet entry fees and coaches travel expenses. If you have questions regarding the dues and fee, please contact the BC Treasurer.

## *FUNDRAISING AND CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP*

Typically, hosting a meet is our biggest fundraiser (we will NOT host a meet this year), but we also do other fundraising. In the past we have sold car decals, coupon books, Christmas wreaths, and carwash coupons. We welcome any other ideas for the BC to be involved in. The more money we get through fundraising, the lower our BC fees!

We are always very happy to receive donations from corporate sponsors. These donations can be in goods or services that we can use when hosting a meet, or monetary. If you know of any company who may be willing to make a donation to our not-for-profit organization, please see a board member for a corporate sponsorship packet.

In the past we had a sponsorship committee working on this specific goal. There is no official committee at this time. If you have the skills and energy, and are willing to take on this challenge, please see a board member.

## *OTHER ACTIVITIES*

There are other activities that occur during the year.

☑ In December, the girls do a gift exchange and we have a holiday party. We contribute towards a “group gift” for the coaches.

☑ At the end of the competitive season, we have an end-of-season party (typically in June). We celebrate the gymnasts’ accomplishments and each girl receives a gift.

☑ Each month two names are randomly chosen to be “athlete of the month”. The girls get to answer a few questions and have their photo up on the bulletin board for that month.

☑ We also acknowledge birthdays, high scores at the meets, and “making State”.

If you or your daughter does not wish to participate in any of the activities, please let a board member know as soon as possible after receiving the information.

## *EXPECTED EXPENSES*

Besides BC fees, what other expenses can you expect? The team needs to look like a team, so a new team leotard may be purchased each year. For compulsory levels it is typically around \$80 - \$90. This leotard is only worn for meets, but can be used for practices after the season is over. Your daughter will also need a warm-up outfit. The jacket is typically around \$75 and the pants \$50. The bag to be carried at meets is around \$20 (not required).

To compete in a USAG sanctioned meet, your daughter must be a USAG member. This fee is paid annually, usually in July or August.

Any travel expenses related to attending meets are to be covered by you. For compulsory levels 4-6, meets are normally within the state. Occasionally it may be necessary to stay in a hotel due to an early start or late finishing time of your daughter’s session. Each meet usually has a host hotel with a discounted rate available.

As mentioned under fees, we sometimes come in under-budget due to raising more money than expected. In this case, there would be a rebate applied to the Competitive Participation Fee paid for the next season – **TO THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE PAID THEIR ANNUAL DUES, ALL COMPETITIVE PARTICIPATION FEES, AND PARTICIPATED IN OUR FUNDRAISING!** If these criteria were not met, you will not be eligible for any rebate that may occur.

## *HOME MEETS (Not applicable for Season 2011-2012)*

The BC will usually host a meet during the season as our major fundraiser. The BC actually hosts the meet, NOT the gym. As the owner of SGA, Marvin Sharp has allowed us to hold the meets at the gym. If we were to hold the meet at an outside venue, our expenses would be a lot higher (renting the venue/equipment, insurance). To contribute towards the costs incurred by the gym (electricity, wear and tear on equipment, etc) we give 20% of the profit from the meet to SGA. This money is usually used to purchase new gym equipment.

Hosting a meet is our biggest fundraiser for the year and can be lots of fun (and hard work). As a member of the BC you are required to help out with the meet. Everyone's involvement is what makes the meet a success. Some of the work that needs to be done includes: setting up in preparation (cleaning, moving equipment, setting up chairs and tables, decorations, etc.) and cleanup afterwards, designing and printing flyers, manning ticket sales, food sales, assisting judges and scoring. You will need to help with either setting up for the meet or tearing down afterwards, and work 1-2 sessions if it is a one day event, or 2-3 sessions if it is a two-day event.

## *COMPETING IN GYMNASTICS*

Gymnasts in levels 4, 5, and 6 are considered "compulsory" gymnasts. In each of these levels each of the girls do exactly the same routines in every event (vault, bars, beam, and floor). Levels 7 through 10 and elite are "optional" gymnasts. These girls have their own individual routines. The age group your daughter will compete in is determined by her age on the date of the Indiana State meet. This season the Level 4 State meet is March 10th and 11th 2011. Therefore, if she turns 7 on March 11th she will compete the whole season as a 7 year old. However, if she doesn't turn 7 until March 12th, she will compete as a 6 year old. (This method is used for each level using its specific State meet date).

During a competition your daughter will get a score out of 10 for each event. The total of the four scores will give an All-Around (AA) score. In order to compete in the State meet Level 4, 5, and 6 gymnasts must score at least 32.00 for an AA score at two or more of their scheduled meets. Level 7, 8, 9 and 10 gymnasts must score at least 32.00 for an AA score at one meet. Once they have "made State" they will go to the State meet, even if their score is lower at subsequent meets.

## *ATTENDING A MEET*

The coaches will decide who is ready to compete once the competitive season (Sep – Mar) starts. If you have any questions regarding this, talk to your daughter's coach. The season for compulsory gymnasts typically has 6 to 8 meets. The actual schedule is set by the coaches; the BC has no input into this. You will be given a copy of the schedule at the start of the season, so you will know which weekends to set aside. However, you will not find out which day (Saturday or Sunday), or the time until a few days before the meet. This is when the coaches receive the information; they will give it to you via your daughter's mailbox or email. This does make it difficult to make plans, but that's the way it is!

You should plan on arriving at the meet about 15 minutes prior to the start of open stretch. This gives you time to sign in and find the coach. Your daughter should be wearing her competition leotard and warm-ups. She should have her hair tied up or pinned out of her eyes. No nail polish can be worn. The only jewelry allowed is small stud earrings.

A meet has three phases: a warm-up time; the competition; and an awards ceremony. You can expect all this to take 4-5 hours. You will be required to pay an entrance fee as a spectator, usually \$4-\$6. If you want a program they usually cost \$1-\$4. Food and merchandise is usually available.

Seating (comfort and ability to see) varies with venue. No flash photography is allowed during warm-ups or competition for safety reasons (you don't want your daughter to fall off the beam because a camera flash disrupted her concentration), but is usually allowed during the awards ceremony.

Awards also vary by meet. In level 4-6, many meets will award medals to the top 50% of each age group for individual events and 100% for the all-around, but this is not always the case. The awarding of medals is at the discretion of the host gym.

Your daughter's score may also vary by meet in a way that you don't think is fair. Remember, this is a subjective sport. It is better to get your daughter to focus on improving her routine each meet, than to obsess over scores and placing.

## *MORALE*

We all want our daughters to enjoy the sport of gymnastics. At times situations or issues arise that bother us. It is best not to discuss these things in front of your daughter. It is amazing how quickly negative feelings and rumors can be spread. If you are upset or concerned about anything, discuss it with the coaches or a board member.

## *WHERE TO GO WITH QUESTIONS*

Approach a board member or send an email, if you have any questions or concerns about BC fees, a meet we are hosting, BC regulations, or fundraising. It is better to get the correct answer the first time, than a lot of difference (and perhaps incorrect) answers from each parent that you ask. Approach your daughter's coach or Marvin if you have any questions about training, meet eligibility, or advancement.

## *COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BOARD AND MEMBERS*

The Board will usually communicate any new information to you through your daughter's mailbox, via email/website, or on the Booster bulletin board. Be sure to check all of these frequently. If you change your email address make sure it is updated with the Board.

When there is a BC meeting, at least one parent from each family should try to attend (this is very important). Upcoming meetings will be posted on the bulletin board, with reminders emailed and/or put in mailboxes. These meetings occur more frequently during the competitive season, especially prior to a home meet.

If you have any questions or concerns not related to coaching, you can discuss these with any board member while at the gym, or contact any of them via email or phone.