



PreTeam Parent's Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome -	3	
Introduction -		4
Our Mission Statement -		5
Our Philosophy -		5
Preteam Philosophy -		6
Questions Concerning PreTeam -		7
Tuition Policy -		7
Attendance Policy -	8	
The GUF -		9
Promotion Policy -		10
Outside Class Policy -		11
Eating Guidelines for Athletes -		11
New Preteam Member Agreement -		12
Should I Watch My Child in the Gym? -		
14		
Abbreviations and Definitions -		
16		
Talent Opportunity Program (TOP) -		
18		
The Reward -	19	
Handbook Acknowledgement Form -		20

Dear Parents,

First of all, we would like to congratulate you and your child on making it to our Preteam program. We know that a lot of time, commitment, and financial effort was put into making it this far.

As a new member of our Preteam, you will have access to our exclusive competitive facility. We take pride in the separation of our recreational and competitive programs. This provides our team and preteam with an environment conducive to the rapid development of the skills and characteristics we are looking for in our competitive team members.

You may be wondering what it will be like now that you are a part of our competitive program. We at Gymnastics Unlimited expect a heightened level of commitment from both parents and gymnasts. Your gymnast will be getting accustomed to a stricter and more regimented environment where they will interact with multiple coaches during each workout. You can expect to have more asked of you as well. Along with more financial responsibility, our committed parents help us with various duties such as fundraisers and hosting meets. Our coaches will help coordinate which duties and events parents will help with.

The Preteam handbook that we have provided you with plays an essential role in the relationship between parents and Gymnastics Unlimited. We strongly suggest that you read and discuss it with your child as soon as possible. Some of the things included in the handbook are the specifics about what is expected of you and your athlete. You can use this handbook as a reference for many of the situations and concerns that will arise throughout your athlete's career at Gymnastics Unlimited.

Again, we would like to congratulate you and thank you for choosing Gymnastics Unlimited. Welcome to our competitive program, and we look forward to a long and successful relationship with you.

-Gymnastics Unlimited

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations to all of you for being part of the Pikes Preteam. You have all shown the potential and desire to be part of this prestigious group. We welcome you. As you hopefully realize, being a PreTeamer is a huge commitment, and we ask that you read and understand all the expectations set forth in this handbook and make an informed decision about whether being a PreTeamer is for you at this time. By paying your tuition you are agreeing to the terms of this handbook.

Many of you have participated in our recreational program. If you are new to the competitive aspect of the program, we would like to welcome you to this part of our program. Due to the fact that the gymnasts train more and the parents interact more, this part of our program is very personal and family-like. We hope you will like being a part of our Pikes Family!

If you choose to be a PreTeamer and if you commit to attending classes and to working as hard as you can, we will guarantee you excellent gymnastics training and progress. We will push you to your limits and beyond, while maintaining a positive learning environment. We will help your child to become a better gymnast and a better person. You will learn life-long lessons in dedication, responsibility, respect, discipline, sacrifice and appreciation. You will have more poise, confidence and self-esteem.

-Gymnastics Unlimited

Our Mission Statement

To provide a safe, fun and positive environment while, promoting creativity, fitness and inspiring students to achieve their goals. This will enrich the lives of our students and the community through the excellence in gymnastics.

Our Philosophy

The children always come first.

We aim to develop in our students a positive self-esteem by instilling the values of good sportsmanship, self discipline, respect and accountability. Gymnastics Unlimited is committed to a standard of excellence and the values you can expect from each member of our staff is:

Safety is everyone's responsibility

Excellence and integrity

Quality education and training

Listening with results

"Teach children that they can achieve and they will remember the lessons for life."

GU PRETEAM PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy for competitive teams is to develop gymnastics excellence during which time we also attempt to initiate a strong educational, ethical, and moral foundation that will carry over to "Life after Gymnastics."

Competitive gymnasts are athletes who acquire and develop many valuable qualities that are inherent in this sport. These qualities include the following.

- *Self-discipline* - knowing what work has to be done in order to achieve a goal.
- *Self-motivation* - working hard because of want and need.
- *Respect* - for the sport of gymnastics, judges' teammates, and coaches.
- *Sportsmanship* - playing by the rules and learning to deal with failure only to make you stronger and learn how to win graciously.
- *Cooperation*
- *Dedication*
- *Determination*
- *Leadership*
- *Concentration*
- *Time management*
- *Teamwork*
- *Friendship*
- *Gracefulness*
- *Nutrition for healthy living*
- *Physical fitness*

Gymnastics excellence means becoming the best you can be individually. Achieving this excellence takes setting goals, both long term and short term, and an incredible amount of work to achieve those expectations. As a *GYMNASTICS UNLIMITED* pre team member you will be expected to strive to be the best you can be, recognizing the fact that...

"If it's worth doing—do it right!"

QUESTIONS CONCERNING PRETEAM

1. Tuition and Fees - Lisa Eichman.
2. Preteam questions, philosophy or concerns - Vanessa Adler, Head Coach.
3. Gym issues, schedule or parent relations - Head Coach
4. Gymnastics Unlimited Foundation (GUF) questions - Owners

TUITION POLICY

Tuition is due on or before the first workout of the month. You will be required to sign an automatic withdrawal form. If tuition is unpaid after the 10th we will automatically withdraw unpaid tuition from your credit card on the 11th. By paying your monthly tuition you will be considered "on the roster", and you will be eligible to participate in preteam events which include: mini meet, holiday parties and exhibitions. Failure to pay your tuition will automatically drop you from our rosters and you are not eligible to participate in any preteam events.

Tuition for Preteam members is based on a 12-month year, regardless of how many hours of workouts they have during the year. Basically this is an annual tuition broken down to 12 payments to help make it easier for you to manage. If you look at the per hour rate of the classes, it should help

make the fee more palatable. Approximately \$3 per hour is unheard of for this quality of training in this industry.

The fees are heavily discounted therefore there will be no pro-rations or make-ups for missed classes, family vacations, or breaks.

From time to time, when children are having a hard time deciding to continue with gymnastics, parents will often choose to take a break. Though we discourage this, it is permissible under certain conditions.

- All breaks are treated as vacations. Payment of tuition is still required to maintain their spot on the roster.
- If you decide not to pay, they will be taken off the roster, and they forfeit all opportunities to participate in GU events and activities.
- We allow a break in length of up to one month. If the child needs longer to decide, they will need to petition with the Head Coach to re-tryout.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is an extremely large part of the sport of gymnastics. It is very important that our gymnasts and their parents take their commitment as a PreTeamer seriously.

Good attendance is essential for the progress and safety of your gymnast.

In order to make sure we are taking the necessary steps to keep your gymnast progressing safely we have set up an attendance policy.

- It is very important that your gymnast is ON TIME for practice. If your gymnast arrives late, they are being put at risk for injury because they are not completing their entire

warm-up. The coaches at Gymnastics Unlimited will not be held responsible for injury due to inadequate warm up because of tardiness.

- An excused absence consists of a medical appointment, family emergency, illness, injury, or school function, etc. A parent or guardian MUST notify the gym BEFORE the missed practice. They can do this by calling the gym at 257-2496 and leaving a message on the *machine* or with a *coach*. Please include the reason for missing practice in your message.
- We understand the need of family time such as vacations. It would be to the benefit of your gymnast if you could try to schedule vacations during the gym's holidays and vacations.
- If your gymnast is injured, but can still work on some aspects of their gymnastics, a parent or guardian must contact the head coach and write out an altered workout schedule. This schedule will be carried out until the gymnast is fully recovered.

THE GUF

Our mission is to further the appreciation and love of gymnastics. Among the many benefits of gymnastics, the development of strength, flexibility, coordination and self discipline and the pride in accomplishment will form the foundation for all sports and for a healthier lifestyle in the future. The Gymnastics Unlimited Foundation (GUF) is a non-profit organization and is tax exempt pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 503(c)(3). The organization's main goal is to allow our competitive team the avenue to fund raise which is used to offset the high costs associated with competitive gymnastics. Without this organization, many competitive gymnasts would

not be able to participate in the competitive side of gymnastics.

The GUF is also actively involved in helping children throughout the community. Some of the events the GUF supports are the Santa Clarita Valley Child and Family Center's Kids Expo, Hosting events to expose underprivileged children to the sport of gymnastics, Santa Clarita School and Business Alliance Career Development Day and sponsoring introductory classes to earn badges for the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts. The GUF continues to look for new opportunities to further the appreciation of gymnastics throughout our community.

PROMOTION POLICY

This policy is to give you and your gymnast the knowledge they need to know in order to move to Level 4 Competitive gymnastics through USAG standards.

The following are the requirements which must be met before your gymnast can proceed to competing as a Pike:

- They must be able to execute all of the skills for the next level they are moving to with correct form on a consistent basis.

- They must be in good standing with tuition and meet fee payments, no money owed to the gym.
- Final promotion decisions are at the discretion of the head coach. Their decision is final.

"Skills dictate the level"

Our promotion policy is based on skill progression, core testing results, attendance, behavior, motivation, parental support and mental ability. Just because your athlete is on Preteam, does not necessarily mean that they will make it to the competitive team. This is where trust in your coaches is very important. We respect all of our athletes and do not show favoritism to any of them. We do, however, treat them as individuals. They will be coached on a case-by-case basis, as all people are different and require different techniques to help them reach their individual goals. *Our goal for your child is to help them be the best that their potential and desire will allow them to be. We give 100% to every child throughout their careers at Gymnastics Unlimited.*

OUTSIDE CLASS POLICY

It is not uncommon in any competitive sport for teams to require consistent coaching. Team gymnasts, which include any gymnast assigned to Rye Canyon, are taught in a fashion required by the USAG to gain the required technical excellence to be competitive in Southern California. For that reason, gymnasts are prohibited from taking any classes outside of Rye Canyon in order to prevent inconsistent instruction. This also includes

private lessons. Private lessons are only to be given by your team coaches at the Rye Canyon facility. Failure to adhere to this policy will forfeit your gymnast's position on team or pre-team.

EATING GUIDELINES FOR ATHLETES

- Experts suggest that the meal structure should be four to five small meals per day.
- One to two meals should be designated as protein meals. This should be in the first half of the day. Low fat protein such as fish, poultry, Tofu and low fat dairy products should be included.
- Two to three carbohydrate meals consisting of grain products such as breads, cereals, pastas plus vegetables and fruit. Dairy products such as butter and cheese should not be included in these meals.
- If possible, athletes should eat a piece of fruit or drink fruit juice immediately after workout.
- Low fat breads and cereals should be available at all times. Do not rely on fast food chains to supply needed meals throughout the week.
- Athletes should bring water, and/or sports drink to practice.
- Snacks during break should be a light and healthy meal.
- Athletes should avoid fried foods, sodas, and junk food as much as possible.

NEW PRETEAM MEMBER AGREEMENT

1. As a *PreTeamer*, I will do the best of my abilities, follow and respect the policies for as long as I am a member. I will remember that

- my coaches, parents, and teammates all put forth effort to help me reach my potential as a gymnast.
2. To be a gymnast is special and requires much dedication and effort. As (or when) I become a *PreTeamer*, I must accept the challenge for the duration. Also realizing that in sports there will be ups and downs. I will do my best not to let myself down.
 3. The start of my workout must be on time and with the frame of mind that I am here to learn and progress as a gymnast. If I arrive late the need to complete the warm-up correctly without disturbing the other gymnast this needs to be my first concern.
 4. When my coach for the event that I am on gives me permission to leave that event then, and only then can I leave to rotate, get a drink or take care of any workout business.
 - a. When rotating from event to event you may go to your locker to return or take out workout equipment only.
 - b. When rotating you may also get a drink of water or juice. Sugar drinks are not acceptable.
 - c. Bathroom breaks, emergency phone calls or any thing that takes more than a few seconds must get permission from a coach.
 5. Working on an off night can make up missing gym but not being part of my group workout will cause problems. I will call to let my coaches know what the reasons for my missing gym are.
 6. I will choose a locker to keep my workout equipment and any personal items that I might need. I will make sure the locker stays clean.
 7. Only relatives are allowed into the gym to watch. Conversations or interaction with family members during workout is not permitted. The only exception to this rule is by permission from a coach. This includes making and receiving phone calls. (Messages will be passed by coaches)

8. If my coach feels I am not putting effort into my workout or I express any form of disrespect for what I have been asked to do my coach will have the option to sit me out of workout for a prescribed amount of time. I will be allowed to return to that event only if I accept the responsibility to make a change.
9. If I am sick or injured I need to communicate with my coaches so I can still accomplish something during workout. This is one of the best times to work on any weakness area I might have. Normally some form of conditioning or stretching can be done. If I am not accomplishing anything I will be asked to leave.

Athlete Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Should I Watch My Child in the Gym?

There is always the question as to whether parents should watch their gymnast practice or not. At the preschool and lower levels, the short class time it naturally results in higher percentage of parental viewer. This percentage decreases to almost zero at the upper team levels. But what is the "right" thing to do?

Should be allowed but discouraged.

Coaches are universally convinced that it is usually best if parents don't watch their children every class period. Some gyms go as far as banning parent viewing of team and pre-team programs. There are legitimate reasons to do this, but we believe it is best to allow parent viewing at any time, while discouraging it for the benefit of the child's advancement.

Want practice time, not always a performance. Some gymnasts feel extra pressure to perform for or in the presence of their parents and do not progress as well under that pressure. If parents are constantly in attendance, your gymnast may be constantly performing as opposed to the more relaxed, progressive state of practicing. Coaches need to be able to control this balance of pressure and relaxation and the presence of parents can complicate that.

Don't try to coach your child.

Children are often distracted and pay attention to their parents instead of the coach, when parents are in the gym. This happens at all levels of the sport from preschool to team. Parents sometimes try to do their own brand of coaching from the sidelines which distracts the gymnasts, complicates and slows the coaching process and even may be dangerous. A parent who coaches their child to point their toes, when a coach is emphasizing

summersault rotation could be distracting the gymnast from a safety point of view.

Leave it to the Pros.

Gymnastics is a very complicated sport and constantly evolving. It is a full time job just to keep up with the rule changes. Even parents who were gymnasts will find their knowledge limited. Coaching is best left to the professionals, especially at the team level. While gymnasts are paying attention to signals from their parents, they are unable to absorb important feedback and information from the coach.

Watching class vs. Watching Preteam practice.

It is much more understandable if parents of preschool and recreational class gymnasts watch their gymnast's whole practice. Since they are likely only there for about an hour, it can be a waste of time to drive back home right away. Watching an entire team practice or practice or the majority of it (most parents don't have the time) however, it is much more likely to be a bad idea.

Watch if they ask.

While there may be instances where it is not true, in general, it is a good idea to watch your child do gymnastics if they ask that you do. Try to understand the reason (the underlying need) they want you to watch. They may have the desire to share something that is important to them with you. You might not want to miss this opportunity.

Insist on viewing privileges.

In this day and age, it seems more appropriate that any gym be open to parents if they should desire it for any reason. Some parents schedules may preclude viewing their gymnasts during normally scheduled viewing times. Parents should also be able to

observe the safety and well-being of their children at any time.

Do what is best for your child's progress. Parents should remember that their gymnast's progress is likely to be faster if they do not view too often. Viewing once a week or bi-monthly is an acceptable amount, either during formal situations or in their regular practice time.

Abbreviations and Definitions

FIG - International Gymnastics Federation

The *FIG* is the governing body of gymnastics for all countries.

USAG - United States of America Gymnastics

All gymnasts, coaches, judges and officials must be a member of *USAG* before they can be on the competitive arena or equipment at any sanctioned event. (This includes meets and clinics.)

VT - Vault

UB - Uneven parallel bars

BB - Balance beam

FX - Floor exercise

AA - All around score

The sum total of all the events added together.

Olympic Order -

Event rotations at a meet are usually done in Olympic order (above). So if you start competition on *BB*, your rotation will continue as *FX*, *VT*, *UB*. If you start on *UB*, your rotation will continue as *BB*, *FX*, *VT*.

Code of Points -

The *Code of Points* is published by the *FIG* and is considered the "Bible of Gymnastics" since it is used in every competitive gymnastics club in the world. It includes the rules for international competition and a nearly complete list of recognized skills for such competitions. The JO program uses a modified version of the *Code of Points* however; all Elite gymnasts must use the regular version.

USAG Rules and Policies -

This is the "rule book" used for all sanctioned competitive events within the JO and Elite programs for the United States gymnasts. It is published by the *USAG* once every year.

Safety Certification -

Safety Certification is a *USAG* requirement for all meet directors, judges and coaches that participate in any sanctioned *USAG* event. To become certified, one must attend a course offered by the *USAG* and pass a written test.

Congress -

Coaches' Congress is a yearly event held Nationally, Regionally and sometimes within individual States. It is a gathering of coaches brought together for sharing of information, teaching techniques and ideas. Coaches' Congress is considered to be one of the prime forms of education for gymnastic coaches.

Rips -

Rips are common in the sport of gymnastics. It is a normally a small tear of skin from the hand and is generally an uneven bar related minor injury. There are several treatments for rips, but the gymnasts are strongly urged to seek this treatment from their coaches. Basically, the tear should be trimmed of "hanging skin" and kept clean and moist during the healing process. Antibiotic ointments (such as Neosporin®) should not be used.

Talent Opportunity Program (TOP)

The Talent Opportunity Program is an identification system, which is implemented under the direction of the Elite Program Committee. Its purpose is to assist the coach in early identification of potentially talented athletes and to nurture and assist in the development of these athletes and their coaches. The age limitations for this program are that a gymnast must be between 7 and 12 years old.

The program tests two primary areas of development:

- Physical abilities (strength and flexibility)
- Skills (modified Elite testing)

There are basically two steps in the TOP system. Regional testing (physical ability testing only) normally takes place by July and National testing takes place in October every year. All athletes who test at the National level are qualified to take part in the normal Elite testing under special rules. Until they are "age eligible" they only test the compulsories and optional routines for "start value". Top qualifiers at the National test get a training camp and become part of the *TOP* National Training Squad (basically the USA Team for this age).

THE REWARD

PreTeam members are giving more and in return, getting more - more instruction, more gym time, more attention and more competition time. Their reward for hard work and commitment will make them become quality gymnasts, gain self-esteem from their accomplishments, build relationships, and learn life long lessons. They will stand out whenever they are doing gymnastics. They will stand out on their own. They will become better women overall.

In closing, we would again like to congratulate you on your success. Please be certain you have weighed all aspects of being a PreTeamer before making your final decision. We know it as an excellent program, but it may not be for everyone, and the beauty of Gymnastics Unlimited is the staff, desire, curriculum, and the facility to offer a variety of classes, programs, levels, styles and everything else to accommodate anyone who wants to be a gymnast. We hope to have the opportunity to work with you this year. PLEASE discuss with us any concerns or questions you have. We are attempting to cater this program to what we feel is best for an intensive beneficial program. Your input is appreciated.

