



# **TNT Team Parent Handbook 2023**

\*All Policies in this handbook become effective May 24, 2023. In this handbook "TNT" will respectively refer to TNT Gymnastics, LLC. of Richland Center, Livingston, Mauston, Prairie du Chien, Sauk Prairie, WI and Waukon, IA.

## **The Mission at TNT Gymnastics, LLC.**

Our goal at TNT Gymnastics is to create an enthusiastic environment with a passionate coaching staff committed to giving to, enhancing and enriching young lives through the sport of gymnastics. TNT is dedicated to helping all gymnasts reach their potential, both physically and mentally, by offering every child the best gymnastics instruction possible. Most importantly, TNT is a place where all participants can feel great about their accomplishments while seeking life-long benefits from their gymnastics experience.

Using specific gymnastics progressions and a highly trained gymnastics staff each gymnast will learn the correct fundamentals and basic skills which will equip the athlete with the knowledge and ability to progress.

As instructors we will use the sport of gymnastics to help every child gain greater self-confidence and a more positive self-image.

## **The TNT Team Philosophy**

Our goal is to provide the mental and physical discipline needed for competition within a framework of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Learning to be comfortable in a competitive situation is a positive experience and adds to a child's development.

## **Welcome to the Team!**

TNT Gymnastics would like to welcome your family to our club. If you are reading this team manual it is because your daughter has already impressed us with her gymnastics talent and potential. Through this team manual we hope to give you a better insight into how our program operates and answer many of your questions.

TNT takes great pride in being a prestigious gymnastics training center. Our ability to maintain TNT's reputation and to continue to grow and prosper is directly related to your enthusiasm, performance and loyalty as a member of the TNT team and our dedicated coaching staff. We hope that you will find being on the team a rewarding experience. Working together, we can continue to progress, aiming to reach your child's full potential and have fun while reaching success.

The purpose of this team manual is to give you a better idea of what our goals are and how we operate as a TEAM at TNT.

If, after reading this manual, you have any questions about any aspect of the program please ASK! We would be happy to answer any question you may have.

## ***Introduction***

This team manual is designed to answer questions and explain the rules and policies for the competitive gymnastics program at TNT Gymnastics.

Competitive gymnastics is a unique sport requiring the support of the whole family in order for the gymnast to be successful.

You are to be congratulated because you are taking the time to think through the byproducts of team membership. Please direct any questions you may have to Coach Danielle Mueller - via email/phone call, NOT FACEBOOK.

## **Gymnastics Goals**

Does your daughter plan to make it to the Olympics, get a scholarship to college, or does she just enjoy the achievement of new skills and the companionship of other team members? Any of these may be valid reasons for joining the team!

Gymnastics is a specialized sport that demands many hours of hard work and dedication. In this day and age teaching children to delay gratification for the attainment of a worthy ideal is a significant challenge. Everything they see and hear on television can be absorbed and internalized as "real life". If a 30-second commercial can get us to buy a product, a 30-minute sitcom or drama will surely sell us a lifestyle.

The problem with television is that it condenses what in the real world takes years of hard work and dedication to achieve. Please understand if your daughter says she wants to be on a gymnastics team, or go for the gold at the Olympics, that's great, but it will take lots of hard work and dedication to make it there, on the part of both the athlete and the family. It certainly will not happen overnight.

## **Life Changes To Keep In Mind**

- At the lower team levels the number of hours of practice per week is relatively low. As your gymnast progresses up the competitive ladder the hours and days will continue to build, as will the costs.
- You may have to rearrange your schedule so that you are available to drive your gymnast to and from practice every day (you may want to start a carpool with other team parents!).
- Homework will have to be done much more efficiently and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available. *(It has been our experience that most of our athletes tend to get good grades and are better at studying because they have learned to budget their time more effectively than their peers.)*
- Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life *(and yours)*. Every effort should be made to be present and on time every day.

# Travel Team vs In-House Team

## In-House Team

- Xcel Bronze & Silver levels only
- TNT Tank Leotard Required
- 2 Competitions (December Mock Meet & May Rock N Roll Showcase)
- Cheaper competition cost & closer competitions
- Minimum age 5 years old.
- Great for those looking at less of a commitment & to find out if they really enjoy competing. Required to practice a minimum of 1 day per week.

## Travel Team

- All Xcel Levels
- TNT long sleeve leotard required
- 3+ competitions
- Travel further for competitions: Madison, Milwaukee, WI Dells
- USAG Membership required (\$65/year, new members are \$25)
- Minimum age 5 years old.
- Has the ability to progress through all xcel levels - practice requirements vary by level (see below).

## Description Of Xcel Team Levels

The USA Gymnastics Xcel program was developed as an alternative competitive program offering individual flexibility to coaches and gymnasts. The goal of Xcel is to provide gymnasts of varying abilities and commitment levels the opportunity for a rewarding gymnastics experience. The program allows a wide choice in skills to meet requirements so selection may be based on an individual athlete's strengths.

The focus of the Xcel program is sportsmanship, leadership, teamwork, and fun. The emphasis in the Xcel program is on correct technique, form, and performance.

### **Xcel Bronze**

An introduction to team. Referral is made by recreational coaches and/or parental inquiry with team coach approval. At this level they can compete in In-House or Travel Competitions, but are NOT allowed to do the April Xcel State Meet. Minimum of 1 day per week for practice, but welcome to come more.

### **Xcel Silver**

This level is a motivating environment for the up and coming gymnast. The focus is on creating a strong physical foundation for the skills necessary for competitive gymnastics. Gymnasts have mastered the Bronze level skill requirements and are looking to be more competitive. They can compete in In-House or Travel Competitions, and are ALLOWED to compete in the April Xcel State Meet. Minimum of 1 day per week for practice, but encouraged to come 2 days if they want to build on their skills and to be prepared for the competition season.

### **Xcel Gold**

This is a big jump from Xcel Silver as the gymnast has to jump to the high bar, go over the vault, have two different tumbling skills on the balance beam and be able to successfully compete two different flight tumbling passes on floor. Minimum of 2 days per week for practice.

## **Xcel Platinum/Diamond**

Moving into these levels will be determined by if they gymnast can successfully perform at this level with the skills required. Minimum of 2-3 days per week for practice.

**Routine Choreography:** Xcel Bronze/Silver – have set “TNT” event routines that they will learn in class. Xcel Gold- Diamond are allowed to have their own floor music and routines – we encourage you to schedule a choreography lesson for floor routine & usually there is time to make up your beam routine in this lesson as well. Beam routines may be made up in class – floor routines WILL NOT be choreographed/made-up in class.

## **Description Of Developmental Team Levels**

The Women’s Development Program (WDP) was created with the belief that all athletes, regardless of their potential, must have a solid foundation of basic skills in order to advance safely. Compulsory Levels: These consist of Levels 4 and 5. Both of these levels are progressive in nature, building upon the skills required at the previous level. You need a certain All Around score to score out of these levels to progress to the next level. Optional Levels: Which are Levels 6-10. Levels 6, 7, 8, and 9 have difficulty restrictions, while Level 10 has no restrictions in the skill choice. Composition is evaluated at Levels 8, 9, and 10.

1. Levels 6 and 7 have competitive opportunities up to and including State. TNT does not take these levels to regional competition. Level 6 can be skipped if the coach believes the gymnast is ready to advance to level 7.
2. Additional competitive opportunities are provided for Levels 8-10, with the Level 10 competitive season culminating at the WDP National Championships, Level 9 at the Eastern or Western Championships and Level 8 at the Regional Championships.

### **Developmental Levels 4 & 5**

These are developmental compulsory competitive levels in which every athlete must compete and obtain a mobility score for advancement per USAG. Practice requirements are a minimum of 3 days per week.

### **Level 6 & 7**

Introductory optional competition levels. is the entry level for Optional competition. The emphasis on this level is execution, artistic performance, and a development of basic optional skills; therefore this level is not evaluated on composition. Practice requirements are a minimum of 3 days per week.

### **Levels 8-10**

Advanced optional level routines are developed and choreographed individually by the coaches for each gymnast’s strength, style, and difficulty level. Practice requirements are a minimum of 4 days per week for level 8-9. Level 10’s will be required to practice 5 days per week.

## **COMPETITIVE PROGRAM POLICIES**

1. Gymnastics training is exclusive to this club. Gymnasts may not train at any other gym, camp, or clinic while competing and/or representing this facility without consent from the management.

2. Each gymnast is required to attend and be on time for all regularly scheduled practices. That means on the floor ready to go when practice begins and not talking or hanging around out front.
3. Proper workout attire is necessary at all times. A properly fitting leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during practice. No jewelry of any kind may be worn during the workout.
4. Absolutely no food, drink, candy **or cell phones** are permitted on the workout floor. All snacks or meals must remain in the lobby area. Gymnasts should not be on phones or lounging in lobby during practice.
5. All injuries, no matter how small, should be promptly reported to the coach. Injured athletes are allowed to attend practice. They will be assigned a modified workout, keeping within doctor's restrictions if you wish to come.
6. No gymnast may be left at the facility unattended. When dropping off a team member please do so within a reasonable time frame. Please do not drop off any one more than ten minutes before the start of the scheduled practice and be prompt to pick them up at the conclusion.
7. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters, as they are ultimately responsible in the eyes of the law for each child's well being. If you have concerns the coaching staff would be happy to explain the reasoning behind techniques and coaching action
8. All competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have attended workouts the week of a competition. Special situations should be discussed well in advance of the competition with the coach.

## **Communication**

Rumor, innuendo, and just plain gossip talk tend to occur when there is a vacuum created by a lack of information - this is detrimental to the successful operation of any gymnastic facility. If you need or want to know any information please reach out to Coach Danielle Mueller via email.

All questions regarding your child's progress, discipline , etc., may be discussed via email/phone call with the manager.

## **Termination Of Enrollment**

We have the right to suspend or ask a gymnast and/or parent to terminate enrollment due to continuous disciplinary problems, which impair the safety and progress of the other program participants, with **no refunds**.

## **COMPETITIVE PROGRAM - FINANCIAL POLICIES**

### **Team is a year round commitment.**

While we cannot force you to take classes during the summer, if you choose to withdraw for the summer, please note that your child may not be up to the competitive level come fall. There are no refunds for warm-ups/leotards if you drop or quit the team. TNT will terminate enrollment if tuition is not up to date prior to enrolling in competitions.

Notice of intent to cancel enrollment must be made via email by the 25th of the month prior you are disenrolling.

## **Make-Ups**

There are no discounts, or prorated accounts due to absence of any nature. This includes, but not limited to injuries, vacations, illnesses, etc. The competitive program is already greatly discounted in comparison to other gym programs and our recreational program. You may be allowed up to 2 make-ups per calendar month & must be made up within that calendar month. You can not stack make-ups or carry over to a different session.

## **Parent Commitment**

1. Make sure the gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets, and special functions.
2. Communicate with the coaches regarding any problems.
3. Check your email regularly to stay current with team activities.
4. Make sure we have a valid email address and that you are set up to receive emails from us.

## **Competitive Season Information**

### **USAG Membership Fees**

TNT competes in USA Gymnastics sanctioned meets for our travel team.

USAG membership fees total \$65, but first time athletes registered are only \$25 (2022-23 fees).

This must be done on the USAG website [www.usagym.org](http://www.usagym.org) by August 15, 2023. Remember to create it for YOUR DAUGHTER & ADD TNT Gymnastics under YOUR DAUGHTER'S NAME.

### **Meet Expenses**

You will be responsible for registering your gymnast on the parent portal for whichever meets you want to attend. Please pay attention to deadlines - no late entries. Each gymnast is responsible for her own transportation to the competition, hotel (*if needed*), and all meals. Admission is charged to spectators at meets. Meet expenses for all coaching fees (i.e.: gas, mileage, food, lodging, and session fees) must be shared by all gymnasts competing.

### **Meet Refunds**

Refunds are determined by each meet and you may or may not be eligible for a refund if you drop/cancel a meet.

### **Competition Schedule**

Please look at our website for the tentative 2023-24 competition schedule.

We HIGHLY encourage everyone on the team to attend the mock meet in December so that your families can attend without having to travel as far as well as giving the gymnasts a "warm-up meet".

1-2 weeks before a competition, participating gymnasts will receive a meet information sheet that includes dates, times, gymnasts & coaches attending, host hotel (if needed), phone numbers, a map, and web

address when available. Allow ample time to get to a meet, park and get settled in the meet venue prior to competition. Your child will only compete ONE day, for approximately a THREE hour span.

**Coaches at Meets:** You may not always have the same coach at meets – but it will be someone who is familiar with meets & the rules. Due to different locations/# of team members we aren't able to have a coach from each location attend every session.

## **The Meet Takes *How Long?***

**The average meet can take as little as 2 1/2 hours or as long as 5 hours.**

Most competitions run in a format similar to the one listed below.

**Warm Up** – Usually a half-hour long. This time is for general stretching and getting equipment settings specific to the gymnast.

**Capital or Modified Capital Cup** is also known as “Warm-Up/Compete” format. The athlete warms up on a specific event and readily competes at that event before moving on to the next event and so on.

**March In** – all the gymnasts line up and march in to the gym to be presented to the audience and judges. Usually the National Anthem is played. This takes about ten to fifteen minutes.

**Competition** – the gymnasts now actually compete and receive scores from the judges at each event. This may take an hour and a half to two hours to complete. Longer if it is an optional meet and one touch warm ups are necessary.

**Awards** – if the organization running the meet is on the ball you may only have to wait five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out. It has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. Once they are prepared it can take from fifteen minutes to half an hour to hand out the awards.

## **Team Leotards/Warm-Ups**

We keep leotards for 2 years – ordering in 2024, 2026, etc for Xcel & ordering in 2023, 2025, etc for Developmental Team.

Xcel Warm-Ups we usually keep at least 4 years – we will be keeping this one until at least 2023. No names on chest so they can resell when they grow out of them – please write name on tags inside. We also do a Team Bag order in the fall.

## **Fundraising Opportunities**

We do 3 fundraisers every year: Cookie Dough Fundraiser, Cake Roll Fundraiser, and the Butter braid Fundraiser. Profit goes into TNT personal account for your child to use for tuition, competition fees, etc.

Fundraisers do not benefit TNT as a club these are at your disposal to raise funds for your personal account to use towards competition expenses, tuition, leotards/warm-ups, etc. There will be no refunds issued to you for funds raised if you happen to leave the program.

## **Team Selection Criteria for Meets**

All gymnasts do not go to every meet. Meets should be a positive experience and therefore gymnast selection is made very carefully. Coaches make the decision on who competes based on the following criteria. Some are just for Xcel or just for the Developmental Team. Bronze is also limited to only a few

meet options. We require all Xcel Gymnasts to compete in AT LEAST 2 competitions prior to the Xcel State Meet AND the Xcel State Meet. The Developmental Optional Team is encouraged to attend as many meets as possible. The Compulsory Level Team will attend competitions as needed.

## **Moving from Level to Level**

The final decision of placement rests solely with the coaching staff. You trust us with your child everyday they walk in the gym. Trust that we will do what is in their best interest.

Moving up from one level to the next is decided by the coaching staff based upon scores from the meet season, attendance at workouts, skill level, and the attitude of the gymnast. This decision will be made in the best interest of the child. As a gymnast moves up, her responsibility to workout and to participate in scheduled meets increases. A gymnast is not guaranteed, nor required to move up a level every season. It is VERY common for a gymnast to compete at a level for a few years.

Although one criterion used to advance gymnasts from one level to the next is meet scores, the scores alone does not qualify them to move to the next level. The gymnast needs the skills and confidence in practice as well.

## **Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts**

The following guidelines will help each gymnast make competition a fun and successful experience.

- Be friendly and use sportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- Everybody has a unique way of experiencing gymnastics competition. Some people look for the fun in the experience; others are simply hoping to cope with their fears, while others are focused to the point of excluding everything else around them – including you! At times this may make it seem difficult to be friendly with some gymnasts at a meet. Just remember, everyone is doing the best they are capable of at that moment.
- Stay focused on the competition.
- Before leaving the competition, notify the head coach. You should always be accompanied by another team member or coach when leaving the competition floor.
- There is absolutely no reason for you to be on any piece of gymnastics equipment unless you are warming up or currently competing.
- If you are staying to watch another teammate compete, or you have arrived early for warm ups, stay seated in the bleachers do not to wander out onto the competition floor.
- Competing gymnasts must stay in their rotation group sitting quietly until the last competitor has finished. Gymnasts are **NOT** dismissed until the last athlete is done competing in the whole meet. Encourage your athlete to be respectful of the other's efforts by watching them and applauding their efforts.
- Gym bags, warm up suits, grips, and any other stuff you brought with you should be placed inside your gym bag and kept near you or under your chair.
- Hair must be up and out of the face for competition.
- No undergarments should be visible.

## ***Win, Lose, or Wipeout***

It is important to remember that a score for any routine is an evaluation of one single performance in your career as a gymnast, not a label you must live up to (*i.e. winning the all around this time means you must*

*win it every time*). Each meet teaches you more about your abilities as a gymnast, competitor, and human being, and are necessary ingredients for success at higher levels of competition and life in general.

## Meet Etiquette for Parents

1. Team Spirit is a big help.... Wear the team colors, or better yet one of our TNT T-shirts.
2. Remember, your gymnast is part of the TNT team. She competes not only for herself but also her teammates, parents, coaches, and TNT.
3. Please show proper respect to all Officials and Coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason, to support your child's interest in gymnastics. **Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keepers, etc.)** If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you must contact your coach. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the Meet Director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.
4. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You **NEVER KNOW** who is sitting near you (I.E. parents of the gymnast you just made a remark about).
5. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to talk or wonder back and forth to their parents until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with FOCUS. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach's job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and teach her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms her down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps her up and motivates her to do her best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be over-confident. A terrible bar routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on her coach's advice, not distractions from off the competitive floor. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, talk to the coach after you have returned to the gym and you have had time to reflect.
6. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator's area. This also includes other relatives and friends. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet, by the meet director or her coach, if a parent is in the competitor's area.
7. **DO NOT** coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnast's focus away from the coach's technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences.
8. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera in advance. Many cameras come with an automatic flash that will go off if it detects low light levels. If you cannot manually disable this device, please do not take pictures during the competition.

## Expectations

Problems occur when a parent expects too much from an athlete who is new to the competitive arena. (*New is defined as having only competed for two or three years.*) It takes a number of years of quality competition for a gymnast to develop the poise and grace to continuously take top honors in a gymnastics competition.

The key is to recognize when your child is working up to her potential. If she completes all her skills for the first time, without a fall, that is a winning routine regardless of what score she receives. Winning isn't just about coming in first. Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what she can do better, that would lessen the effect of this "victory" for her. The week after the meet your daughter's coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate her on the elements she competed correctly.

Any score she receives during a competition is no reflection on you as a parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Everyone has good days and bad days, and it is how she learns to react to them that contributes to her development as a competitor and as a person.

Remember always that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

**Other FUN perk – Yearly End of Season Summer Team Banquet/GALA where the girls dress to the NINES and have a fun time celebrating...dinner/DJ/awards/dancing.**

**Communication is key! If you have questions or concerns please come to us directly versus reaching out to other sources of information.**

**E-MAIL IS THE BEST/QUICKEST form of communication – I try to respond within 1-2 days, unless it's a holiday, session sign up, etc.**

**E-Mail: [tntgymwi@gmail.com](mailto:tntgymwi@gmail.com)**

**Danielle Mueller, Gym Manager will be responding to e-mails/billing questions/class schedule changes/all questions gymnastics related**

**Website: [www.tntgymnasticswi.com](http://www.tntgymnasticswi.com) → All team classes & info can be found under the "Team" page.**

**Facebook Page: @TNTGymnasticsWI**

**TNT Team Parent Facebook Group: TNT Gymnastic Team Parents Group Instagram:**

**@tntgymnasticswi**

**Phone: (608) 279-9913**