

STARS & STRIPES TEAM NEWS

September 2023



Back to school transition:

These first few months back to school are tough as the kids transition back to reality of gymnastics AND academics; additionally, with the meet season being just around the corner it is crunch time, possibly adding stress for athletes. Emotions are high and the athletes are exhausted by the end of the week. Learning the discipline of managing a challenging schedule and thriving through the "grind" is definitely a skill the athletes are learning and can continue to improve upon by pushing through the tired, hard days... **THAT IS WHEN ATHLETES GROW AND GET STRONGER BOTH MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY.**

The bold letters were necessary because without conquering the hard times athletes will **NEVER** truly learn what they are capable of and gain the confidence to face challenge after challenge (in this sport and beyond). Our coaching philosophy is very intuitive, as we realize this time is challenging and have compassion for the athletes. We recognize the need for some lenience to a certain extent, and it is provided; however, we also have a responsibility to prepare these young ladies with the necessary tools required to be successful in the sport. We know there is a need for balancing when to push and when to pull back. This is **GO** time.

WORD OF THE MONTH:

LEADERSHIP

Inspiring people to come together & take action towards a common goal.

PRACTICE CHANGES:

OCTOBER

- NO PRACTICE for LEVEL 3 Saturday
October 21st: Fun Meet
- NO PRACTICE for ALL LEVELS Tuesday
October 31st: Halloween

Team Calendar & Parent Information

Parent information is emailed and also posted on the competitive team page of the Stars & Stripes website. Additionally, on the team page there is a button for the team calendar. The school-year schedule is posted on the calendar but it does not yet reflect holidays, gym closings, 1/2 days of school, etc. The calendar will be completely updated by the end of August.

STARS & STRIPES TEAM NEWS



2023-2024 Competition Schedule

The competition schedules are attached to this newsletter for all teams.

Uniform Packages

Thank you for helping with sizing your athlete last month!

XCEL: You will receive your whole uniform package late November/early December.

DEVELOPMENTAL: You will receive your entire uniform package by end of December.

PRE TEAM: You will receive your leotard for the first October fun meet. Level 3 and Xcel Bronze will receive their entire uniform package by the end of December.

BETSY BOOTCAMP:

Monthly Nutrition

Each month the team newsletter contains nutritional tips, recipes and valuable information from sports nutritionist Betsy McNally Laouar – the best part, all of the information is specific to gymnasts!

This month focuses on pre season training and how to properly fuel your body from morning til night. This newsletter will give your tools to energize this pre season.

New Routines

XCEL SILVER & UP AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM

New Level 4 gymnasts will learn their new routines. The process of learning the routines will take approximately 4-6 weeks. It is expected that it will take another 6-10 weeks to really fine-tune and perfect the routines (for competition).

New level 5 gymnasts will begin learning their routines early fall, there are not many changes from level 4 to level 5 so we don't need as much time to make these adjustments.

Optional level athletes (level 7 and above) and Xcel Silver/Gold/Platinum receive a new floor routines every 2 years. Floor routine choreography usually takes place between late August and late October.

MINDSET MATTERS

When faced with challenges a productive mindset is key, PERSISTENCE is a key attribute to maintaining a productive mindset.

Persistence: The determination to keep going even when faced with challenges or initial failure.

*Learning to stick with it, gratification will not be instant - there is a process to learning a skill, gymnasts will learn patience and following through.

*Persistence turns into progress - progress leads to pride, joy and fulfillment teaching athletes the benefit of being persistent.



COMPETITION SCHEDULE



DEVELOPMENTAL TEAM 2023-2024

Dates	Competition	Location	Levels Attending
January 12 th -14 th	Battle of Champions	Glass City Center 401 Jefferson Ave. Toledo, OH	Level 4 through 7
January 19 th -21 st	Wolverine Classic	American 1 Credit Union Event Center Jackson, MI	Level 4 through 7
January 26 th -28 th	Athlete Warrior	Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center Warren, MI	Level 4 through 7
February 9 th -11 th	Grand Rapids Classic	MSA Sports Spot Grand Rapids, MI	Level 4 through 7
February 16 th - 18 th	Elevate the Stage	Huntington Center Arena Toledo, OH	Level 4 through 7
February 22 nd -25 th	Drop it Like it's Hot with Katelyn Ohashi	Lansing Center Lansing, MI	Level 4 through 7
March 9 th -10 th	Level 4 & 5 State Championships	TBD	Level 4 & 5
March 23 rd -24 th	Level 7 State Championships	Kellogg Arena Battle Creek, MI	Level 7
April 19 th -21 st	Level 7 Regional Championships	TBD	Level 7

**schedule subject to change*

EXACT DAYS & TIMES:

The exact date and times for competitions will be provided by the competition host club approximately 10-14 days before the competition weekend. Once we receive this information we will send it out via email.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE



XCEL TEAM 2023-2024

Dates	Competition	Location	Levels Attending
December 8 th -10 th	MEGA Magic Classic	High Velocity Sports Canton, MI	Xcel Silver, Gold & Platinum
January 12 th -14 th	Battle of Champions *Optional Travel Meet*	Glass City Center 401 Jefferson Ave. Toledo, OH	Xcel Silver, Gold & Platinum
January 26 th -28 th	Athlete Warrior	Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center Warren, MI	Xcel Silver, Gold & Platinum
February 9 th -11 th	Grand Rapids Classic	MSA Sports Spot Grand Rapids, MI	Xcel Silver, Gold & Platinum
February 22 nd -25 th	Drop it Like it's Hot with Katelyn Ohashi	Lansing Center Lansing, MI	Xcel Silver, Gold & Platinum
March 2 nd – 3 rd	Xcel Silver State Championships	TBD	Xcel Silver
March 16 th -17 th	Xcel Platinum State Championships	TBD	Xcel Platinum
March 23 rd – 24 th	Xcel Gold State Championships	Kellogg Arena Battle Creek, MI	Xcel Gold
April 26 th - 28 th	Xcel Regional Championships	TBD	Xcel Gold & Platinum

**schedule subject to change*

XCEL TRAVEL MEET: Battle of Champions: Location – Glass City Center Toledo, OH

This is an optional, additional meet for Xcel team members. Please register by October 1st, however your account will not be charged until Nov. 1st. The additional cost is \$189, register online (listed under special events 2023) or through our business office.

PRE TEAM COMPETITION SCHEDULE 2023-2024



HOT SHOTS, HOT SHOTS 1, HOT SHOTS 2, LEVEL 3 & XCEL BRONZE

Dates	Competition	Location	Levels Attending
October 21 st	In House Fun Meet	Stars & Stripes Athletics	All Hot Shots levels, level 3 & Xcel Bronze
December 2 nd -3 rd	Jingle Bell Rock Holiday Performance	Stars & Stripes Athletics	All Hot Shots levels, level 3 & Xcel Bronze
January 26 th -28 th	Athlete Warrior (Travel Fun Meet)	Macomb Community College	Level 3 & Xcel Bronze
February 3 rd	In House Fun Meet	Stars & Stripes Athletics	All Hot Shots levels, level 3 & Xcel Bronze
*March 15 th -17 th	Level 3 & Xcel Bronze Fun State Meet (Travel Fun Meet)	TBD	Level 3 & Xcel Bronze
*March 24 th	The Flipping Flamingos Fun Meet (Travel Fun Meet)	Gym America Ann Arbor, MI	Level 3 & Xcel Bronze
May 18 th	In House Fun Meet	Stars & Stripes Athletics	All Hot Shots levels, level 3 & Xcel Bronze

**schedule subject to change*

EXACT DAYS & TIMES: TRAVEL FUN MEETS

The exact date and times for travel fun meets (level 3 and Xcel Bronze only) will be provided by the competition host club approximately 10-14 days before the competition weekend. Once we receive this information we will send out an email.

*March Travel Fun Meet: We are still waiting on the location for the Level 3 & Xcel Bronze Fun State meet. Once that is determined we will have a finalized second travel meet for level 3 & Xcel Bronze. We try to keep our travel fun meets within reasonable driving distance. NOTE we are either doing the Level 3 & Xcel Bronze Fun State meet or The Flipping Flamingos Fun meet, NOT both.

Fun Meet

OCTOBER 21ST

AT STARS & STRIPES



LEVEL 3 & XCEL BRONZE AT 12:30PM
HOT SHOTS & HOT SHOTS 2 AT 1:30PM
HOT SHOTS 1 AT 2:30PM

Each fun meet will last approximately 30-60 minutes. The gymnasts will showcase their skills on all 4 events and receive an award at the end of their performance.

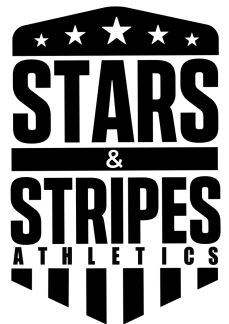
ARRIVAL

Please have your gymnast arrive **15 minutes** prior to their start time.

Upon arrival, gymnasts and spectators need to enter through the middle door of the building.

The athletes will get checked in and the spectators can find seating.

Athletes should wear their 2023-24 team leotard and scrunchie with their hair in a bun for the fun meet.





POWERFUL WORDS

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

PARENTS PERCH

Young students: "When I know the way, I go the way, and show the way to others!"

Older students/teens/adults: "Inspiring people to come together & take action towards a common goal."

- Week 1** Leadership defined: What a leader is, does, and the kind we want to be
- Week 2** Leadership Skills: Listening and communicating effectively
- Week 3** Leadership Skills: Group goals, taking initiative & recognizing strengths
- Week 4** Leadership Skills: Making powerful choices and taking responsibility

Dear Family,

The Powerful Word of the month is "leadership."

John Maxwell said; "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." Leaders set a great example and inspire others to work towards a common goal. Most of us want our children to become leaders. We want them to take healthy risks, go after goals and inspire others to do the same.

During tough times, such as wars, tragedies, emergencies and as you likely remember all too well, pandemics, we see examples of great leadership and poor leadership. Strong leaders help to address the concerns of their constituents or members while remaining calm, level-headed, curious, empathetic and collaborative. Powerful leaders put their character into action and use it to motivate others to stay on course. Leaders serve as models and provide a "playbook" as our children become leaders themselves.

People who are effective leaders recognize and pool the strengths of the group. They encourage people to use their gifts rather than taking over or micromanaging. Leaders know they can't "wear all the hats" and also know which team players are best for each task! They share the rewards and are grateful for every person's unique contribution.

Leadership skills must be exercised like a muscle. Such skills help kids by:

- Boosting self-esteem
- Improving public speaking
- Enhancing communication skills
- Identifying their strengths
- Improving on weaknesses
- Developing organizational skills
- Teaching collaboration skills

Baylor University's Karon LeCompte, Ph.D., a leadership expert, explains that there are three learning skills that translate into skills for developing young leaders – multitasking (thinking simultaneously about goal attainment and the issue they are

solving) coordinating different senses (watching & adjusting to the dynamics of people around them) and developing competency (sharpening the skills they do well & those they want to improve upon). We must encourage our children to think of ways they could improve their community, use their voice for good and lead others. Now is a perfect time to start!

We thank you for your support. You are pivotal in helping to make our school one of the best personal development centers in the world.

Here's to your success!

Best Regards,

—Your Motivated and Dedicated Instructors

UPCOMING POWERFUL WORDS

- OCTOBER** TRUSTWORTHINESS
- NOVEMBER** RESPECT
- DECEMBER** GENEROSITY

BETSY BOOTCAMP

September Nutrition News

Endurance Is the Name of the game!

It's September, which means it's THE PRE-SEASON, time to build endurance for those routines and also fuel the body from morning til evening!!! You need endurance to make it through not only your regular school day and activities but also a full practice, plus homework afterwards. The brain and body are acting in OVERTIME. With added pressure of back to school, energy can be low...so how do we do this? This newsletter will give you the tools to energize this pre-season!



THE VITAMINS AND MINERALS ESSENTIAL FOR ENDURANCE AND ENERGY



When we talk about energy, we definitely, obviously want to focus on complex carbs, protein, healthy fat, and lots of water, but within those foods hide some amazing minerals that are essential for energy production, repair and helping you to build cardiovascular and muscle endurance for the long practices that await you after school.

Here are the vitamins and minerals that you need to know about!

1. POTASSIUM

This mineral regulates normal muscle contractions, water balance and calms cramping aches in recovery. Longer periods in the gym coupled with heat put gymnasts at risk for cramps. Eat your bananas, AND...potatoes, avocados, seeds and beans!

2. MAGNESIUM

Best mineral for muscle, nerve and brain connections, putting your muscles and your brains at work in HARMONY, together will yield the best results for a gymnast, especially after a long day at school! Popeye loved his spinach and so should you! (Pumpkin seeds are also a gymnast favorite.

3. ZINC

An essential minerals that helps with muscle and wound repair as well as cell immunity- zinc also helps energy metabolism and converting your food into energy-also great for bone health! If you like shellfish and nuts, you are in luck! If you don't, whole grains and mushrooms pack a good amount of zinc!

THE VITAMINS AND MINERALS ESSENTIAL FOR ENDURANCE AND ENERGY



4. IRON

This chemical element helps promote proper blood flow and oxygen through the body- it increases cardiovascular output (important for that last tumbling pass!) Lack of iron can lead to extreme fatigue, weakness and even shortness of breath! Iron is also essential for cognitive performance! Strong heart and strong brain=Strong Gymnast! Beans anyone??

5. FOLATE

This mineral is important for helping cells that are constantly being maxed out!! Cell repair and oxidative stress happen with both endurance and muscle endurance athletes (gymnasts). Keep cells strong and functional with adequate folate, for tissue repair, growth and muscle maintenance. Folate (found in a TON of green foods) is essential for an athlete training consistently- that would be a competitive gymnast, right? Get your dark leafy greens ready! If it's GREEN it's GOOD!

6. VITAMIN B6 AND B12

B vitamins are essential for metabolizing energy and staving off early fatigue. Keep in mind B12 can only be found in animal products so ask your Dr. about supplementation if you are vegan or vegetarian. If low in energy check if you are eating enough B12 dense foods: milk, Greek yogurt, fish, organ meats, egg yolks, fortified milks and cereals.

7. CALCIUM

The bone mineral! Gymnastics is a stress sport on the bones and joints and most can go for hours and hours! Calcium is essential for building bone strength, structure, density and growth. While you are building your endurance keep in mind you need a good amount of vitamin D for your bones to absorb calcium so.....

THE VITAMINS AND MINERALS ESSENTIAL FOR ENDURANCE AND ENERGY

8. Vitamin D: “Hard-to-get” vitamin D is essential for building immunity so you can attend each practice with full energy! So, if you want to go for long periods of time in gymnastics you need D for muscle endurance and function. D also is important for strong bones. Some research suggests Vitamin D may play a role in supporting mitochondrial function- the “powerhouses” of our cells that produce energy. Get 20 minutes of sun each day or get your serving of cheese, milk, eggs, mushrooms, fatty fish (sardines are my fave!)



9. Antioxidants: Many vitamins and minerals fall into this category, specifically vitamins C, polyphenols, tannins, anocycathins, lycopene, beta carotene, flavonoids and ALA acids. Antioxidants provide anti-inflammatory compounds that support wound healing, immunity, and collagen synthesis. These powerhouses stave off oxidative stress that rob us of energy and repair! When looking for foods with antioxidants, think COLOR: Rich purple, blues, oranges, yellow and red fruits and veggies! My favorites are pomegranates, blueberries, kale, eggplant, peppers and citrus.

11 FOODS THAT GIVE GYMNAST'S ENDURANCE AND POWER!!

1) Beets- drinking beet juice can help as it is rich in nitrates that raise nitric oxide in blood and is lined to energy and stamina! Rich in B Vitamins to keep you goin!



7) Asparagus: Rich in folate, water dense- If it's green it's good! Packed with immunity boosting antioxidants and vitamin K for blood flow.

2) Bananas: B6 potassium fiber- great source of natural electrolytes



8) Coconut Oil: An MCT oil! Coconut oil is burned instead of stored ! Anti-fungal and antibacterial, can be used on skin as well as eaten!

3) Oatmeal: fiber complex carbs and protein and B vitamins- this energy source will keep you going for many hours!



9) Sardines: Loaded with B vitamins (remember B 12 is only found in animals) iron, zinc, protein, healthy fat, vitamin D. Honestly, you can NOT BEAT sardines for energy for an athlete, also amazing for brain health, bone health, overall tissue repair, blood flow/inflammation! An athlete's perfect food!

4) Chia Seeds :extremely nutrient dense, healthy fat fiber, b vitamins and Iron

10) Peas: Packed with folate, vitamin C, protein, zinc and a plethora of antioxidants.

5) Cherries: Antioxidants, anti-inflammatory- healing



11) Dark Chocolate- Saving the best for last! Magnesium anyone? Keep those muscles working overtime with a mid workout snack of dark chocolate covered raisins! YUM

6) Seeds: ANY! Betsy Bootcamp loves seeds. Especially pumpkin and sunflower for magnesium boosts and B vitamins!





WANT TO AVOID FATIGUE???

Stay Hydrated: A lot of gymnast fatigue is not directly related to food, per say. Often times gymnasts are simply dehydrated. Instead of grabbing a sports drink go for regular water or drink coconut water to rebalance electrolytes

Avoid Processed foods= no vitamins, no energy and no repair!
Nutrients, vitamins and minerals plus antioxidants help the body make your food into energy, so be sure to repair your muscles and keep your cells strong!
Processed foods are lacking in many of the vitamins, minerals and nutrients that do these wonderful things for your body!

Keep Blood Sugar Stable and Avoid Excessive Sodium: Processed foods and refined grains can cause rapid spikes in blood sugar levels, this leads to a quick release of insulin to lower blood sugar which can result in a crash of energy levels, making you "BONK" or totally lose all your energy! Too much sodium and refined sugars will drain your energy and recovery will stall as well. Be sure to (As I always say,,,) Eat like a cave girl! Keep foods

IN ADDITION: "NON- FOOD ESSENTIALS

Adequate Rest and Sleep: Getting enough quality sleep allows the body to recover and repair itself. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night, especially during periods of intense training.

Stress Management: High stress levels can contribute to fatigue. Practice stress-reduction techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, or mindfulness to help manage stress.

Massage Recovery: Regular massages, foam rolling, and other recovery techniques can help improve circulation, reduce muscle tension, and promote recovery.

Energy Boosting Recipe of the Month:

LENNY'S SARDINE PATTIES

I love sardines for gymnasts. For many reasons, but the main one being the amazing amount of omega fatty acids for brain health. Everyone knows that gymnastics is a very technical sport. The more brain foods we can get into our athlete's bodies, the better! I also love the both calcium and vitamin d for bone health and the large amount of protein in each serving of sardines. Your kids may pinch their nose, but even Lenny our autistic child with food aversions loves this recipe! Hence the name~

For this recipe you can use your hands (gloves if you want to) or a Kitchen Aid electric mixer with the flat flex edge attachment ONLY. You will also need a frying pan.

Makes Three Servings

Ingredients:

Two 3.75 ounce tins of sardines with no bones, soaked in olive oil (there will be three inside)

1 egg

1/2 teaspoon onion powder

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

NO SALT!

Black Pepper to taste

A pinch of cayenne pepper

1 tablespoon chopped parsley

1 Tablespoon of powdered parmesan cheese

2 Tablespoons fresh tomato sauce

3 Tablespoons of coconut oil

Lemon juice to taste or fresh tomatoes slices or salsa



Drain the oil from the sardines well.

Place the sardines in a bowl first. Then add ALL of the ingredients into the bowl except the coconut oil and lemon juice. The oil is for the pan to cook the patties.

Thoroughly mix everything in the bowl, mashing and mixing all ingredients together.

The sardines will break apart and are very fragile. Do this for three minutes.

If using the electric mixer mix for three minutes as well.

Divide the mix into small balls about the size of ping pong balls. Place them on a plate. Add the coconut oil to your pan over medium heat.

When warm, delicately place the balls in the pan. Let them cook three minutes and then delicately, slowly flip the ball without breaking it. When it flips over press down with the fork and push into a patty. Cook for three more minutes. If you would like the patty more crusty you can cook longer.

Remove your patties with a spatula and or fork. PLEASE NOTE DO NOT EVER ADD SALT TO THIS RECIPE! You can eat this with an arugula, endive or green salad and a squeeze of lemon juice or fresh tomatoes or salsa.

Message From Coach Betsy:



I love September! It's a great "reset" for goals heading into the pre-season. I want to encourage everyone to take that extra little effort this month to PREPARE your food, and eat/snack on energy dense, water dense food! Nutrition is the FIFTH EVENT in gymnastics. The more you practice it, the better your endurance, strength and ultimately, routines will be! Practice makes perfect, it may take you some time to get back into the swing of things in September, but you will thank yourself later when you have some rocking' practices where everything comes together perfectly! You got this!

Betsy