HOW TO
START AN
Xcel PROGRAM

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ADDING AN XCEL PROGRAM TO A CURRENT PROGRAM

Whether adding Xcel to your current program or deciding to run an Xcel only gym, identifying athletes who may be good candidates is the first step in developing an Xcel competitive program. Recreational athletes who show passion for the sport, high school gymnasts who have a limited season, and current or former Junior Olympic team athletes that are considering a different level of commitment provide a perfect pool of athletes for an Xcel Program.

The perfect place to find athletes that may feed into the Xcel Bronze or Silver divisions is your recreational program. High school team participants and former Junior Olympic competitive athletes may be ready to enter into the Gold, Platinum or Diamond divisions. In order to keep communication clear for everyone involved, it is important to set expectations for participation before choosing the athletes or having tryouts. Practice times, participation costs (tuition and competition), and competitive requirements should be clearly stated.

There are options for organizing Xcel practices. The optimal schedule depends on the specifics of your gym space and staffing. For example, workouts can be blended with your current Junior Olympic team to take advantage of existing coaching expertise. This format may also offer an aspiring recreational teacher the mentoring required to be a future Xcel team coach. In contrast, stand-alone Xcel team practices may be a better option for your particular gym.

WHY ADD AN XCEL PROGRAM?

It's fun! Xcel brings competitive gymnastics to gymnasts in a program that embraces all skill levels – beginner through advanced. It is a personalized competitive program starting at the first entry division.

Have you had students "drop out" for a session (or longer) to play another sport or to participate in a school activity/club? So many students want to experience competing on a team. Other programs (schools, city recreation departments, YMCA's, etc.) have provided team opportunities for students of all levels for years. With Xcel, you can offer that team experience to many of your students.

Xcel offers three different entry divisions, allowing you to place students appropriately based on their skills and gymnastics experience. In addition, there is flexibility in choos-

ing skills to fulfill the event requirements from the beginner division through the most advanced division. Emphasis is on execution, not difficulty, giving the gymnast the ability to perform the skills she does best. Even a brand new beginner Bronze could have her own personal Floor routine! What could be more fun and special?! By personalizing routines and skill choices, athletes may require fewer workout hours and will remain competitive. With a less demanding workout schedule, a gymnast may have time other activities and will not have to make that "all or nothing" decision between activities.

As your gymnasts' skills progress, the Xcel Code of Points continues to offer a wide range of challenging advanced level skills to work and to incorporate into their routines.

WHO IS XCEL FOR?

The Xcel Program is designed to offer a broad-based, affordable competitive experience outside the traditional Jr. Olympic Program to attract and retain a diverse group of athletes.

Xcel is a great program for gymnasts that:

- Are a variety of levels, abilities, ages and commitment levels and want to enjoy all the benefits that gymnastics has to offer while having more flexibility than the Junior Olympic program.
- Have a passion for gymnastics and want to stay involved in the sport for the long term, while not striving for the goal of being a Level 10 or elite gymnast.
- Cannot be in the gym the number of hours that the Junior Olympic program requires because of other activities or sports but still want to be a competitive or non-competitive gymnast.
- Have fears of skills that the Junior Olympic and Compulsory programs require them to have. In Xcel, requirements are more flexible.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Now that you have decided to introduce an Xcel program into your club, it is important to know where to go to find crucial information on the rules and policies of this program.

1. Visit the USA Gymnastics web site at **www.usagym.org**.
    a. Click on the word WOMEN on the top menu bar. This will take you to a page for the Women's Program
    b. Click Xcel Program on the left side menu bar.

c. Click on "Xcel Program Overview" to review and learn about the Xcel Program.

d. Click on "Xcel Updates" to review and learn of the recent updates made in the Xcel Program.

e. Print the "2013-2017 Rule Charts Revised Pages". This document includes the main principles surrounding the rules for the Xcel program, i.e, special requirements on each event in each division of competition. This will enable you to put together quality routines for your gymnasts.

f. Order the Xcel Code of Points. This reference book will give you a list (with pictures) of the skills that you may use to fulfill these special requirements.

2. The National governing body of USA Gymnastics determines the rules of competition for the Xcel Program. Some rules are written at the National level, some are written at the regional level, and some are written at the state level. Check with your state's administrative committee (SAC) for when the Xcel season takes place and how the competition schedule works in your state.

3. Download the USA Gymnastics Women's Rules and Policies at **https://usagym.org/pages/women/pages/rules_policies.html**. This manual provides information on, to name a few, Xcel competition policies and procedures, entry and mobility procedures, membership credentialing requirements, sanctioned event requirements, and apparatus requirements.

4. It is required that you are a USA Gymnastics Women's professional member in good standing to coach on the floor at USA Gymnastics sanctioned competitions. Two online courses are required for membership. "Safety and Risk Management" and "Fundamentals of Gymnastics Instruction". To find these courses, go to the USA Gymnastics web site – **www.usagym.org**. Click on EDUCATION on the top menu bar. The course numbers are U100 and U101. Once you have completed these two basic online courses you may apply for a Women's Professional Membership. In addition, a background check is required for membership. This screening process must be completed every two years. Visit **https://usagym.org/pages/membership/pages/info_professional.html** for more information.

EDUCATION NEEDED AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Must haves in order to be on the competitive floor at all USA Gymnastics sanctioned events:

- USA Gymnastics Professional or Junior Professional Membership
  1. Background check is required.
  2. Successful completion of online or live Safety Certification course.

- Successful completion of U100 Fundamental Gymnastics Coach Instruction

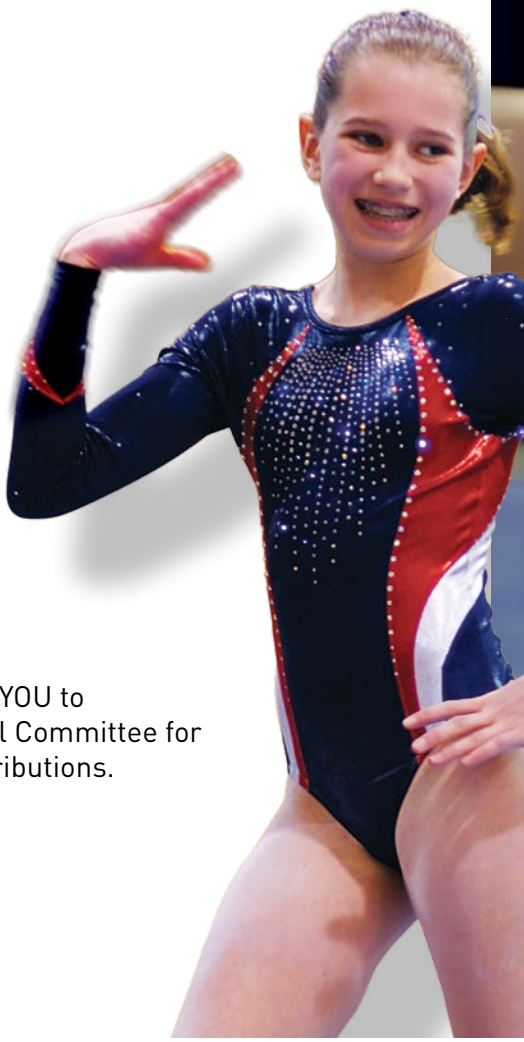
There are several live educational opportunities offered every year for members.

1. National Congress
2. Regional Congresses
3. Hands on Training Courses
4. Safety Certification Courses

There are also numerous online educational opportunities available to members.

1. USA Gymnastics University — Information on almost any topic you wish to learn about.
2. Webinars — provided monthly on various subjects

All educational information and materials may be found at **www.usagym.org**.



THANK YOU to
the National Xcel Committee for
their contributions.

MENTOR CLUBS

REGION 1

Golden Bear Gymnastics
25 Sports Lane
Berkeley, CA 94720
Contact: Leesa Berahovich
berahovich@gmail.com

Gymcats Gymnastics
440 Parkson Rd
Henderson, NV 89011
Contact: Jill Preston
jill@gymcats.com

REGION 5

Gym America
5555 Hines Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Contact: Claudia Kretschmer, Emily Bartley
734-971-1667
gymamericami@gmail.com

REGION 7

Berks East Gymnastics
Parkerford, PA
www.berkseastgymnastics.com
Contact: Mike Vanim
610-495-2214
berkseast@gmail.com

REGION 8

'Mixed programs' club —
Tampa Bay Turners
2301 26th Street N
Saint Petersburg, FL 33713
(727) 328-8500
www.tampabayturners.com
Contacts: Brad Harris, Co-Owner, Head Coach and
Colleen Barger, Co-Owner, Compulsory/Optional Coach

Xcel only' club — Gymcarolina
9321 Leesville Road
Raleigh, NC 27613
(919) 848-7988
rkgymcarolina@aol.com
www.gymcarolina.com
Contacts: Elaine Wulf, Head Coach and Beth Tessier, Owner/Director

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