



SPIRIT RULEBOOK

2026



2026 INSC RULEBOOK

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INSC CHEERLEADING AND SPIRIT FOR TACKLE AND FLAG FOOTBALL

Article I THE ORGANIZATION

The purpose of INFC Cheerleading & Spirit (herein referred to as Indian Nations Spirit Conference or INSC) is to promote and uphold team spirit among those we encounter, to develop good sportsmanship by example, and to foster good relations within the community and between teams and squads during events. The organizational goal is to work in harmony with the team management, administration, and other athletic teams and sporting organizations.

Article II INSC CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: INSC Membership

The INSC Membership will provide recommendations and assist in developing guidelines for cheerleading and spirit programs across all INFC Member Organizations. The Membership shall be made up of a representative from each INFC Member Organization.

The INSC Director will work in conjunction with the INFC Commission and serve at the discretion of the INYS leadership.

Section 2: Meetings

Meetings shall be held at the request of the INFC Commissioner, INSC Director, or at the request of any four member organizations within 14 days of such request. These meetings shall be limited to representatives of the individual member organizations or other necessary participants; however, each organization will be limited to three active participants during any meeting. Persons other than those listed above wishing to attend a meeting and/or address the membership must first have approval from a Commission Officer.

Section 3: Meeting Notice

Each organization must be notified at least 72 hours in advance of any meeting and provided with the purpose of the meeting. No conference business can be conducted unless this condition is satisfied.

Section 4: General Meeting

INSC will hold a General Conference Meeting as early as January, but no later than a week before the tackle membership meeting is held. The purpose of this meeting will be to review issues from previous years, gather suggestions for the next season, and appoint other officers and committee chairs.

Section 5: Votes

One vote per club. No proxy votes will be accepted.

Section 6: Voting Eligibility

Members may only vote on issues pertaining to the grade levels represented within their club.

Section 7: INFC Oversight

Upon completion of the voting process, the INSC Director will submit the results of the vote to the INFC Commission for final consideration and approval.

Article III DIRECTOR OF CHEER & SPIRIT

Section 1: Term

The INFC Commission shall appoint the INSC Director for a one-year term.

Section 2: Qualifications

The INSC Director must have been an active member of INSC the previous year, with at least 75% attendance.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Tackle Club Affiliation

To be a member of a cheer club within the Indian Nations Football Conference, the cheer or spirit club must enter the conference through a tackle club member of the INFC.

Section 2: Membership Agreement

A cheer or spirit club that is a member of the INFC may not participate in another conference or league. Each cheer or spirit club admitted into the INFC must provide in writing the structure of their organization, including the names and positions held by their officers, as well as their telephone numbers and email addresses. This information must be provided to the INSC Director and the INFC office upon admittance into the conference and annually at the beginning of each season.

Section 3: Member Removal

A Cheerleading & Spirit organization and/or its teams not in compliance with the INFC rules may be suspended by the Commissioner and the Commission or removed by majority vote of the INFC member organizations.

Article V

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Section 1: Governance

The rules governing the tackle and cheerleading/spirit programs, as well as the rules and regulations, are set by the INFC Commission Officers. The INFC Commission Officers will acknowledge and adhere to all rules and policies.

Section 2: INFC Governance

The Cheerleading & Spirit rules are an extension of the INFC football rules. All rules that are suitable or would apply shall be adhered to by all cheer or spirit clubs cheering for INFC clubs/teams. These rules and regulations will be in effect throughout the regular tackle football season and the Cheerleading & Spirit competition season.

Section 3: Commissioner

The INFC Commissioner is empowered to limit, restrict, or make changes as deemed necessary.

Section 4: Compliance

Cheer or spirit organizations must abide by all rules as set forth by INFC and INSC. Officers, coaches, and parents will be held accountable for any rule violations.

Section 5: Liability

If a Cheerleading or Spirit organization is operated separately from the tackle football program, the cheer or spirit club will be liable for all penalties assessed by the INFC Commission Officers and the INSC.

Article VI RULE VIOLATIONS

Section 1: Penalties

Violations of INFC rules will be addressed and penalties assessed by the INFC Commissioner, who will then review them with the Commission. At that time, the Commission can, by majority vote, overrule or reinforce the Commissioner's actions. The penalty or penalties assessed against an organization, parent, cheerleader/player, or coach can be one or more of the following:

- Fine
- Suspension of coaches or individuals within an organization
- Probation
- Any action deemed appropriate by the majority vote of the INFC Commission

Section 2: Inappropriate Behavior

Assaults, verbal abuse, profanity, display of poor sportsmanship, or rule violation by a coach, parent, participant, club official, or guest at an INFC function will not be tolerated. Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or the consumption of either is not allowed at an INFC event. Penalties will be dealt with accordingly.

Section 3: Ejections

A coach or cheerleader/player who has been ejected from a game will automatically be suspended for the next game. The coach, cheerleader, or player will be allowed to practice but will not be allowed to participate, except as a spectator in the stands. The INFC Commissioner, upon review, is authorized to make an exception if it is determined that such an exception is deemed appropriate. A coach or cheerleader/player may also receive a harsher penalty if considered to be warranted by the INFC Commissioner.

Section 4: Incident Reports

A club must report promptly to the Commission office any rule violation of the INFC Bylaws.

Article VII

CERTIFICATIONS AND CLINICS

Section 1: ASEP Certification

Each head coach and all members of each coaching staff will be ASEP certified in Cheerleading and Spirit and will provide proof when requested by a Commission officer. The President of each association will turn in to the INFC office a list of all coaches involved in their program, along with a copy of their ASEP card, before the first regular season game.

Section 2: Certification Exceptions

Exceptions to ASEP certification would be:

- OSSAA School Certified Coaches
- USA Cheer

Section 3: Coach Passes

Coaches who have registered in Sportabase and have completed their ASEP certification or equivalent certification (e.g., high school certification) will be issued a Coach Pass. The number of coach passes distributed will be determined by the conference.

All coaches on the sideline must wear the current year's INFC Coach Pass on a lanyard around their neck.

Section 4: Sideline Requirements

The head coach is responsible for their sideline. If a sideline coach is not wearing the Coach Pass, the coach in question will be removed from the sideline and prohibited from coaching. The head coach and the coach in violation will both be subject to suspension from practices and/or games.

Section 5: Sideline Personnel

The number of non-player personnel on each cheer squad's sideline shall not exceed a total of three (3). These three (3) include the coach and two assistant coaches.

Section 6: Coach Meetings

One coach from each team must attend the mandatory coach meeting. Failure to comply will result in a \$200.00 team fine. All performances will be suspended until the fine is paid to INFC. Individuals caught attempting to falsify attendance for another coach will be suspended for the season.

Article VIII GENERAL COACHES RULES

Section 1: Objectives

A child's health and well-being are the primary objectives for any coach.

Section 2: Coaching Age

For safety and liability purposes, INSC requires a coach to be 18 years of age or older. (A coach refers to the adult responsible for the squad.)

Section 3: Rule Compliance

A coach will adhere to all rules and regulations as set forth by their organization and the INFC.

Section 4: Coach Presence

An ASEP-certified adult must be present at all practices, games, and competitions.

Section 5: Coach Behavior

A coach will not be permitted to use profanity or abusive language; use alcohol or tobacco of any kind; or conduct themselves in a manner that could be deemed offensive. This rule applies to all practices, games, and functions involving the cheer squad while representing your club and INFC.

Section 6: Incident Notification

If a problem or situation arises with another INSC organization, the INSC Director and/or INFC Commissioner must be notified immediately.

Section 7: Resolution Policy

If a problem or situation arises within the Cheerleading & Spirit squad, the coach is expected to resolve any grievance. If a solution is not reached, the coaches are expected to direct the grievance to their organization. If the grievance remains unresolved, the INSC Director shall be notified. Finally, the INFC Commissioner shall be notified of the grievance if it remains unresolved after the above channels have been followed. This only applies to INSC rule violations.

Section 8: Prohibited Cheering

No degrading or negative cheering or chanting towards another squad will be permitted.

Section 9: Conduct Responsibility

Each cheer club will be responsible for the conduct of all its coaches. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their parents.

Article IX PARTICIPATION RULES

Section 1: Participation

INSC prohibits cheerleading and spirit tryouts of any type. Every participant who completes registration requirements with an organization shall be allowed to participate on a cheer squad. This rule applies to both recreational and competitive squads.

Section 2: Registration Dates

Each organization is required to define its cheerleading and spirit registration dates by advertising the beginning and ending dates. Every participant must be accepted by the registration deadline. It is strongly recommended that the advertisement be kept for verification should the need arise.

Section 3: Violation of Participation

Violation of the participation rule will be dealt with severely by the INFC Commission and may result in the removal of all persons involved. All coaches, assistant coaches, and squads are required to attend all INFC regular season and postseason games scheduled for their respective clubs. Attendance at pre-season games or scrimmages is at the discretion of the Club Cheer Director.

Section 4: Parent Responsibilities

Every parent will read and sign a Parent's Code of Ethics before any participation. It will be the responsibility of the cheer club to have the signed documents on file.

Article X PRACTICE AND MEMBER CONDUCT REGULATIONS

Section 1: Practices

Program	Grade	Maximum Days per Week	Maximum Practice Length
Tackle	Mighty Mite	3	1 ½ hours
Tackle	3rd-4th	3	2 hours
Tackle	5th-7th	4	2 hours
Flag	K-2nd	2	1 hour
Flag	3rd-5th	2	1 ½ hours

These are maximum practice limits. An organization may establish shorter practice times.

Section 2: Member Conduct

Members are expected to conduct themselves with utmost respect at organized practices, games, or any function representing their respective club and/or INSC, toward other teammates, coaches, and competing teams. If a member is ejected from an INFC event, the club is to notify INFC immediately.

Section 3: Practice Dates

Organized practice will not begin until two weeks before the set start date for INFC Tackle Football.

Article XI STUNT REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Section 1: Stunting Requirements

No stunting is allowed without a coach present. This applies to all practices, games, competitions, and any function where the squad is practicing or performing. Because of the increased athleticism of today's cheerleaders and the complexity of some stunts performed, there is a risk, as in any athletic sport, of serious injury. INSC strongly encourages all cheer clubs to provide instruction on stunting for all coaches from a stunting professional, prior to a squad being permitted to stunt, to reduce the risk(s) involved.

Section 2: Weather Conditions

ABSOLUTELY NO stunting or tumbling in wet conditions. Wet conditions include dew on grass, rain, and/or drizzling weather.

Section 3: Spotter Requirements

Any stunt above shoulder level requires a spotter at all times, as per INSC guidelines.

Section 4: Stunting Guidelines

All stunts must comply with INSC Stunting Guidelines. Each organization is required to define stunt eligibility for each grade level.

All clubs must provide a copy of their stunt guidelines to the INSC office before practicing or performing stunts. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a fine, suspension of the cheer squad, and/or any action deemed appropriate by the INFC Commission Officers.

Section 5: Stunt Consent

The INSC strongly advises that each organization obtain parent consent before teaching and/or performing any stunting.

Section 6: Stunting Violations

Due to the dangers involved with stunting, any violation of stunt rules will result in immediate and severe disciplinary action by INSC.

***** GOLDEN RULE: WHEN IN DOUBT - DON'T STUNT*****

INSC TACKLE CHEER STUNT GUIDELINES

	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH& UP
THIGH STAND/SHOULDER SIT	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PREP	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SINGLE LEG AT PREP LEVEL	N	N	B	Y	Y	Y
PREP TO EXTEND	N	N	B	Y	Y	Y
GROUND-UP EXTEND	N	N	N	B	Y	Y
SINGLE LEG AT EXTEND LEVEL	N	N	N	N	B	Y
BASKET TOSS (ANY)	N	N	N	N	N	N
FULL-DOWN (ANY LEVEL)	N	N	N	N	N	N
DOUBLE DOWN	N	N	N	N	N	N

Y = Approved stunt for grade level.

N = Not approved stunt. This stunt may never be attempted at the stated grade level.

B = Stunt must be BRACED by another stunt at or below prep level.

Advanced Stunts

A certified stunt coach should teach inversions, twisting, flipping, and other similar skills. Any coach wishing to teach advanced stunts not listed on the chart above should contact a USA Cheer Certified coach to be trained on how to teach advanced skills to INSC athletes. A Certification Form must be submitted to the INSC Spirit Director before teaching advanced-level skills.

INSC FLAG CHEER STUNT GUIDELINES

Flag Cheer Stunting will be limited to

- Thigh Stands only
- At or below belly button level

Article XII INFC FOOTBALL GATE

Section 1: Gate Admission

Everyone, including coaches and sponsors, will be required to pay gate admission or furnish an INFC Coach Pass. If a coach or sponsor does not have a pass, he/she will be required to pay the gate admission fee.

Section 2: False Entry

Any coach or person caught in an attempt to gain entry with a false or reproduced INFC pass, gain entry without their pass and/or refuse to pay gate admission, or caught attempting to "hand-off" an INFC pass to another individual will be ejected and subject to having their pass revoked, further suspension, and/or a fine up to \$200.00.

Article XIII HALFTIME PERFORMANCES

Section 1: Halftime Purpose

All cheer squads will be allowed to perform a halftime routine. The cheer squad has many responsibilities during the football game, including the halftime performance. Halftime is the time to motivate the crowd and get them ready for the second half.

Section 2: Halftime Requirements

Halftime is 10 minutes (15 minutes maximum, if necessary, with prior approval from your club). Guest cheerleaders or spirit squads will perform first, followed by the home cheerleaders and/or spirit squads. Home fields are only required to allow one guest performance per halftime. No field official/field representative has the authority to cancel a halftime performance without prior consent of the INFC Commissioner. ALL performances are limited to a maximum of three minutes.

Section 3: Halftime Extension

If halftime consists of a homecoming or recognition activity, the guest organization must be allowed to perform first, and all activities combined cannot exceed 15 minutes.

Article XIV MUSIC

Section 1: Press Box

Each squad MUST provide an appointed individual to be in the press box during the halftime performance. His/her responsibility will be to announce each squad member's name as well as to start and stop music for the performance. (Providing a recording of each squad member's name might be an option.)

Section 2: Equipment

Each squad must have its own equipment to play any music for a performance.

Section 3: Appropriate Media

Please keep in mind that INSC promotes a family environment; therefore, music that contains sexual references, words, and/or sounds considered inappropriate is not allowed. Dance routines that contain sexually suggestive movements are considered inappropriate and therefore not allowed.

Article XV COMPETITIONS

Section 1: Competition Rules

All tackle cheerleading and spirit coaches will adhere to the INSC Rules and Regulations when attending competitions. Insurance provided by INFC does not cover guidelines outside of our organization.

Flag Cheerleaders may not compete in competitions.

Section 2: Gameday Priority

INFC football games (season and postseason playoffs) are priority, and that obligation must be fulfilled.

Article XVI SAFETY & APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

Section 1: Safety Guidelines

Jewelry (including belly button rings), gum, or candy are not allowed during practice or games. This rule applies to all cheerleaders, coaches, and/or advisors who are actively participating in practices and games.

Section 2: Nails

Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length at practice and games to minimize the risk of injury. This rule applies to all cheerleaders, coaches, and/or advisors who are actively participating in practices and games.

Section 3: Footwear

Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.

Section 4: Gameday Responsibilities

- The coach should keep a copy of medical releases at all practices, games, competitions, or performances.
- Be mindful of the location of medics, ambulances, and other emergency services when attending out-of-town games.
- Prepare a quick and handy reference chart to keep with you, listing who on the squad might be diabetic, allergic to bee stings, asthmatic, etc. Ask your parents to inform you of the prescribed medications a cheerleader may be taking.
- Make certain the squad is properly warmed up before each practice or game. Failure to do so is one of the leading causes of injury.
- Always inspect the cheer area for debris and uneven terrain. Remove all debris from the area. Keep water bottles, bags, and other items organized and out of the cheering area.

Article XVII CHEER ETIQUETTE

Section 1: General Etiquette

It is appropriate to cheer when your team comes on the field, when your team or a player makes an exceptional play either on offense or defense, during a big defensive play, between quarters and at halftime, during timeouts, when the other team is kicking a field goal or extra point, and when your team is kicking off or punting.

Section 2: Injury Guidelines

When an injured player leaves the game, it is appropriate to cheer encouragement and tribute to that player. This includes a player on the other team.

Section 3: Injury Etiquette

It is not appropriate to cheer when a player is injured. This includes a player on the other team. It is advisable to take a knee until the injured player leaves the game.

Section 4: Appropriate Cheering

Negative, demeaning, or chanting/cheering for the purpose of taunting the opponent will not be tolerated. This also applies when more than one cheerleading or spirit squad is on the same sideline.

Section 5: Conduct

All cheer & spirit members are representing the INFC and your respective cheer & spirit clubs, so please conduct yourself in a manner that reflects good sportsmanship, a spirit of cooperation with coaches, parents, and other cheerleaders as well as care and concern for yourself and others around you.

Article XVIII RULE CHANGES

Rule changes may be amended, adopted, or repealed each season by the INFC Membership and/or the Commissioner.

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SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about the assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of the game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to the hit or fall
- Can't recall events after a hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or "pressure" in the head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

COACH RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD A CONCUSSION BE SUSPECTED

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Look for signs and symptoms of concussion if an athlete experiences a bump or blow to the head. "When in doubt, sit them out." Athletes with signs or symptoms of concussion must not return to play.
3. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated immediately by an appropriate health care professional.
 - a. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself.
 - b. Coaches recording the following can help a health care professional in assessing the athlete:
 - i. The cause of the injury and the force of the hit or blow to the head.
 - ii. Any loss of consciousness, and if so, for how long.
 - iii. Any memory loss or seizures immediately following the injury.
 - iv. Number of previous concussions (if any).
4. Inform the athlete's parents/guardians of the possible concussion and give them the concussion fact sheet for parents found on usafootball.com.
 - a. Ensure that parents know the athlete must be seen by an appropriate healthcare professional.
 - b. Provide formal documentation of the injury and notify the INFC Commissioner.
5. Allow the athlete to return to play only after an appropriate healthcare professional clears his or her return. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems.

CONDUCT

Section 1: Any assault, verbal abuse, profanity, or display of unsportsmanlike conduct by a coach, parent, participant, club official, or guest at any INFC function will not be tolerated. Intentionally running up the score will be classified as unsportsmanlike conduct. Violations will be dealt with accordingly.

Section 2: Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and/or the consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs will not be tolerated by anyone at an INFC-sanctioned function.

Section 3: The penalty for any infraction will be one or more of the following:

- Fine up to \$500.00.
- Suspension from a game or games.
- Lifetime suspension from any INFC football event or game.
- Probation.
- An action deemed appropriate by the INFC Commission.

PARENT CODE OF ETHICS

- I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parent Code of Ethics:
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth, not adults.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.
- I will read the National Standards for Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.