

# COMPETITIVE GYMNASTICS PROGRAM

**Welcome** to the competitive programme at Queenstown Gymnastic Club!

For many caregivers, gymnastics is a relatively new sport and lots of information that the coaches and committee take for granted can be helpful and interesting.

## ***About our coaches:***

Our coaches have some gymnastics and/or teaching background with them having competed in gymnastics to a high level. Most have various coaching and judging qualifications or are currently completing their qualifications.

Our coaches are young and may be still at high school. This is because artistic gymnastics is a very young sport and many artistic gymnasts stop competing in their teens, but remain with the sport as coaches.

## ***Classes***

Please ensure you are at classes ready to start on time. Class times usually stay the same throughout the year. The competitive year starts in the 1<sup>st</sup> term, culminating with the South island champs in September (for junior athletes), and Nationals in October for Senior athletes

## ***Training***

Warm ups vary and also depend on the skill level for each group. They also depend on the time of the year. There will be more drills and repetition leading into competitions and more games at other times or as a reward after competitions.

Training for competitive classes will be 'tough'. All gymnasts are expected to put their best foot forward and train as if they are competing at all times. Gymnastics is not just a physically demanding sport it is also a psychological sport and those gymnasts who can 'feel the fear and do it anyway' are most likely to progress consistently. Encourage your child to talk to their coach if they have concerns, this builds trust and understanding which is essential for the future.

***Conditioning*** is an **extremely** important part of gymnastic training. This includes fitness, strength and flexibility training. This ensures the gymnast has the physical ability to support the moves required of them now and in the future. It *will* be hard at times and tiring and *will* be sore (especially for splits/flexibility training).

Gymnastics is a very disciplined sport, but your child will end up loving even the hard stuff. Coaches are trained in the areas of conditioning and flexibility training, and they will not be doing any thing to harm your child, even if it is sore!

## ***Injuries***

If your child has an injury, please talk to your coach and keep them up to date with prognosis and health professionals' advice. The coach will ensure that training complements any prescribed rehab programmes, plus we can still do other things to ensure your child can join in.

It is easier to return after an injury if you've kept in touch, both physically and psychologically, all rehabilitation must include continuing to attend training and performing other drills or conditioning on uninjured parts of the body.

Because gymnastics involves jumping, swinging and all forms of movements on various apparatus, bumps and bruises, although not common, are not unusual. If a serious injury occurs at gym (i.e. more than a minor fall, bump or bruise), you will be advised of what happened and what action we took.

### ***Competition Routines***

The routines will be repeated numerous times to ensure the gymnast remembers them easily when it comes to the competition. Each move will be tirelessly broken down. Again, this is so they are well prepared for competition. Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) has 4 apparatus; this is done alone whilst competing.

### ***Rewards***

The gymnasts can also earn ribbons depending on their competition scores. This rewards them for improving their scores between competitions. So if their overall mark improves significantly on an apparatus, they will get a ribbon, regardless of their placing in the competition. This is a great system to encourage personal improvement, and the gymnasts really respond to it.

### ***Competitions***

Competitions usually begin about May, Everyone will be offered to travel to competitions out of town if the gymnasts are 'ready' to compete. This call will be made by the coach. There is an entry fee for each competition, this will be advised and varies slightly depending on the club/competition. It's often around \$30-\$40. The entry fee needs to be paid by or before the closing date. The exact fee and entry/closing date will be advised via our Competition Secretary who will arrange entries for the club to all competitions we attend.

If you travel out of town to compete, you and other families competing will be responsible for the cost of transport and accommodation. As an employee of the club, the coach may travel with a family or will travel alone depending on competition timings. The club reimburses the coach travel and accommodation expenses.

Scores at competitions can be confusing, that's where recording can help. If you need more information, please ask your coach, who will be able to advise what faults attract what deductions. You may not question judges, this is the head coaches role in consultation with the controlling judge, (only if appropriate). In the end, the best remedy is to not give the judges anything to deduct from.

### ***Further Levels***

As your child competes, they may be eligible to move up to harder levels. This will depend on scores at competition, overall conditioning, willingness to train, consistency in training and skills. To progress to the next step they must reach 50 points in a minimum of 2 competitions, but even then it is unlikely unless dispensation is given by gymsportNZ that a child can move up a step during a season.

### ***Other classes***

Alternatively, if your child wishes to remain in gymnastics but no longer wishes to compete or wants to train less, they could change to the recreational incentive awards classes. These are once a week, and (if passed) badges are received for each level.

### ***Holiday training***

There will also be the ability for some extra training sessions over the school holidays – times will be advised by the coach closer to the holidays. Holiday sessions are extra to term training and as such are over and above the club fees, so need to be funded in consultation with your coach. These sessions ensure that your child remains fit and flexible enough over the break (two weeks can make a huge difference). Gymnasts in lower levels are not always expected to attend, but will benefit from them.

### ***Attire***

All gymnasts must wear competition attire when competing and club tracksuits. Leotards and gear are available to buy from the club. These can be paid off in instalments if the initial outlay is a concern. There are often second hand uniforms for sale as well – These may be advertised on the club noticeboard. When training, gymnasts *must* wear appropriate form fitting clothing such as a training leotard (not the competition leotard) Since the girls are upside down a lot, please ensure clothing is fitting.

Many gymnasts at this age also like to wear hotpants or short shorts over their leotards or tights underneath when training (especially in the winter). Some wear polyprops over their uniform in the winter whilst warming up.

No zips, buckles or buttons or jewellery, as these can be dangerous or damage equipment. Also, please ensure hair is tied up for each session and always bring your OWN full drink bottle.

### ***Safety and gym rules***

Please refer to the attached code of conduct for the club.

Please also be aware that children not in classes must not play on the equipment, this is a safety rule and children will be asked to move, even off the edge of the floor. In addition, the gymnasts must wait off the floor until called by their coach to start a session, again safety first.

### ***Committee***

We are also always looking for more coaches and committee members, so please consider putting your name forward.

The committee is responsible for the day to day and financial running of the club and meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month. If you wish to raise an agenda item or have suggestions, please contact the President at least a week prior to the meeting.

### ***Communication***

In the interest of speed, cost and the environment, the default method of communication for fees, classes and newsletters is e-mail. Please ensure that your e-mail accounts are set appropriately and updated e-mail addresses are forwarded to the club.

If you cannot accept e-mail correspondence, please advise us.

### ***Concerns/Questions/Disputes***

#### ***Coaching:***

If you have any concerns about your child's coaching, we encourage you to talk directly with the coach in the first instance, often we would also insist that you actually observe the sessions yourself. If you feel that this has not addressed the issue, then you can refer your concerns to the Club President.

***Fees/Money:***

The preferred method of payment is by internet banking, please ensure that you include a clear reference so that all money can be cross referenced to your account.

Our coaches are not encouraged (nor do they wish) to deal with money. If you have queries or concerns, please discuss with a committee member in the first instance.

***Alternatively:***

If the coach has concerns about your child's behaviour they are encouraged to speak with the child first, and raise with the caregivers if they feel it is necessary. It is not common to have behavioural problems in competition gym, but bullying others, being disruptive in class or rude to the coach may be addressed if it continues.

In all cases, if you wish to raise issues any further, you are welcome to contact the club President,

***In closing***

Hopefully this has given you enough of an overview to further understand and enjoy your child's involvement in gymnastics and to open the lines of communication.

Regards,  
Mike Byers  
QT Gymnastics Club  
President

## **QUEENSTOWN GYMNASTICS CLUB**

### **MEMBER - ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT**

Queenstown Gymnastic Club is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all its members. The club believes that it is important that members, coaches, officials, administrators, parents and spectators associated with the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, all those associated with Queenstown Gymnastic Club should comply by this Code of Conduct.

- **DESIRABLE BEHAVIOUR:** Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other athletes, deliberately distracting or upsetting other athletes, or being overly critical is not acceptable or permitted in gymnastics.
- Work equally hard for yourself and for your team. Your team's performance will benefit, so will you. Always warm up and stretch properly to avoid injury.
- Be a good sport. Acknowledge all good routines and abilities whether they are from your team or the other team. Treat all athletes as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another athlete.
- All members must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Be prepared to lose sometimes. Everyone wins and loses at some time. Be a fair winner and good loser. Do gymnastics for the "fun of it" and not just to please parents and coaches.
- **OFFICIALS/RULES/COACHES:** Play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official or question a judge. If you have any queries discuss with your coach only at an appropriate time.
- Remember to discuss or forewarn your coach of absences, or ring and leave a phone message at the club. Arrive at the gym club ready to begin training on time, and report to your coach as you arrive.
- During the session, you must not leave without permission of your coach. At the end of the session you must leave the gymnasium and not linger on equipment, unless given permission by your coach.
- Co-operate with your coach, teammates and other athletes. Without them there would be no competition.
- **EQUIPMENT:** Do not use equipment that does not have appropriate safety mats or equipment. Do not adjust equipment unless under supervision/instruction of a coach/teacher.
- Do not use equipment that is not designed or intended for your session.
- Replace equipment to the correct area upon completion of your class in appreciation and consideration of all users. Ensure the equipment room is left tidy.
- **ATTIRE:** Wear appropriate clothing (no buckles, belts or buttons, no loose clothing), have hair tied up/tidy and bring water to each training session. No jewellery (except 1 pair of studs)
- At competitions: wear the appropriate uniform, have hair tidy and arrive early as advised.

## **QUEENSTOWN GYMNASTICS CLUB**

### **COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

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- **DESIRABLE BEHAVIOUR:** Ensure you are reliable in attending training sessions.
- If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to arrange a relief coach and to advise the President of that relief in person or by phone call. Ensure relief coaches are arranged with plenty of notice (unless it is an unavoidable emergency situation).
- Whenever possible, group athletes according to skills and physical maturity.
- The scheduling and length of practice times and competition should take into consideration the maturity level, competition level and fitness of athletes.
- Avoid over-focusing on the talented athletes. The “just-average” athletes need, and deserve, equal time.
- Remember that children participate for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of their motivation. Never ridicule children for making mistakes or not being able to do certain skills.
- Actively discourage the use of performance enhancing drugs, and the use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances.
- Be aware of the role of the coach as an educator. As well as imparting knowledge and skills, promote desirable personal and social behaviours; and never tolerate acts of aggression.
- Treat all athletes fairly within the context of their activities, regardless of gender, race, place of origin, athletic potential, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status and other conditions.
- Encourage and facilitate athletes' independence and responsibility for their own behaviour, performance, decisions and actions. Involve the athletes in decisions that affect them.
- **PERSONAL SAFETY:** Ensure any physical contact with athletes is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the gymnast's skill development. Avoid situations with your athletes that could be construed as compromising.
- Do not exploit any coaching relationship to further personal, political or business interests at the expense of the best interest of your athletes.
- Be acutely aware of the power that you as a coach develop with your athletes in the coaching relationship and avoid any sexual intimacy with athletes that could develop as a result.
- **OFFICIALS/RULES/COACHES:** Teach your athletes that the rules of gymnastics are mutual agreements, which no one should evade or break.
- Develop team respect for the ability of competitors and the judgement of officials and opposing coaches.
- Seek to keep abreast of changes in the sport; ensure that the information used is up to date, appropriate to the needs of athletes and takes account of the principles of growth and development of children.
- Use the NZ Coach Approach (athlete centred, coach led); learning through athlete ownership, awareness and responsibility.
- Recognise athletes' rights to consult with other coaches and advisers. Cooperate fully with other specialists (for example, sports scientists, physiotherapists) and follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured gymnast is ready to recommence training.
- **EQUIPMENT:** Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the athletes. Take responsibility for any damages that occur or are found by ensuring the club is advised.
- Replace equipment to the correct area (according to the agreed plan) upon completion of your class in appreciation and consideration of all users. Ensure the equipment room is left tidy.

## **QUEENSTOWN GYMNASTIC CLUB**

### **PARENT'S/SPECTATOR'S CODE OF CONDUCT**

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- **DESIRABLE BEHAVIOUR:** Ensure that you and your child are aware of and adhere to the responsibilities as per the **Members-Athlete's Code of Conduct**.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others, regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Show respect for your athlete's competitors, without them, there would be no competition
- Encourage children to participate if they are interested. If they are not, don't force them. Remember children are involved in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Applaud good performances from each gymnast and team. Congratulate all athletes regardless of the outcome.
- Focus on participation and increasing skills, they are not miniature professionals.
- Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility and appropriate social behaviour especially when dealing with or in the vicinity of persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example, don't use foul language, harass athletes, coaches or officials.
- Never ridicule or yell at your child and other children for making a mistake or losing a competition, be positive.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities and avoid use of derogatory language based on gender, race or impairment.
- Encourage and guide athletes to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Understand the repercussions if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of, this code of behaviour
- Please participate fully by offering to assist with events, fundraising, the committee and competitions whenever possible. Please do not allow a minority to bear an unfair burden of responsibility.
- **OFFICIALS/RULES/COACHES:** Accept decisions of all judges as being fair and called to the best of their ability. Do not raise issues of disagreement publicly.
- Encourage your child to learn the rules and participate within them.
- Remember to discuss or forewarn your coach of absences, or ring and leave a phone message at the club.
- Athletes must arrive at the gym club ready to begin training on time, and report to their coach as they arrive.
- **EQUIPMENT:** Only enrolled members are to use the equipment and only during their session times.
- Parents: Siblings **must not** use the equipment or the floor; as there is a high risk of injury to them & gymnasts. Supervise your children at all times.
- Ensure your child has the appropriate attire, drink bottle and hair is tied up for each training session