

Overview: American Twisters Competitive Team Program

On the following pages you will find an overview of the American Twisters Competitive Team Program, under the direction of Competitive Team Coordinator, Gary Anderson. If you have any general questions please do not hesitate to contact him at his email address: MrMVT@aol.com. For specific optional level questions you should contact Optional Level Head Coach Christy Ramirez at TwistersCoachChristy@gmail.com. For specific compulsory level program questions you should contact Compulsory Head Coach, Erin Hall at gymcoach84@gmail.com. For specific questions about our Xcel Competitive Team Program, contact Sara Kelly at sarabkelly@gmail.com. Trying to contact any of our coaches by phone is difficult, because they do not accept calls while on the floor coaching. You will also find answers to many of your questions along with more information at our web site: www.twistergymnastics.com/. Once there, go to the Coconut Creek location and then click on the “team” tab.

Our team program has several supplements, which you can read about on the following pages and at our team web site. Our philosophy is to keep parents informed of their child’s progress and to “work together” with the parents and our “expanded network of professionals” to obtain each individual’s gymnastics goals.

The competitive gymnastics experience is like being a triangular raft, with the parents in one corner, the coaches in the other and the athlete in the third. Without communication and cooperation we may all be “paddling” as hard and as fast as we can but just going in circles. With everyone doing their part and coordinating our efforts, the chance of gymnastics competitive success for the athlete is greatly increased.

Individual gymnasts’ accountability is a big concern in our program. The athlete taking responsibility for her attendance, attitude and work habits is vital in her success. How do we do this?

- Attendance Reports – Each month there will be an attendance report emailed home to each parent. This will have the number of practices conducted that month and the number attended by each girl on the team. Getting positive results is easier when practices are attended.
- Physical Abilities Testing – Every 6 to 10 weeks, the coaches administer a physical abilities test (test of strength and flexibility) to all the competitive team girls. Their test results are compared to their previous results, and to their same competitive level teammates. These results are emailed home to each parent so they can also monitor their daughters’ progress. In this sport most skills require an extreme amount of strength and flexibility and these tests will indicate if an athlete is even capable of attempting some of the more difficult skills.
- Grouping – Various levels begin their training at the same time each day. Within each level there are various groups formed once the warm-ups are over and the training begins. Groups are formed based on a variety of things, attitude and work ethics from the previous day, attendance for the week, placing all the best dancers together because there is a dance class that day, etc. Here again, girls are held accountable each day for their behavior, attitude and work habits and are not automatically guaranteed a spot in the “top” group because they get better meet scores than their teammates.

Supplemental programs that are part of Twisters Competitive Team Program

It takes a “village to develop a superior gymnast” and a coach having the skill or technical knowledge to spot or teach a high level skill is not enough to ensure competitive success. This is why our program incorporates professionals from other areas to help in our gymnasts’ development. With the exception of private appointments with the sports psychologist, there is NO additional cost for any of these; they are simply part of our overall training program which is covered by the monthly tuition.

- **TiVo Replay** – At each event (vault, bars, floor and beam) we have a mounted 50” TV monitor and camera. The system runs continuously during the entire practice, with the replay going to the wide screen monitor at each event, which is on a 15 to 20 second delay. This means that the gymnast can take a turn and 15 seconds later simply look up to the monitor and see what she just did 15 seconds earlier. We, in essence, have another coach at each event -- “Coach TiVo” -- who allows the girls to see themselves (see you really do bend your knees and your toes really are NOT pointed).
- **Sports Psychology Program** – Optional level gymnasts have a group sports psychology “rotation” along with their vault, bar and beam rotations every other Monday. This program is led by Dr. Christine Hiler, (<http://americantwisters.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Gymnastics-Sports-Psychology-flyer.pdf>) who was a former college gymnast. Dr. Hiler writes a summary of what was discussed in her sessions with the girls and works closely with the coaching staff with goal setting and mental preparation for competitions. Dr. Hiler two introductory group sessions throughout the year with compulsory levels 3, 4, and 5. Dr. Hiler is available for 1-on-1 sessions with gymnasts from all levels if needed and can be contacted directly at: chiler24@att.net
- **Nutrition Program** – A professional nutritionist and dietician, Nicole Aucoin RD, LD/N, (<http://americantwisters.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Twisters-Nutrition-Handbook-2.0.pdf>) works with our competitive program. Topics such as what to eat between events at a meet; what to eat on your way to practice; what to eat after practice; how to handle the holidays, etc. are covered in lectures and parent emails throughout the year. Nicole does two introductory nutrition sessions with the compulsory levels 3, 4, and 5 throughout the year.
- **Team “doctor”** – “On call” for our team is Dr. Stephen Swirsky (<https://www.nicklauschildrens.org/news-and-events/video-center/meet-stephen-m-swirsky-do-the-orthopedic-surgery>) our team doctor, who is an orthopedic surgeon, specializing in pediatric and adolescent sports medicine at Miami Children’s Hospital, Department of Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery. Dr. Swirsky also has an office in the Ft. Lauderdale area. When there is a serious or ongoing injury problem, he will see our Twister gymnast’s within 24 hours of calling him.
- **Physical Therapy and Injury Assessment** - American Twisters also has a working relationship with the international renown Barwis System Sports assessment and rehabilitation program, with their huge regional gym and multi-purpose facility just 5 miles from the Twisters gym. The Barwis system (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/>

1di6ZLP551VQh2LjcGnEiGIE-0FzIuwG1/view) has a designated rehab therapist assigned to our team program and this person visits our gym once a week to assess and then institute rehab programs for any injuries or weaknesses found in girls within our program. This connection provides almost immediate care for our gymnasts injuries and provides a specific and detailed rehab program for our optional level competitive gymnasts.

- **Dance Program** – Each Friday ALL the optional and compulsory level gymnasts have a “fun” dance/cardio class. During the summer this is supplemented with a 30 min. ballet class 3-4 days a week.
- **Choreography**– We have 4 in-house choreographers that work closely with our gymnasts to do original choreography for our floor routines. We have designated times of the year in which we create routines for our Optional team. Each of the choreographers has many years of experience, and have helped Twisters receive many State, Regional and National floor titles throughout the years. Each Fall there is choreography information sent out regarding music, payment and setting up a day to put the routine together. Girls normally keep their optional floor routines for two competitive seasons.
- **Communications “hot-line”** – Since communication is so important in any relationship, we have several sources of “keeping the lines of communication open” with our parents.
 - There is a large bulletin board at the gym near the team cubbies. Announcements are put there on a regular basis for the parents to see and to follow up on “broadcast emails” that go out to all team parents approximately every two weeks giving any workout changes or meet information.
 - Parents are encouraged to email any of the Twisters Head Coaches and/or the Twisters Team Coordinator (names and emails at the beginning of this document), when you have ANY problems or concerns. All these people have a policy of answering your email with 24 hours. So, don’t rely on parent gossip, go directly to the source and get a **quick** and **accurate** answer from the head coaches and team coordinator..
 - All team information, meet information, and workout changes (days, times, holidays, etc.) gets sent via email directly to the team parents. Once you are on the team, you will be added to our team emailing list to receive all changes and updates.
 - Team web site. The Twisters web site has an area for announcements and “things to come”. A strong effort is made to keep this current and listing events (meets, special practices, cancelations, etc.) in this area.
 - **Head Coaches Q & A sessions** -- It is extremely difficult to get a chance to speak personally with any of the coaches at the Twister gym unless you are around at the very beginning or very end of their work day. During all the in-between times they are coaching from one rotation directly into the next. This is why you may have to resort to emailing Erin, Christy, Sara or Gary. Approximately every 5 to 7 weeks, each head coach (compulsory, optional and Xcel) conduct a 30-minute Q & A session at the very beginning or end of a normal workout. This gives the parents a chance for some “face time” with your daughters’ head coach, to be able to ask them any of your questions or concerns. This is also a great way to avoid or

- reduce the “parents gossip” trap, by getting answers directly from the head coach.
- Either “group” or “individual” coach/parent conferences can be held both at the beginning and the end of the competitive season to establish and evaluate goals.

Steps in becoming a Twister Team Member

- Contact the Twister office and tell them of your interest in our competitive team. You will be asked to leave your name, phone number, email address, daughter’s age and competitive level. This information will be passed onto the appropriate head coach who will then contact you within 48 hours. If you are not contacted within that amount of time, please call the office once again.
- OR – since you have this document, you can simply use the head coaches personal email address on page one and contact them directly.
- Once contact has been made with a head coach (Christy, Erin, Sara), or the competitive team coordinator (Gary Anderson), you may be asked to provide scores and a recent video of her most recent competition and/or skills done during a recent workout, and to arrange a date for her to be administered the Twisters Physical Abilities Test (strength and flexibility)..
- Depending on the results, you may then be invited to workout with the competitive level the coach feels is appropriate.
- You will be asked to participate in a minimum of three team trial workouts.
- Following the above workouts, you and your daughter will meet with the head coach to review the physical abilities test scores and the trial workouts to see if your daughter will be accepted into the competitive team program and at what level.
- If invited to join the team, you will then have to fill out all the team forms, pay tuition and any other meet or assessment fees that would be due at that time.