



Black Hills Aerial Cup

presented by Live It Up Studio

February 26th - 28th, 2027

Rapid City, SD



Premier Aerial Competition

2027

Bringing aerialists together!

See aerialists from across the Midwest
perform and compete in this exciting event!

WWW.LIVEITUPSTUDIO.COM



February 26th –February 28th, 2027



Black Hills *Aerial Cup*

Presented by
Live It Up Studio

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INFORMATIONAL PACKET

Black Hills Aerial Cup: Elevating Aerial Arts Through Performance Excellence

The Black Hills Aerial Cup (BHAC) was created in 2021 with a vision to bring aerial athletes, coaches, studios, and families together for an exciting competition experience in the heart of the Black Hills.

What began as a small post-pandemic event has grown into a premier aerial arts competition in the Midwest, welcoming athletes and studios from across the region and beyond. BHAC celebrates the three pillars that make aerial arts so unique:

- **PERFORMANCE** — creativity, storytelling, artistry, and stage presence
- **ATHLETICISM** — strength, discipline, technique, and physical excellence
- **COMMUNITY** — connection, collaboration, encouragement, and shared passion

Our goal is to create an environment where athletes can challenge themselves, grow as performers, learn from experienced judges and coaches, and celebrate their accomplishments - whether they are stepping on stage for the first time or returning as seasoned competitors. Each year, BHAC continues to grow while staying true to its original mission: creating opportunities for aerialists to rise, inspire the next generation of aerial artists, and elevate the art of aerial performance throughout the Midwest and beyond.



Dates

Competition: February 26th – February 28th, 2027. The daily schedule will be emailed a week prior to the competition start. Competition days will be Friday, Saturday, Sunday depending on the number of participants.

Registration Starts: September 1st, 2026 **Registration Deadline:** February 15th, 2027

Music Submission Deadline: February 15th, 2027

Location

NEW LOCATION - THE BOX
The Box Elder Events Center
631 Watiki Way, Box Elder, SD 57719

Registration and Fees

There is a limited number of spots at the Black Hills Aerial Cup 2027 – 250 performance slots.

Participation Fee:

- Solo - \$ 160 Participation Fee per performing category/act.
- Duo - \$ 200

Early Bird Pricing (through December 31st 2026)

- Solo - \$ 140
- Duo - \$ 180
- To enter each competitor (or a guardian of the competitor and or coach if under the age of 18) must complete **Registration Form and sign a Waiver** at liveitupstudio.com/blackhillsaerialcup.
- No refunds will be issued after sign-up. You may not transfer your registration to a different event. You may not transfer your registration to another category or another competitor.
- All registrations are processed manually by our staff which sometimes may take 1-2 business days.

Change and Late Fees:

- Music Change Fee - \$30
- Music Late Submission Fee - \$30
- Category/Level Change Fee - \$30
- Studio Team Change Fee - \$100

- **Please note!** Before submitting your registration, learn the following policies and rules in this document.

If you have any questions, please contact us via e-mail BlackHillsAerialCup@gmail.com or phone **605-209-3770**. Additional important dates and information may be shared via email. Make sure that the email address you registered with is one you check regularly.

Tickets

This is a ticketed event. All visitors, support team, and families must have a ticket. Eligible Team Coaches will receive free event pass and backstage pass. Coaches name must be listed in participant registration form.

- No additional people are permitted on stage with competitors from the time the music starts until it ends. Additional people on stage will result in disqualification.
- Unless pre-approved by event management, no additional people are permitted on stage with competitor during stage testing. Coaches are encouraged to accompany the competitor to backstage and stage walkway. Coaches will not be permitted to spot moves at any time during stage testing or performance.
- No additional people are permitted backstage or in the dressing rooms.
- Tickets will be available for purchase at liveitupstudio.com/blackhillsaerialcup.

Additional Cost

Plan for additional potential and optional costs:

- Workshops
- Tickets
- Merchandise
- Concessions and Snacks
- Photo/Video Costs

Official Stay

Make your Black Hills Aerial Cup experience even better by staying where the competition happens! The **Courtyard by Marriott Rapid City** is our official athlete hotel, conveniently connected to the Box Elder Events Center, the home of BHAC.

Stay Where the Action Is!



Stay Together. Compete Together. Celebrate Together.

Make your Black Hills Aerial Cup experience even better by staying where the competition happens! The Courtyard by Marriott Rapid City is our official athlete hotel, conveniently connected to the Box Elder Events Center, the home of BHAC.



BOX ELDER EVENTS CENTER



CONNECTED. CONVENIENT.



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT
RAPID CITY



WATIKI WATERPARK



WHY STAY HERE?



RIGHT NEXT TO THE COMPETITION

No long drives or worrying about traffic on competition morning. Stay at the official hotel and enjoy the convenience of being connected to the event venue.



UNITED ATHLETES, ONE COMMUNITY

Staying together creates a true competition experience. Connect with athletes, coaches, families, and studios from across the country before and after the competition.



LESS STRESS. MORE COMPETITION.

Wake up close to the venue, grab breakfast, get ready, and head to the competition without the hassle of traveling across town.



BE PART OF THE BHAC EXPERIENCE

The competition doesn't end when you leave the stage. Staying at the official hotel gives you more opportunities to meet fellow competitors, celebrate performances, and enjoy the weekend together.

Book your BHAC stay and make the most of your competition weekend!



MAKE YOUR BLACK HILLS AERIAL CUP EXPERIENCE EVEN BETTER BY STAYING AT OUR OFFICIAL BHAC HOTEL!



SPECIAL DISCOUNTED PRICING

Enjoy exclusive hotel rates available to BHAC athletes, coaches, families, and spectators.



SPECIAL BHAC EVENTS

Be part of special events and activities designed to bring our aerial community together throughout the competition weekend.



ACCESS TO WATIKI WATERPARK

Take a break from the competition and enjoy access to WaTiki Waterpark—the perfect place for athletes and families to relax, play, and have fun! You can access the WaTiki Indoor Waterpark Resort with free admission when staying at Marriott properties like the Courtyard by Marriott Rapid City or Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites Rapid City.



ONLY A 2-MINUTE WALK TO THE PERFORMANCE VENUE

Stay incredibly close to the action! The performance venue is just a 2-minute walk away, making it easy to get to rehearsals, performances, workshops, and awards without worrying about parking or transportation.



**CLICK THE LINK BELOW TO
BOOK YOUR STAY NOW AT DISCOUNTED PRICE!**



COURTYARD
BY MARRIOTT

Fairfield
BY MARRIOTT
INN & SUITES

GUIDANCE AND RULES

Divisions

All participants this year will be grouped by divisions:

- Pre-Juniors (ages 5-9)
- Juniors (ages 10-13)
- Juniors (ages 14-17)
- Adults (ages 18-25)
- Adults (ages +25)

These divisions may be either grouped together or divided at Black Hills Aerial Cup leadership discretion.

Pre-Juniors and Juniors use the same equipment as adult divisions. Very small children have successfully performed on our standard fabrics. Smaller children (and adults) are permitted to request a smaller lyra for their performance.

Levels

All participants will be divided in 4 ability levels. This year we are offering 4 different levels: **beginner, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced.**

- There are different requirements for the complicity of the routine for different levels. Please, choose the level that is the closest to your abilities. Please, consult your coach. When choosing the level, please take into consideration your aerial experience.
- We reserve the right to adjust your category up or down based on our knowledge of your skill set. If you intentionally choose a lower level than you know you belong to you may be moved.
- Any request to change the level after completing registration will result in \$30 Fee.

Categories

All participants may compete in following categories:

- Solo hammock (sling)
- Solo silks
- Solo lyra
- Solo Specialty Apparatus and showcase category.

NOTE: If there are at least 3 competitors on the given apparatus in the specialty category, we will create a separate judging category for those individuals.

- Duo Performances

Compulsory Form

Compulsory Form has been removed.

Apparatus

- **While Black Hills Aerial Cup provides all the performance apparatuses and equipment, competitors may request to use their own apparatus. All requests must be made by the coach in the written form via email to BlackHillsAerialCup@gmail.com. The apparatus is subjected to safety check and must comply with competition standards and guideline.**

Hammock (Sling)

Hammock is provided by competition production management. Hammock is approximately 8-10 feet (may vary slightly per venue) and is hung using 2 "O" rings and a single swivel. Hammock is nylon tricot low/medium stretch fabric hung from a swivel and a single rigging point. The height of apparatus can be modified with the use of pulley. No use of pulley permitted during the performance.

Performer may request to use own apparatus. The apparatus is subjected to safety check and must comply with competition standards and guideline.

Level	Beginner	Intermediate	High-Intermediate	Advanced
<i>Description of Performer</i>	- Instructors may not perform at the beginner level. - The actual length of time a person has been studying hammock is not important. - Use of the full length of hammock is not required. - Beginner performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and dynamic movement and flow. - Beginner performers are encouraged to establish a character or storyline.	- An Intermediate Hammock performer is one who is comfortable with a basic level of inversions and inverted moves. - Not necessarily need to show that they have any experience as a performer. - Intermediate performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, flow. - Intermediate performers are expected to establish a clear character or storyline.	- A High Intermediate Hammock performer demonstrates solid aerial experience and control beyond the basic level. - Comfortable with multiple types of inversions and transitions (including inverted drops or combinations). - Able to use of the full length of hammock. - Expected to demonstrate strength, flexibility, flow, and endurance that go beyond the intermediate level. - Should present a performance with a developed character, theme, or storyline.	An Advanced Hammock performer is someone who has a firm grasp on a large piece of the aerial hammock skill vocabulary. These people may be teachers and may have experience as a performer. Advanced performers are expected to demonstrate dynamic movement, flow, strength, and flexibility appropriate for this level. Advanced performers are expected to present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<i>Difficulty</i>	- May show extensive floor work - Must start on the ground - May come down in between trick set - Demonstrate proficiency in the bottom of hammock - Inversions from floor only No aerial inverts (if you are wrapped in the hammock, it is considered assisted and is ok as long as you are not hanging) - Only 1 single non-	- Floor work no more than 25% - Must start on the ground No coming down within routine allowed. <i>The performer may reach the floor to add spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus</i> - Demonstration of 1-2 drops expected - Drops/dives/flips only up to 1.5 rotations - Only bent leg aerial	- Floor work no more than 25% - Must start on the ground - No coming down within routine allowed. The performer may reach the floor to add spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus - Demonstration of 1-2 drops expected - Multi directional drop are allowed up	- Floor work no more than 15% May start in apparatus No coming down within routine allowed. The performer may reach the floor to add spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus - Demonstration of at least 2 drops expected - At least one straight leg, straight arm invert

	inverted flip is permitted but not required • No drops • No neck hangs or ankle hangs, heel hangs • No elbow rolls or arm roll ups • No beats • No belays	invert expected • Demonstrate proficiency in bottom of hammock and standing in hammock • No kamikaze drops or open wrap drops, ankle drops • No inverted slack drop • No neck hangs, ankle hang or heel hang • No elbow rolls or arm roll ups	to 2 rotations • Only bent arms inverts • Straight leg aerial invert expected • Spin is expected • No kamikaze drops or open wrap drops • No neck hangs, single ankle hang or heel hang	Demonstrate strength, flexibility, dynamic work (spin) • No kamikaze drops
<i>Music Length</i>	Min 2:30 min Max 3:00 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:30 min Max 4:00 min

Silks (Fabric/Tissue/Split Panels)

Silks are provided by competition production management. Silks are black Low Stretch Nylon Tricot fabric. Silks are tied to a stainless-steel rescue 8 and hung from a single swivel, attached to a single rig point 25' above the stage, depending on available rig points in the venue. Silks will have a 2-foot tail.

Performer may request to use own apparatus. The apparatus is subjected to safety check and must comply with competition standards and guideline.

Level	Beginner	Intermediate	High-Intermediate	Advanced
<i>Description of Performer</i>	- Instructors may not perform in the beginner level. - The actual length of time a person has been studying silk is not important. - Use of the full length of silk is not required. - Beginner performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and dynamic movement and flow. - Beginner performers are encouraged to establish a character or storyline.	- An Intermediate Silk performer is one who is comfortable with a basic level of inversions and inverted moves. - They do not necessarily need to show that they have any experience as a performer. - Intermediate performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and dynamic movement and flow. - Intermediate performers are expected to establish a clear character or storyline.	- A High Intermediate Silk performer demonstrates solid aerial experience and control beyond the basic level. - Comfortable with multiple types of inversions and transitions (including inverted drops or combinations). - Able to use of the full length of silk. - Expected to demonstrate strength, flexibility, flow, and endurance that go beyond the intermediate level. - Should present a performance with a developed character, theme, or storyline.	- An Advanced Silk performer is someone who has a firm grasp on a large piece of aerial skills. - These people may be teachers and may have experience as a performer. - Advanced performers are expected to demonstrate dynamic movement, flow, strength, and flexibility appropriate for this level. - Advanced performers are expected to present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.

<i>Difficulty</i>	• May show extensive floor work • Must start on the ground • May come down in between trick set • Only 1 single non-inverted flip/drop is permitted but not required • Demonstrate at least one type of climb • Proficiency in lower half of silks • Use of knot is permitted • No aerial inverts • No neck or ankle hangs • No elbow rolls or arm roll ups • No beats	• Floor work no more than 25% • Must start on the ground • At least one aerial invert expected • Demonstrate more than one type of climb • Proficiency in lower half and middle of silk with foot locks or similar • Demonstration of 1-2 drops expected. • Drops/dives/flips only up to 2 rotations • Demonstrate at least one non-foot-lock skill • No coming down within routine allowed • No kamikaze drops, or open wrap drops, drops to wrist locks • No dynamic ankle drop • No corkscrew drops, and wheel downs • No neck hangs • No elbow rolls or arm roll ups • No catch release	• Floor work no more than 25% • Must start on the ground • No coming down within routine allowed. The performer may reach the floor to add spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus • Demonstration of 1-2 drops expected • Multi directional drop are allowed up to 2 rotations • Only bent arms inverts • Straight leg aerial invert expected • Spin is expected • No kamikaze drops or open wrap drops • No neck hangs, single ankle hang or heel hang	• Floor work no more than 15% • May start in apparatus • At least one straight leg, straight arm invert • Demonstrate at least one inverted climb • Proficiency in full length of silk • At least 2 drops expected • Balance of strength, flexibility, dynamic work (spin) • No coming down within routine allowed • No kamikaze drops
<i>Music Length</i>	Min 2:30 min Max 3:00 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:30 min Max 4:00 min

Lyra (Hoop)

Lyra is provided by competition production management. Outside silks will not be permitted.

Our standard is a 36" single point stainless steel tabless lyra on 6-foot spanset. At the far end from the lyra, the spanset is connected to a single swivel via locking carabineer. You MAY use the span sets for choreography! You may not touch the rigging above the span sets. The height of apparatus can be modified with the use of pulley. No use of pulley permitted during the performance. Performers are permitted to request a smaller/bigger lyra for their performance. Size available: 37", 35", 34", 32", 30".

Level	Beginner	Intermediate	High-Intermediate	Advanced
<i>Description of Performer</i>	- Instructors may not perform at the beginner level. - Use of the whole lyra is not required. - Beginner performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and dynamic movement and flow. - Beginner performers are encouraged to establish a character or storyline	- An Intermediate Lyra performer is one who is comfortable with a basic level of inversions and inverted moves. - They do not necessarily need to show that they have any experience as a performer. - Intermediate performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and dynamic movement and flow. - Intermediate performers are expected to establish a clear character or storyline.	- A High Intermediate Silk performer demonstrates solid aerial experience and control beyond the basic level. - Comfortable with multiple types of inversions and transitions (including inverted drops or combinations). - Able to use of the whole - Expected to demonstrate strength, flexibility, flow, and endurance that go beyond the intermediate level. - Should present a performance with a developed character, theme, or storyline.	- An Advanced Lyra performer is someone who has a firm grasp on a large piece of the aerial lyra vocabulary. - These people may be teachers and may have experience as a performer. - Advanced performers are expected to demonstrate dynamic movement, flow, strength, and flexibility appropriate for this level. - Advanced performers are expected to present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<i>Difficulty</i>	- May show extensive floor work - Must start on the ground - May come down in between trick set - Any basic mounts are acceptable - Proficiency on the lower level and in middle of lyra No invert to the spanset above the lyra No drops	- Floor work no more than 25% - Must start on the ground No coming down within routine allowed. <i>The performer may reach the floor to add the spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus.</i> - Proficiency under and - Demonstrate at least one drop - Demonstrate at least	- Floor work no more than 25% - Must start on the ground No coming down within routine allowed. <i>The performer may reach the floor to add the spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus.</i> - Proficiency under and inverted to the top of lyra - Demonstrate at least	- Floor work no more than 15% May start in apparatus No coming down within routine allowed. <i>The performer may reach the floor to add the spin if performer remains at least one point of contact with the apparatus.</i> - Proficiency under, in, inverted, and on top

	• No standing on top bar • No heel, foot, neck or elbow hang • No beats • No hip, elbow rolls, “lion” rolls, windmill rolls or dynamic rolls; singular knee (Monkey, Horse, Russian), beauty rolls - ok	one type of invert in lyra • Demonstrate at least one move with only 2 points of contact • Demonstrate dynamic work and spin techniques • No heel, foot or neck hang • No hip, elbow rolls, “lion” rolls, windmill rolls or dynamic rolls; Monkey, Horse, Russian, beauty rolls – ok.	one drop • Demonstrate at least one type of straight leg invert • Demonstrate at least one move with only 2 points of contact • Demonstrate dynamic work and spin techniques • May demonstrate heel, foot, elbow hang, • Only single rolls • No single arm inverts • No neck hangs, single ankle hang or heel hang	of lyra • Demonstration of 1-2 drops expected • At least one straight leg, straight arm invert • Demonstrate at least one move with only 2 point of contact • Demonstrate dynamic work and spin techniques • Balance of strength, flexibility, dynamic work (spin)
<i>Music Length</i>	Min 2:30 min Max 3:00 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:00 min Max 3:30 min	Min 3:30 min Max 4:00 min

Showcase and Specialty Apparatus

Specialty apparatuses include any apparatus that is not listed in the above categories and all doubles performances.

- We suggest and encourage to follow the category and level criteria that is the closest to your apparatus.
- **If there are at least 3 competitors on the given apparatus in the specialty category, we will create a separate judging category for those individuals.**
- Competitors will submit and bring their own unique apparatuses they would like to showcase. Each apparatus is subject to safety and integrity testing by the Black Hills Aerial Cup staff.

MUSIC, LOOK AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Music

Your entire act must fit within your time allotted. This includes any performance before and after your music plays. Maximum music length assumes all performance takes place during your music. You will be allowed a reasonable amount of time to take your position before performing and bow after your performance. If your final edit exceeds the maximum length allowed for your division your music will not be accepted and your chosen song will not be reserved.

Maximum Time Allowance:

Beginner – 3:00

Intermediate – 3:30

High Intermediate – 3:30

Advanced – 4:00

Music Reservation Policy

Your song is considered **officially reserved only once you have uploaded your music to Dropbox AND it has been added to the official Music List.**

Songs will be considered in the **order they are received**, so we strongly encourage you to register and submit your music as early as possible!

DUPLICATE SONG SUBMISSION

If another athlete submits the **same song** after it has already been reserved, the athlete who submitted the song second will be **notified that the music has already been reserved.**

At that time, the athlete will have two options:

1. Keep the same song.

The athlete may choose to keep the music, and the Music List will indicate that the song is being **repeated** in the competition.

2. Change the song.

The athlete may select and submit a different song **without being charged a music-change fee.**

This exception applies only when an athlete is notified that their selected song is already reserved by another competitor. All other music changes remain subject to the standard music-change policy and applicable fees.

- If your song IS **NOT** approved, YOU WILL BE contacted by our staff. Otherwise, no other action needed from you.
- Music **MUST** be a clean/radio edit version. **No** profanity, derogatory language, explicit or suggestive content will be accepted. Remember it's a family friendly event!
- Deadline for Music submission: February 15th. Music submitted after the deadline is subjected to a \$30 Late Fee. No exceptions.
- If you wish to change your music after the initial submission, there will be \$30 Change Fee.
- It is participant's responsibility to ensure that they submit the right music version.
- **You are required to submit your music as MP3 File.** No other file types will be accepted.

- Please, upload your music/song to

MUSIC UPLOAD Drop Box

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/22zldzb64glm7hxb230o>

Music sent via email will not be accepted - DROPBOX UPLOADS ONLY.

- Use following naming when submitting the music:
- Full Competitor Name – Song/Track Name– Division - Level – Category – School/Studio
- *E.G: Anna Starenkova – Evanescence Bring Me To Life – Adult Advanced Silks 25+– Live It Up Studio*

Wardrobe

Each aerial performer must have own costume. Typically, it is full-body, full sleeve or sleeveless, non-see-through unitard or leotard. Leg coverage is required. If your leotard has open legs, you may wear stirrup professional dance tights. Appropriate undergarments are required. Aerial socks are allowed. All costume must be age appropriate.

You are responsible for testing your costume prior to performing to make sure it meets requirements. All costumes must be age-appropriate.

- No jewelry or piercing
- No boots or shoes
- No extensive and tangly sequins, zippers, or anything rough or jagged that may snag or tear the fabrics.
- Embellishments, rhinestone, gems are allowed.
- Hair and makeup must be nicely done. Hair style must be appropriate and safe for aerial performance (ex. pony tail, braids, bun).
- **NO** loose hair style! If your hair style impedes your performance, you WILL receive a deduction.
- Excessive stage makeup is allowed if it fits and completes the performance idea.
- Deductions WILL be incurred if costume gets stuck or disrupts a performance.

Props and Accessories

- Props and accessories are considered anything that comes in addition to competitor's costume (ex. hat, coat etc.). Props may **NOT** be anything messy or hard to clean up, such as **glitter, feathers, confetti, shredded paper, or liquid of any kind**. No fire will be approved. Competitors must be able to take all props on and off stage in one trip without assistance.
- If you choose to use a prop please, include that information in the registration form. Please, consult our staff at blackhillsaerialcup@gmail.com if you have any questions.
- Human props must follow all competitor rules for conduct and dress code. Human props may not touch the apparatus at any time or assist the performer in any way that may be misconstrued as a doubles routine. Human props must be preapproved at blackhillsaerialcup@gmail.com

Grip Aids

Only approved grip aids may be used so we can make sure they won't damage apparatus.

Fabrics/Steel Performers: Spray rosins may be used on fabrics and steel.

Popular approved grip aids:

- Natural Rosin Powder
- Firm Grip Spray
- Muller Grip Spray
- Better Grip

GENERAL EVENT INFORMATION

Photography & Videography

- A professional photographer/videographer will be covering the event. Do not block the professional photographer or videographer. The Photo and Video packages may be available but not guaranteed.
- Audience members may take pictures and video using phones only as long as they do not impede judging, the performer or staff.
- Do not enter or leave the audience area during a performance because this is disrespectful to the performer and could impact their photos and video. There is ample time between performances and divisions to change position as needed.

Awards

- If you place and cannot stay for the awards ceremony, you must arrange for someone who is staying to pick up your awards for you.
- Awards for performers may be mailed by the Black Hills Aerial Cup staff at an additional cost.

Changes

- Schedules, venue, dates, categories, and all other aspects of the competition are subject to change. While we make every effort to adhere closely to announced details, unforeseen events may require adjustments within the competition structure.
- Changes will be communicated as early as possible.

Safety

- All participants or the guardians of participants if under the age of 18 must sign a waiver.
- All participants are required to use crash pad/mat.
- All performers are expected to follow instructions given by the head rigger with regards to rigging safety.
- No touching rigging!
- No additional people are permitted on stage with competitors from the time the music starts until it ends, except for approved human props.
- No additional people are permitted on stage with competitors during performance.
- Doing moves outside of your category can result in deduction and disqualification.

STUDIO REPRESENTATION & TRANSFER POLICY

The Black Hills Aerial Cup is committed to creating a positive, fair, and professional competition experience for all competitors, coaches, studios, and families. Clear policies help minimize confusion, reduce unnecessary conflict, and ensure decisions are made with the athletes' best interests in mind. While studio representation transfers have been extremely rare in previous years, this policy has been established to provide clarity and consistency moving forward. It reflects common practices used by dance, gymnastics, and aerial competitions across the industry.

Studio Affiliation

A competitor represents the studio listed on their registration at the time of entry. Once registration has been submitted and accepted, studio affiliation is considered final. This policy allows the competition to accurately prepare schedules, competitor rosters, scoring systems, announcements, awards, printed materials, and promotional content.

Studio Representation Changes

A competitor may request to represent a different studio only under exceptional circumstances.

To be considered, the following documentation must be submitted to the Competition Management Team **no later than 90 days prior to completion day**:

- Written consent from the competitor's current studio director.
- Written consent from the new studio director.
- Written consent from the competitor's parent or legal guardian (or the competitor if 18 years of age or older).

Without written approval from all required parties, a competitor may not represent a different studio during the same competition season. Any approved studio representation change is considered a **one-time exception** and does not establish precedent for future competitions.

Administrative Change Fee

Any approved studio representation change will incur a **\$100 administrative fee per each performance occurrence**.

This fee is consistent with existing fees for category, level, or music changes and helps offset the administrative work required to update schedules, scoring systems, competitor listings, awards, printed materials, and event presentations after registration has been processed.

Communication

To ensure consistency, fairness, and professionalism, all communication regarding studio representation must take place **between studio directors and the Competition Management Team** through documented written correspondence.

The Black Hills Aerial Cup will not respond to individual parent or athlete inquiries regarding studio representation disputes or transfer requests.

Sportsmanship & Professional Conduct

The Black Hills Aerial Cup expects all competitors, parents, coaches, studio owners, instructors, volunteers, and spectators to treat one another with respect, professionalism, and courtesy at all times.

Harassment, intimidation, unsportsmanlike conduct, or behavior that disrupts the positive competition environment will not be tolerated. Any individual found in violation of the Black Hills Aerial Cup Code of Conduct or Sportsmanship Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from the event or competitor disqualification, at the discretion of competition management.

Our goal is to provide an athlete-focused environment where every competitor feels supported, respected, and celebrated. We appreciate the cooperation of all studios and families in helping us maintain a fair, positive, and professional competition for everyone involved.

CHOREOGRAPHY ORIGINALITY & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Black Hills Aerial Cup celebrates creativity, originality, and artistic expression. Competitors, coaches, and studios are expected to respect the intellectual property and creative work of others. Competitors may not knowingly perform choreography that has been copied or substantially reproduced from another athlete, instructor, choreographer, or studio without permission. This includes full routines or significant portions of choreography that are recognizable as another creator's original work.

Drawing inspiration from existing movement styles, techniques, or performance concepts is a natural part of the aerial arts. However, competitors are encouraged to develop routines that reflect their own creativity, interpretation, and artistic voice. If concerns regarding choreography originality or intellectual property are brought to the Competition Management, the matter may be reviewed. Supporting documentation or evidence may be requested from the parties involved.

The Black Hills Aerial Cup reserves the right to investigate credible claims of copied choreography or other intellectual property violations. If it is determined that a routine substantially infringes upon another creator's original work without permission, the Competition Management may take appropriate action, including score deductions, disqualification, or removal from the event.

By entering the competition, competitors, coaches, and studios acknowledge that submitted routines are either their own original work or are performed with the permission of the choreographer or copyright holder.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Please be respectful of your mates, competitors, coaches, staff and families attending the events and help them feel comfortable learning more about fitness, aerial arts, and sport.
- Language and comportment must be family friendly. This includes music, costuming, props, clothing and conversations held in public areas.
- Competitors are expected to be honest in representing their levels and abilities. We reserve the right to switch competitors' categories depending on the level of misrepresentation.
- Be respectful to the people hosting and running the competition. You are expected to respond positively to requests and instructions from the competition staff. This includes stage managers, judges, hosts, venue employees, and all other competition and venue personnel. This includes online behavior.
- As with all live events, unexpected things happen. Please be patient with each step of the process and understand that we do our best to give you a great competition experience!

DAY OF THE COMPETITION

Check In

- Arrive early for stage testing to allow yourself time to check in and warm up. If you miss your stage testing time because of late arrival, additional time WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE.
- Sign all waivers online. This may be done before arriving at the venue and must be done BEFORE you proceed to stage testing.
- If you are the guardian of a minor, you are responsible for checking them in and signing all their waivers.
- If you are under 18, you must have a legally responsible adult sign all waivers.
- You will get a tour of backstage, dressing rooms, and other key areas when you check in.
- Warm up and get ready! Once stage is ready you will be called on stage.

Stage Testing

- When you are invited to take the stage for stage testing, you will be given a maximum of 2 minutes for stage testing. Please, plan out your stage test and do not take advantage of the stage manager by requiring them to ask you to leave the stage.
- Your stage testing should include setting your height (if applicable) and familiarizing yourself with the feel of the apparatus and stage. You will not have enough time to go through your entire routine.

Performance

- Competitors don't have to stay at the performing venue for the whole day. Daily schedule with the performance order will be published and shared with competitors at least 10 days prior to the event.
- Arrive at least one hour prior to your scheduled performance time.
- If you miss your performance time, no additional time will be given.
- If a competitor fails to complete their performance, such competitor shall be disqualified.

JUDGING

Judging is performed by a panel of judges right on spot during the performance. There is a short window of time between the performances for judges to complete their scoring sheets.

Judging is final. No discussion of judges' decisions will be permitted.

Black Hills Aerial Arts Cup leadership and competition staff will not respond to email requests for explanations of judging feedback and scoring. We make every effort to qualify judges. We understand that their comments and perspectives of your work might not align with yours or your coach's but we urge you to accept judge comments as an opportunity to improve.

Results and Scoring Sheets

Final Results will be posted as soon as finalized after the competition is completed on Black Hills Aerial Cup website. Scoring Sheets with judges notes will be shared and emailed upon request.

Judging Procedure

Each division is judged by a minimum of **2** judges who evaluate competitors in the entire division in order to increase fairness. You may receive points and deductions that are quite a bit higher or lower from one judge to another. This is due to individual judging styles and perspectives and is found in all subjective competitions.

Each criteria within groups A. and B. is evaluated by the 10 - point system where 1 - lowest, 10 - highest. Judging considers the following groups and criteria:

A. Difficulty and Technical

- Difficulty of Individual Moves **(10)**
- Difficulty of Combinations and Uniqueness of Transitions **(10)**
- Intentional Lines **(10)**
- Controlled Toes (Pointed or Flexed) **(10)**
- Control of Apparatus **(10)**

B. Artistry and Composition

- Flow of Moves—Tricks/Spins/Floor to Apparatus, etc. **(10)**
- Musicality **(10)**
- Stage Presence Throughout with Character and/or Emotion **(10)**
- Balance of Program (Tricks/Spins/Strength/Flexibility) **(10)**
- Variety of Movements **(10)**

C. Deductions

1. Unfinished Routine – Disqualification
2. Not Meeting the Criteria for Specific Division **(Max -3)**
3. Major Slips or Falls (depending on severity—judges may stop performance) **(Max -3)**

4. Use of Unsecure/Unsafe Moves (**Max -3**)
5. Touching rigging (intentionally or otherwise) (**Max -2**)
6. Unappropriated costume /Costume malfunction (**Max -2**)
7. Non-approved props (**Max -2**)
8. Exceeding maximum performance time/ Finishing Late (**Max -1**)
9. Minor slips and mis grabs (**Max -1**)
10. Improper technique (**Max -1**)

Judging Guide

Each judge will have a sheet with listed criteria of their group for scoring and comments.

How to calculate the final score?

Average A point + Average B point – Average C = Final Score.

Deductions

Deductions focus on dangerous and restricted moves, unfair use of equipment, violation of rules and guidance.

Grounds for Disqualification

- Competitors are not allowed to consume any alcohol, illegal drugs or medical drugs that impair function to perform. If an individual is displaying indications of alcohol or drug consumption, you will be disqualified immediately.
- Disrespectful language or actions towards or about judges, competitors, coaches, staff, volunteers, or schools.
- Performer fails to complete routine on stage.
- No refunds will be issued in case of disqualification.

Special Awards

- **The Absolute Champion** – Award given to a competitor with the highest score.
- **The Best Costume:** This award goes to a routine that the judges feel had either unique costumes or some kind of costume that stood out to them.
- **The Best Choreography:** This award goes to the routine and choreographer that the judges feel displayed outstanding, creative or complex choreography.
- **The Best Character and Storyline:** This award goes to the routine and choreographer that the judges feel had the best creative character or storyline.
- **The Best Entertainer:** This award goes to the routine that the judges feel was the most entertaining routine. It could be a high energy routine, a routine with a great concept.
- **The Best Music Choice:** This award goes to the routine whose music choice complements the choreography and enhances the overall performance. It could be a unique or unexpected choice that stands out.
- **The Best Sportsmanship:** This award goes to the competitor who demonstrates the highest level of respect, encouragement, and positive attitude towards fellow participants, judges, and organizers. It recognizes someone who embodies the spirit of teamwork and camaraderie, both on and off the

stage.

- **The Judges Choice:** This is an opportunity for each judge to give their vote (their "golden buzzer") to the performer that stood out for them the most and or stole their heart.

Appendix A: Scoring Sheets

Participant's Name:			
Level:	Category:		
Judging Group: A	Judge's Name		
	Criteria	Score (1-10)	Comments
1.	Difficulty of Individual Moves Overall delivery in effective trick executions. Tricks must be done in a safe and secure manner. Tricks should showcase performer's strengths. There must be a range of movement and shapes.		
2.	Difficulty of Combinations and Uniqueness of Transitions - Combinations with a seamless blend of proper technique and form; and gradual progression and consistency throughout. - Originality in all components of the routine from entrances and exits in and out of tricks, transitions and combinations.		
3.	Intentional Lines Fluid technique in maximum precision, correct posture, body alignment or inadequate physical capacities (such as active and passive flexibility, strength, amplitude, power, or endurance)		
4.	Controlled Toes (Pointed or Flexed) The foot and toes should be pointed. The toes should not be clenched or showing tension unless performing an aerial walk or if it is a choreography choice.		
5.	Control of Apparatus No unnecessary grasping or gripping the apparatus. A temporary loss of control on the silk \ hoop or a clear loss of balance during a choreographic element. When using dynamic movement, the athlete must demonstrate absolute control to avoid the stop of apparatus in the element with an unfavorable angle.		
	Total		

Participant's Name:			
Level:	Category:		
Judging Group: B	Judge's Name		
	Criteria	Score (1-10)	Comments
1.	Flow of Moves—Tricks/Spins/Floor to Apparatus, etc. Flow refers to the ability to create a seamless and effortless routine. The sequences, moves, transitions, choreography and/or acrobatic movements should flow in a seamless, smooth, natural, flawless, and graceful way. The routine should not look disjointed in any way. Entire routine should have seamlessly connected elements and movement.		
2.	Musicality • Musicality is the ability of the competitors to interpret music and to demonstrate not only its difficult elements or technique, but its flow, shape, and intensity and passion within the physical performance. • Competitors should connect with the music and show expression through their costume, body language, and facial movements. • Expressiveness and projection. • Musical sensitivity and timing - ability to move accurately and consistently as required by the characteristics of the music and its elements, melody, rhythm, harmony, tempo dynamics, and articulation.		
3.	Stage Presence Throughout with Character and/or Emotion Choreography should tell a clear story. Competitor's movement must reflect the story, theme, and music. Expressiveness and projection.		
4.	Balance of Program (Tricks/Spins/Strength/Flexibility) This focuses on how your routine is designed or built showing different type of movements.		
5.	Variety of Movements Competitors should create new and original movements for their transitions in and out of elements and on and off the apparatus; show creativity, originality, and variation in simple and well known tricks. Routine does not repeat itself in elements, climbs, inverts, and lifts.		
	Total		

Participant's Name:			
Level:		Category:	
Judging Group: C		Judge's Name	
	Criteria	Max Deduction per each unfollowed criteria	Notes
1.	Unfinished Routine - Disqualification	Disqualification	
2.	Not Meeting the Criteria for Specific Division	-3	
3.	Major Slips and Falls	-3	
4.	Use of Unsecure/Unsafe Moves	-3	
5.	Touching rigging (intentionally or otherwise)	-2	
6.	Unappropriated costume /Costume malfunction	-2	
7.	Non-approved props	-2	
8.	Exceeding maximum performance time/ Finishing Late	-1	
9.	Minor falls and mis grabs	-1	
10.	Improper technique	-1	
	Total		

FINAL SCORE: _



Thank you for reviewing the competitor packet 2027. Missing any info? Please, email us at blackhillsaerialcup@gmail.com. We appreciate your input and feedback.