

Q & A: Stars Vipers All-Star Cheer (Austin)

As we continue our growth in Austin, we feel that it is important to keep lines of communication open and transparent. With this, we will provide insight that is captured from parent meetings and current member feedback. For that reason we have started a list of some questions that can better assist anyone who is seeking information on our second location in Austin. Our hope is that you find this helpful.

Future plans for Austin

- Q: Will Stars continue providing services in Austin?
- A: There are several reasons why Stars Vipers has decided to continue in Austin for another season. It is no secret that we were planning on growing, however it was just a matter of when and which situation would best set us up for success.
 - Due to the influx of athletes from the Austin and Greater San Antonio area we feel it is best to bring Stars Vipers to those who are not able to make the commitment to drive for reasons that are understandable. By making Stars Vipers accessible, it is our hopes that athletes and families committed to the sport can experience what we do for our athletes in Schertz.
 - Our continued partnership with Tumble Tech has made this process much more possible. The combination of Aerial Sports and All-Star Cheer under the same roof will provide an experience for athletes that is second to none. In addition, with this partnership has come an ample amount of growth which has led to our personal venture of relocation in the near future.
 - In the long term our vision is that we have three locations (Schertz, Austin, San Antonio) that are one family, with one mission: providing athletes opportunities for unlimited growth.

In House Competition & Practice Schedule

- Q: Are our teams going to compete against each other?

A: The reality is that we already compete against each other for awards...high point, choreography awards, showmanship awards, and summit bids. When we attend the larger events like NCA and Summit, unfortunately it is not up to us to decide which teams are in certain divisions. It is up to the event producer of each event to make the breaks of each division based on team registration. We as a staff will do our best to build teams that historically do not compete against each other at larger competitions. Based on this past year's events, regional and smaller local competitions we can expect that our teams will compete against each other at certain competitions.
- Q: Are teams in Austin going to have practice in Schertz/San Antonio?
- A: Athletes who are on Austin teams will not be required to attend practices in Schertz/San Antonio. We will provide athletes from both locations the opportunity to travel if they choose to accept a roster spot on an out of town team.

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- Example: If the Austin locations offers a Senior Level 4 team, but your athlete is a good fit for a Restricted Level 5 team, in Schertz, we will make that option available.
- Example: The Cedar Park athletes are not going to be expected to commute. We will however provide a great opportunity for athletes to commute for a team they desire to be on. Because of our commitment to providing a consistent coaching experience for our members we envision these two locations operating as one. #together
- In order to provide a different environment for Austin athletes, we will, on a limited basis, grant parent requests to schedule practices that offer their athletes a different environment to practice in.
- Q: How many days a week do we practice?
- A: At Stars Vipers we have a culture of accountability allowing us to be on schedule, in which limits the need for extra practices. (please see our contract @ starsvipers.com to become familiar with our expectations of athletes and parents)

Q: We hear you make certain classes mandatory?

A: Absolutely, we feel it is critical for athletes to grow with their team members and to always be improving. The classes we make mandatory are jump and stretch. Due to the fact that we make jumps mandatory for everyone and stretch mandatory, but not limited to top girls, we price them at \$30 a month.

Q: Are your practices closed to parents?

A: Yes, our practices are closed. We love our parents and do believe they are the most influential individuals that guide our athletes through their cheer career, however we also believe that by closing practice we create a more focused and goal driven environment. This is part of our culture and we feel it is an important part of our process. We respect individual's opinion's that may feel differently.

Tryouts

- Q: Is everyone who attends tryouts selected for a team?
- A: We do our best to find placements for all athletes trying out for our teams, however, we do not guarantee that every athlete will be selected for a team or for a certain role on a team. Currently we place more than 90% of athletes that tryout and most that are not on a team after tryouts are due to the parent or athlete not accepting our offer.
 - The most common outcome for an athlete not being on a team is that they feel they are capable of being on a higher level team or feel strongly that they need to be in a certain role.
 - We respect everyone's opinion however **we are accountable for selecting teams to our standards at all levels.**

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- At the level in which we compete we strive to put the best athletes on the mat for 100% of the routine. Being a well rounded athlete serves our purpose greatly.

- Q: What can I do to prepare for tryouts?
 - Come in for pre-tryout evaluations, see our social media for dates and updates, or contact SV directly to see if you can schedule a date.

 - If you would like to be a strong candidate for one of our teams please become familiar with our video that demonstrates the specifics we are looking for in each area of our sport. The video will be accessible on starsvipers.com by April 9th, 2018.

 - We strongly suggest signing up for a jump or tumbling class at either location to gain experience to how our coaches train various techniques.

- Q: Does Stars Vipers accommodate athletes request for certain roles?

A: This is a very sensitive situation for a few athletes and parents. We understand the culture of cheer has made certain roles more prominent than others. We do not buy into that viewpoint at Stars Vipers. The focus is the team and it is in our DNA that every athlete on the mat is essential to “team” success.

- Q: How do you determine an athlete’s level/team?

- A: Picking teams is part science and part art. It is probably the most important thing we do all season and a process that we take extremely serious.
 - How do you pick athletes level:
 - Tumbling is one of the biggest hurdles athletes and parents have when trying out. At Stars Vipers tumbling is a prerequisite to be considered for a team, but it is not a deciding factor. There are many athletes that can tumble, but can they do it with a heart rate of 185, down a straight line, with 25 other kids on the mat knowing that there is still 2 minutes left in the routine? Even if they can, do they bring other skills that we need?

 - We look at the entire athlete. Can they dance, stunt, perform and jump at the level or age group they are trying out for?
 - This is where the art/innovation comes in.

 - There are **very limited** cases that some athletes don’t have all the “required” skills but they just have “it” to make a specific team better.

 - This is a process we have to get right if we ever want to be considered a legitimate sport with a defined path for progression.

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- That being said we never bat a 1000 at tryouts. There are times that we over/under estimate athlete's abilities, athlete's regress, and some progress dramatically.
- How do you pick teams?
 - Very carefully ☺
 - We do our best to put athletes of like ages and athletic ability together with the goal of being successful at the highest levels. It might be a little funny to some but we put as much time and effort into putting together our Youth Level 1 teams as we do our Worlds teams, probably more time to be truthful.
 - It is also important to note that some believe that being on a senior team is held in higher regard than to a youth or junior team. We are not sure how this misconception has come about, but we do not believe this at Stars Vipers. We feel that, when done at a high level, perfecting kids at a younger age bracket is impressive.

Q: I heard you automatically put athletes on lower levels?

A: This is a misstatement however we can see how some outside individuals may see it this way. We feel strongly in responsible progression. Unfortunately there is not a set criteria from gym to gym on how to appropriately move kids from level to level. We will not sacrifice quality and do not give in to parent pressure to place athletes on certain teams or place athletes in certain positions. If you are set on a certain level or a certain role on the team being a member of our gym potentially could lead to a poor experience for you and more importantly your team. We do not fall under the industry wide criteria of walkovers equal level 1, tucks equal level 3 etc.... If you have these skills then it will make you a candidate for the team however there is so much more that goes into being a true well rounded athlete at a given level.

Austin Teams

- Q: How many teams are you going to have in Austin?
- A: We have not given ourselves a set number. This is dependent upon how many and what athletes decide to tryout. We are committed to building a great program in Austin where athletes and parents, who are ready, can come get a great experience.
- Q: When will you be in Austin to evaluate potential athletes?
- A: We will be in Austin on Saturday March 31st from 1-3pm and Mandatory Flyer specific evals on April 22nd from 1-5pm providing evaluations for potential athletes. For all athletes besides Flyers, being evaluated is not mandatory, however we do feel by being evaluated prior to tryouts will lead to a better member experience and avoid any safety issues. Follow up on FB, Instagram and Twitter for upcoming dates.

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- Q: How will you be sending out information to keep people updated on changes, camps, clinics, tryouts, etc.?
- A: We encourage everyone to like our social media pages and follow us on Facebook and Instagram. We will also create a class in our parent portal for athletes that are highly interested in staying in communication while we build up the Austin location. We will also pass information along to Danielle to share with her membership.

Costs

Q: Your cost seem to be higher than some other gyms in the local market, why is this?

A: Yes and no, we are definitely not the lowest cost gym in the industry. That being said there are many factors that go into how each gym charges for their services and the resources that help make a program what it is. As an example: we do not charge for evaluations, flyer evaluations, or private tryouts. We also do not encourage athletes to buy miscellaneous items that do not lend themselves to improving athletes on the mat (bags, warm-ups, banquets etc...). In addition any fun items teams receive prior to national season are included in our fees. We provide the highest quality in the industry for every full year team for choreography, music, and uniforms. We deliver a best in class experience with our skills camp that provides over 30 of the best instructors in the country. Our mission for every one of our teams is to go head to head with the best teams in the industry. Therefore we attend more summit bid events than most of our competitors will attend and in most cases our teams will hit the competition floor almost twice as many times as most gyms in the industry. There are so many ways to structure your cost and we feel by making it easy to see and not skimping on the important things is the best way to go. We understand that all-star cheer is an investment in your athlete so Star Vipers Fundraising Committee has worked very hard to provide a well-organized cadence of events to help every athlete offset a significant amount of their fees for the season.

Rebecca and I are also planning on being extremely involved in both locations. We currently live in New Braunfels and will be making the commitment to be at both locations.

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