

Coaching Acro Is As Easy As Pie

by Dr. Jay Binder

Recipe for Success

Ingredients Needed:

- 2-4 gymnasts
- 1 coach, properly trained
- 1 40 x 40 spring floor
- 1 teaspoon of practice thyme
- 1 teaspoon of sage advice
- A dash of competitive spirits

Mix thoroughly and bake for 2-3 months and you have 2-4 servings of gymnasts retained in your gym. This recipe will certainly qualify you to enter your goods in the local and state competitions and quite possibly regional and national competitions as well. Add additional thyme, sage advice and competitive spirits to rapidly advance the level and skill of your final product.



This article is designed to get the message about Sports Acrobatics out to existing coaches and gym owners of artistic, rhythmic, and trampoline and tumbling clubs across the country. It is an easy way to add a lucrative program to your gym and offer a wider range of programs for your athletes. There are many reasons to add Sports Acrobatics to your existing gymnastics program. Some of these reasons are listed below.

- Sports Acrobatics is an extremely easy program to add to your gym, as you can use existing spring floors, mats, spotting belts and personnel.
- It is not difficult to teach existing staff to coach Level 5 and 6 acrobats - therefore adding an additional program to your gym.
- You can retain athletes in your gym that you might otherwise lose because they are too tall, too big, too old, or they've gone as far as they can in their respective discipline.
- Sports Acrobatics allows you to market to new groups of students from pre-K to cheerleaders to competitive gymnasts that "don't fit the usual mold."
- Sports Acrobatics gives flexibility to "mix and match" athletes to fit your changing gym and athletes' growth (women's pair, men's pair, mixed pair, women's trio and men's four).
- Allows high-level competition and success in much less time, athletes that have backgrounds in other disciplines can compete Level 5 or 6 at Sports Acrobatics Nationals in a few months.



The first 2003 Sports Acrobatics New Coach Clinic was held January 11-12 in Jacksonville, Fla. A second clinic is being held February 1-2, 2003 in Dayton, Ohio. Jacksonville, Fla. is the site of the 2003 Sports Acrobatics J.O. and Elite National Championships in July and August. The USA Gymnastics Freedom Cup will be held in conjunction with Nationals and will feature world-class U.S. and international competitors in Senior Elite and two World Age Group level competitions. The U.S. competitors will be chosen at Team Trials in Milwaukee, Wis., in June and should include current Mixed Pair World Champions,

Arthur Davis and Shenea Booth.

The format will include teaching Sports Acrobatics Level 5 coaching on Saturday and Level 6 on Sunday. The clinicians will cover the progression of coaching acrobatics skills required in levels 5 and 6 and review the basics of constructing tempo and balance routines. The attendees will get a copy of the Sports Acrobatics Specifications, which describes the competition rules and skills for all levels. They will also receive handouts and a video compilation of example routines from all five pair/group categories.

Tuition for the clinic is as follows:

- two-day clinic, including the Sports Acrobatics Specifications, handouts and video is \$90 per coach
- two-day clinic only is \$65 per coach (including handouts and video)
- single day sessions are \$40 each per coach

At the Sports Acrobatics New Coach Clinics, the new Sports Acrobatics Specifications book is being offered at a discounted rate of \$25 to all participants.

The goal of the clinic is to fully equip the attendees to return to their gyms understanding the sport, coaching techniques, and basic routine construction, ready to begin a new program or enhance an existing one. It's possible that some participating coaches may be able to prepare pairs and groups that can compete in local, state, regional, and national competitions in 2003 or 2004. You can register for the clinic by calling the Senior Program Director, Carisa Laughon at 317-829-5667 or by email at claughon@usa-gymnastics.org. Clinic details are also available online at www.usa-gymnastics.org/acro.

-Dr. Jay Binder

Dr. Binder is a member of the Sports Acrobatics Program Committee and a member of the USA Gymnastics Board of Directors. He has also been the national team physician for the past 12 years. He practices orthopedic surgery and sports medicine in Metairie, Louisiana.