



# EVENT MANUAL

Windy City Crown Open | Schaumburg Convention Center | March 21-22, 2026

Revised November 26, 2025

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# WINDY CITY CROWN OPEN

The Crown Open Event Series is more than just competition—it's a celebration of teamwork, passion, and performance. Our high-impact events highlight the best in cheer & dance, featuring dynamic routines, great choreography, and the unshakeable spirit of young athletes. The inaugural Windy City Crown Open is set for March 2026 in Greater Chicago.

## Event Dates

March 21-22, 2026

## Registration Opens

December 1, 2025

## Competition Venue

Schaumburg Convention Center  
1551 Thoreau Dr N,  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

## Host Hotel

Renaissance Schaumburg  
1551 Thoreau Dr N,  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

## Event Schedule

The Windy City Crown Open will begin each morning at 8:00 am, see event schedule for Divisions. Teams placing 1st in the Windy City Crown Open will receive bids to the 2026-2027 Crown Open Series. Additional events will be announced in the future.

Event Day	Divisions	First-Last Team Competes
Saturday, March 21 & Sunday, March 22	Show Cheer 1 – 4 Core Cheer Dance Sideline Performance Cheer Costumed Mascot	8:00 am–4:00 pm (CST)

## Teams & Divisions

Age Division	Ages Division
Tiny Mite	7 and Under
Mitey Mite	9 and Under
Jr. Peewee	11 and Under
Peewee	12 and Under
Jr. Varsity	10-14
Varsity	12-16
Bantam	14 - 18
Challenger, All Inclusive Cheer Abilities	5-18

Skill Division	Age Division
Core Cheer	TM, MM, JP, PW
Show Cheer 1 (1 Ltd.)	CH, TM, MM, JP, PW, JV, V, B
Show Cheer 2	MM, JP, PW, JV, V, B
Show Cheer 3-4	JP, PW, JV, V, B
Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop	CH, TM, MM, JP, PW, JV, V, B
Sideline Performance Cheer	MM, JP, PW, JV, V, B
Costumed Mascot	V, B

## Size Divisions

Show Cheer 1-3 & Sideline Performance Cheer Skill Divisions, Further Subdivided by Size:

- Cheer Small: Minimum 5 – Maximum 10 Athletes
- Cheer Medium: 11 – 20 Athletes
- Cheer Large: 21 – 35 Athletes

Show Cheer 4 & All Dance Divisions with four or more teams.

- Apply Natural Break for divisions with four or more teams.

**Exception:** *Divisions with more than 10 teams (11+) will be further subdivided by natural break.*

# EVENT PLANNING & REGISTRATION

## Overview

This will help in planning your trip to Schaumburg, Illinois and provide a seamless experience throughout the booking process. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the enclosed information.

Event registration opens on December 7, when groups can begin securing Team Credentials.

## Registration Fee

The Team Credential fee is based on the size of the team and is based on \$100 per athlete. Two coaches are included with team registration; these coaches will receive an event credential at check-in.

Each participating athlete and coach will receive an event lanyard, and all athletes will receive a special gift.

Rostered coaches are able to purchase additional event credentials at an incremental cost of \$100 each during the team check-in process.

## How to Register Your Team

You can register your team using the Playmetrics online registration portal. [Click here](#) to begin the registration process.

As part of the registration process, you'll be asked for team roster information.

**Pop Warner Teams:** You'll be asked to provide your Sports Connect TEAM ID number.

For a better understanding of where to locate your ID number, refer to the example to the right.

**Non-Pop Warner Teams:** You're required to upload a roster that includes each Athletes' name (First & Last) and date of birth, as well as the Coaches' names (First & Last) and head coach's email address.

Rosters will be checked during the event's check-in process. In addition, all teams must be able to provide athlete's birth certificates if questioned, prior to, during, or after a competition.

### Adjustments & Modifications

If you add Athletes to your team after you have registered for the event, you may request an invoice to pay for each additional athlete or pay the incremental fees during the team check-in process at the event.

No refunds will be given for teams that decide not to participate in the event, or for Athletes that drop off the official team roster for the event.

## Host Hotel Booking & Reservations

The Windy City Crown Open is not a stay-to-play event, so teams are not required to book rooms with partner hotels to participate in this event.

However, we have worked with several Schaumburg-area hotel operators to offer discounted rates to participating teams and families. These negotiated hotel rates are guaranteed to be lower than those currently on the market.

### Host Hotel

Pop Warner has secured a special rate at our host hotel, **Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Hotel**.

Teams and families are encouraged to book directly with the Renaissance.

Rooms are available at \$179 per night for a double room. A rollaway is \$20 per night if requested and based upon availability. Reservations can be made online using this special passkey: <https://book.passkey.com/go/PopWarnerNational2026>

All Reservations must be received on or before 5 PM Thursday, March 5, 2026.



Pop Warner TEAM ID Number Location



Host Hotel: Renaissance Schaumburg  
[\[Book Now\]](#)

## Additional Hotel Options

We have a range of hotel partners that can fit any budget. To secure rooms at any of these hotels, please use [our special TEAM INN booking link](#).



## Transportation

Airport transfers and ground transportation are not included with either the Team Credential fee or the Hotel reservation. However, here are some helpful tips:

### Travel Time between Airports, Train Station and Schaumburg Convention Center

- O'Hare International Airport
  - Distance: The distance between the airport and convention center is roughly 13 miles and is primarily accessible via I-90.
  - Travel Time: The average travel time between the two locations is around 16 minutes.
- Midway International Airport
  - Distance: The distance between the airport and convention center is roughly 35 miles and is primarily accessible via I-290.
  - Travel Time: The average travel time between the two locations is around 45 minutes
- Union Station (Amtrak station)
  - Distance: The distance between the airport and convention center is roughly 32 miles and is primarily accessible via I-90.
  - Travel Time: The average travel time between the two locations is around 40 minutes

### Rental Cars & Rideshares

- O'Hare International Airport
  - All major brands – Hertz, National, Enterprise, Alamo, Avis, and more – have a presence at O'Hare.
  - Rental car companies are located in the Multi-Modal Facility (MMF). To get to the MMF from the terminals or reverse, passengers should take the [Airport Transit System](#).
  - The MMF's address is: 10255 W. Zemke Blvd., Chicago, IL 60666.
  - For rideshares, including Uber and Lyft, there are two loading zones:
    - Terminal 2 – waiting area is on the Upper Level with pickup poles marked with orange signage labeled 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F and 2G to designate pickup zones.
    - Terminal 3 – waiting area is on the Upper Level with pickup poles

marked with green signage labeled 3G, 3H, 3J and 3K.

- Midway International Airport
  - All major brands – Hertz, National, Enterprise, Alamo, and Avis – have a presence at Midway.
  - Rental Car pick-up is located at Lower Level Door #2. Shuttles operate 24/7 and are scheduled to run every 15 minutes.
  - Midway's Rental Car Facility is located at 5150 W. 55th Street, Chicago, IL 60638.
  - For rideshares, including Uber and Lyft, the loading zone is on the Lower Level Outside of Baggage Claim, Door 2-4.

#### Daily Self-Parking at Convention Center

- Complimentary Self-Parking: Available on-site for guests and visitors.
- Valet Parking: Available daily for a fee, though specific hours of availability may vary.
- Overnight Parking: Also available for a daily fee.

#### Entertainment Options

To enhance your stay in Schaumburg or the Greater Chicago area, there are numerous entertainment options. These are not required to purchase but may add to an enjoyable visit.

[TopGolf Schaumburg](#)

[Andretti Indoor Karting](#)

[Enterrium](#)

The options have direct links so you can book your experience directly with the venue.

## ARTICLES OF COMPLIANCE

#### Event Day, Team Entrance

Arrive 20 minutes prior to warm-up time and report to the Team Entrance. Rostered coaching staff and athletes (with team book/roster) will be admitted to this area. Scheduled warm-up time can be found on the Order of Performance. Teams will not be permitted to warm-up after your designated warm-up time has passed so please be prompt.

Challenger, Cheer Abilities and/or All-Inclusive Divisions are permitted an Exhibition Performance on their preferred date, March 21 or 22.

If your team arrives early to Schaumburg Convention Center, they are permitted to watch the event. When your team leaves seating areas, please bring all belongings with you.

#### Warm-Up Area

An event staff member will welcome your team and escort them to the Warm-Up Area. The Head Coach will present the Team Roster, Registration Confirmation. Each athlete/rostered coach may enter with Credential (received at time of registration) to enter the warm-up area, backstage and coaches' seating area.

This station should take no more than 10 minutes.

An event staff member will escort your team to one mat for warm-up, tumbling and stretching for a timed, 10 minute period (9 Minutes, 1 Minute to Exit Area).

The team will then be asked to immediately move to one warm-up area. A 54' x 42' surface will be provided (nine (9) panel matted surface) for a timed, 10 minute practice floor (9 Minutes, 1 Minute to Exit Area). The area will be equipped with a sound system (with uploaded music) for your warm-up time.

As soon as warm-up is complete, an event staff member will escort your team immediately backstage to the performance floor, entrance area.

## Music Verification

An event staff member will escort your designated team staff member to Music Verification.

**Music Policy:** Ownership and creative rights of music are intellectual property covered by Copyright law. The event respects the intellectual property rights of others and expects all athletes to adhere to the following rules regarding use of third party music for cheer and dance performance:

- All music used for cheer and dance performance must be purchased from a source authorized to sell a copy.
- You may use a mix purchased from an authorized mix vendor.
- You may use a song in its complete original form, purchased from an authorized vendor (such as iTunes, or a traditional retail store).
- For either a mix or a complete song, save your receipt.
- Any recording or broadcast of the cheer / dance event must be done with the music in background / off mic and with a voiceover describing the athletes and performance.

The Head Coach should also come prepared with a backup copy of the team music (CD/IPhone/IPad/IPod, etc.) even though it has been uploaded to the warm-up area and performance floor.

## Spectator Viewing Area

Fans should arrive ten (10) minutes prior to the team's scheduled performance time at the Performance Floor Spectator Entrance. Fans will be directed into a secured area that will be closed before the team takes the floor. When the team's routine is complete, the fans will be escorted out of the viewing area in time for the next performance.

All fans entering this area must show good sportsmanship, respect for the performers and also be aware of the Judges' view. Fans will not be permitted to bring noise makers, megaphones, signs, shakers, etc. into this viewing area. A photographer is on hand to provide action photos of your team.

Photographs will be available for purchase at the Schaumburg Renaissance Convention Center. Camera, video or any type of recording/photography including cell phones will not be permitted in this Spectator Viewing Area to avoid distraction for the performers and judges.

## Awards Ceremony Announcements

There will be multiple award ceremonies to coincide with current CDC and State/Local requirements. More information to follow.

## Parade of Champions

Rostered Team (Coaches and Athletes) must participate in full uniform and required soft soled athletic wear. The emcee will announce the team to enter the Awards Area Back Stage Left,

Photo Opp and Exit Front Stage Left to designated seating around the perimeter of the Awards' Stage.

## Awards

The events will award three places, first through third, in each division, Show Cheer 1-4, Show Cheer 1 Ltd, Core Cheer, Sideline Performance Cheer, Hip Hop, Theme Dance, Pom Performance and Costumed Mascot. Show Cheer and Sideline Performance Cheer Divisions will be further subdivided by size: Small, Medium and Large. A picture will be taken in the awards area with three (3) awarded teams (First – Third Place).

- Show Cheer 4 and Dance Divisions will apply the natural break when four or more teams are entered into an age division.
- Cheerleading Divisions with more than 10 teams (11+) will be further subdivided by natural break to maximize number of teams in a division.

## Highest Score Awards

Cheer & Dance teams with the highest score in their skill division will be announced and awarded Trophy and Championship rings. (Show Cheer 1-4, Core Cheer, Sideline Performance Cheer, Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop).

## Crown Open Bids

More information coming soon regarding Bids to 2026-2027 Pop Warner Queen City Crown Open, December 2026. Charlotte, North Carolina.

## Rules Review Station

If your team receives a Rules Deduction, the listed Head Coach will receive a text message, approximately 10 minutes following your team's performance, and will be directed to report to the Rules Review Table, next to the Judges' Platform. At that time only, and if you have a Rules Deduction (does not include Point Deductions), the Head Coach with one Assistant Coach may request a brief meeting with the Head Rules Judge for video review to better understand a "listed" rules deduction for their team only.

## Photography Area

This station is located at the Schaumburg Renaissance Convention Center. Each team may take a group and/or individual photo(s) in this location at a time during the event that is convenient to your team. Remember to check back after your performance for action photos.

## Miscellaneous

- Teams participating in the Crown Open Series must have at least five (5) active/rostered athletes on the performance floor on event day.
- Rostered Cheerleading Teams with more than 2 male athletes (3 or more) will be placed in a Co-ed Category within their age division.
- Participants wearing a full medical boot brace/walking boot may not be involved in stunting or tumbling. Safety - In concentrated efforts to reduce the risk of injury to athletes, every region/national event will use every possible means to obtain performance mats for safety, as well as to secure professional spotters.

## Mascot Performance

Introducing a Costumed Mascot Division to the event for rostered athletes in the Varsity and

Bantam Divisions. Introducing a second Costumed Mascot Division to the event for rostered adults representing an Association.

This fan favorite division will perform a 1:00 minute themed skit to music. Mascots should follow all guidelines as outlined in the 2025 YCADA Rules Packet.

- **How it Works?** 1:00 Skit Time (Max 90 seconds to allow for set-up break-down)  
Rostered Athletes/Coaches may assist with Set-Up, Break-Down.
- Mascot must be dressed in Official Team / Association Costume.
- May not Use Height Increasing Apparatus; No Live Props Permitted or Props that may damage surface;
- Costume should be well ventilated and easily removed