



tristar
GYMNASTICS

**Competitive
Programme Handbook
2023**

Welcome to Tri Star's Competitive Programme.

This handbook has been developed to give you some information about how we support our competitive athletes here at Tri Star. Competitive gymnastics will give your child the opportunity to develop confidence, mental and physical discipline, an appreciation for hard work, great relationships, and learn some cool tricks!

Our values here at Tri Star are *Belong, Respect, Excel*. We encourage all our members; *athletes, staff and parents*; to try and live out these values through creating a welcoming environment, treating each other and our spaces with respect, and through encouraging everyone to reach their own potential.

We have a code of ethics which we encourage everyone to read [here](#).

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Competitive History

Tri Star has a long history of producing both National and International level athletes. For over 35 years Tri Star has had athletes represent New Zealand at the Olympics, World Championships and Commonwealth Games. Many of these athletes are still members of the club today either as coaches, judges, or volunteers. Our current GM David Phillips, MAG Coordinator Misha Koudinov and WAG Judge Dido Gotz are former Olympic athletes themselves!

General comments

The competitive programme at Tri Star requires gymnasts to have natural physical ability which is why entry into our programme is by invitation only. Gymnastics is a challenging sport, and we want to set athletes up to succeed. It is hard to predict a gymnast's ultimate potential when they are young, and we take a *Growth Mindset* approach to developing our competitive athletes; treating mistakes as learning opportunities and helping them to be the best *they* can be.

Caregivers, please note that gymnasts don't always progress in a linear fashion due to their physical and psychological development, enthusiasm, coordination, or injury. Don't worry if your child doesn't move up a level/step every year ... the important thing is they are having fun and move when they are safe and technically ready to do so. Our coaches are always looking for ways to develop an athletes abilities in the training environment so while progress might sometimes be slow please know it remains our priority.

Athletes in our programme will learn:

- To train hard & extend themselves physically.
- To focus & concentrate.
- To face and work through fear (the beam is pretty skinny after all).
- To hold anxious feelings (competition) and still perform well.
- To be a great team player.
- Some pretty cool tricks!

Terminology

GNZ	Gymnastics New Zealand
MAG	Men's Artistic Gymnastics
WAG	Women's Artistic Gymnastics
TRA	Trampoline Gymnastics
TUM	Tumbling Gymnastics
T&T	Trampoline and Tumble

Communication / Our people

Communication

We want to keep the lines of communication open so please get in touch! Our staff are not always available to take calls as they have limited administration time throughout the week. Please email them and they will get back to you as soon as they can.

- **Questions about your child's technical development** – contact your Programme lead or child's coach.
- **Questions about uniform, competition entry** – contact Kate Speight: kate.speight@tristar.org.nz
- **Concerns about Athlete Wellbeing-** contact the Athlete Wellbeing Coordinator, Kate Speight- kate.speight@tristar.org.nz
- **Any questions about fees-** contact the finance manager, Matthew Palmer: accounts@tristar.org.nz
- **Absences-** contact team@tristar.org.nz
- **Concerns about coaches' performance-** contact the General Manager, David Phillips: David.phillips@tristar.org.nz
- **Any other queries or concerns** – Please refer to our concerns and complaints pathway.

Remember if you have concerns, we much prefer you to get in touch so that we can try to resolve things as soon as possible.

We often celebrate our athletes' achievements and communicate to our community through **social media** (Facebook and Instagram), our **website** and via **email** so get connected! Each term we will send out a newsletter celebrating the terms activity.

Our People

Operations

- **David Phillips-** General Manager
David.phillips@tristar.org.nz
- **Luke Dobney-** Operations and Events Manager
Luke.dobney@tristar.org.nz
- **Matthew Palmer-** Finance Manager
accounts@tristar.org.nz
- **Sarah Kelly-** Competitive Programme Coordinator/ WAG Lead Coach
Sarah.kelly@tristar.org.nz
- **Kerri Murray-** Events and Fundraising
Kerri.Murray@tristar.org.nz
- **Kate Speight-** Athlete Wellbeing Coordinator
Kate.speight@tristar.org.nz

WAG

- **Sarah Kelly-** Competitive Programme Coordinator/ WAG Lead Coach
Sarah.kelly@tristar.org.nz

MAG & TUM

- **Misha Koudinov** – MAG Lead Coach
Mikhail.koudinov@tristar.org.nz

TRA

- **Emily Knight**- Trampoline and DMT Coach
Emily.knight@tristar.org.nz

SQUAD

- **Dennise Hassan**- Squad Lead Coach
Dennise.hassan@tristar.org.nz

Description of Competitive Pathways

Squad Regional Gymnastics (MAG, WAG, T&T)

1-2, 3-4, 5-6 The Squad pathway of classes is a lower training hours pathway within the Competitive Programme. Squad 1-2 groups are the foundational

classes for our other Competitive Pathways and athletes can feed from these elementary classes into the other competitive codes. The Squad pathway also offers a full lower hour's class opportunities for all school ages and is a great option for athletes wanting a balance of gymnastics and other activities in their week. The Squad Programme content is similar to the other pathways but athletes progress at a slower pace. Squad athletes are expected to commit to a full year within the programme. Squad athletes have local and sometimes regional competitions - usually 4/5 per season.

WAG Women's Artistic Gymnastics

Step 1-4 *Elementary.* The gymnasts compete in local and occasionally regional competitions. There are usually 4-5 competitions per year.

Step 5-6 *Junior.* The best performing gymnasts are eligible for selection to the Auckland team to Nationals. They must reach the qualification mark set by GNZ to be considered for selection. Auckland is restricted to 1 team of 4. If numbers allow, GNZ permit one additional team and/or individuals to attend Nationals. *Note: A gymnast must be turning 9 in the year of competition in order to compete at Nationals.*

Step 7-10 and Senior

International *Senior.* Gymnasts compete at competitions throughout New Zealand and are also eligible to trial for international team selections. They must also qualify to compete at Nationals.

MAG Men's Artistic Gymnastics

Level 1-3 *Elementary.* Level 1-3 boys compete in local and occasionally regional competitions. There are usually 4-5 competitions per year.

Level 4-6 *Junior.* The best gymnasts are eligible for selection to the Auckland team to Nationals. They must reach the qualification mark set by GNZ to be considered for selection. Auckland is restricted to 1 team of 4. If numbers allow, GNZ permit one additional team and/or individuals to attend Nationals. *Note: A gymnast must be turning 9 in the year of competition to compete at Nationals.*

Level 7-Open

Senior. Gymnasts compete at competitions throughout New Zealand and are also eligible to trial for international team selections. They must also qualify to compete at Nationals.

T&T Trampoline, Double Mini-Tramp and Tumbling

Junior and Intermediate Our T&T groups are grouped according to ability and there may be mixed ages in any given group. Our Junior and Intermediate T&T athletes work towards the GNZ requirements for their age group. They have both local and regional competition opportunities.

Any athlete 9 years and over who has met the requirements of their age group is eligible to compete at the Nationals Champs.

Selections

Gymnasts are *invited* into all competitive programme classes. Gymnastics is a very technical sport, and the requirements of the routines athletes have to perform are greater than in our recreational (GfA) programmes. This requires our team to assess each athlete before inviting them into the programme for safety and best fit.

Acceptance into a competition training group is based on:

- Physical abilities
- Competition results
- Technical readiness (skill & coordination)
- Attitude and work ethic
- Coaches' discretion.

We make our selections into all our competition squads in the middle of Term 1 and 3 so parents will know their training schedule well before the Term starts. Generally, timetable changes remain in place for a full year. A child can be assessed outside of these selection times by contacting our competitive programme coordinator sarah.kelly@tristar.org.nz directly. All newly selected athletes are offered a 1 term trial initially so both coaches and athletes can confirm the programme is a good fit.

Occasionally if an athlete is consistently struggling in the competitive programme we may invite them into a more suitable programme for their ability. Our aim is to retain athletes for as long as we can in gymnastics. Providing timely alternatives is a good thing in the long run though can be a difficult transition.

If your child is wishing to transfer from another club our process is:

1. If we have space, one or two trial training sessions are offered with a group at the approximate level of the athlete.
2. Coaches will assess athletes suitability for our programme and either recommend we offer membership, propose an alternative class or decline membership. This will be communicated via our competitive programme coordinator.
3. If successful a provisional offer of membership will be extended so that the athletes parents may reach out to their current club to communicate plans to move. This provides the family with the security of knowing they have a place at Tri Star before leaving their current club.
4. Once this communication has been confirmed to Tri Star, we will also contact the athletes current club to see if there is any reason we should not accept membership (e.g. poor fee payment history or behaviour not consistent with our club values). N.b. Tri Star works closely with many Auckland clubs and maintaining transparency with any athlete transfers is a priority.
5. If current club feedback is positive a full membership will be extended, and we will process an athlete transfer form.
6. If your child ceases their membership (with notice given), and are wanting to return to any programme, they may have to be reassessed. Re-entry will also depend on space available in each of the programmes.

Training

We are very aware of the potential risks in our sport, and we make every effort to achieve and maintain a safe and fun environment for our athletes. The hours our athletes train are aligned with the technical requirements of the level they are competing in and are age and stage sensitive. We make every effort to keep a close

eye on any negative impacts on our athletes including regular medical and RED-S screening for senior athletes. Our best source of feedback is often our parents so please if you have concerns reach out to a team member.

Our coaches are all trained through Gymnastics New Zealand to assist gymnasts until a skill has been mastered. We use soft matting, the foam pit, and an array of training aids to break skills down in the learning process.

Quick training guide

- We operate on a **1:8 coach athlete ratio** (or close to it). Squad operate with a **1:10 coach to athlete** ratio.
- Please try to **be on time** – warm up is important in a dynamic sport like gymnastics.
- Please encourage your children to **listen closely** to the coaches direction – we are a busy gym and need to have kids on task.
- Girls are to wear **appropriate activewear** (e.g., leotards, leotards and tights, singlet and shorts, singlet and tights etc.) with hair tied up, and boys typically wear shorts and shirt.
- Occasionally boys may be asked to remove their shirt by a coach when they are being assisted with a skill as it is safer to grab a torso rather than a flapping shirt! The boys may also remove their shirts for training due to heat (and lets be honest they often want to show off their muscles like the big boys)!
- In winter we encourage all kids to **wear a fitted thermal** for extra warmth.
- Gymnastics is a high energy sport, so we encourage parents to fuel their children with healthy food choices. Athletes may **bring healthy snacks and water** to training (if your child has allergies please let us know). You can find advice on healthy training snacks [here](#).
- We offer a **private and semi-private training** service for those times when an athlete needs a little extra help. Check out <https://tristar.org.nz/private-training> for details.
- We do have **open gym** sessions at Tri Star but in the interests of safety, and to avoid overtraining, we do not allow any competitive programme athletes to train at these sessions.
- Athletes learn at different speeds so don't be alarmed if other children in your child's group are learning skills faster than yours ... remember we want each gymnast to be the best *they* can be, and some skills just take a little longer to get!

Missing Training?

Holidays

Our coaches are very passionate about what they do, often putting in more time that they are paid for. If you are planning an extended family holiday, out of courtesy please

give coaches 3-4 weeks' notice. If you have smaller commitments that come up, we prefer 24-48 hours' notice so we can prioritise your child's training activity accordingly.

Breaks from training are scheduled around competition events to enable athletes, staff and parents a chance to rest and relax. These breaks are built into your fees. There are no additional fee reductions for family holidays or illness. For significant injuries or long term illness where training volume is significantly impacted, athletes can apply for a 50% reduction in fees.

Younger athletes will have more/longer breaks and our senior level athletes will have a minimum of 4 weeks / year. You can see this year's calendar complete with breaks [here](#).

Injuries

When a gymnast is injured, our coaches are often able to modify training and concentrate on other areas that don't affect the injury. It is important gymnasts remain in contact with teammates, and that they continue to stay strong and flexible for their return to full training. Training fees can only be adjusted according to the [competitive fee's policy](#). If your child sustains a more serious injury e.g. a break, spinal or head injury, medical clearance will be required before resuming full training.

Illness

If your child is sick, please keep them away from training. A day off won't hurt and is a great way to show concern and care for teammates. Just give the office a call **6254354**, team@tristar.org.nz and the team will let the coaches know.

Athlete Wellbeing

At Tri Star we aim to ensure that our training culture is a supportive and inclusive one, thus providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all our members. Our club values of **Belong**, **Respect** and **Excel** guide the behavioural expectations of our training environments. If we are made aware of any behaviour that does not align with these values, we investigate all claims following the protocols that we have in place and take an appropriate action. You can find our Concerns and Complaints pathway through the following [link](#).

In the interests of athlete welfare, all our coaches are police vetted, have or are working towards appropriate GNZ (or equivalent) training, and complete a Child Safeguarding course. We also have on staff our Athlete Wellbeing Coordinator, Kate

Speight, who oversees the development of various athlete centred initiatives and is a point of contact for athletes to reach out to.

Tri Star has Athlete Leaders for each code and they are a great inspiration as well as on the floor support to our junior athletes. They are supported by our Wellbeing Coordinator and help feedback how we are doing as a club. Check out this year's Athlete Leaders [here](#).

Tri Star also has two Athlete Representatives on our Board of Directors. These athletes report quarterly directly to our board of trustees bringing an athlete voice directly to our governance space. Check out this year's Athlete Representatives [here](#).

Physio

We have a two great Physio's that have gymnastics experience and are currently working with many of our team members both onsite at the club and at their respective clinics. Their details are:

- **Patrick Peng** – Patrick is a former international level gymnast of Tri Star and has an excellent understanding of the demands of our sport, and how to get your child up and running again.
 - <https://physioimpact.co.nz/>
 - 0212226168
- **Hayley Glasgow** – Hayley was also a former international level gymnast and has travelled internationally with New Zealand teams.
 - Hayley.sligo@hotmail.com
 - 021934486

Patrick and Hayley will be able to recommend any additional specialist care your child may need.

Psychological Support

Amanda Hardaker is a mental skills coach who works for Headstrong Consulting. Amanda was a level 10 gymnast from Park City, Utah and has a Master of Science in Applied Psychology from the University of Canterbury.

- **Amanda Johanson**- amanda@headstrongconsulting.com

Amanda is available for online consultations and is a frequent contributor to our training camps.

Supporting your child

Parents play a crucial supporting role for young gymnasts. Here are a few tips we have found work well for parents in the competitive programme at Tri Star:

- **Let coaches coach**, and parents' *parent* – leave the technical stuff to us and keep home a safe place to decompress, recharge and create balance.
- Make sure you have something for the kids to eat quickly after training – it's important for recovery and helps to **avoid a 'hangry' car ride home**. We have put together some nutrition guidelines, for some handy hints around training nutrition, <https://tristar.org.nz/competitive-gymnastics>
- **'Check in'** briefly with your kids after training and let them lead the conversation – sometimes they will want to debrief and other times they will prefer to keep it to themselves (this is O.K. so don't force it)! They just need to know *you* are interested in what *they* are interested in.
- On competition days, **arrive at least 30 minutes early** so your child has time to adjust to the atmosphere. Gymnastics competitions are structured affairs and take a bit of getting used to. Competition organisers also reserve the right to bring an event forward by 30-60 minutes.
- Encourage your kids to **focus on the things they can control** like their effort, focus, team spirit, fun. They can't control the judging or results (probably a good reminder for parents sometimes too)!
- It's easy as a parent to get caught up in the excitement (or even drama) of training and competition. Sometimes you'll hear things from other parents about coaching, judging, management that may be of concern to you. **Don't dwell or stress** – just give us a call and get some clarification.
- While you may not always agree with or understand our decisions remember **we're all on the same team** and want the best for your child too! Remember it's in our interests also to have your child succeed.
- We love having parents as a part of our training environment and encourage you all to come and **support your kids from the mezzanine area upstairs**. We have found that some kids eventually reach an age where the drop off/pick up level of parent involvement can be a better approach when gymnastics becomes the 'thing' they do away from home. We encourage you to check in with your kids and see what they want.

Behaviour Management

Rules and regulations which govern gymnasts and parents have been outlined here and in our [constitution](#). Essentially, we operate on the following guidelines for any low-level behaviour which is unhelpful or unsafe in our environment:

1. **Check in**- If a coach notices unhelpful behaviour, they will check in with the athlete to see if there is a reason they are not performing at their best.
2. **Verbal warning** – if the behaviour continues, the coach will verbally communicate to the athlete what needs to change.
3. **Time out + talk to parents** – if poor behaviour continues, we will sit the child out from their training session and contact the child's adult.
4. **Suggest alternatives** – if poor behaviour continues over multiple day/s weeks, we may invite them to join a more suitable programme, or if serious enough, cease their membership.

Bullying or serious misconduct of any description will not be tolerated from parents or gymnasts, and if substantiated may result in a suspension, or even termination of club membership.

Competitions

There are usually between 4-6 competitive opportunities in a season which runs between March and July (Competitive) and June and October (Squad). We aim to choose competitions for our athletes that give them a balance of good quality competition, out-of-town opportunity (which are great for family trips) and space events out well (this is a little out of our control as GNZ set the calendar).

Competition attendance is **compulsory** so that our athletes have the opportunity to build their performances throughout the season, contribute to teams, gain qualification scores for nationals (for those eligible), and show off their hours of hard work.

Competition entries

At the end of each year (December), Tri Star will publish a calendar of events for the following year. When entries open for each competition we will send you a link which you can just click on to accept- we will notify you of costs to be paid to the club. Please note, that as soon as you accept the invitation, you will be liable for the entry fee, even if you don't attend the event.

If your child is sick or injured, please provide us with a **medical certificate**. In most cases the entry fee will be refunded, in part, by the hosting club.

Competition timetables come from the hosting club, and in some cases we may only receive the information a couple days out from the competition day. We pass along any information as soon as we receive it, but please have patience as there can often be delays from the hosting club in providing the information.

Team Selections

A team consists of three or four gymnasts. The three highest scores on each apparatus are added together to get the final team score. The coaches will select teams prior to competition. Please refer to our team's [selection criteria](#).

Away competitions

Once or twice in a season we will travel out of the Auckland Region for all nationals' eligible athletes, and this is an additional cost to the club. Many clubs spread the costs of coach and judge travel, food and accommodation amongst all the travelling athletes equally. AT Tri Star to support our athletes, these costs are covered in your term fees.

Judging

For those sitting and watching this sport for the first time, the way gymnastics is judged may seem very confusing. Try not to get too hung up on scores, and if you need

clarification on your child's performance / progress the best thing to do is talk to your coach or programme lead. We will be able to provide you with feedback specific to your child's performance that will often help to provide context.

Anyone interested in becoming a judge please contact the office and Tri Star will support you with training.

National Championships.

For those athletes who are eligible to compete at nationals (see below) it is a really amazing opportunity! All the gymnastics codes are represented under one roof, and it is an exciting event for a young gymnast to be a part of as the best gymnasts in New Zealand come together under one roof.

Selection to Nationals and for Auckland teams is based firstly on attaining qualification scores (set by the technical committees of each code), then on an athlete's ranking in the Auckland region. This is calculated taking into account the best scores of the athletes over a number of predetermined events.

If an athlete doesn't make a team, there is the chance they could still attend as an individual but only if there are available spaces.

Nationals' selection process:

- All athletes must be 9 years and over.
- For MAG, Tramp, DMT and Tumble, generally there are no restrictions on the number of athletes that attend nationals due to lower membership numbers. If they have reached the performance criteria (which is documented in the technical handbooks), they can attend. There are pathways for both all-around gymnasts and apparatus specialist (MAG).
- In WAG there is one team of 4 per step. Teams are selected by taking into account the top 3 all around scores of all athletes in each step from throughout the qualifying season with one score needing to come from an out of region event. Some consideration is also given to overall team strength so if for example an athlete with 3 strong events adds more value than the 4th ranked AA athlete, they may be selected instead.
- Selections are made by representatives from all clubs in the Auckland region. If a decision cannot be agreed upon by all three Auckland region clubs, the fourth ranked AA gymnast is automatically given the fourth place on the team.
- If other regions don't fill their team quota, then GNZ may make available additional spots for individuals to attend nationals. Typically, this is communicated within 10 days of nationals team announcements.

Uniform

Competition uniform is *compulsory* and varies depending on the Step and Level of your child. Please contact the office for uniform requirements, orders, and second-hand options - team@tristar.org.nz.

Fees

At Tri Star we endeavour to keep your training fees as low as possible. Due to the large number of training hours it is still quite an expensive sport. Fees are on a sliding scale, the more hours an athlete trains, the lower the hourly rate.

Our training fees are invoiced at the start of every term and the invoices will include an affiliation fee to Gymnastics New Zealand (which enables athletes to compete in sanctioned events) as well as the cost of your child's tuition.

Fundraising

The tuition we collect in the competition programme does not cover the cost of staffing the programme. We rely on a combination of a strong recreational membership and event revenue to help top up our income.

To support our commitment to keeping fees at an affordable level we would like to request your support with our **2023 Event and Fundraising Calendar**. We are hosting

- Diverse-ability Week (fundraising and awareness) - Term 1
- AGM + Quiz Night – Term 2
- Tri Star Tramp and Tumble Champs – Term 2
- Tri Star Senior Artistic Champs – Term 2
- Auckland Manukau Champs - Term 2
- Tri Star Elementary Champs and Novice Competition – Term 2
- Awards Night (Competitive Programmes) – Term 3
- Mason Gillespie Memorial / Tri Star Novice Competition - Term 3
- School Holiday Camps – Term 1,3,4
- Club Display – Term 4

These events and other fundraisers are good little earners for us and require people power! Keep an eye out for communication about up-and-coming events this year so you can *help us to keep your costs down*. We try to create 'bite sized' opportunities for you to fit a bit of volunteering into your busy family schedules, and I'm sure we can rely on you all to lend a hand.

It really does make a difference and is a great way to feel connected to the people and purpose of Tri Star.

Publicity & Promotion

As a part of your membership enrolment, we request permission to use photo and video footage of your child for promotional purposes. Our athletes are our best advertisement, and we want to celebrate their successes. If you have any objection to this practise, please let us know and please refer to our media policy for further information <https://tristar.org.nz/policies-and-procedures>.