

Holiday Edition Tumbling Times



Competitive Gymnastics: A Guide



Virginia Techniques is training 125 competitive gymnasts this season—but what does it all mean?

Techniques is the home of two competitive teams: Junior Olympic (JO) and Xcel. Both teams compete in their respective programs regulated by USA Gymnastics (USAG), the national organization devoted to organizing competition throughout the United States, from the earliest levels to the selection of the U.S. Olympic Team.

Our JO program starts at the pre-team level, where gymnasts train USAG Levels 1 and 2, with Level 2 gymnasts competing in local meets. Next, they progress to Levels 3-5, known as Compulsory levels—where gymnasts across the country compete the same routines. You may have heard some of the music often at the gym! These levels are designed to give a strong base before entering the Optional levels 6-10, where gymnasts

and coaches work together to select skills to best suit the gymnast (and please judges!)

Level 3 and up has State Meets, but starting at Level 8, gymnasts may qualify for regional competition. Regionals bring together gymnasts from several states to

show their very best. Virginia is in Region 7 with five other states. At Level 9, gymnasts can qualify from Regionals to Eastern Nationals—competing against gymnasts across the entire Eastern half of the United States. At Level 10, gymnasts can qualify to JO Nationals—the highest level of competition in the JO Program!

The Xcel program is also managed by USAG and consists of five levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond. Gyms use the Xcel program in a variety of ways, but at Techniques it is an opportunity for gymnasts to enjoy the competitive aspects of gymnastics with a lighter practice and competition schedule. Gymnasts start in the pre-xcel program where they attain their competition skills, and then enter the program at the Silver level. All levels of Xcel have optional routines, where gymnasts work on skills that best suit their abilities at that level.

So where is the program that gets us

our Olympians? USAG manages another program called the Elite program, where gymnasts can compete for spots on the National Team. There are a variety of ways gymnasts can enter into the Elite program, however it isn't required to be an Elite to be eligible for many gymnastics-related opportunities such as national competition and college scholarships.

If you are interested in competitive opportunities for your gymnast, please let us know! You can speak with your child's coach or talk to us at the front office.

Upcoming Events

Blizzard Blast Make-Up Class

January 7th

Old Dog Meet Team Fundraiser

January 7, 3:30

Kids Night Out

January 7, 6-10 pm

Rockstar Invitational

January 20-22, Blacksburg HS

I'm Super Theme Week

January 30-February 4

Kids Night Out

February 4

Back Handspring Clinic

February 18, 1:30 pm

Ribbon Week

March 13-18

Ninja Mission

March 18



OLD DOG MEET



January 7, 2017 ~ 3:30 p.m.

Admission: \$5 per person

Join us for an afternoon of fun seeing your favorite "old dogs" (Virginia Techniques coaches!) strut their stuff in the Old Dog Meet! The junior and senior gymnasts are coordinating the event to raise money for their trip to compete in New York City and have convinced many of the coaches at Virginia Techniques to pull out their old leotards and get back in shape!

The coaches do gymnastics and the gymnasts coach!
Come cheer on your favorite coach!

Inclement Weather Policy

Gym delays, closings, and event cancellations will be posted on the website and emailed to all families scheduled for class on the closing day. In the event of bad weather, please visit

www.vatechniques.com, check your email, the gym Facebook page, or call (540) 381-5151. Whenever possible, morning closings will be determined two hours before class and evening closings will be announced by 3 pm. Obviously, with developing storms we will make decisions as soon as possible.

Kids' Night Out

New this year at Techniques, we are pleased to bring you Kids' Night Out! These fun-filled events on the first Saturday of each month bring games, crafts, gym time, movies, and more for FOUR hours for kids ages 3 and up!

Only \$31 per child, with sibling discounts available, it's the new best way for kids (and parents!) to spend Saturday evenings!

- *January 7*
- *February 4*
- *April 1*
- *May 6*



A FEW MOMENTS WITH...



We sat down with our NinjaZone Program Coordinator and coach Robert Jaeger to spend a few minutes talking about the program that took the nation (and Virginia Techniques) by storm in October 2015 and hasn't let up yet! Here are a few of his responses:

Q: What do you think makes the Ninja program so popular?

A: From playgrounds to sidewalks, everywhere you go kids are jumping, climbing, and having fun. NinjaZone incorporates natural movements and obstacle course skills to turn this playing into a fun gym experience and kids love it! It also takes a disciplinary approach that reflects martial arts programs which is attractive to many parents.

Q: What are the short-term benefits participants are seeing from the program?

A: One of the first benefits I see from NinjaZone is the discipline aspect. Despite all of the distractions that come with a gym, the kids listening skills tend to increase quickly with the program.

Q: What about the long-term benefits?

A: After training NinjaZone kids learn to adapt, overcome obstacles both physically and mentally, advance coordination, and learn to overcome fear. All of these skills will prove very valuable as they grow up and through adulthood.

Q: Does participating in NinjaZone require a long-term commitment?

A: Not at all! While the major benefits from NinjaZone come after long-term training, its short term benefits are wonderful as well. They can also be applied to other sports and teach life lessons.

Q: What's your favorite part about coaching NinjaZone?

A: I have been doing NinjaZone style training for around eight years, most of which was learned without a coach and involved trial and error making it a slow process. It is great to be able to pass on skills and knowledge to new generations and see children progress. The greatest moments are when I see how happy and proud kids are after conquering skills they have been working on.



Gymnasts of the Season



Preschool Program: Breiton Hackworth

Age: 2 years old

School: First Baptist Roanoke

Favorite Gymnastics Event: Trampoline

Other School Activities: Swimming, Soccer Shots

Favorite Movie: Big Hero 6

Favorite Book: Goodnight Moon

Favorite Food: Pizza

Favorite Gymnast: Ms. Megan

Favorite Quote: Just keep swimming. Just keep swimming."

Breiton's Inspiration: "My big brother Alasdair"

Ninja Program: Abigail Hester

Age: 7 years old

School: Christiansburg Primary

Grade: 1st Grade

Favorite Ninja Event: Obstacle Course

Favorite Athlete: Stephen Curry

Favorite Movie: Descendants

Favorite Color: Red

Favorite Book: Bible

Favorite Food: Pizza

Abigail's Inspiration: Mommy and Daddy



Compulsory Program: Jill Grim

Age: 7 years old

Number of Years in Gymnastics: 4

School: Dublin Elementary

Grade: 2nd Grade

Favorite Gymnastics Event: Bars

Favorite Gymnast: Laurie Hernandez

Favorite Color: Orange

Favorite Book: Junie B. Jones

Favorite Food: Chili

Jill's Inspiration: "Laurie Hernandez"