

CHEERLEADING Champs

Bartow High School won last year's national championship with a high-flying routine

Most weekends, you can catch Florida's Bartow High School co-ed cheerleading team pumping up crowds at sports games. But in February 2016, the team traveled to Orlando to handstand on each other's shoulders, back handspring across a stage, and launch high into the air—all with a national championship at stake.

At the Universal Cheerleaders Association National High School Cheerleading Championship, Bartow competed against six other teams in their division and won. But snagging first place—not to mention qualifying for the championships—takes a lot of time and practice.

"We practice all summer, and we do basketball games and football games, which help a lot because we have to do stunts and cheers there," says Brianna Clark. She's a Bartow cheerleader who's been cheering since middle school. To prep for these performances, Bartow's team practices three hours a day, three days a week.

These frequent practices not only help the team perfect their moves but also help them learn and perform new stunts safely. Safety is a top priority for Bartow and other cheer organizations. Spotters on the ground stand nearby, ready to catch a tumbler if he or she falls.

"Active spotting is key when attempting new stunts," says Lori

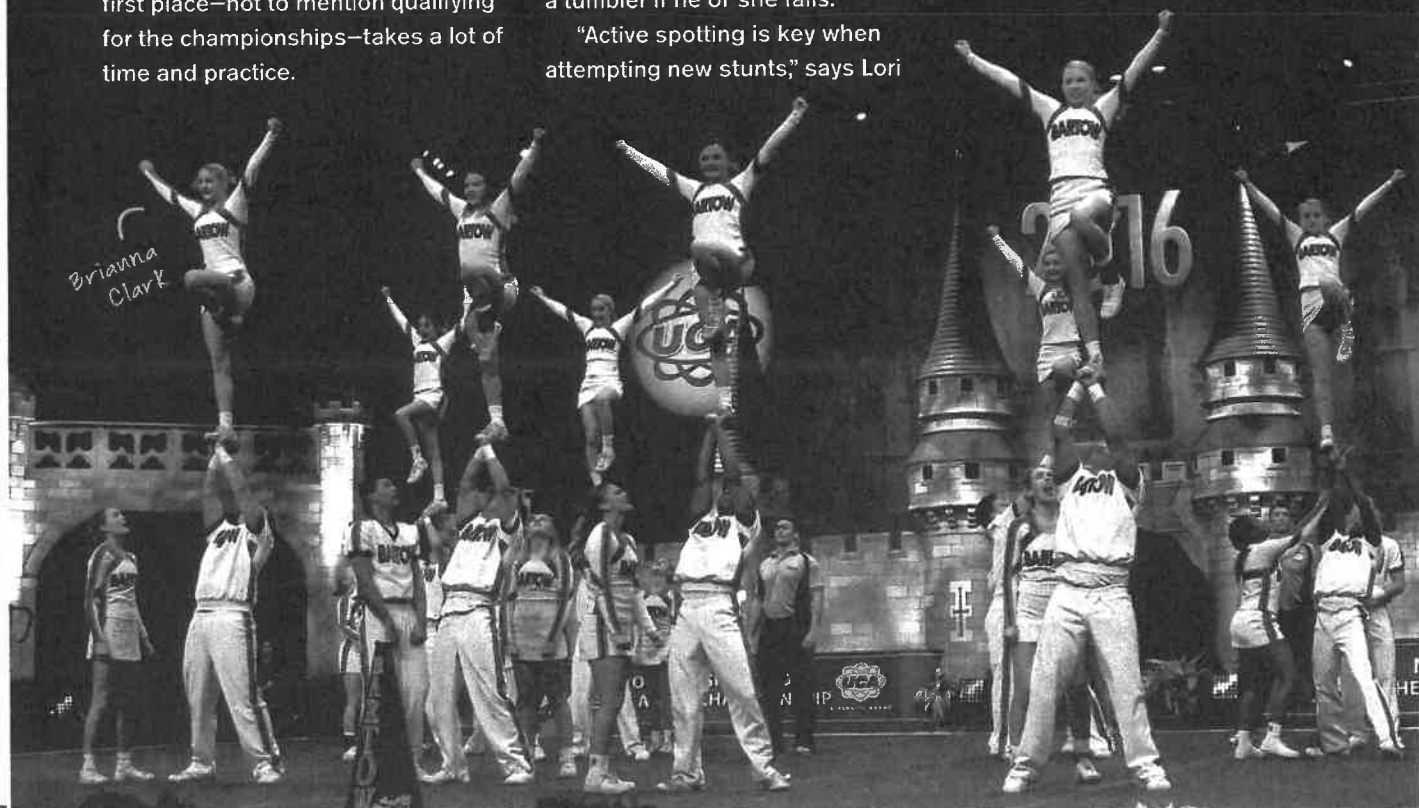
Jolliff, who has coached at Bartow High School for 13 years. She helps build the team's routines. "We always begin new skills with multiple spotters around, but even after the athlete has the correct understanding of the skill, we still have spots."

For example, the "Liberty" is a stunt where a flyer (the person lifted into the air) balances on one leg and extends her arms while being held up by the base (the person who does the lifting). Spotters keep their eyes on the flyer to make sure he or she is safe. It's just one of the many stunts Bartow used in their championship-winning routine.

Bartow has won four state and two national championships and has sent 43 athletes to college on cheerleading scholarships over the past 13 years. As a senior, Brianna's time at Bartow is almost up—but she'll always have memories of becoming a national champion.

"It was just a lot of fun to be rewarded for all the work that you did," says Brianna. "It's good to feel like you accomplished your goal!"

—*Courtney Palis*



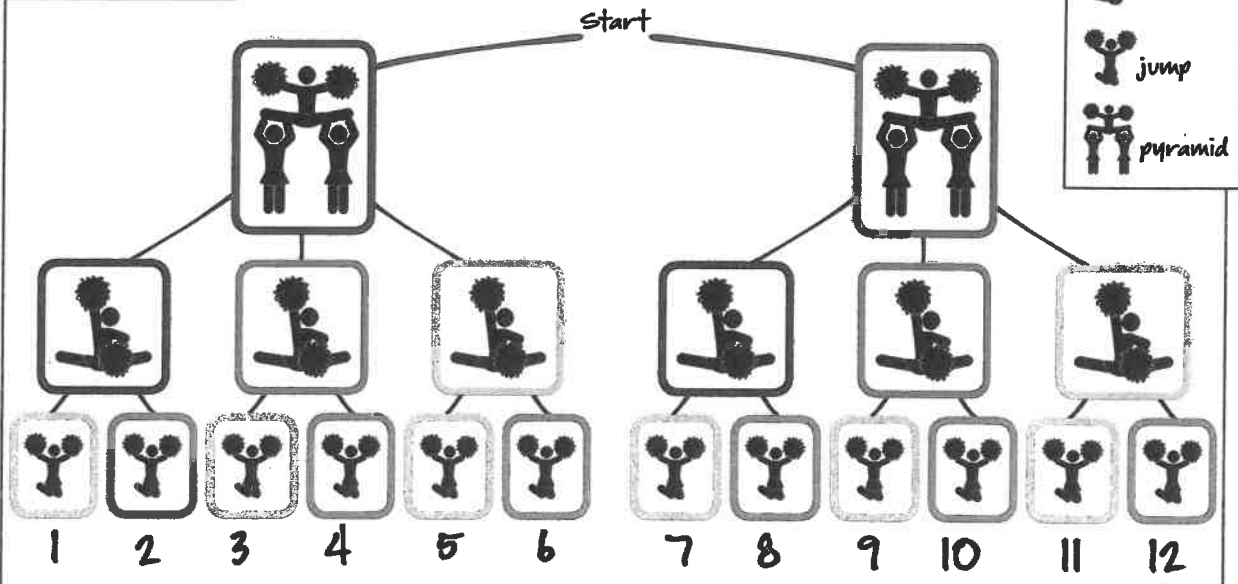


Cheerleading teams use combinations of different types of moves in their routines. A combination is a group of items in which order does not matter. To find the total number of possible combinations that a set number of items has, you can use tree diagrams.

EXAMPLE: You've been practicing various versions of 2 pyramids, 3 tosses, and 2 jumps. How many unique routines can you make using 1 of each move?

Do the MATH!

Draw tree diagrams of your options:



KEY



→ So you can build a total of 12 different combinations of routines out of these moves.

YOUR TURN

On a separate sheet of paper, draw tree diagrams to find the total number of unique combinations that can be made for each set of moves in the questions that follow.

1 Your team has been practicing 3 different tosses, 2 jumps, and 4 pyramids. How many combinations of routines can you create using 1 of each move?

3 You can pick from 3 types of tricks, 3 pyramids, 4 cheers, and 3 tosses. How many combinations of routines can you make using 1 of each move?

5 A. For your final routine, you've practiced 4 tricks, 5 cheers, and 3 tosses. How many unique routines can you make using 1 of each move?

2 For another routine, you've practiced 3 types of cheers, 4 tumblers, and 5 flips. How many unique routines can you make using 1 of each move?

4 Your team has been practicing 3 types of flips, 2 jumps, 2 tosses, and 5 tumblers. How many routines can you create using 1 tumbler, 1 flip, and either 1 jump or 1 toss?

5B. Make another tree diagram for the moves in part A, starting with a different move at the top of the tree. How do your answers compare?