



RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

for the
**NATIONAL JROTC FITNESS
CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIPS**
Daytona Beach, Florida

1) PURPOSE a) To identify potential safety hazards/risks to cadets, instructors and spectators that are possible during the upcoming Fitness National Championships. b) To pose mitigation/elimination methods to give everyone the best chance of staying safe throughout the weekend.

2) POSSIBLE RISKS ITEMS

a) **Temperature & Sun Related Issues (MODERATE RISK):** Individuals can experience excessive heat injuries due PRIMARILY TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS: Unfamiliar heat conditions (their body is just not used to the intense Florida heat). Improper/restrictive clothing, lack of proper hydration (both the night prior and the day of), poor conditioning/physical preparation and/or inadequate diet, both leading up to and on the morning/afternoon of the competition, and lack of proper sleep. EXCESSIVE HEAT is the MOST SERIOUS ISSUE likely to face the cadets. Not cared for, these issues can lead to the most serious medical conditions available including headaches, dizziness and disorientation. Left untreated, symptoms can progress to stroke, paralysis and even death. Additionally, cadets may NOT be used to being in such intense, direct sunlight that they could experience on the beach in Central Florida. This type of sun can produce sunburns, rashes and other heat related issues listed above.

Mitigation: 1) parents & instructors ensuring when possible cadets eat, dress, get plenty sleep and hydrate properly. PROPER HYDRATION STARTS 36-48 hours prior to a competition, not the morning of! Instructors should closely monitor heat related issues (heat exhaustion/heat stroke); 2) Keeping cadets in the shade of the pool deck, indoors at the hotel, transport vehicles or other locations in and around the event and otherwise out of the heat. Teams are encouraged to bring tents, canopies or other shade structures for time between events; 3) Use of sunscreen and sunblocking products by teams will be needed as well and stressed in advance to protect sunburn.

SNI further mitigates this risk by several factors undertaken: 1) starting the most arduous event (3K Team Run) earliest in the morning when the temperatures, winds, and heat effects are at their lowest; 2) SNI maintains a complete water station with water buffalo coolers for competitors to fill their event water bottles (provided by SNI to every competitor); 3) providing teams with adequate breaks between competition events for instructors to ensure shade and food/hydration are stressed and checked; 4) providing sunblock station for cadets in need; 5) training emphasis for SNI staff to LOOK FOR cadets getting too much sun and/or heat and feeling comfortable reminding instructors of the dangers.

b) **Wind Related Issues (MINOR RISK):** The beach location of the event can be a very windy situation. Flying sand can lead to eye irritation however flying debris in certain situations can cause trauma from event equipment, tents and structures not secured correctly toppling and striking those in attendance. These injuries can be more serious including cuts & bruises on the modest end and concussion, puncture wounds and severe head injuries.

Mitigation: 1) Teams will be reminded to TRIPLE CHECK the security of all loose objects they bring to the beach to be sure they do not become airborne; 2) Teams are reminded to think about using goggles or other eyewear for individuals that are susceptible to eye irritation; 3) SNI will ensure our event items are secured. In severe wind situations, some apparatus may not be assembled and used. Those items REQUIRED for use that may be susceptible will not be brought out until they can be directly monitored and secured with additional care. Some decorative items may NOT be placed out for display in severe situations; 4) Trash cans in use for the event are weighted or attached to poles and designed for the winds commonly present at the beach.

c) **The Ocean (SEVERE RISK):** The ocean itself is not used for any portion of the competition but proximity to the event could allow cadets to enter and enjoy the surf therefore it is listed herein. The competition site maintains professional lifeguards that assist in protecting those entering the ocean and a beach patrol that secures the safety of the shores and the water. However, SAFETY STARTS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL.

The Ocean maintains NUMEROUS hazards to include the following:

Shallow Water (*up to your knees*):

- i) **Jellyfish** – Rare to happen in May, all are non-deadly but for those allergic can be more severe. Species in these waters are similar to a bee sting. MITIGATION: Lifeguards & SNI maintain vinegar which helps to take the “sting” out. A band-aid is placed on the affected area.
- ii) **Salt Water** – Can be an eye irritant. If swallowed can cause stomach upset, diarrhea and vomiting. MITIGATION: Don’t SWALLOW salt water. It will cause you to DEHYDRATE in larger quantities. If you DO get a swallow of salt water, drink plenty of regular drinking water ASAP to balance your cells.
- iii) **Water Quality** – Daytona Beach area ocean water is extremely clean and the beach has never been closed due to poor quality. Any beach closure would be maintained by the beach patrol. No mitigation required.

Deeper water (*over knee high*): (*NOTE: SNI STRONGLY DISCOURAGES CADETS ENTERING THE OCEAN WATERS THIS DEEP!*)

- i) **Rip Tides** – Water pulling cadets farther and farther from shore. When they attempt to swim back, they tire and can drown. MITIGATION: Life guards KNOW when these occur and do not allow swimmers in these areas. DO NOT FIGHT against the current and swim if being pulled out. Swim PARALLEL to the shore until the pull ceases, THEN swim to shore.
- ii) **Drowning** – Even EXPERIENCED swimmers can drown, especially in the tumultuous waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Medical conditions, striking your head on the sea floor or even powerful waves can knock someone around enough to cause panic and then drown. MITIGATION: Do not allow your cadets to be in the ocean in water above their knees – period.
- iii) **Animal Bites (sharks/barracuda, etc)** – The ocean maintain sea creatures that CAN cause physical hard to humans. While the chances of an animal attacking a human are far less than one in one MILLION, certain items can be done to REDUCE your chances even further. MITIGATION: 1) Avoid swimming near fishing activity. if you see seabirds swooping down to the water, leave; 2) Avoid wearing jewelry, as the reflection of light off such accessories is similar to the reflection of light off a fish's scales; 3) Stay out of the water at night and during dawn and dusk. Sharks hunt most actively at these times, and they're harder for you to see in darker conditions; 4) Avoid overcast days, as it approximates the light levels at dawn and dusk's feeding times; 5) Stay out of the water if bleeding. If you have an open wound. Women need not be concerned if they are experiencing menstrual bleeding and lastly; 6) Do not urinate in water 0 sharks have an AMAZING sense of smell!
- iv) **Rough Surf/Breaking Waves** – Causes more deaths than any other single factor in ocean-related deaths. Atlantic Waves are extremely powerful and maintain a similar punch at times as being run into by a motor vehicle at 20mph! This can cause someone to be knocked over, swallow water, become disoriented, hit their head on the sea floor. All of these items can lead to drowning and death. MITIGATION: Again, DO NOT go into the surf that deep. Daytona Beach is a LONG gradual shoreline that allows people to walk 30-100 FEET into the surf at times before reaching the point where the waves “break”. Enjoy the beach but do it from the shallow waters only.

DO NOT ALLOW CADETS TO ENTER THE WATER DEEPER THAN THEIR KNEES. IF YOU DO ALLOW SWIMMING IN DEEPER WATER, DO NOT ALLOW SWIMMING ALONE. DO NOT ALLOW CADETS TO ENTER THE WATER IF THEY ARE NOT PROFICIENT SWIMMERS.

Swimming in the ocean requires a far stronger skill set than swimming in a pool, pond or other “still” waters. The ocean is POWERFUL and CAN KILL YOU if you are not experience or trained to swim in deeper more churning waters.



d) Lightning (MODERATE RISK): Cadets could be struck or injured by lightning. While lightning is fairly common in Central Florida, lightning is not likely this time of year (but more likely in the afternoon).

Mitigation: SNI works in concert with the Beach Patrol and closes the beach when lightning possibility reaches a distance of 10 miles. Should lightning occur, SNI will signal by radio the IMMEDIATE suspension of the event. All teams at that point will clear the beach and the pool deck area and head inside the hotel or into their school bus/van. Brief cadets where you will plan to meet in the event of lightning storms. People should refrain from using running water during storms because both the copper pipes using in many commercial buildings and the water itself are very conductive and strike nearby can pose a risk to you even inside a building.

e) Wild Animals/Insect Bites (LOW RISK): The hotel and beach area maintain virtually NO harmful animals. It is POSSIBLE to see a poisonous snake, scorpion, raccoon or other animal but it is extremely RARE in the coastal areas. Similar, bees and other small flying insects do not gravitate to the coast because of the prevailing breeze. Near the hotel attendees will often see small lizards that run and jump around in the vegetation. They are completely HARMLESS.

Mitigation: Cadets should ensure they do not intentionally handle any wildlife. Spiders and bees are most common but still not very prevalent. Ensure cadets and others know to get basic treatment for any insect bite immediately. Wash the wound and apply the proper dressing depending on the injury. Looking for swelling and redness and apply ice as needed.

f) Vehicle Safety (LOW RISK): The beach is hard packed sand and allows vehicle traffic in the area DIRECTLY ADJACENT to the competition area. THERE IS NO DRIVING ALLOWED ON THE BEACH ARE WHERE THE ACTUAL COMPETITION TAKES PLACE! Cadets could be injured by vehicles AND in the areas they park, as well as on the road in front of the hotel (A-1-A). Pedestrians have ALL RIGHTS OF WAY AT ALL TIMES but remember people with the right of way get run over and DIE! Event signage is posted emphasizing traffic lanes on the beach. Vehicles will travel no faster than 10 MPH on the beach and 35 on the road in front of the hotel. Seat belt use is mandatory.



Mitigation: ON THE BEACH: Watch where you are going and look for cars. Do NOT "layout" near the traffic lanes or parking areas. Drive with your windows down and be EXTRA CAUTIOUS of beach goers. Small children should be watched EXTRA CAREFULLY. Annually someone is KILLED generally by laying in areas where cars park – car doesn't see them and they are run over. ON A-1-A: Cross only in designated crosswalk (no jaywalking). Be careful walking on the sidewalks and do not jump into traffic. Speed limits are EXACTLY enforced – do not speed!

g) Falls/Cuts/Nosebleeds/Related (LOW RISK): Cadets may be injured by a fall during any event. Most importantly after a fall at the first convenient time, the school's instructor should speak with the cadet and physically look at the injury and treat as required. With any fall that maintains a possible head injury, please contact the SNI staff to ensure medical support is called for an evaluation. Any form of puncture wound should also seek the SNI staff for advanced medical support.

Mitigation: The best way to reduce the chance of a fall and deep cuts is to be in good condition for the event, wear the proper footwear, and to ensure you have the opportunity to review the course and look for areas that may cause falls BEFORE your competition begins.

h) Bruises/Sprains/Strains/Related (LOW RISK): Cadets can suffer a sprain, sprain or bruise through the normal course of competition. Bruises should be looked at and re-contact in the affected areas should be avoided if possible. Sprains & Strains are tricky and range from: 1)a Grade I (mild) sprain/strain involves some stretching or minor tearing of a ligament or muscle; 2)a Grade II (moderate) sprain/strain is a ligament or muscle that is partially torn but still intact and 3)a Grade III (severe) sprain/strain means that the ligament or muscle is completely torn, resulting in joint instability. Grade I injuries usually heal quickly with rest, ice, compression, and elevation (RICE). Therapeutic exercise can also help restore strength and flexibility. Grade II & III injuries are treated similarly but may require immobilization of the injured area to permit healing, with grade III sprains/strains require possible surgery to restore function.



Mitigation: Many of these injuries happen when the competitor is tired so they tend to happen later in the day. Most commonly affected areas are ankles, wrists, fingers and even necks. The BEST way to combat these issues is to be in peak physical conditioning PRIOR to attending the event. Other factors in play are to ensure proper hydration and to have proper meals. Stretching and warm-up are essential just prior to any physical exertion are also factors that can help prevent this.

3) SPECIAL POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR SAFETY

- a) The courses in use for the Fitness Nationals events will be carefully reviewed to be as safe as possible while still providing a challenge to the competitors.
- b) Teams SHOULD have with them at all times ***a basic first aid kit***. On site during the event, SNI will have a first aid kit an individual with advanced first aid training to assist you with minor medical issues. For any advanced issues, SNI maintains Advanced EMS support via 911 telephone.
- c) Every event will maintain starting personnel as well as course personnel to allow total supervision for all competitors. These individuals have radios to be able to summon the appropriate level of EMS services.
- d) TRAVEL TO/FROM THE EVENT: Instructors who are driving, ensure you have sufficient rest the night prior to attending. Use rest breaks to stay fresh. Keep bus/van decorum at a dull roar.
- e) FIREPITS: Fires of any kind are not permitted anywhere on the beaches in Daytona.
- f) BATHROOMS/SHOWERS: The pool deck maintains small showers to clean the sand off the feet of those coming from the beach area. Inside the hotel doors, bathrooms are maintained for use by the competitors. BOTH of these areas are wet areas and are places where slip/falls can be common. No horseplay especially in these areas.
- g) Cadets MAY NOT compete barefoot therefore tennis shoes OR water shoes are best.
- h) Please remember all event judges have radios that can summon instructors, as well as the medics/ambulance personnel. Should a cadet, parent or instructors need to contact SNI for any reason, we will be located in the event HQ room (see map on website). We can also be contacted by any of these radios scattered throughout the facility.

4) CLOSING STATEMENT

ALL SCHOOLS ARE REMINDED to plan in advance to look at the Fitness Nationals website where the local weather forecast is found. Ensure precautions are taken based on the conditions expected. Do not trust the cadets to ensure their preparation and safety – this is the responsibility of the instructor as this can be a life or death situation. Any advanced questions or other needed information should be gained from the event manager Sports Network International and specifically to Competition Director Justin Gates. His specific contact information is found on the Fitness Nationals website: <http://fitness.thenationals.net>.