The Sport of Cheer is an Athletic, Independent Sport with a Long, Innovative History!

1898 BIRTH OF CHEER
Minnesota, USA At a University of Minnesota sporting event, student Johnny Campbell jumps on the sports field and leads and entertains the crowd in “Cheers” and “Chants.” Cheer is born.

Early 1920’s New Cheer Techniques Introduced
Cheer athletes introduce new techniques to assist their efforts. Signs, Arm Motions, basic Cheer stunt skills are introduced to further motivate the crowd at sporting events.

1948 CHEER TRAINING CAMPS INTRODUCED
Former Cheer athlete Lawrence “Herkie” Herkimer begins Cheer training camps. By 1961, Herkie trains over 100,000 Cheer athletes around the USA each year. Future ICU President Jeff Webb works to assist Herkie in the late 1960’s.

1950’s Women Become the Majority
In the beginning, Cheer athletes were mostly men - until many men began to serve in the US military overseas. Women quickly became the majority and still remain 85% of Cheer’s athletes today.

1940’s New Advanced Cheer Techniques Introduced
Jeff Webb introduces new Cheer specific Stunt, Pyramid and Crowd techniques augmenting Cheer’s athletic role in Sports.

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1975 THE CHEER ROUTINE IS BORN
Cheer combines Skills with Music. Jeff Webb opens a University training camp by combining music with Cheer Skills. The Cheer Routine is born.

1974 NEW ADVANCED CHEER TECHNIQUES INTRODUCED
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1982 1ST NATIONAL CHEER CHAMPIONSHIP ON ESPN TELEVISION
Jeff Webb places the “Cheer Routine” competition on a new sports network – ESPN. The Sport of Cheer is watched by millions on television and syndication around the world begins.

1987 CHEER SAFETY MEASURES PUBLISHED
Jeff Webb publishes the Cheer safety manual and organization, “American Association of Cheer Coaches and Administrators” (AACCA) to safely support the growth of Cheer.

1985 CHEER EDUCATION PROGRAMS ARE FORMERLY INTRODUCED IN JAPAN AND AROUND THE WORLD
Jeff Webb’s organization introduces Cheer training programs in Japan, the United Kingdom, and later in Continental Europe, Latin America, Oceania and Africa, to name a few.

1990 ALL STAR CHEER BEGINS; HIP HOP BECOMES POPULAR
USA School and University Cheer reaches 1.7 million athletes. Non-school Cheer or “All Star Cheer” begins to grow worldwide. At U.S. basketball games, Cheer athletes entertain crowds with hip hop, the new urban form of crowd entertainment.

1995 1ST INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
The nations of Japan and Chile exhibit National Cheer Championship Teams at the United States National Championships.

2004 1ST WORLD CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS, ICU NFS MEET
During the 1st World Club Championships, 11 National Federations meet and establish the ICU - to further support NF global development, and the Sport of Cheer worldwide.

2005 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION ACCELERATES
Popularity of the ICU and IASF accelerates-World Championships and participation increase an estimated 11 new NF’s each year.

2009 ICU BEGINS APPLICATION PROCESSES TO SPORTACCORD, IOC, AND WADA
The ICU seeks membership in the International Sport family to benefit Cheer athletes on all continents and serve as a great partner to all IFs of the world.

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1996 OPENING CEREMONIES OF THE XXVI OLYMPIAD
Cheer athletes participate in the Opening Ceremonies of the XXVI Olympiad in Atlanta.

2011 OFFICIAL U.S. ANNUAL SAFETY REPORT LISTS CHEER AS ONE OF THE SAFEST SPORTS, SECOND ONLY TO SWIMMING.

2013 ICU REACHES 105 NATIONAL F FederATIONS; holds 9th World Championships with 70 Nations in attendance.

2013 POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION BY SPORTACCORD COUNCIL FOR ICU SPORTACCORD MEMBERSHIP.

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