

Fast Track and Air Track Safety Guidelines

Introduction

The “Fast Track” and “Air Track” tumbling beds can be a great asset as a teaching aid for tumbling skills and development of spatial awareness for a range of gymnastic skills. The ability of the gymnast to generate rotation around the longitudinal, transverse and saggital axes and the skill to control body shapes within tumbling elements can be greatly enhanced with these training aids.

The benefits that may be attributed to these tumbling aids include:

- A greater number of repetitions of the skill can be performed before the onset of fatigue
- The level of impact on the body is reduced; hence the risk of overuse injury may be reduced
- Greater time in the air enables skills to be learnt more readily
- Skills can be learnt in advance of the gymnasts physical ability and confidence to perform the skills on the competition or usual tumbling surface

Checking the Apparatus

Check that:

- The apparatus is assembled/installed according to the manufacturers’ guidelines
- The area surrounding the apparatus is covered with suitable matting
- All apparatus in the close vicinity, such as chains, cables, anchor points are suitably padded
- The springs and surround padding are in good order and correctly fitted on the Fast track
- The Air track is suitably inflated and that the bed does not have any air leaks. Care should be taken to ensure that the air compressor is fitted and functioning correctly
- All obstructions close to the apparatus are removed
- The exit end or deceleration area at the end of the track should be into a pitted area or suitable safety matted landing area

Safe Practice Guidelines

There are inherent risks in the use of these tumbling beds due to the elastic nature of the equipment. Bouncing on these beds can be enjoyable, but they should not be seen as a plaything, since the risk of an incident will rise if the following guidelines are not adhered to:

- The Fast Track or Air Track should never be used without the direct supervision of a BG Qualified Coach – minimum level: UKCC Level 2
- The coach should never coach skills which are above the level of their coaching qualification and verifiable experience
- Participants must be frequently reminded of the inherent risk and informed of the guidelines for safe practice
- Never permit acts of daring, horseplay or fooling around
- Check the readiness of the participant/s to learn new skills through personal ability, consolidation of prerequisite skills, physical preparedness, confidence and safe progressive stages of learning
- Always be conscious of the height of the air track from the floor as this may constitute a hazard
- Extra care should be taken when attempting to support a gymnast on these highly flexible surfaces
- Non-slip footwear such as trampoline/gymnastics shoes or non-slip socks should be worn (note: nylon socks or silk socks are not recommended since they may slip on the bed)
- Close fitting gymnastics attire should be worn. Long hair should be tied back
- After illness or absence due to injury, check the evidence that the participant is fit to participate
- When teaching a new element always be alert to the potential for errors to be made
- Before permitting participants to use the apparatus, ensure that they have; good mid-body control, can execute safe landings and have experience in falling safely