

GYMNASTICS AND RESPECT

Gymnastics has always been a very disciplined and respectful sport. The gymnast formally presents to the judge who formally allows her to compete. At the end they again acknowledge each other formally. If not there can be repercussions.

In a world that is becoming less disciplined and less respectful we all need to work hard to keep both in our sport. We are a fun group of people, but we need to **always** remember how we are coming across. We have been saying forever that “perception is everything” and it is.

- A frown at the end of routine (possibly trying to remember the value of a skill) can be perceived as not liking the gymnast or her routine.
- Your chin resting on your hand out of habit is perceived as boredom.
- Trying to race to get done quickly at an event by keeping deductions in your head so you can raise your hand immediately for the next gymnast is perceived as the judge not judging each routine.
- Even saying something like “Aren’t those leos pretty!” can be perceived by the parent volunteer next to you as favoring that team.

Please keep working hard to be as professional as possible. Most of us are, but only by being diligent. THANKS!

CPE’S*

You’re thinking “Oh no!” But it is coming again. Good news! The NAWGJ National Symposium is coming to the Chicago area July 15-18! Go to nawgj.org for information. Room rates are very reasonable at the Eaglewood Resort, so make your reservations early!

Of course, Regional and National Congresses are excellent, too, but this Symposium will have many more sessions and lots of variety.

*For new judges, CPE’s are the continuing professional education hours that we need each year. Go to usa-gymnastics.org for information.

Quote of the newsletter: I always put the responsibility to judge as fair as possible first, because I know that behind any performance there is a big investment in training, time, effort, money, etc. I think the key to staying in this profession is to follow your principles and be calm with your decisions. Naomi Valenzo from Mexico, recognized by FIG as one of the 4 best A panel Brevet judges 2001-2004. Cited in International Gymnast magazine, Sept., 2009.

MENTORING NEW JUDGES

It’s fairly easy to teach new judges in a clinic situation, but what do you do during their first year (more or less) of meets? There are not nearly as many small “local” meets as there were when we started. Now judges are trying to mentor in a large invite on a long event and try to keep the event moving.

Problems for the mentor: Time restraints of keeping big meets moving and still mentoring, trying to help a new judge without making him/her feel incapable.

Problems for the mentee: Being sure enough to give an independent score, realizing that you know all the deductions but may need more experience learning to apply and temper all those deductions.

Suggestions:

- Spend 10 – 15 minutes during the judges’ meeting and the breaks (if there are any) to discuss your event.
- When discussing scores that are out of range, the mentor can ask “What were your largest deductions?”
- Realize that the meet director is paying for 2 opinions. Both people need to work together.
- Don’t be afraid to ask each other questions
- NEVER say things that make either person look incompetent. There are many ears around a judging table!

To be continued...Please email me with your ideas!

KEEPING FOCUSED

Yes, we all need to keep focused during a meet – especially the long ones we all have right now. What I mean, though, is that we all need to strive to keep focused on what our job is at a meet. No matter what your rating, experience, knowledge is, each job at a meet has certain parameters.

Meet Ref: Does: Oversee the running of the meet, handle inquiries, notes R & P infractions on the sanction, compiles and checks information concerning judges' fees. **Does not:** tell the meet director how to run the meet, advise coaches to inquire, offer unsolicited advice on routines, force judging panels to change scores.

Chief Judge: Oversees the event, judges each routine fairly and consistently, oversees any helpers (scores, times, etc.), keeps the scores in line, i.e., not allowing the scores to rise or lower throughout the day, handles inquiries. **Does not:** give the meet ref unsolicited advice, does not change the format or rotation of the meet.

Acting Judge: Judges each routine fairly and consistently, helps the CJ with any paperwork if asked. **Does not:** talk during conferences (especially 4 judge panels) unless asked.

All Judges: Must come up with independent start values and scores, remain at their events until the meet is over. **Does not:** "chat" with coaches or gymnasts on the floor, involve themselves with the conduct or training of the gymnasts.

Be nice, be positive, be focused and ENJOY THE SHOW!!

(Go to the JO Code, p. 3-7 for complete information.)

EQUIPMENT UPDATES AND CLARIFICATIONS

PLEASE READ, UNDERSTAND, AND BRING YOUR R & P. TO MEETS AND WATCH EQUIPMENT!!!

4 inch landing mats at vault, bars, and beam need to be as wide as the mat underneath. This does not apply to an 8 " mat. A judge should remind the coach if the matting is not legal, resulting in a .3 deduction. It is the coach's decision to use or not use that mat. If you are in a situation where no legal mats are available as additional landing mats, the meet referee needs to write it on the sanction.

The vault runway must be a consistent, flat area; thus, tape, Velco, etc., are not allowed on the runway. Excessive chalk is not allowed, e.g., pictures cannot be drawn on the runway or board.

BEAM CONNECTIONS

We all have questions about the new interpretations of connecting tumbling series on beam. Please try to be as consistent as possible and to keep attending clinics where examples are shown.

A couple of things have been confused (and still will be).

1. "A slow connection is a broken connection" with regard to backward flight element on beam. This means ONLY back walkover, flipflop (or reversed) or flipflop, flipflop. It is the connection that needs to be fast and without hesitation. If the back walkover is slow, you may have a rhythm deduction of that skill, but it would not affect the connection.
2. The cartwheel round-off can be connected using a rhythm deduction (meaning it is not all-or-nothing). There has been some confusion about a "leg kick" in between. Don't think about the height of a kick. It should not look like a kick at all. Rather, it should look like a "step-through" into the round-off.

Good luck and stayed tuned!