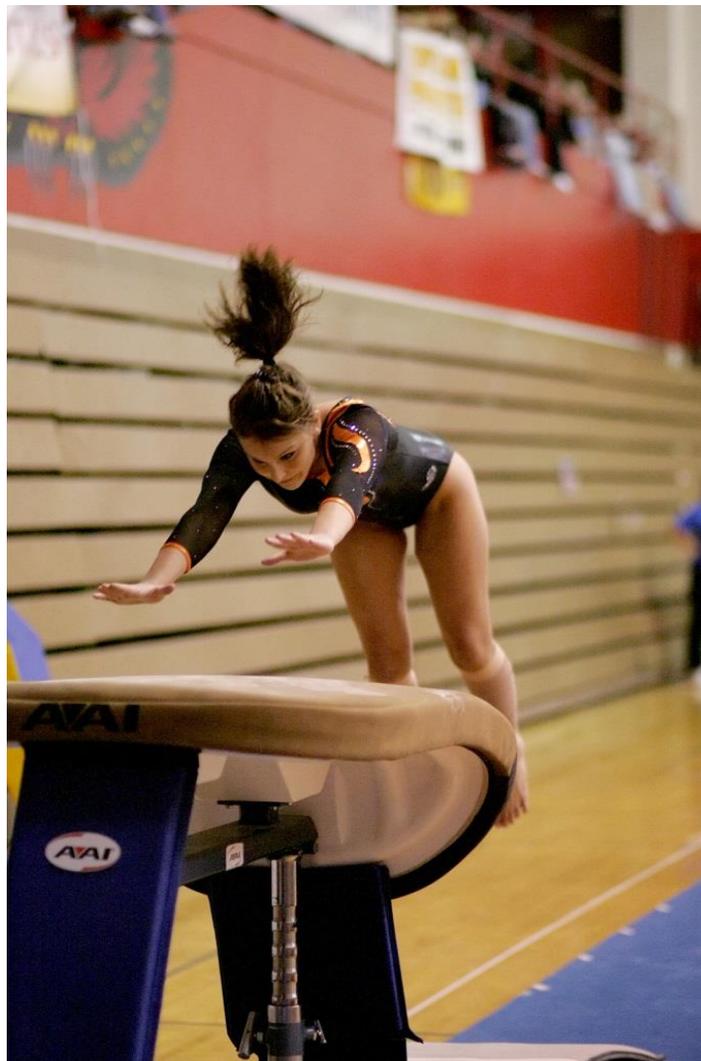




# **2014-16 GYMNASTICS JUDGES MANUAL**

**FOR NEW AND EXPERIENCED JUDGES**



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## INTRODUCTION

This Gymnastics Judges Manual is being provided to assist new and experienced MHSAA gymnastics judges. This Manual provides the opportunity to review expectations, requirements and responsibilities of a gymnastics judge. Becoming a gymnastics official is to become a part of a close-knit, professional community. The purpose of this manual is two-fold:

- To welcome new officials to the wonderful world of the sport while highlighting some of the most important issues to consider.
- To highlight important issues to all officials in order to preserve the integrity of the sport.

It is our hope that this manual will prove to be informative. While it is never meant to replace the current rulebook, it should be considered a valuable resource for judges seeking to professionally complete their duties.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Purpose**

To acquaint new officials with their duties and responsibilities. Judges will understand the importance of dress code, arrival time and professional behavior.

### **Registration**

A gymnastics judge who works interscholastic contests, grades 7-12, must be registered for the current year with the MHSAA in the sport of gymnastics.

### **Proper Uniform**

It is your duty to make sure you arrive at any meet in proper judging attire. Gymnastics judges are required to wear a white top and solid black skirt, dress, or slacks. Any additional garments worn should be black. Judges must wear their MHSAA Officials emblem on the left chest pocket area of the blouse/shirt or coat/blazer or display the emblem in a clear vinyl badge holder with a black lanyard.

### **Rules Meeting Attendance**

Gymnastics judges must attend a face-to-face or on online rules meeting to be considered for post-season tournaments. Rules meetings are arranged for the purpose of reviewing old rules, explaining new ones, and providing consistent interpretations to the rules.

### **MHSAA Tournament Selection**

Meet referees who work Regional and Final Tournaments are invited by a committee of gymnastic coaches and school administrators who are currently tournament hosts.

In order to be considered for tournament judging or a meet referee position, an official must attend one of the MHSAA Gymnastics Rules Meetings conducted during the current year and be a registered judge. In addition, recommendations are sought from every varsity gymnastics coach to determine the judges that are highly qualified in selective events that should be considered for the MHSAA tournament judging.

Gymnastics judges who wish to officiate at the MHSAA Final Tournament shall attend at least one judging clinic offered by the Michigan Gymnastics Coaches and Judges Association (MIGCJA) or any other judging clinic approved by the MHSAA prior to the end of the current gymnastic season.

### **Code for Athletic Officials**

(From MHSAA Officials Guidebook, page 1)

1. Register with the MHSAA each year on a timely basis (by July deadline) and attend all required meetings. Work no interscholastic contests with officials who do not hold current registration in the sport.
2. Join and actively participate in an "Approved Association" for officials (see mhsaa.com).
3. Accept contracts for and officiate only contests for which you are qualified and experienced. Execute and honor contracts in a timely and ethical manner. Complete reports and follow-up all obligations resulting from a contest.
4. Be prepared, physically and mentally, to officiate according to the principles and philosophy promoted by the MHSAA.

5. Refrain from use of alcohol or tobacco, including e-cigarettes or other smoking devices, within sight of players and spectators and avoid use of alcohol any time before a contest on the day of the contest.
6. Cultivate professional relationships with partners, players, coaches, administrators and spectators. Refrain from comment to the media.
7. Commit to a personal lifestyle which avoids sexual misconduct, use of illicit drugs, and public abuse of alcohol and will not in other ways impinge upon your perception in the community to fulfill the obligations and standards of the MHSAA "Code for Athletic Officials."
8. Officiate according to the rules and manuals adopted for MHSAA competition. Admit and correct one's own errors, hold to correct but unpopular decisions, and support the decisions of other officials.
9. Exercise self-control at all times. Guard against baiting or taunting which may generate a loss of poise or demeanor which can erode the professionalism expected of officials in even the most difficult circumstances.
10. Hold to and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include honesty, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion and tactfulness.

### **Pre-Meet**

- Prepare both physically and mentally.
- At least one day prior to the meet, confirm your attendance with the athletic director. (Email works!)
- Review your contract closely for start time.
- Plan your meet day so that you have time to complete any other work/family responsibilities.
- If there is any doubt in your mind about your timing and ability to arrive at the meet, contact your athletic director and find out who the other judge(s) will be.
- Find a replacement if needed (this is why we look well in advance).
- Plan for your judging attire.
  - Gyms can be cold.
  - Will you have time to change into appropriate judging attire?
  - Will you need different shoes/boots during the day?

### **Meet Arrival**

- Arrive one half-hour prior to contracted start time.
- Be sure you are dressed properly. Did you have to change on the way?
- Identify yourself as an official to the athletic director/parent working the ticket table.
- Introduce yourself to the other judges if you don't already know them.
- Let the coaches know you are there.
- Ask coaches if they have any questions.
- Measure the equipment!
  - Don't assume it's been done at a previous meet and is fine. Equipment gets moved all the time. And not necessarily by people that know how to do it!
- Report any measuring inconsistencies to the coaches and ask for gymnasts to help you fix them.
- Take reasonable steps to educate yourself in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.
- Act professionally while waiting for the meet to start.

### **During the Meet**

- Uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.
- Comport yourself in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession. Be mindful that your conduct influences the respect that athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.
- If you don't know something – Ask!
- Know the rules.
- Work together with the other judges.

### **After the Meet**

- Do not act favorable to one team over the other(s).
- Discuss any issues/concerns privately with the coach.
- Do not speak negatively about anyone in front of an audience.

- Nicely ask for your check, if you haven't already received it.
- Thank the coaches/athletic director for their dedication to high school gymnastics.

### **Post Meet**

- Bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the MHSAA.
- Maintain an ethical approach while speaking with others.
- Do not speak about the meet in chat rooms, forums or any other forms of social media.
- Repack your judging materials to get ready for your next meet!

## **UNIFORMS**

### **Competitors Uniforms**

- One piece leotard – moderate proportions
  - No French Cut
  - No low neckline showing cleavage
- Matching Briefs or Skin-colored briefs
- No Visible Bra: Bra shall not be exposed (wording in book)
- A single partial/whole manufacturer's logo/trademark is permitted on the leotard (no more than 2 ¼ square inches in size with no dimensions exceeding 2 ¼ inches).
- No Jewelry
  - Religious Medal – ok must be taped to body
  - Medical Medal – ok must be taped to body
- Glitter or Stick-On Body Art - no
- Body Paint – no
- Shimmer in Makeup – ok
- Offensive Tattoos must be covered.
- Neutral Color Gymnastic Footwear
- No casts or splints.
- Unaltered manufactured braces – ok
  - Hand, wrist, elbow, ankle, and knee
  - Does not require additional padding
- Hair Devices – ok
- Must not pose risk of injury
- Securely fastened
- Purpose to secure hair away from face and eyes
- Deduction 0.2 per event for improper uniform from average score by Chief Judge

### **Judges Uniforms – Refer to above information.**

- Solid White Top/blouse
- Black Skirt/Slacks/Dress/Jumper
- Additional Items – such as sweater/blazer should be black
- Official's emblem
  - Left chest pocket area of blouse, blazer, or sweater
  - Displayed in clear vinyl badge holder with plain black lanyard
- Jeans – no
- Florals, Patterns, Stripes – No
- Sweatshirt Material – No
- Tip – Comfortable Low Heel Shoes in Black

## **DUTIES OF JUDGES**

### **Meet Referee**

- Thorough knowledge of current gymnastics rules and regulations
- Attend coaches meeting on-site
- Hold pre-meet session with judges on-site
- Inspect and measure all equipment to see they meet specifications
- Act as a liaison between coaches, meet director and judges
  - Mediate when necessary
  - Use positive communication skills
  - Act as a final arbiter

- Handles inquiries
  - Show or hand out copy of current inquiry form
  - Explain inquiry procedure
  - Give examples of proper and improper inquiries
  - Explain who handles inquiries and to whom they are returned
- May judge first routine on each event
- Judge routines periodically for consistency
- Assess team deductions
  - Give examples of team deductions
  - Notify coaches of team penalties as soon as possible
- Disqualify competitors when necessary
  - Verbal abuse, disrespect of judges
  - Give examples for disqualification
  - Profanity by gymnast
- Know the location of the hosts and the athletic trainer
- Determine procedures for handling serious injuries
  - Blood borne
  - Ambulance service

### **Senior Official**

- At dual meets, the senior official acts as a Meet Referee when no Meet Referee is contracted and is the most experienced official at the meet.
- Covers the above Meet Referee responsibilities whenever necessary
- Interprets rules, taking time to discuss issues.

### **Chief Judge**

- The Chief Judge will check to see if the timers are prepared.
- The Chief Judge will signal the gymnast to begin within 30 seconds of the signal.
- The Chief Judge will signal if the gymnast is exceeding warm-up or out-of-bounds on floor.
- The Chief Judge will watch for the gymnast to salute at the conclusion of the performance.
- The Chief Judge will record the duration of the beam and floor routines on the score sheet.
- The Chief Judge will judge independently and record scores.
- The Chief Judge will compare her score sheet to the acting judge(s), checking specifically for difficulty, event requirement, bonus, neutral deductions, and range of scores.
- The Chief Judge will impose the deductions as indicated on the Chief Judge/Meet Referee Deduction Sheet on page 107 of the *2014-16 NFHS Gymnastics Rules Book*.
- The Chief Judge will handle any inquiry after it is screened by the Meet Referee.
- The Chief Judge will handle equipment failure and determine if the gymnast is allowed to repeat the exercise.
- The Chief Judge will make sure score sheets are in proper order
  - Promote positive communication with coaches regarding order.
  - Deduction for out of order gymnast.
- The Chief Judge will keep track of placement of gymnasts at large meets.
  - Provide a form for recording.
  - Explain use of the form.
- Verify score sheets and sign the final results.
- The Chief Judge or Meet Referee will contact MHSAA as soon as possible the following day with any reportable infractions.

### **Acting Judge**

- Participate in the pre-meet conference.
- Follow the directions of the chief judge.
- Be able to justify your score.
- Deduct neutral errors.
- Cooperate at all times.
- During conferences:
  - Re-check math.
  - State your justification and adjust when necessary.
  - Adjust (if necessary) into range pleasantly.
- Assist the chief judge whenever possible.
  - Check matting positioning and layering.

- Assist with equipment issues.
  - Beam height
  - Board placed on matting
- Watch for jewelry, improper uniform, improper language.

### All Judges

- Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to competition.
- Monitor warm-up times. The event timer can be utilized for this as well.
- Agree on bonus as it relates to difficulty.
- Understand and use the official score sheet.
- Judge and record score independently.
- Be able to justify your score.

## JUDGING MECHANICS

Judging is evaluating a performance through mathematical computation. The computation process should be done independently by each judge and posted as soon as possible for verification by the chief judge. Examples of scoring are:

1. **Calculating event score:** When 4 judges are used, the high and low scores are eliminated and the middle scores are averaged. The difference between the two middle scores shall fall within the range determined by the average score. When not in range, judges must confer to bring the scores within range. Scores are calculated to the hundredth/thousandth.

Examples:

- a. Judges' Scores = 6.7, 6.3, 6.4, 5.9  
After eliminating the high and low scores of 6.7 and 5.9, the middle scores are averaged (added together and divided by 2) to arrive at an average score of 6.35. The difference between the middle scores of 6.3 and 6.4 (0.1) is within range of the average score so 6.35 is the final score.
  - b. Judges' Scores = 8.75, 8.4, 8.35, 8.8  
After eliminating the high and low scores of 8.8 and 8.35, the middle scores are then averaged (added together and divided by 2) to arrive at an average score of 8.575. The difference between the middle scores of 8.75 and 8.4 (0.35) is out of range of the average score and necessitates an adjustment. After conferring, the 8.4 score is adjusted to 8.5. The middle scores of 8.75 and 8.5 are now within range and averaged to arrive at a final score of 8.625.
2. **Value Parts and Non-Value Part (void) Elements:** Elements that are facilitated and saltos that fail to land on the soles of the feet first, receive no Value Part credit and are considered VOID elements. VOID elements that do not receive Value Part credit may not be counted as part of a series, a pass, or count as an event requirement. Elements that are recognizable, or attempted but not completed, including void elements, may receive credit for one of the required elements. When an element does not receive Value Part credit because it is performed a third time without variation, regardless of the preceding or succeeding element, it may count for any requirement that does not specify it must be a Value Part including one of the required elements. Elements listed separately in the rules book are considered separate elements. Elements or vaults performed in a different body position or with a different degree of turn/twist are considered separate elements (1/4 turn/twist does not make an element different unless it is listed separately in the rules book).
  3. **Judges' Shorthand:** One of the keys to objective judging of gymnastics routines is the ability to constantly observe the routine while noting it on the judge's sheet. To accomplish this, a method of shorthand notation is a necessity. Mastery of a shorthand system allows the judge to quickly evaluate the entire performance from his/her notes, either immediately after the performance, later in response to a legal, written inquiry or following the meet when a coach or gymnast asks for assistance by having a score reviewed with the judge(s). A judge may have her own personal shorthand system. However, if a judge does not have such a system, the symbols included in the element illustrations for bars, beam and floor are recommended as a suggested system.

4. **Difficulty:**

#### The Basics:

- All recognized skills in the sport of gymnastics are assigned a specific difficulty. These skills can be medium, superior, high superior, or advanced high superior skills. On uneven bars, balance beam, and

floor exercise, it is expected that a routine will contain 4 medium skills, 3 superior skills (worth 0.5 each), and 1 high superior skill (worth 0.3).

#### Helpful tips:

- When you begin judging gymnastics, you will quickly learn how overwhelming it can be to try to remember the value of every skill, especially as you are judging a routine in progress. Certain skills that show up frequently (such as wolf jumps, round offs, kips, etc.) will begin to be imprinted on your memory. Those that are more obscure (valdez on beam) will require you to look them up on the rule book. It is always okay to take the time to make sure you have assigned a skill the correct difficulty or to verify a difficulty with your judging partner.
- It is sometimes helpful to mark the difficulty of a skill as you write it down if you are confident of its value. For example, if a gymnast performs a tuck jump full on beam without execution, you may choose to write "AHS" above it so that you remember to calculate your bonus correctly later. Or, if a gymnast attempts a tuck jump full, but clearly lands only 3/4 of the way around on her feet, you may want to write "HS" above it so that when you go back to score the routine, you remember that your initial impression was to give only 3/4 credit for that skill.
- Look for missing superiors first. If there are missing superiors, then you can look for the presence of a high superior, which would then receive superior credit, since a superior is worth more than a high superior.

### **5. Event Requirements:**

#### The Basics:

- Uneven bars, Balance Beam, and Floor Exercise each have their own unique set of event requirements that you should look for throughout the exercise. Each one of these requirements is worth 0.2 in this category.

#### Helpful tips:

- Many experienced judges have found it useful to mark event requirements in their shorthand while judging a routine in order to quickly and easily identify them during the scoring process. For example, a judge may choose to underline or circle a straddle jump directly connected to a punch front on floor to signify the presence of an acro series.
- Familiarize yourself with the event requirements on each event and never hesitate to talk to another judge if you aren't sure about whether some does or does not qualify as one of these requirements. Always do a quick check at the end of a routine to verify that your event requirements match.
- While it is not mandatory that you agree on event requirements, if you have different scores in this category, it allows you and your judging colleague to discuss why this has happened. It may be that one of you simply missed a requirement, or it could be that one of you decided to connect a series while the other one did not. In any case, these conversations are valuable and are in the best interest of the gymnasts and coaches receiving these score sheets.

### **6. Execution:**

#### The Basics:

- Execution includes all of the small faults (like bent arms, flexed feet, etc.) and large faults (like falls) that happen during the course of a routine. This category is worth 4.2 in the event score on uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise. Marking all of these faults can be stressful for an inexperienced judge. You can be so busy trying to write down the skills that you see that deducting for these faults takes a backseat.

#### Helpful tips:

- In your rule book for each event (including vault), there is a listing of faults with their appropriate deductions. Familiarize yourself with this section, and keep it open as you judge the routine.
- At first, it may be helpful (and less overwhelming) to take an execution deduction as a whole, such as taking 0.2 for the entire first tumbling pass of a floor routine, rather than marking the deduction for each individual skill.
- Do not be afraid to "give and take" in the best interest of the gymnast. If, for example, a wolf jump is performed on beam with the front leg at 30 degrees below horizontal, it would be appropriate to award superior credit (0.5) and take 0.1 for the position than to deny the skill.
- Do not worry about being "nice" or "harsh" in your execution deductions. Rather, aim for "reasonable" and most importantly – consistent.

### **7. Bonus:**

#### The Basics:

- The bonus category is a small, but important category, comprising on 0.8 of the final event score. It is important to calculate this category correctly as it is often decisive in differentiating high-level gymnasts from each other in high-stakes competitions.
- Up to a maximum of 0.4 – For advanced high superiors provided no fall or spot has occurred. (0.2 for one advanced high superior or 0.4 if there is a second different advanced high superior).
- 0.2 – for a high level back-to-back superior. (Examples: HS+HS, HS+AHS, AHS+AHS; for balance beam only: AHS acro + S acro; for floor exercise only: AHS acro + S salto)
- Up to a maximum of 0.2 – credit may be earned in any of the following ways:
  - a. 0.1 each: For a low level back-to-back superior, same or different. (Examples: S+S, S+HS, S+AHS)
  - b. 0.2 – For a second high level back-to-back superior, same or different. (Examples: HS+HS, HS+AHS, AHS+AHS, balance beam only AHS acro + S acro; floor exercise only AHS acro + S salto)
  - c. 0.2 – For a 3<sup>rd</sup> different advanced high superior provided no fall or spot has occurred.

**Notes:**

1. An advanced high superior (AHS) that does not receive 0.2 AHS credit in the Bonus category due to a fall or spot may be performed a second time and receive AHS credit if performed without a fall or spot.
2. To receive 0.2 for a single advanced high superior in Bonus, there must be no fall or spot. Advanced high superiors with a fall or spot, if complete, may receive credit in difficulty, event requirements or as part of any back-to-back-series.
3. A single element in a series may not be counted twice to receive back-to-back superior credit.
4. On balance beam only: An AHS acro element directly connected (before or after) to a S acro element will receive 0.20 as a HL BBS.
5. Back-to-back superior credit may be awarded if there is a fall following the second element in the series provided both elements are considered complete according to the criteria for awarding Value Part credit.
6. In floor exercise only:
  - a. S, HS and/or AHS acro elements that are indirectly connected within one continuous, uninterrupted acro pass may be given BBS credit. Example: front salto, round-off, flic-flac, back salto.
  - b. An AHS acro element directly connected (before or after) to a S salto will receive 0.20 as a HL BBS.

Helpful tips:

- Mark any Advanced High Superiors in the routine with an “AHS” or another special symbol during or after the routine.
- Get in the habit of circling any back to back superiors as you see them. If you aren’t sure, write a question mark next to them. Then, after the routine you can decide if it was a:
  - high level BBS (HS + HS, HS + AHS, or AHS + AHS). On beam, AHS acro directly connected to a S acro element; on floor, AHS acro element directly connected (before or after) to a S salto.
  - low level BBS (S + S, S + HS, or S + AHS).
  - Make sure that if there is a fall or spot on an advanced high superior, that you don’t give it advanced high superior credit. It can count as a high superior for difficulty, though.
- Most judges mark what IS present in bonus on the score sheet with numbers, check marks, X’s, or +’s. Then, they subtract that number from 0.8 to place in the Tally column.
- For example, if a gymnast does 1 advanced high superior and a low-level BBS, they would have 0.3 given in bonus. The tally column would read 0.5.

**8. Composition:**

The Basics:

- Composition is perhaps the most formidable and frightening of the categories for a newer judge. It is by far the most subjective category and is also critical in differentiating high-level gymnasts during high-stakes competitions.
- This category is meant to reward gymnasts who have a well-rounded routine, reflecting balance in difficulty and artistry throughout the routine and is worth 0.8.

Helpful tips:

- Ask for help! As composition is deemed such a challenging category, there are countless resources that have been created to help you. These include:
  - A description of what to look for in the rule book;

- Additional handouts posted on mhsaa.com, emailed out in the judging cyber-community, and given out at judging clinics;
  - Discussions at judging clinics and rules meetings;
  - Extra materials available via the NFHS and state governing bodies, such as the NFHS *Girls Gymnastics Judges' Manual* and clarification documents/rules inserts.
  - Resources available through your local Gymnastics Judges and Coaches Associations.
- Know what you're looking for. When you consider variety of choices in elements and connections, provide examples to yourself of things that would constitute a deduction of 0.1, 0.2, and 0.3. Use the resources above to help you get started.
  - Talk to your judging partner. If he/she is willing, ask your partner to explain how the composition deductions were determined. This lends valuable insights to the process.
  - Aim for consistency above all.

## 2014-16 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

### 1. Spotting:

When a spotter facilitates or assists an element (gymnast could not have completed the element on her own), the deduction is 0.5. For the spot and no Value Part credit is awarded. Therefore, no credit is given for event requirements, no AHS bonus credit is awarded and the element may not be used for credit as part of a back-to-back superior series.

When a spotter touches a gymnast without assisting (gymnast completed element on her own), the deduction is 0.5 for the spot. If the element is completed according to technical requirements, it can still be awarded Value Part credit, event requirements and may be part of a back-to-back superior series.

- a. Any type of spot on an AHS that results in a 0.5 deduction will make the element ineligible for 0.2 in Bonus for an AHS (must be completed without a fall or spot).
- b. If a gymnast falls after being spotted (facilitated or touched) during an element within a routine, 0.5 is deducted for the fall in addition to the 0.5 that is deducted for the spot.
- c. If a gymnast is spotted upon landing of a dismount, a total deduction of 0.5 is taken. Do not deduct for both a spot and a fall, if a fall occurs.
- d. If a coach catches a falling gymnast, deduct 0.5 for the fall only.
- e. If a coach touches or pushes a gymnast when, or after, she lands an element to stop her momentum, deduct 0.5 only. If a fall occurs after the touch, do not also deduct an additional 0.5 for the fall.
- f. There is no penalty if a gymnast inadvertently touches the coach.

### 2. Six Ways to Break a Series:

In order to receive credit for a series on BB or FX, the elements must be directly connected, that is, with no extra step or stop between. Series are not connected if there is:

- a. A stop between the elements that delays the immediate take-off of the next element.
- b. A loss of balance causing a stop between elements.
- c. An extra step, hop or jump between elements. If an element lands on two feet – the next element must take off from two feet with no movement of either foot between elements. If an element lands on one foot – the free leg may be set down right next to the landing foot for a two-foot takeoff or the free leg may be the takeoff leg for another element by taking a step into the next element as in – (step L, leap R, step L onto free leg, leap R).

An example of an acro series that is considered non-connectable, regardless of how quickly the elements are performed: Back walkover to lunge (or back handspring step-out to lunge) to round-off, cartwheel, front walkover, or handstand: The first element lands on one foot, and then the second foot (free leg) is placed on the beam behind in a lunge. The gymnast then leans forward to initiate the second element.

**NOTE:** The only way these elements could connect is by landing the first element on one leg and then swinging the other leg (free leg) forward to step into the second element. During the step, the leg swing forward must be no higher than 45 degrees or the series will be considered broken.

- d. A repositioning of the support leg.
- e. A landing in a plie' from the first element, followed by a straightening of the legs, with another plie' prior to the takeoff of the second element.

- f. A large arm swing that causes a stop and delays the immediate takeoff of the second element. Ideally, at the end of the first element, the arms should end in a position for takeoff for the second element. If the body continues its movement, an arm circle does not necessarily break the connection.

In gainer elements, the arms are allowed to continue circling forward-upward and backward-downward without automatically breaking the connection. The circling action is an inherent arm pattern for gainer type elements. A backward acro flight series would be considered broken when the arms move as low as the thighs or further back after the landing of the first element in the connection. A cautious, slow-moving attempt to connect backward flight elements would be considered broken and no rhythm deduction is applied. This does not apply to series of non-flight acro, acro flight with forward and/or sideward elements, counter acro flights, and dance or mixed elements. With the exception of backward acro flight series, if a connection is a bit slow or there is a slight hesitation, credit can be given with a deduction taken for incorrect rhythm.

### 3. Rule Enforcement Throughout the Season:

The NFHS Girls Gymnastics Rules Committee has worked hard to provide a code of rules and interpretations that are the foundation for creating fair and equitable competition for all student participations. However, the coach teaches and the gymnasts apply the rules. Each gymnast is accountable for her actions to be in compliance with the rules such as the prohibition of wearing jewelry, proper uniform and other requirements and expectations. Each judge must study the rules, keep up to date and have an understanding of how the rules fit together.

## NFHS JUDGING SUPPLEMENTAL EXPLANATIONS

### 1. Supplemental Explanations for the Definitions:

- a. **LA Turn/Twist:** Any type of turn or twist that goes around the longitudinal axis of the body. The longitudinal axis is a line drawn down the middle of the body from head to toe.
- b. **LA Turns/Twists That Are Direction Changes:** Only  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ , and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  LA turns/twists are direction changes. All other LA turns/twists, 1/1 and 2/1, finish facing and moving the same direction and therefore do not constitute a change of direction.
- c. **Elements:** Any movement with value is called an element.
- d. **Value Parks:** Elements become Value Parts and can count for difficulty when they are performed according to specific criteria on each event.

#### Criteria on each event:

**Bars:** To receive Value Part credit, an element is almost completed and contact with the bar occurs. (7-2-6)

**Beam:** To receive Value Part credit, an element is almost completed and weight is borne. (8-2-6)

**Floor:** To receive Value Part credit, an element is almost completed and weight is borne. (9-2-5)

- e. **Difficulty:** The sum of the Value Parts.

### 2. Value Parts and Non-Value Part (Void) Elements:

Elements that are facilitated and saltos that fail to land on any part of the bottom of the feet first, receive no Value Part credit and are considered VOID elements. VOID elements that do not receive Value Part credit may not be counted as part of a series, a pass or count as an event requirement. When an element does not receive Value Part credit because it is performed a third time without variation, regardless of the preceding or succeeding element, it may count for any requirement that does not specify it must be a Value Part. Elements listed separately in the rules book are considered separate elements. Elements or vaults performed in a different body position or when a different degree of turn/twist are considered separate elements (1/4 turn/twist does not make an element different unless it is listed separately in the rules book).

### 3. Back-to-Back Superior Credit and High Superior Credit:

A series of superiors that receives high superior credit also receives credit for back-to-back superiors under bonus. The gymnast may be credited with either one high superior or two superiors for the series under Difficulty. Some examples are: series of saltos on floor, series of butterflies on floor, etc. A single superior element in a series may not be counted twice to receive back-to-back superior credit. Therefore, credit for two back-to-back superiors requires four directly-connected superior, high superior and/or advanced high superior elements, or two series of two or three directly-connected superior, high superior and/or advanced high superior elements. Exception: On floor exercise, the superiors, high superiors and/or advanced high superiors may be included in one continuous, uninterrupted acro pass without being "directly connected." For example: front salto, round-off, flic-flac, back salto.

#### 4. Steps:

In an effort to have consistent deductions for steps on landing, and not over-penalize steps, the following interpretation shall be followed:

- Land, very small step-close or other small foot movement = up to 0.1.
- Land, one small jump forward = 1 step (0.1)
- Land, one step forward or backward, then close (feet together) = 1 step (0.1)
- Land, two steps forward, then close the back foot to the front foot or vice versa = 2 steps (0.2)
- Land, large step or jump on landing (approximately 3 feet or more) = 0.2 deduction.
- Land, three steps = 0.3 deduction.
- Land, 4 or more steps = maximum 0.4 deduction.
- Land, one or more steps, then falls = maximum deduction is 0.5.

Additionally, if the gymnast is out of control or has additional movements to maintain balance after the step(s), additional deductions may be applied.

#### 5. Inquiries:

A coach shall submit a written inquiry or a verbal intent to inquire with the meet referee within ten minutes after all scores are recorded for that team for that event. For example, if a coach wants to submit a written inquiry on balance beam, but the team is immediately up on floor exercise, the coach may verbally notify the meet referee of intent to inquire. At the next earliest opportunity, the coach shall submit the written inquiry to the meet referee.

#### 6. Vaulting:

Due to the 8 degree slant in the top of the vault table, a slight bend in the first arm to make contact is acceptable technique on Tsukahara and quarter-on vaults, so there is no deduction taken. Round-off entry vaults are legal provided a spotter is present before the gymnast vaults and there is a board safety mat around the board. It is legal for a round-off entry vault to include a salto and a twist in any flight phase.

#### 7. Extra Swings:

- a. If an element is performed poorly or ends in a dead hang, extra swings may be necessary to regain momentum. Extra swing deductions may be taken on several elements but no more than 2 consecutive extra swings should be taken on any one single element (maximum of 0.6).
- b. After a fall, the gymnast is allowed to jump (or be lifted) to the high bar and take a maximum of two "pump" swings to initiate momentum to resume the exercise. If more than two pump swings are taken, a 0.3 deduction for each extra swing(s) (after the two allowed) would be applied up to a maximum of 0.6.
- c. The tap swing technique used by itself to swing forward and backward, not as part of an element, is considered an extra swing.

#### 8. Uncharacteristic Elements on Bars:

- a. Squat on LB, jump with  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn to HB.
- b.  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn on feet on LB.
- c. Leg cut that is not simultaneous.
- d. V-sit on LB.
- e. Scale.
- f. Climbing or crawling onto the LB.
- g. Jumping from LB to support on HB continuing to a forward roll over the HB.

#### 9. Bar Change:

A bar change occurs when there is movement from one bar to the other bar. A gymnast who performs elements on the low bar and then moves to the high bar has fulfilled a bar change. A fall from one bar with continuation of routine (performance of a listed value part element) on the other bar is considered a bar change.

#### 10. Description of Handstand Turn Techniques – Uneven Bars:

- a. **Blind Change:** A basic  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn typically performed as a back giant, back stalker, sole circle, or clear hip to handstand nears completion. The gymnast's chest leads or moves forward. When turning left, the left hand remains on the bar and, if continuing through handstand, the right hand regrips in an undergrip. A blind change can include a second hand change to finish in an overgrip if connecting to an underswing  $\frac{1}{2}$  over the low bar (bail  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn) rather than continuing through handstand.

- b. **Pirouette:** This term is normally used for a ½ turn in handstand in which there are two hand changes, one before the turn and one after the turn. When turning right, the left hand first changes from overgrip to undergrip while pivoting around the left arm. As the turn is completed, the right hand regrips in overgrip and the left hand is again in overgrip as a result of the ½ turn.
- c. **Higgins Roll:** This ½ turn occurs as the gymnast leaves the handstand, leading with the back. When turning right, the left hand remains on the bar and twists to an L-grip as she turns. The right hand regrips in either a mixed L-grip. (Looks like a ½ pirouette but the base hand doesn't move).
- d. **Healy Technique:** 360 degree turn on one arm – this is a full turn on one arm performed after the handstand phase. The base (pivoting) hand begins in undergrip and pivots on one arm until a full turn has been completed. It finishes in a mixed L-grip or L-grip.

#### 11. Tap Swing:

A tap swing is a technique used to execute a giant or another circling element and is used to increase speed in a swing. It can best be described as: the body is in a hollow position as it begins the downward-forward swing from the high bar. As the feet pass the low bar, the body relaxes from the hollow position to a slight arch. The slight arch position is maintained through the vertical (under the bar) and is followed by an aggressive kick forward-upward with the legs/feet together while the body, at this point, returns to the hollow position as it moves toward the level of the high bar. A tap swing used by itself to swing forward and backward, not as a part of an element, is considered an extra swing.

#### 12. Description of Hand Grip Positions – Uneven Bars:

NOTE: When a handstand or circling element to handstand is followed by a turn, the turn is considered as part of that circle or handstand. Together, it is considered one element. (Example: clear hip handstand ½ turn is one advanced high superior element.)

- a. **Overgrip or Regular Grip:** Used for kips, casts, hip circles, backward giants, etc. When in a front support, knuckles are facing upward, palms down.
- b. **Undergrip or Reverse Grip:** Used for front giants, forward stride (mill circles), etc. and is sometimes attained by means of a “hop change” from overgrip. When in a front support, knuckles are facing downward, palms upward or forward.
- c. **Mixed Grip:** One hand is in overgrip and the other is in undergrip.
- d. **L-Grip or Eagle Grip:** The arms are twisted 360 degrees from undergrip, through overgrip and continuing. The arms are twisted with thumbs pointed away from the body. In an L-grip front giant, elbows are pointing in the direction of the giant.
- e. **Mixed L-Grip:** One hand is in L-grip and the other hand is almost always in an undergrip.

#### 13. Handstands on Beam and Floor:

A handstand does not fit into any directional category. It is neither forward, backward nor sideward. An acro element must pass through the vertical plane either forward, backward or sideward to satisfy the composition requirement of one backward acro element and a second acro element that is either forward or sideward. A handstand moves up to the vertical plane and comes back down but never passes through the vertical plane. Therefore, a handstand may not be credited as a backward or forward/sideward acro element in composition. The handstand may be used in an acro series to fulfill the event requirement.

#### 14. Description of Selected Jumps and Leaps:

- a. There are three leg positions that are the basis of the criteria for awarding credit for leaps and jumps requiring a split. Split or stag-split leaps/jumps have a forward-backward split. Side split jumps have a sideward split (straddle). In a straddle pike position, the body is piked at the hips with legs horizontal and split to at least 135 degrees.
- b. To receive credit for a Schuschonova, the gymnast must show straddle-pike jump, legs horizontal, then legs circle around to stretched position prior to landing in a front lying position on the floor.
- c. The Khorkina is listed to draw attention to the fact that the twist is a horizontal, not a vertical twist and it has no root jump/leap. A Khorkina is leap, 1 ½ horizontal twist to the prone position. All other jumps and leaps have the same value to the prone position as to a stand.
- d. A switch-leg leap to wolf position has the same value as a wolf jump. It is considered a different element because the take-off is from one leg rather than from two. A switch-leg leap to wolf position is a wolf shape.
- e. A hitchkick and a cabriole do not have a shape and therefore may not be used in a series to satisfy the event requirement of a dance series of different shapes on floor exercise.

**15. Direction of Specific Elements on Beam and Floor:**

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|--|-----------------------|
| a. Round-off on beam   | = sideward            |
| b. Round-off on floor  | = no direction        |
| c. Jump backward (flic-flac take-off) with $\frac{1}{2}$ (180) twist to walkover forward (Onodi) | = forward             |
| d. Jump backward with $\frac{1}{2}$ (180) twist to salto forward (Arabian salto)                 | = forward             |
| e. Cartwheel or dive cartwheel   | = sideward            |
| f. Aerial cartwheel  | = sideward            |
| g. Handstand   | = no direction        |
| h. Butterfly forward or backward   | = sideward            |
| i. Aerial round-off  | = sideward            |
| j. Sideward salto  | = sideward            |
| k. Flic-flac with $\frac{1}{4}$ twist (90) to side handstand                                     | = backward            |
| l. Backward roll to handstand  | = backward            |
| m. Tic-Toc on beam and floor   | = forward or backward |

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