

2011 Special Olympics Oregon Summer Season

Gymnastics Rules and Guidelines

The official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Oregon artistic gymnastics. These rules are based upon the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) rules for artistic gymnastics (www.fig-gymnastics.com). FIG rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules. In such cases, the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall apply.

SECTION A—OFFICIAL SPECIAL OLYMPICS OREGON EVENTS OFFERED

Coaches are responsible for providing training and event selection appropriate to each athlete's skill and interest.

- 1) **Mixed Gender Events** (Level A only - Lower ability athletes only)
 - a) Vaulting
 - b) Wide beam
 - c) Floor exercise
 - d) Tumbling
 - e) Single bar
 - f) All around (total of all five event scores)
- 2) **Men's Events** (Levels 1, 2 or 3)
 - a) Floor exercise
 - b) Pommel horse
 - c) Rings
 - d) Vaulting
 - e) Parallel bars
 - f) Horizontal bar
 - g) All around (total of all six event scores)
- 3) **Women's Events** (Levels 1, 2 or 3)
 - a) Vaulting
 - b) Uneven bars
 - c) Balance beam
 - d) Floor exercise
 - e) All around (total of all four event scores)
- 4) Male and female gymnasts may compete in all events offered within the same level (All Around) or may be "specialists," competing in one, two or more events but not all events.
- 5) Order of events for competition
 - a) In men's artistic competition, the order of events is: floor exercise, pommel horse, rings, vaulting, parallel bars, and horizontal bar. Men may be scheduled to start the meet on any event, but must continue their rotation in order.
 - b) In women's artistic competition, the order of events is: vaulting, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise. Women may be scheduled to start the meet on any event, but must continue their rotation in order.

SECTION B—DIVISIONING/RULES OF COMPETITION

- 1) Age-group divisions will be followed.
- 2) There are four levels of competition
 - a) Level A (compulsory routines for gymnasts who have ambulatory problems, etc., but are too advanced for the Motor Activities Training Program.)
 - b) Level 1 (beginner compulsory routines)
 - c) Level 2 (intermediate compulsory routines)
 - d) Level 3 (advanced compulsory routines)
- 3) For all levels
 - a) Coaches will determine the competition level for their athletes. The athletes must be able to safely perform all of the skills in that level.
 - b) In all-around competition, athletes must compete at the same level in all events.
 - c) An artistic gymnast specializing in fewer events than the all around total (i.e., three) may compete on two different levels, with a one-level difference between.
- 4) The written text is the official version. Visual aids such as floor patterns, illustrations and videotapes or DVD are provided as a supplement. If a difference exists between the text and visual aid, the text must be followed. For written text of all compulsory routines, go to http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/sports/gymnastics_artistic.pdf (see pages 9 - 110).
- 5) Modifications for gymnasts with visual impairments
 - a) In order to aid the athlete, the following types of assistance are permissible for all levels of competition:

- i) Audible cues such as clapping may be used in all routines.
 - ii) In the floor exercise, music may be played at any close point outside the mat or the coach may carry the music source around the perimeter of the mat.
 - iii) In vaulting, the gymnast has the choice of not taking a run, but using one step, two steps, multiple bounces on the board (with hands starting on horse) or a gymnast may hold onto a rope alongside the runway.
 - iv) Coaches must notify the meet director and judges of their athlete's visual impairment before the meet and prior to each event.
- 6) Modifications for athletes with hearing impairments
- a) In the women's floor exercise, the coach may signal the athlete to begin the routine without penalty.
 - b) Coaches must notify the meet director and judges of their athlete's hearing impairment before the meet and prior to the floor exercise event.
- 7) Modifications for athletes using canes or walkers
- a) In the floor exercise, coaches may walk onto the floor and remove (and replace) walkers and other aids as needed without any deduction.

SECTION C—EQUIPMENT

- 1) Attire
- a) Male gymnasts shall wear tank tops (leotards) and long gymnastic pants or gymnastic shorts depending on the event. T-shirts that are tucked in may replace the tank tops. Gymnasts may compete in socks, gymnastic slippers or bare feet.
 - b) Female gymnasts shall wear a long-sleeved leotard, have bare legs and have either bare feet or wear gymnastic slippers. Flesh-colored tights with bare feet are permitted but not recommended. Sleeveless leotards may be worn if the temperature warrants it. The only jewelry allowed is stud earrings.
- 2) Men's and women's artistic equipment
- a) Generally, see FIG equipment specifications and mat specifications for competition equipment. Modifications have been made to meet skill and size requirements for Special Olympic athletes.
 - i) Additional mats may be used to accommodate smaller gymnasts or for added safety. (There are no deductions unless specified in the specific event.)
 - ii) Boards may be placed on top of the allowed matting around the equipment to help gymnasts mount but should be removed immediately.
 - b) The floor exercise mat may be sprung or unsprung.
 - c) No vaulting horses or tables are used in Level A or Level 1.
 - d) Any standard vaulting board is permitted. A vaulting collar must be used for inverted, optional vaults.
 - e) The heights of the uneven bars, parallel bars and high bar may be adjusted to meet the size of the gymnast. Where the height cannot be lowered sufficiently, additional mats may be used to raise the floor.
 - f) Balance beam
 - i) Level A beam is 12.25cm (6in) wide and no more than 10cm (4in) above the panel mat it sits on. The beam may be covered with suede cloth or indoor/outdoor carpeting.
 - ii) Levels 1 and 2 may use a floor beam that is 10cm (4in) wide and 4.88m (16ft) long. The top is no more than 30cm (12in) off the ground and 10cm (4in) from the mats or they may use a Level 3 beam.
 - iii) Level 3 uses a regulation beam that is 10cm (4in) wide and 4.88m (16ft) long. Its height may range from 88cm (34 5/8in) to 1.2m (47 1/4in).

SECTION D—SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 1) Overview
- a) Consistent with the Special Olympics philosophy that the movement is athlete-centered; the safety of athletes is the primary concern when establishing sports rules. The establishment of international guidelines for Special Olympics gymnastics compulsory and optional routines will ensure that the athletes follow a proper progression of instruction in gymnastics skills. This will reduce the incidence of injuries. Athletes who safely perform all skills in a specific level of compulsory routines should compete at that level.
 - b) Learning the proper progressions of skill instruction and correct spotting techniques is the responsibility of the volunteer gymnastics coach.
- 2) Special Olympics Safety Position
- a) Regardless of how much safety is provided, coaches should not entice or encourage their athletes to perform skills that are beyond their reasonable ability or skills that are beyond the coaches' ability to teach. Special Olympics recommends that all gymnastics coaches become safety certified in accordance with the policy endorsed by the appropriate National Governing Body. Special Olympics concurs with the following responsibility statement:
"Even though gymnastics safety is everyone's responsibility, the instructor or coach must bear much of it, including the responsibility to see that others do their share: the parents, the doctor and the athletes. Prevention and remediation are

major responsibilities in a broad umbrella-type program under which many other points must be included: the environment, the prescribed learning progression and the physical preparedness of the athlete. These are the areas where the instructor/coach bears much of the moral and legal responsibility. It is not enough to warn and inform; all concerned must have an appreciation and understanding of the risk in every vigorous gymnastics activity."

- b) As written in the compulsory routines, coaches must be under the rings, high bar (see specific requirement for each high bar level) and uneven bars, prepared to spot, before an athlete may compete in these events. The coach must remain there during the routine. If the coach does not remain in a spotting position from start to end, the following deductions will occur:
 - i) Gymnast will not be judged while the coach is not in a position to spot.
 - ii) Judge will "call" the coach to be there. A 0.3 deduction will be taken for undisciplined behavior.
 - iii) Assuming that the coach returns to the spotting position, the gymnast will be judged from that point. All skills performed prior to that will be considered as omitted parts and deductions taken.
 - iv) If the gymnast decides to start over, he/she may. If the gymnast leaves the apparatus or the coach touches the gymnast in order to start over, a 0.8 deduction will be taken in addition to the 0.2 for delay of meet.
 - v) If the coach does not return to a spotting position and the gymnast completes his routine, the gymnast will score a zero.
- c) During vault and parallel bars competition, the coach must be present and in a position to spot. Rules 1-5 above apply.

SECTION E—JUDGING/SCORING

- 1) General judging
 - a) Two to six judges are used to evaluate each event. When four to six judges are involved in the scoring of a routine, the high and low scores are eliminated, and the remaining scores are averaged to result in the final score. The judges place themselves around the event mat or apparatus and are not allowed to consult among themselves unless ordered to do so by the head judge. (If the judges' scores are not "in range," there is a consultation.) The final average score is flashed.
 - b) Due to the importance of the divisioning process and in fairness to all, the following rule will be in effect once the competition begins: **Judges are not allowed to talk with coaches, parents or athletes concerning a gymnast's routine.** This rule applies on and off the floor of competition. If such communications occur, removal of the judge will be recommended to the Games Committee.
 - c) Neutral deductions are taken off the final score. There is a four point maximum to these deductions. Examples include:
 - i) Improper attire - 0.3 each routine
 - ii) Improper equipment and use of aids - 0.8 each routine (Coach may petition in cases of special need)
 - iii) Undisciplined or unsportsmanlike behavior - 0.3 each time
 - iv) Failure to present to judges before or after - 0.3 each time
 - v) Failure to remove board or mounting surface - 0.3 each time
 - vi) Coaching assistance (Special Olympics modifications):
 - (1) Physical assistance - 0.5 each time
 - (2) Verbal assistance - 0.3 each time
 - (3) Signals to gymnast - 0.2 each time
 - vii) Not starting within 30 seconds of judges' signal - 0.3 each time
 - viii) Not wearing competition number (if provided) - 0.3 each time
 - d) If an athlete entered in the All-around receives no score in any one of the events, then they are not eligible for an award in the All-around event.
- 2) Protests
 - a) There are General Protest Forms for non-judging issues. (These will be provided by Special Olympics Oregon staff.)
- 3) Scoring
 - a) The averaged scores are sent to the scoring table where they are placed and compared with gymnasts in that event, level, age group and skill group for medals. (See Divisioning.)
- 4) Judging Compulsory Artistic Routines
 - a) The judges may give a maximum score of 10 points for a compulsory routine. The score of 10.0 is broken down as seen in each individual event score sheet.
 - b) Value of routines/elements
 - i) There are 9.5 points to this category in both men's and women's routines. In Level A, there are 10 points to this category.
 - ii) The deduction for omission of an element equals the value of the element plus an additional deduction of 0.5. (The same as if the athlete barely tried it but had to be spotted to do it.)
 - iii) Execution deductions are taken off each individual element. Specific deductions are noted; in addition, general deductions are:
 - (1) Small errors: 0.1 (includes bent arms, knees, leg separation, loss of balance, wrong hand placement, etc.)

- (2) Medium errors: 0.3 (includes the same as small errors but done to a greater extent)
- (3) Large errors: 0.5 (includes excessive or extreme bending of arms and/or knees, leg separation, or loss of balance)
- (4) Very large errors and falls: 0.8 (includes falls on and off the apparatus)
- iv) Amplitude deductions are taken off each individual element using the above execution guidelines. Amplitude includes the range of motion and how large or compressed the skill shown is compared to the ultimate.
- v) Rhythm deductions are taken off each individual element also. These deductions include unwanted stops (0.1) to a whole series of poor rhythm throughout the whole routine.
- c) Bonus/virtuosity
 - i) There is 0.5 points to this category in both the men's and women's routines. (In Level A there is no bonus/virtuosity category.)
 - ii) Virtuosity means the precise technical execution of a skill(s) with exceptional height and/or extension.
 - iii) In some cases a specific bonus of 0.5 is noted (e.g., height of beam). The athlete will receive this bonus in addition to the 0.5 bonus/virtuosity that may be awarded. However, a maximum of 10.0 points is the highest score an athlete may receive.
- d) An entire routine may be reversed without deductions, and a single element may be reversed without deductions as long as it does not change the floor pattern (floor exercise).

COMPULSORY ROUTINES - For text and diagrams of all routines, please refer to rules located at http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/sports/gymnastics_artistic.pdf (pages 9 - 110).