



We are deeply saddened by the death of past NGJA president and 3-time Olympic Judge, Harry Bjerke. He was 80 years old.

Harry Bjerke has contributed more than 45 years of service to the sport of gymnastics. Harry has been a highly respected men's brevet judge for 35 years, and has judged three Olympic Games, 1996, 2000, and 2004. He has also judged eleven World Championships and countless international competitions. Harry has served as the Men's Technical Director or judge at every USA Championships, Olympic and World Championships Trials between 1977 and 2012. He was also a judge or technical director at 16 NCAA championships.

Harry was truly committed to the USA Men's Program. He has served as men's technical director or judge at numerous collegiate events and was an instructor at the USA Continental Judges' Course in 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2001. As President of the National Gymnastics Judges Association from 1987-1996 and continuously on the NGJA Board of Directors for over 25 years, Harry has given of his time and talent to the sport. He even coached for SUNY at Farmingdale from 1972-1982.

Harry was a member of the USA Gymnastics Board of Directors from 1987-1996. His dedication to the sport earned him an induction into the NGJA Hall of Fame in 1991 and the Spirit of the Flame award in 2001. Harry was inducted into the USAG Hall of Fame in 2005. He was also honored with the FIG Honorary Judges Diploma, the highest honor that an international official can earn.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Harry's wife, Maureen.

A very sad day. My mentor and very good friend, Harry Bjerke has passed.

Harry was most proud of his International career, even beyond the recognition he received for an exceptional local and national career. He was Technical Director of All USA Championships, Winter Cups and Olympic Trials for nearly 20 years.

He was inducted into the EGJA, the NGJA and the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame. He was one of very few judges inducted into the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame. Harry was also inducted into the Ithaca College, his alma mater, Hall of Fame and the Suffolk County NY Hall of Fame. He was most proud of having earned the highest Honor of the FIG, the FIG Honorary Judge Diploma based on the extraordinarily large number of International meets he judged as well as earning the title of FIG Technical Expert.

Harry's Lifetime Favorite Achievement was being honored with the Spirit of the Flame Award, USA Gymnastics Highest Honor, elected by the Olympians.

Harry was also on the USAG Board of Directors for 13 years, first representing the NGJA, then as Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Harry was committed to the USA Men's Program.

Our thoughts and prayers at this time are with his wife Maureen.

Condolences can be sent to Maureen at

44 Lawrence Lane, Bay Shore, NY 11706

This is truly a very sad time. Harry Bjerke was THE gymnastics judge of New York and of the USA, as well as our top international judge. Harry was both a mentor and good friend. He will be sorely missed. As a New York gymnast, I first met Harry as a high school gymnast when he judged at the City Championships. Later, when I wanted to join the EGJA and become a collegiate judge, it was Harry who eased the way at the spring meeting of the Association. Later, Harry gave me my first opportunity at judging a college tournament, the Farmingdale Open, and the honor and opportunity to work with him as the Exec. Dir when he was the President of the EGJA. From there it seemed Harry was always there, whether as NGJA President, as meet referee, technical director, and other leadership roles to guide myself and other younger judges as we began our careers and made our way in the sport. I don't think anyone judged more USA Championships or Olympics from the USA than Harry. For so many years, he was the leading judge in the USA. He was always supportive to younger judges like me that were coming up. He and his gracious wife Maureen, who probably attended more gymnastics meets than anyone but Harry, opened their home each year at the time of the Farmingdale Open or Christmas or Memorial Day to the local judges, to the coaches coming in for the Open and to athletes coming also. Harry was President of the NGJA for three terms, continually seeking to keep the organization strong and independent. At his side always, was his wife, Maureen. Rest in Peace Harry, our prayers and condolences to Maureen. – Ken Achiron