

National Certification Procedures

for

Mens Gymnastics Judges

by

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and

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Almost two years have past since Bill and I described the first unified National Certification Procedures. These were based on the pilot course held at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus on September 5-7, 1969. Since that time over 150 National Cards have been issued at clinics held in Chicago, Stanford University, Seattle, Los Angeles, Denver, Kansas State University, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, West Point, Sarasota, and many other areas. In general the reception by gymnasts, coaches, and judges has been very enthusiastic.

In our first description we alluded to judge selections and judging consistancy being as predictable as the weather. We now feel confident that judging uniformity, consistancy and quality are much more predictable and that because of this, selection processes now have a sounder basis for being fair. The ultimate has not yet been reached, but we are getting closer. Just as complete objectivity, or perhaps more precisely, complete lack of subjectivity, in the judging process is difficult to attain and in our opinion detrimental to fair evaluations, so complete objectivity in evaluating and selecting judges performances is impossible. We can nevertheless say that now minimum standards have been set. These will change (improve) as time goes on and we still learn more about the complex processes involved in judging.

Table I

Summary of NGJA Certification Requirements

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>Type of Certification</u>	
	<u>National</u> (Mandatory)	<u>Regional</u> (Suggested)
Minimum Age	19	18
Experience		
Competitor or Coach	2 years 2 years	1 year 1 year
Judge	2 years	1 year
History Form	must fill out	must fill out
16 hr. NGJA course	must take	must take
Min. Grade on 100 Quest. Written Test	3.5/5.0 (70%)	3.0/5.0 (60%)
Min. Grade on Practical Test	3.5/5.0	3.0/5.0
Min. B+C Score	3.0/5.0	2.5/5.0
Min. Live Judging Score	3.0/5.0	2.5/5.0
Reciprocity	U.S. & Territories	Within each of 4 regions
Each Card is good for...	Lesser of 4 years or until FIG has major rules changes	Lesser of 4 years or until FIG has major rules changes

To keep a card  
actively valid a  
4 hr. refresher  
course must be  
taken

each year

each year

Also a 100 quest.  
written test

The following explanatory notes are important.

Competitive or Coaching Experience refers to Mens Gymnastics.

Coaching experience may be high school or college.

Judging Experience refers to college dual meets or their equal. A minimum of six dual meets per each year counted.

The History Form must be completed and given to the Course Director.

The 16 Hour Course must be directed by a NGJA Technical Director. A typical outline is shown.

Regional Certification Procedures and Cards are to be handled autonomously within each of the 4 regions shown on Map-1. The requirements listed are only suggested, but to date each region has complied for the sake of greater uniformity.

The Refresher Course must be given by a NGJA Technical Director or his designate. It consists of:

- . two hours of lecture (recent rules changes etc.)
- . one hour of discussion
- . a 100 question written test.

Failures: If the written test is failed but the practical test, passed during the 16 Hour Regular Course or if the written test is failed during the Refresher Course, another different 100 question test may be given by the Regional Technical Director in charge of the course. This is true for 1 year after taking either of these courses. In the case of the full 16-Hour Regular Course, the practical portion need not be repeated (if passed) for one year. If the Practical Test is failed and the Written Test passed, then both tests must be repeated.

In cases of Discrepancies not well covered by the current procedures, the judging candidate may appeal either himself or through the Course Director (Regional Technical Director) to the Technical Committee for a Special Ruling.

International Courses and Cards: the NGJA participates and aids in International Courses, but it has no jurisdiction or control over these courses in any way with regard to course

content, frequencies, locations, issuance and validity of cards. These courses are handled by the FIG and usually last four days. International Cards are considered equivalent to National Cards, but a yearly Refresher Course must be taken just as in the case of National Cards.

## How to Run a National Certification Course

If you would like to run a National Certification Course the following procedure should be used:

1. Contact your NGJA Regional Technical Director. Consult Map Number 1 to determine your region. The following men are the current Directors:

East Frank Cumiskey  
15 Piermont Road, Rockleigh, N.J. 07647  
201-768-1950

Mid-East Ted Muzyczko  
1948 Broadway, Melrose Park, Ill. 60160  
312-344-2088, 312-344-4300

Mid-West Lou Barretta  
8090 Greenwood Blvd., Denver, Colo. 80221

West Jerry Wright  
541 Freya Way, Pleasant Hill, Calif. 94523

Assisting these Regional Directors are:

Southeast Jon Culbertson  
4844 Brywill Circle, Sarasota, Fla. 33578  
813-355-3604

Southwest John Draghi  
6821 Wardlow Ave., Longbeach, Calif. 90808

2. Courses are usually run on week-ends (Saturday and Sunday) so as to not interfere with other commitments. Set your date with your Regional Technical Director.

3. You must provide, lecture classrooms, a gym, and gymnasts to perform exercises. Film tests are not acceptable.

4. You should work out accomodations, places to eat, etc.

5. The NGJA does not charge any fees except for expenses. If you wish to give your lectures an honorarium that is your business, but this is definitely not required.

6. You will have to set a certain course fee to meet expenses. Appropriate literature should also be mailed out. A course outline is available from your Director.

7. The Course Director (Regional Technical Director) or his designate is completely in charge of running the course, giving interpretations, giving tests, correcting tests, and sending test results to the NGJA Secretary, who will then issue cards. All forms and tests will be provided by the Course Director. The Course Director must approve all lectures and the Expert Panel.



### Course Procedures

The course should be 16 hours although a minimum of 14 hours is permissible. A typical Course Outline is shown in Figure 1. The lectures are mainly of three types: Introductory Lectures, Review Lectures, and Individual Event Lectures. The Individual Event Lectures are perhaps the most important.

At least one lecture per event i.e. a minimum of six lectures should be given. At the end of the lecture, live scoring is strongly recommended so that candidates may be able to judge live performers -- listing ~~B~~and C moves along with appropriate scores. If live performers are not available; films should be used. The specific execution errors peculiar to each event should be thoroughly covered. Any difficulty discrepancies should also be discussed. Lecturers should not be arbitrary and should freely answer questions. At the end of each lecture candidates should be in the habit of listing B's and C's and putting down appropriate scores. This is quite important since candidates will be tested in precisely this manner.

## Test Procedures

### Written Test

A suitable Written Test is to be given, which should not contain more than 100 questions. The questions must be based on what is actually printed in the FIG manual and not on verbal opinions or loose interpretations of questionable sections. Multiple choice and completion questions are suggested. The test should not take more than 30-45 minutes to complete. No oral tests are permitted.

A candidate must score at least 3.50/5.00 or 70%. If he does not he cannot get a national card and must repeat this portion of the test.

### Practical Test

The Practical Test consists of candidates evaluating live performances, by listing B moves, C moves and a score on a test sheet. Candidate scores are compared with those of an Expert Panel that does the same.

### Panel of Experts

The panel should consist of at least 3 and preferably 4 expert judges, at least two of which have valid National Cards. The panel should select a superior judge who would

mediate differences and average the panel scores. Each panel judge should write down the number of B's and C's as well as his score for each performer evaluated. However, each of the panel judges has an additional responsibility for being an expert in each of the following 3 categories:

Difficulty	1 Judge
Combination	1 Judge
Form	1 or 2 Judges

After each performance the panel will quickly submit scores to the superior judge who will arrive at an average. If any discrepancies exist the panel must give the candidates the benefit of any doubt. For example, if there is a questionable C move or if a C move may be given 2B credit this should be considered. For example, the following assessments may all be correct:

2 C -- 4 B -- 9.1	
1 C -- 5 B -- 9.1 -- questionable C	
1 C -- 6 B -- 9.1 -- 1 C given 2 B credit	

The candidates cannot be penalized for the panel's lack of unanimity on B's and C's but any scoring spreads should be discussed to one final average. At the end of an exercise, after the candidates' cards are picked up, the superior judge must announce the number of B's and C's and the panel's average score.

### Performances by Gymnasts

At least 4 events must be worked -- 4 performers per event. For long horse, 4 vaults are sufficient. Performers should gear their routine as closely as possible to the following ranges:

<u>Performer</u>	<u>Score Range</u>
1	60 - 70
2	70 - 80
3	80 - 90
4	90 - --

Alternatively 3 men-6 events may be used.

This may be difficult to meet exactly but should be followed as closely as possible so that the candidate's range of ability is tested. It is also suggested that the competitors not perform any really questionable moves subject to extensive interpretation. It would not be a bad idea to "allow" one or two performers to fall-off so that this phase of judging can be tested.

### Evaluation by Candidates

An announcement should precede the performances explaining that all gymnasts are to judge as if they are performing in the Olympics Preliminaries i.e.

6 -- A moves	Difficulty	3.4
4 -- B moves	Combination	1.6
1 -- C move	Execution	5.0
		<u>10.0</u>

The usual mitigation rules are applicable here. After viewing a performance, each candidate is required to put the following on his score paper:

NUMBER

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Number of B moves and C moves

Final Score

Each candidate is allowed the following lengths of time to evaluate each performance:

1	st.	performance	40	seconds
2	nd.	performance	30	seconds
3	rd.	performance	20	seconds
4	th.	performance	20	seconds

At the end of each time period, the score sheets of each candidate will be picked up. It is important to have enough score pads available so that the delays can be avoided.

### Evaluating the Candidates Scores

This is a time consuming procedure so that ample, knowledgeable clerical help should be available. The standard NGJA work sheets and evaluation sheets should be used. See Figures 3, 4 and 5.

The final scores should be displayed as follows:

Name	Number	C move Score	B move Score	C+B move Score	Exercise Score	Practical Score	Theory Test Score
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On the basis of the above procedure candidates receiving a Practical Score of 3.50 or higher will receive numbered national cards from the Secretary of the NGJA. Results and questionnaires are forwarded to the Secretary by the Director as soon as possible after the test. Candidates are notified by mail as soon as possible, disclosing Written Test and Practical Test Scores. The cards will be mailed out by the Secretary.

It is a good idea to issue Course Completion Certificates to those who did not qualify for National or Regional Cards.

Regional cards may be awarded if the local judges' organization so decides. A suggested score for regional qualification is a Practical Score of 3.00. Regional cards are the responsibility fo regional organizations although they may want to follow the preceding procedure.

### Definition of a Nationally Certified Judge

Based on the forgoing procedures we can now define a Nationally Certified Judge as follows:

1. He has a good knowledge of the latest rules as indicated by his passing the Written Test score.
2. He can distinguish a minimum of 76% of B moves in simulated meet, compared to an expert panel.
3. He can distinguish a minimum of 64% of the C moves in a simulated meet, compared to an expert panel.
4. In scoring gymnastics performances in the 8.00 - 8.90 range he can evaluate these within a maximum deviation of .35 compared to an expert panel.
5. He has shown a reasonable ability to score gymnastics exercises ranging from 6.0 to 9.5.
6. He has had a minimum of two years of college level judging experience plus experience as a coach and/or competitor. If he has not been a competitor or coach he must have had four years experience as a judge.
7. He has taken an oath to swear his objective adherence to rules.

This definition is currently complete and accurate, but as our sport moves forward we hope to improve it by incorporating new and pertinent findings that will better the quality and quantity of gymnastics judges in the United States at all Competitive levels.