

SO IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE MEET REFEREE

A Survival Guide



OVERVIEW

- Meet Referee basics
- Things to do before the meet starts
- Addressing the judges before the meet
- How to fill out an inquiry form
- Presenting the inquiry form to the chief judge and to the coach
- What you should bring
- Things to know

OVERVIEW CONTINUED

- Judge's affiliation
- Carpooling
- Calculating the pay sheet
- Professionalism
- Communication
- Dealing with challenging situations
- Review
- Questions?

MEET REFEREE BASICS

- ◉ The role of the meet referee is to be an objective liaison between the judges and coaches in order to benefit the gymnast
- ◉ An acting meet referee is judging at an event and handling meet referee duties at the same time
- ◉ A separate meet referee will be assigned to the meet as a meet referee only
- ◉ All judges on the floor should be respectful of the meet referee and put personal opinions aside

MEET REFEREE BASICS

- ◉ Be sure you are confident with the rules for the level to be judged and understand your role as the meet referee



- ◉ Know what your job is and what it isn't as the meet referee
- ◉ Come to the meet knowing that judges can agree to disagree
- ◉ Advocate for yourself if you need something (meet directors may inadvertently forget when there is a separate meet referee)

MEET REFEREE BASICS

- ◉ You should attend the coaches meeting at district level meets and above
- ◉ Coaches cannot approach judges at elimination meets
- ◉ Inquiries must be submitted within 5 minutes of the completion of the rotation so judges need to be available for 5 minutes after the completion of the event
- ◉ Placement of judges is in numerical order around the event, clockwise from the chief judge table

PLACEMENT OF JUDGES AT THE EVENT (CLOCKWISE FROM CJ)

Judge
2

Judge
3

● Balance Beam

CJ

Judge
4

MEET REFEREE BASICS

- ◉ For meets requiring a score to qualify to the next meet, if .10 or less is needed for the gymnast to qualify, you may go to the lowest scoring event for a possible change
- ◉ Verify with the score table that score changes are accurately applied in the needed places
- ◉ Judges sitting at the same table should have a tabulator placed between them
- ◉ Meet directors or organizers may give gifts to the judges that do not exceed a retail value of \$20.00

MEET REFEREE BASICS

- ◉ A minimum break of 30 minutes should be provided after 3.5 to 4 hours of judging and a minimum of 45 minutes after 7 hours of judging
- ◉ When there is an early morning report and a late finish time it is recommended that there is an option to stay at a hotel (distance and/or weather conditions should be considered)
- ◉ It is best to leave your opinions at home and remain objective at the meet - as the meet referee you may not force a score change
- ◉ Notate any warnings given by a chief judge for attire, signaling or inappropriate behaviors
- ◉ Be mindful that you are continually being watched and evaluated by others
- ◉ Do not make any assumptions and don't make it harder than it should be

THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE MEET

- ◉ Contact the meet director to confirm the schedule and ask about arrangements for meals (may provide meals or per diem), hotel, car pooling arrangements and payment as well as any special instructions
- ◉ Ensure that the assigned judges will be at the meet at the specified report time and appropriate carpooling has been scheduled as agreed upon with the meet director (remind judges to have verification of mileage)
- ◉ Be sure you are aware of any rule changes or problem areas
- ◉ Know how an inquiry form should be filled out and be able to educate coaches

ADDRESSING THE JUDGES BEFORE THE MEET

- ◉ Discussion items at the judges meeting:
 - Verification of up to date USAG membership, safety and background check
 - The location of bathrooms
 - Arrangements for meals, hotel and payment
 - Be sure the sanction is signed by the judges
 - Any expectations or special requests for the meet
 - Discuss any equipment issues
 - Procedure for base score video if one is available
 - Procedure for score tabs
 - Review any problem areas
 - Review any recent rule changes
 - Provide professional protocol reminders
 - Inform judges on report time and start time of the next session
 - Ask if there are any questions

HOW TO FILL OUT AN INQUIRY

- ◉ An inquiry can only ask:
 - If the correct rules were used to judge the level
 - Any Unusual falls or unusual occurrences
 - Neutral deductions (line and time deductions)
 - Start value (opt), Major Elements and text (comp)
 - Specific flat composition deductions (opt)
 - All descriptive information must be completed on the inquiry form
 - Score range
 - Inform coach that score:
 - Could be Lowered
 - Could stay the same
 - Could be raised





USA GYMNASTICS SCORE INQUIRY FORM

INQUIRY FORM

Check One: Vault _____ Bars _____ Beam _____ Floor _____

Gymnast's number _____ Name _____ Score _____

This inquiry is based upon the following (check one):

1. Major Elements (Comp.) or Start Value (Cpt) _____
2. Neutral deductions _____
3. Spec. composition (Opt) _____
4. Score Range _____
5. Falls/Unusual Occurrences _____

List all elements that receive difficulty and connection value

Judges' Use Only

Element/Bonus Value	Description of Element(s)	Y	N

Coach's Name _____ Team _____

	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3	Judge #4	Average
Start Value:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Score:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adjusted SV:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adjusted Score:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

_____ Score Not Adjusted

 Signature of Chief Judge/Meet Referee

SUGGESTIONS TO THE COACH

- ◉ Write out value parts in order of performance (can use shorthand symbols)
- ◉ Bracket combinations and connections
- ◉ provide the language used in the code (skill number) rather than slang terminology
- ◉ offer to give the inquiry form to the coach once there is a response from the judge
- ◉ Questions to be asked:
 - She had a fall between ____and____ and I wondered if bonus was received for the element before the fall?
 - Did the gymnast receive full difficulty?
 - What are the individual judges scores?

PRESENTING AN INQUIRY FORM TO THE CHIEF JUDGE

- ◉ Be cautious of your body language
- ◉ Address the chief judge only
- ◉ Ask questions that will help you to understand the objective information needed to take back to the coach
- ◉ Do not use accusatory language and don't add inappropriate language from the coach
- ◉ Make suggestions with gentle encounters (“have you thought about...” “did you consider...” “I hear you say...” “can you look over it again” “Let’s think about...”)

DELIVERING THE RESULTS OF THE INQUIRY FORM TO THE COACH

- ◉ Stick to the facts - no inflection of your opinion should be provided
- ◉ Report the objective information from the judges
- ◉ listen to the concerns of the coach
- ◉ Use empathy
 - “I’m sorry you feel that way”
 - “this was how the judges saw it today”
 - “provide objective feedback” (“focus on sticking the landing, improving connections, fully completing a skill, are you aware that..., read the words, check R & P, check the code, know the deduction is...if...”)

WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING IN YOUR MEET REFEREE BAG OF TRICKS

- ◉ Inquiry forms
- ◉ NAWGJ fee scale
- ◉ Meet expense sheets
- ◉ Yellow card
- ◉ Expense voucher forms
- ◉ Code of points and/or compulsory book
- ◉ Rules and policies
- ◉ Copies of W9 forms
- ◉ Contact phone numbers for judges and relevant personnel
- ◉ A great big smile worn on the outside of a body with non-threatening body language

THINGS TO KNOW

- For invitational competitions a meet host may request specific judges when submitting a “request for judges” form
- A score may only be changed if:
 - There was a clerical error with entry of the score
 - CJ forgot to deduct a neutral deduction (line or time infraction)
 - A gymnast was judged by the wrong rules for their level
 - A video review may be completed by a Jury of appeals for state meet and above only

JUDGE'S AFFILIATION

- ◉ Affiliated judge - a judge whose immediate family member is an athlete or coach at a competing club or a judge who critiques or coaches at a specific gymnastics club on a regular basis (more than once a month) does not apply if the athlete is recreational
- ◉ An affiliated judge may be assigned to judge:
 - As a panel judge or meet referee (not chief judge)
 - No more than one judge with the same affiliation may be assigned per panel

CARPOOLING

- ◉ Carpooling should be scheduled in order to minimize the expense of the meet host
- ◉ A judge living within a 15 mile radius of the meet site will not be eligible for mileage, even if they carpool
- ◉ No mileage is paid for the first 30 miles except to those carpooling (deduct 30 miles if not carpooling)
- ◉ The standard IRS rate is used for mileage (for a full cent change determined in December)
- ◉ Total mileage should not exceed the cost of an airline ticket
- ◉ A map-quest type document of mileage is to be presented to the meet referee

CALCULATING THE PAY SHEET

- ◉ The hours judged per day for the same set of judges are calculated to the nearest half hour from the actual march in time (or base score film) to end time of last event for each session
- ◉ For meets with multiple sets of judges, each session would be calculated to the nearest half hour
- ◉ Appropriate break time is figured (allowable and paid)
- ◉ Allowable mileage is recorded (a reasonable carpool is 3 judges)
- ◉ Tolls and/or parking should be recorded
- ◉ Airfare cost if not previously paid by the meet host

CALCULATING THE PAY SHEET

○ Meals

- May be provided or per diem paid
- If a judge has a dietary restriction they should bring their own food
- \$15.00 per diem, when on site responsibilities are at least 3 hours but less than 8 hours (time begins with report time)
- \$30.00 per diem, when on site responsibilities are 8 hours or more
- All meals not provided by the meet director are \$15.00 per meal with a maximum of \$40.00 per day for overnight meets

CALCULATING THE PAY SHEET

- ◉ Chief judge/meet referee rate - Is paid only at state meets with 4 judge panels
- ◉ Judges rating - record correct rates for each judge
- ◉ Apply total hours and calculate fees
- ◉ Add all items to compile each judge's total payment
- ◉ Plan ahead to complete calculations - do not wait until the end of the meet
- ◉ Have each judge record their information on an individual pay stub and double check addition
- ◉ Remind judges to check that their payment is correct (correct amount, filled out to the right person, signed)

SAMPLE CALCULATION FOR A 3 SESSION ONE DAY MEET

Session 1

Start time: 8:30

End time: 10:00

Judging time: 1 hr. 30 min

Break time: 1 hr. 25 min

Session 2

Start time: 11:25

End time: 2:10

Judging time: 2 hr. 45 min

Break time: 1 hr. 25 min

Session 3

Start time: 3:35

End time: 5:40

Judging time: 2 hr. 5 min

Break time:

Day 1

Total Judging time_____

Total Break time_____

Allowable break time_____

Paid break time_____

Total Paid time_____

PROFESSIONALISM

- ◉ Maintain a pleasant facial expression when judging
- ◉ Display a positive attitude by encouraging others
- ◉ Allow others room to grow



PROFESSIONALISM

- ◉ Avoid the appearance of professional impropriety
- ◉ Know the rules and be prepared
- ◉ Be punctual
- ◉ Attire should be neat and within the dress code



ACCEPTABLE ?



Example A



Example B



Example C

UNIFORM PROTOCOL

- ◉ An official uniform should be worn (first year judges can wear navy or black slacks or skirt)
- ◉ Skirts should be knee length without high slits
- ◉ Low cut blouses are not recommended
- ◉ T-shirts, sweaters, midriff tops that reveal the bottom are not acceptable
- ◉ Spike heels, sandals or tennis shoes are not recommended
- ◉ There should be minimal adornments
- ◉ Items that draw attention and individuality are not recommended

REGION 3 JUDGES



PROFESSIONALISM

- ◉ Don't hug coaches, athletes or parents when on the competitive floor
- ◉ Acknowledge the signal of the gymnast at the conclusion of their routine
- ◉ Maintain accuracy and timeliness
- ◉ Remain completely unbiased
- ◉ Treat others with respect
- ◉ Don't be overly officious by criticizing or judging others

PROFESSIONALISM

- ◉ Avoid talking while evaluating
- ◉ Respect privacy
- ◉ Disable cell phones
- ◉ Avoid social media
- ◉ Use proper chain of command (up the chain and down)
- ◉ Be a team player

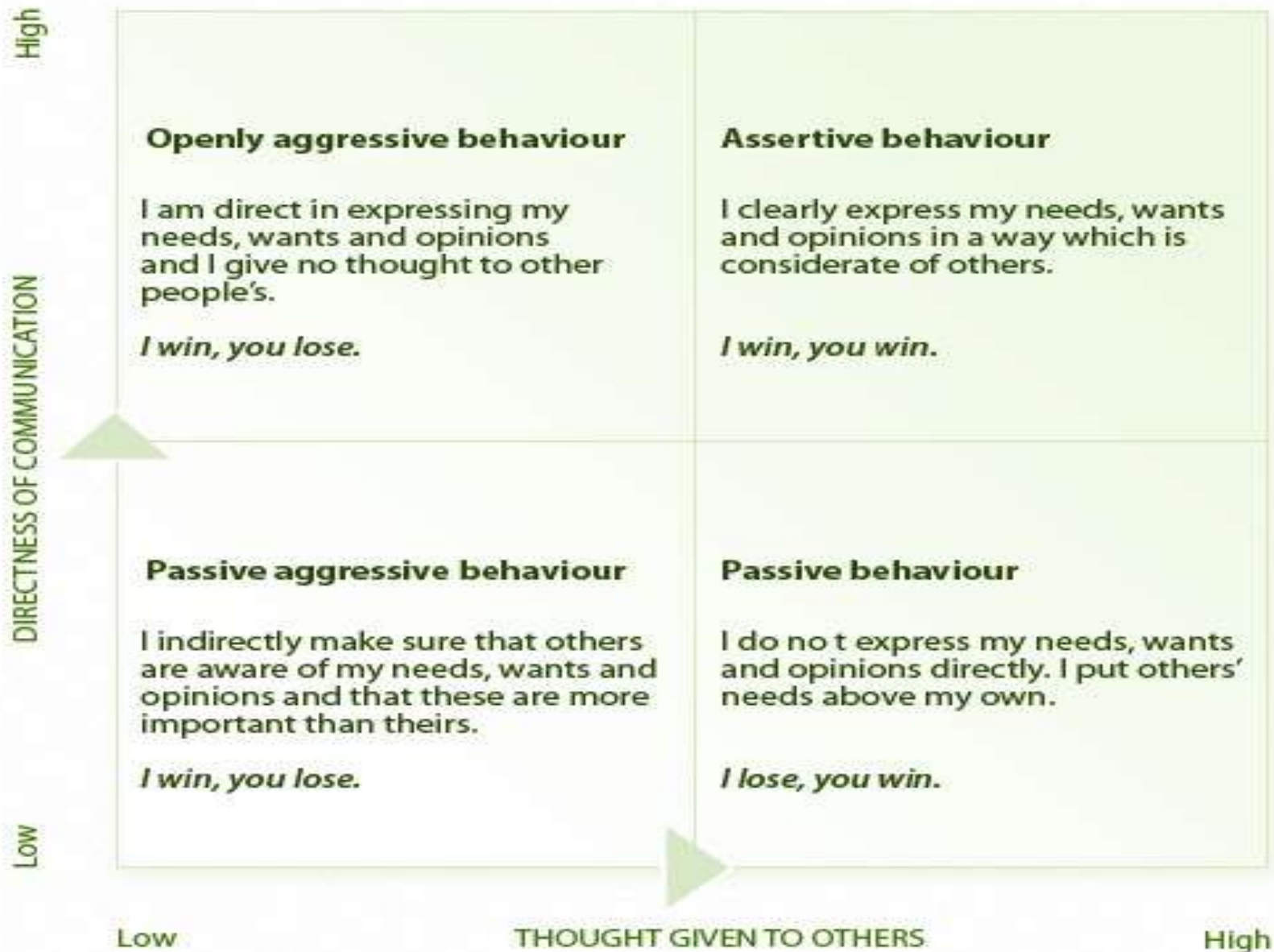


COMMUNICATION

- ◉ What is my communication style?
- ◉ What is the communication style of the other person?



WHERE DO YOU FIT?



COMMUNICATION

- ◉ What is the best communication style for the situation?
 - Short and direct approach
 - Analytical approach
 - Kind and gentle approach
 - Providing only factual information



COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR THE MEET REFEREE

- ◉ Be sure you check your emotions at the door
- ◉ Constantly monitor your approach:
 - Is your body language appropriate?
 - Is your facial expression telling?
 - What is your tone of voice?
 - Are you choosing the correct words?
 - Are you respecting personal space?
- ◉ Listen to all sides without judgment
- ◉ Observe the body language of the people involved

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR THE MEET REFEREE

- ◉ Ask specific questions to help problem solve
 - What is the other persons perspective?
 - Would you do anything differently?
 - Any other considerations?
 - What is in the best interest of the gymnast?
 - How do we resolve and move on?
- ◉ Be direct, honest and to the point
- ◉ Check your accuracy by reviewing
- ◉ Maintain confidentiality
- ◉ Remember that coaches want the best for their gymnasts
- ◉ Remember that judges want to do the best job they can

NAWGJ CANNONS

- ◉ There are 16 canons that express the conduct expected of women's gymnastic judges in their relationship with the public, with the association and with the profession of judging in general
- ◉ The Canons embody the general concepts from which the ethical consideration and disciplinary rules are derived - use these canons to guide interactions

NAWGJ CANONS

- ⦿ 1. maintain integrity and competence
- ⦿ 2. fulfill duty of making judges available
- ⦿ 3. assist in improving the system
- ⦿ 4. avoid the appearance of professional impropriety
- ⦿ 5. know the rules and provide best effort
- ⦿ 6. have current knowledge
- ⦿ 7. be on time and attend required meetings
- ⦿ 8. be alert, quick and accurate (work thru conferences in a professional manner)

NAWGJ CANNONS

- ◉ 9. should not solicit meets for him/herself
- ◉ 10. should be completely unbiased
- ◉ 11. should treat gymnasts, coaches, judges, promoters, spectators and volunteers with respect
- ◉ 12. should look and act professionally
- ◉ 13. should not be overly officious
- ◉ 14. confine duties to purposes of judging
- ◉ 15. never consume alcohol or drugs prior to meet
- ◉ 16. exercise good judgment when using social media

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

- ⊗ ~~Judge refuses to carpool or is late to carpool~~
 - ~~If a judge chooses not to carpool for any reason or is late to the carpool, mileage would not be paid to that judge~~
- ⊗ ~~Judge refuses to carpool with a particular driver~~
 - ~~If already within the carpool situation ask the driver for a change of driving behavior~~
 - ~~If the unsafe driving situation continues notify the SJD~~

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

◉ Car pooling

- Judges cannot be forced to carpool
- While carpools are encouraged individual needs must be considered
 - Departure time and arrival time (weather conditions)
 - Work schedule needs or other commitments
 - Abilities of drivers
- Prior to the meet carpooling arrangements must be communicated to the meet referee in the event that negotiations need to be made with the meet director
- There may be a situation where the meet director will request that mileage fees be split among drivers who had the potential to carpool

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

- ◉ Judge refuses to room with another judge
 - As the meet referee, listen to the reason for the refusal and objectively determine if there is a valid need to make a change (need vs want)
- ◉ As the meet referee you need to guide those involved to a reasonable solution.
- ◉ This may mean that in some circumstances person sacrifices must be made.

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

◉ Roommate basics

- Do not monopolize the bathroom
- Consider completing make-up and hair outside of the bathroom
- Do not invite others into your room without the approval of your roommate
- If you bring food to the room, remove leftovers from the room to avoid offensive smells
- If you are arriving in the middle of the night, inform your roommate ahead of time
- Smoking should not occur in the room
- Clean up after yourself
- Be sure to invite your roommate to meals and ensure carpool arrangements to the meet site

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

- Family members/friends traveling to the meet
 - If you want a family member or friend to travel with you to a meet or stay in the hotel room with you - the required procedures must be followed
 - No reimbursement for mileage would be paid
 - Hotel reservation must be made for an additional room
 - You cannot take food from judges hospitality to feed family members (friends and family are not permitted in the judges room)
 - If the friend or family member wishes to watch the meet, they must pay the entry fee

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

- Jury of Appeals: (equipment failure or unusual situations) apply at state meets or higher
 - Comprised of meet referee (who serves as the President of the Jury), meet director, chief judges of all four events, USA gymnastics personnel
 - Makes the final decision regarding any unusual situations
 - Reviews improperly handled inquiries
 - Video review may be considered by the Jury of Appeals within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the meet and before awards
 - Procedure is discussion, and voting with majority vote dictating final decision

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

◉ Dealing with Injuries

- Allow the meet director to intervene
- Notify medical staff if available
- Limit accessibility of unnecessary personnel to the injured athlete
- Do not solicit for statements of what happened
- Limit exposure of sensitive situations
- Do not discuss your opinions with anyone at the meet
- As an observer you can jot down some notes for yourself for reference at a later time
- Blood spills should be handled appropriately

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

- ◉ Be sure you are intervening with the most positive impact possible

- ◉ Consider the source of the problem
 - Lack of professionalism
 - Impaired communication
 - Involves a different set of moral values
 - Lack of knowledge
 - Involves conflicting personalities



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Conflicts should be resolved:

- In a timely manner
- Efficiently
- Respectfully
- Objectively
- Fairly
- By providing education or “teachable moments”
- With a minimum of loose ends
- Using the proper chain of command



THE DON'TS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- ◉ Don't ignore the conflict
- ◉ Don't react instead of responding (be proactive rather than reactive)
- ◉ Don't make problems larger than they are
- ◉ Don't admire the conflict by perseverating on the situation (let it go)
- ◉ Don't gossip about the conflict

Understand your own limitations
(situational, emotional or skill related)



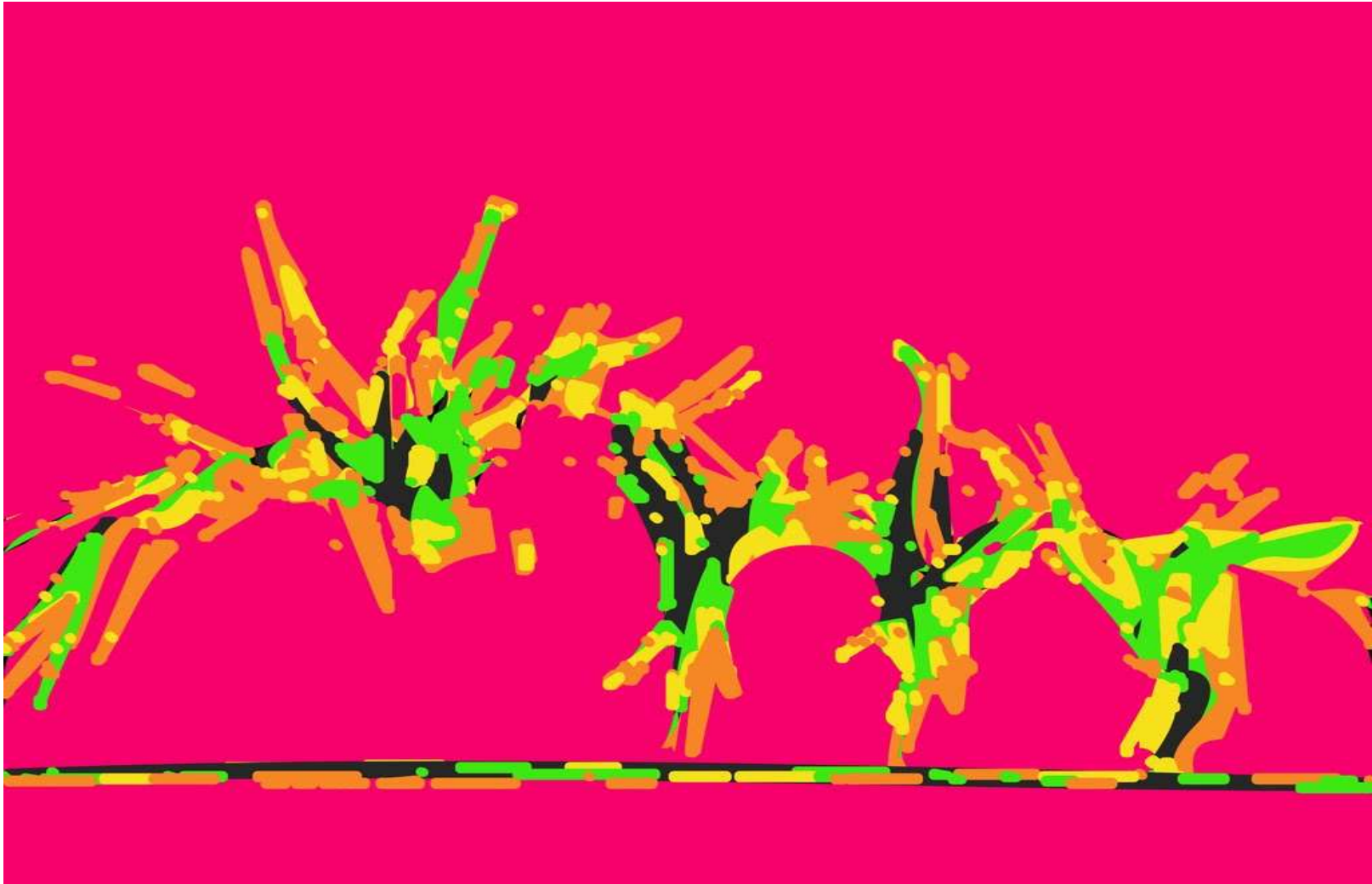
REVIEW

1. Within what time frame do inquiries need to be submitted?
2. When would you conduct a jury of appeals?
3. What is the rate of a level 9 judge?
4. Name an effective communication tool
5. Name ways to show professionalism
6. Prior to the meet should you tell the judges how they should be judging?
7. In the judges meeting should you communicate the expected judging procedures in order to set the tone of the meet?
8. Why is it inappropriate to hug coaches, athletes or parents on the competitive floor?

REVIEW TRUE/FALSE

1. You don't need to be concerned about how the inquiry is filled out since most of the coaches know the correct procedure
2. When there is an inquiry for the judges to review it is ok to let the judging panel respond directly to the coach
3. When calculating the pay sheet hours, each session should be rounded to the nearest hour
4. Body language is a good way to let others know what you think
5. Affiliated judges should not be assigned
6. A standard rule of thumb is to not make any assumptions and to over communicate

QUESTIONS?



REFERENCES

- ◉ Texas Gymnastics Judge's Guide 2015
- ◉ USA Optional Code of Points
- ◉ 2015- 2016 USAG Rules and Policies
- ◉ USAG website (forms, USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct)
- ◉ NAWGJ website (NAWGJ Cannons)
- ◉ TX NAWGJ website (forms)
- ◉ “Dealing with Difficult People” by Denise Green - Brevet Judge Washington
- ◉ The experiences of self and others