



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Gymnastics Rules Changes Minimize Risk and Improve Scoring

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Susan True

INDIANAPOLIS (March 3, 2006) — Twenty-two rules changes in high school girls gymnastics aimed at minimizing risk and improving scoring were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Girls Gymnastics Rules Committee at its January 29-30 meeting in Indianapolis. The gymnastics rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

One significant change allows gymnasts to perform a round off-entry vault if a coach is present as a spotter and a safety collar is placed around the front end and sides of the board.

“Although round off-entry vaults are not required, the rule change allows a gymnast who has only learned a round off-entry vault to perform it in high school competition,” said Susan True, liaison to the NFHS Girls Gymnastics Rules Committee. In order to minimize risk, the round off-entry vault is void if it includes a salto and twist in afterflight.

Another risk-minimizing rule permits a spotter to facilitate the gymnast in preflight or afterflight only on a handspring vault, thereby encouraging beginning gymnasts to attempt a vertical vault. Rule 7-1-3 now requires matting between the bars to be 7½ feet wide in order to ensure appropriate matting consistent with manufacturers’ specifications.

Other rules focused on scoring — the deduction for “lack of tempo change” was deleted and a deduction of up to 0.1 for a lack of direction change (excluding mount and dismount) replaces “uniqueness of choreography”, both on uneven parallel bars. Artistic presentation now replaces “uniqueness of choreography” in the composition score for beam and floor. Credit for back-to-back superiors was moved to Bonus. Also, under Bonus, it was clarified that the first bonus high superior included in a routine (with no more than a 0.3 deduction under Execution) receives 0.2 as well as 0.2 for a second, different bonus high superior (with no more than a 0.3 deduction under Execution). There is only 0.1 given under Bonus for an extra high superior or bonus high superior, and only 0.1 for the ultimate

performance of a superior/high superior/bonus higher superior and/or an entire routine performed to the ultimate.

Rule 9-1-3 removes the deduction for an individual inadvertently stepping into the competitive area on the floor exercise while placing or removing a sting mat or skill cushion near the boundary line.

“This situation is not likely to cause any interference to the gymnast’s performance, and is consistent with other gymnastics rules codes,” True said.

Cell phones were also examined by the rules committee, and Rule 5-1-6c now enacts a 1.0 team deduction if a coach or gymnast uses a cell phone in the competition area after one warning. Rule 5-1-6 also prohibits judges from using cell phones in the competition area.

Other changes focused on clarifications and miscellaneous requirements, such as Rule 7-1-2 that requires the host management to mark the minimum setting in black and the maximum setting in red on the bars being used in competition. Rule 3-3-5 addresses a growing trend, permitting gymnasts to wear a properly secured head covering and/or long tights or gymnastics pants for religious reasons, provided a letter of permission is obtained from the state association and is on hand at the competition.

According to the 2004-05 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS, 19,115 girls from 1,430 schools participate in gymnastics.

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