



9-12-18



**Acrobatic Gymnastics  
Program Committee Meeting Minutes  
August 8-10, 2018 \* Providence, RI**

**Role Call**

Carisa Laughon, Program Committee Chair *(note: Carisa absent during portion of meeting indicated below)*  
Sarah Thomas, National JO Committee, Chair  
Ronda Francis, National Elite Committee Chair  
Holly King, National Technical Committee Chair  
Dylan Maurer, Athlete Representative *(note: Dylan absent during portion of meeting indicated below)*  
Ryan Ward, Acrobatics Program Director (non-voting)

*Meeting convened 8/8/2017 at 6:30pm (Dylan absent)*

**Welcome**

Carisa started the meeting by welcoming the committee members and congratulating Holly King on her recent election as National Technical Committee Chair. The outgoing chair, Kari Duncan, was thanked for her service in the role over the last 10+ years.

Ryan provided an update to the committee regarding National Office, which included safe sport updates, staffing changes, and new/updated policies and procedures.

**Growth & Development Committee**

The Growth and Develop Committee asked the APC to consider a proposal to name two additional members:

- 1) representation for Region 7 – Leeann Lenhart, and
- 2) judging representative – Valere Binet.

The APC considered this proposal and **recommends expanding the Growth & Development Committee by two members, appointing LeeAnn Lenhart as the Region 7 Representative and Valere Binet as the Judging Representative.**

**Motion: Carisa Laughon**

**Second: Ronda Francis**

**Unanimous vote**

The APC asked Ryan and G&D Committee to continue to communicate and publicize the goals, resources, and accomplishments of the committee. The G&D Committee serves as the main point of contact for new clubs interested in starting acrobatics, so please refer any prospective clubs, coaches, athletes to the G&D Committee members (list of members listed [here](#)).

**Future Stars**

The APC discussed the need to host a Future Stars camp this fall and is moving forward with plans for this event, targeting the dates of Oct 26-28, 2018.

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Discussed other aspects of the Future Stars Team and Program for future seasons, including the team's purpose and significance in our development pipeline, better defined selection criteria, inclusion of individual and/or pair/group testing for qualification onto team, number of available spots on the team, and the need for more tracking and communication among team members/clubs. The APC ask for the National JO Committee to strategize and make recommendations back to the PC for consideration for the 2019 season.

### **Super Clinic**

The APC discussed hosting a Super Clinic event. This would be a 3-day weekend of education offered to new clubs and coaches, existing clubs and coaches, athletes (limited pair/groups per club), and judges. The education will include lecture sessions, hands-on training, and collaborative and networking opportunities. The Super Clinic may also be an opportunity for judging clinics. The goal is to provide more targeted and specific coach education and opportunities for judges and coaches to learn and work together.

Event information, registration, and schedules will be published as soon as possible.

### **JO Updates**

Current JO Code of Points: Changes for the 2019 season for Levels 6-8 Individual Elements have been approved and will be published in an errata document online.

2021-2024 JO Code of Points:

1. JO Code will be revised and updated for the 2021-2024 cycle. For the new cycle, there will be a charge to purchase/download the JO Code of Points. The CoP will be set for the cycle, without changes.
2. Individuals have been identified to electronically develop the CoP, create new compulsory music and choreography for levels 2-5.
3. Targeted release date for the 2021-2024 CoP and other materials is August of 2020.

*(Dylan joined the meeting @ 8:20pm)*

### **USA Gymnastics Championships - Nationals**

The Program Committee has heard the comments and concerns expressed from our community regarding USA Gymnastics Championships. This is an important event on our calendar annually and a substantial consideration for the PC is continued support, retention and growth of our Junior Olympic program. In conjunction with the National Office, we are exploring all options for future years to shape the national championships event to be rewarding for all participants, include more community-building, and become the special event that our community continues to ask for.

*Kerry Perry, USA Gymnastics CEO and Kyle James, USA Gymnastics Vice President of Marketing and Sales participated in this portion of the meeting.*

Kerry expressed her opinion that acrobatics has much untapped potential, especially in terms of marketing and revenue generation. Kerry encouraged us to develop an overall plan that can help gain visibility, grow membership, and develop revenue growth, not only thru incremental revenue at a single event.

*Kerry and Kyle left the meeting.*

PC continued to discuss marketing plans and will consult with the Marketing Department to create a marketing plan to build greater awareness of acrobatics and look for ways to increase revenue.

*Concluded meeting 8/8/2018 at 10:15pm*

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Meeting commenced 8/9/2018 at 2:00pm

### National Team Camp

The APC discussed plans to host a National Team Training camp along with a selection competition in December. Host sites are challenging to find because USA Gymnastics no longer has a national training center. Ryan and PC will continue to move forward to identify potential sites and get a camp scheduled.

The APC would prefer to host two regional training camps in early 2019 in place of another national team camp.

### Vegas Acro Cup

**Recommend only current SNT will be assigned to compete for team USA at the Vegas Acro World Cup. The Vegas Acro Cup invitational competition is open to any interested pair/groups meeting level and age requirements, according to competition directives, without the need for approval through the International Club Competition Request program. Age Group and JNT (12-18 and 13-19) will not be assigned to the competition as Team USA but may compete representing their club.**

**Motion: Sarah**

**Second: Holly**

**Unanimous**

### 2018-2019 Acrobatics Calendar

- o October 26-28, 2018 Future Stars Camp, Location: TBD
- o November 2-4 or Nov 9-11, 2018 Super Clinic, Location: TBD
- o December 6-9, 2018 National Team Selection and Training Camp, Location: TBD
- o January/February 2019 National Team Regional Training Camps
- o Feb 8-10, 2019 WOGA Classic, Plano, TX (club *international* competition)
- o March 8-10, 2019 Maia International Acro Cup and World Cup, Maia, POR
- o March 22-24, 2019 Vegas Acro Cup and World Cup, Las Vegas, NV (Seniors only)
- o April 12-14, 2019 Flanders International Acro Cup and World Cup, Puurs, BEL
- o June/July 2019 Acrobatics National Championships
- o September 13-15, 2019 World Cup, Lisbon, POR
- o October 2019 PAGU Championships
- o Nov 1-4, 2019 National Team Training Camp
- o May 20-26, 2020 World Age Group Competition, Geneva SUI
- o May 29-31, 2020 World Championships, Geneva, SUI

\*\*Note: activities on schedule are based on approved 2019 budget\*\*

### JO Committee Report

Sarah presented the proposed changes for the next cycle (2021-2024) for WG and WP. The PC approved these changes and asked the NJOC to move forward with the other disciplines.

Other initiatives from the National JO Committee:

1. Recognition for pair/groups comprised of athletes from multiple clubs: wish to set positive examples to encourage this to happen throughout our community.
2. Issues are occurring with athletes moving gyms and coaches/clubs "recruiting" athletes from other programs. While specific rules to prevent this are challenging and perhaps not in our program's best interests, we should continue to educate our community (coaches, athletes and parents) about correct/ethical ways to handle these situations.

### Blocks Program

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Dylan and Sarah presented revisions to the blocks program for incorporation for the 2019 season, which include addition of two more competitive levels, removal of link bonus, adding skills and revising difficulty chart, changing definition of skill variation, adding one-arm transition values.

**Motion to approve the changes to the blocks program as presented. Update the name of the program to XCEL Blocks. Names of levels will follow those in other disciplines' Xcel program; bronze, silver, gold, platinum, diamond.**

**Motion: Sarah**

**Second: Dylan**

**Unanimous**

Note: 2019 Xcel Blocks updates to be published online as soon as possible.

### **Board of Directors Update**

Dylan presented an update from recent Board of Directors meetings, including:

1. Board restructure recently implemented, limits program reps and athlete reps.
2. Current board includes many great, highly qualified members, who are willing to help
3. Huge concern and topic: safe sport
  - a. Implementation of recently adopted policies
  - b. Investigation process
4. Reassured about financial standing of organization (insurance policies, etc.)

### **Elite Committee Report**

Ronda presented work from the National Elite Committee including:

1. Bonus point (scoring) system for International Track levels. The reasoning is to build a program that supports the need to increase difficulty and skill development on the international track in an effort to be more competitive internationally. The idea being that certain, identified high-value and "wow" skills would receive a bonus in score. Various program details and concerns were discussed. Additional data will be gathered to prepare a final proposal for the Program Committee.
2. **Recommendation to add a position on the national elite committee for a national coaching staff representative, appointed by the national coaching staff annually. National Coaching staff is not eligible to serve on the Athlete Selection Committee as the NEC representative.**

**Motion: Ronda**

**Second: Dylan**

**unanimous**

*Meeting concluded at 7:00pm*

*Meeting commenced 8/10/2018 at 10:15am*

### **Technical Committee Report**

Holly presented the following:

1. Monthly judging newsletters will continue to be communicated. The Regional Technical Chairs will be included in this process monthly for content, etc.
2. Nationals Recap
  - a. Judges scores during the event were in range throughout the event, especially given neutral judge panel and one judge panel.
  - b. Artistry scores, in general, did not show enough range in scores, high scores were in line, but scores were not brought down low enough for other routines.

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- c. Judges must be provided more time for tariff sheet review. Reviews in future years must start earlier (before event) and work in judging partnerships. Coach and Judge review will be conducted just prior to mandatory coach meeting.
3. Tariff Sheet Creation Program  
The FIG has worked with programmers to create a Tariff Sheet Creator (specifically for international track levels). The Program Committee considered introducing this option to coaches. There would be a minimal fee to use this technology. The NEC was asked to solicit input from coaches to gauge whether this would bring a benefit to them.
4. National Judges' Course
  - a. Online "pre-test" will be provided before hosted event. This will provide an understanding as to what content to prepare for course and get judges to open rule books and re-condition them to thinking about Acrobatics prior to course attendance.
  - b. Course will include more videos and application of knowledge.
  - c. Videos, content, information, etc. will be taken from the National Course and used in Regional Courses throughout the country.
5. Judges Progressions and Requirements - These will be evaluated by the NTC to determine if any changes need to be made.
6. Conflict of Interest constraints for Judges
  - a. Use the term "conflict of interest" instead of affiliation.
  - b. Of 101 current judges in the USA, only 12 (rated high enough to judge at a national level event) are free of conflict of interest.
  - c. The PC discussed this issue as it relates to developing more judges in our community, especially those without a conflict of interest, and determining judging assignments to include experience and knowledge among other criteria, not only conflict of interest.
  - d. For local, state and regional competitions the rules and policies will be updated to reflect the changes below:
    - i. CJP – no conflict of interest, whenever possible.
    - ii. DJ – no restrictions regarding conflict of interest
    - iii. MR – no conflict of interest, whenever possible.
    - iv. At Selection Events (i.e., for National Team, World Team, etc.), conflict of interest is not allowed on the judges' panel. Judges on panel may change between sessions to provide experience for judges at national events, provide a conflict of interest free environment for the athletes, and maintain a competition of the highest quality.
7. Fast-Track Judging Certification Process – In an effort to develop more judges and encourage retired athletes to stay involved in the sport, a process to allow expedited judging certification and progressions for ex-athletes was discussed.

**Recommend implementing a Fast-Track Certification program for ex-athletes in Acrobatic Gymnastics beginning with the 2019 season. Individual must have competed as a senior athlete at a national-level event (i.e.; USA Gymnastics Championships, World Team Trials, Acro Cup, etc.). Qualified individuals may choose to start certification at the state or regional level by taking the full examination for the respective level. If passed, the individual can judge at the qualified level and progress up to higher levels of judging in one-year increments, with the cap of the Fast-Track program being national level. From the national level, progressions will be the same for all judges, as currently defined in the Rules & Policies. Note: to progress to the next judging level after one year of experience, all progression criteria must be met.**

**Motion: Holly**

**Second: Carisa**

**Unanimous**

8. Judging Hiatus

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Adjust Rules & Policies (Section 13.4.e) as follows: *Following a one-year or less hiatus from judging, a judge may re-enter at the same level by taking the certification course and "re-cert" examination.*

Following a hiatus of more than one year, a previously certified judge may choose to re-enter the judging ranks at the last held level or a lower level. To do so, the judge must take a certification course and pass the respective certification exam. Judging progressions start anew from that point.

9. FIG Judges and International assignments – The PC discussed the current group of international judges, important criteria and considerations for this level of judge, experience, assignments, and development initiatives. The NTC will further define assignment criteria and rotation order and present to PC for approval. Open communication with all international judges is important to this process.
10. Tariff Sheet Submissions - The PC discussed a revision of process and method for the submission of tariff sheets before competitions (both regionally and nationally). The NTC will provide complete updates by fall.
11. Online Judging Education – A Local level online judging course, exam and practical exam was discussed as a way to help certify judges in areas with little or no other acrobatics, where new clubs are starting, as well as provide opportunities to further grow the pool of judges within the country.  
**Recommendation to produce an online judges' course, exam, and practical exam and allow this online certification option for new Local Judge level.**  
**Motion: Holly**  
**Second: Sarah**  
**unanimous**
12. Judging Tools – the NTC will work to develop:
  - a. Study guides for courses and exams, so individuals know what to study and prepare for when certifying or taking an upgrade exam.
  - b. Judging reference guide, summary document to have handy at competitions.

### Athlete Selection Committee

Discussion around converting to a 3-member committee occurred. Because of the unavoidable problem with conflict of interest, a 3-member committee cannot function. A 4-member committee will stay in place and nominations will commence in September.

### Program Council

The following statement will be added to the criteria for Acrobatic Gymnastics Program Council Representatives: If an individual meets criterion for both positions on the program council, it is the individual's choice about which criteria to run under, but he/she must select one.

### National Congress

PC would like to build more of a presence at national congress and discussed ways to do so. National Congress is a terrific educational event and provides opportunities to build awareness for acrobatics, as well as, education our own acrobatics community.

*Meeting concluded at 3:45pm*

*Meeting commenced at 6:00pm (Carisa absent)*

### Athlete Funding

The APC discussed the goals of elite funding, benefits to athletes and the acrobatics program, criteria for funding, how much funding reasonable.

**Recommendation to include in the 2019 Acrobatics Program Budget, athlete funding for three World Cup events for age eligible Senior Elite pair/groups (Maia, Flanders, Lisbon), in addition to the monthly stipend, using currently defined criteria, to continue for the 2019 season.**

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**Motion: Ronda  
Second: Sarah  
Unanimous**

**Athlete Head Tax**

**Recommendation to increase the Athlete Head Tax, payable to USA Gymnastics for each athlete competing in a sanctioned event to the following amounts: \$6 locals, \$8 State, \$10 Regionals, and \$5 for Xcel Blocks.**

**Motion: Ronda  
Second: Dylan  
Unanimous**

*Meeting concluded at 7:30pm*