

## PART SIX

### APPARATUS REQUIREMENTS FOR ELITE AND JUNIOR OLYMPIC COMPETITIONS

#### I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Athlete safety guidelines, as listed in the *USA Gymnastics Safety Handbook*, should always be considered.
- B. It is recommended that there be a clearance of 5' to 6' from one apparatus to any other. This includes corresponding mat area or any other obstruction, i.e., other apparatus, walls, pillars, etc.
- C. Equipment specifications, including vault runway thickness, must be published in the pre-meet information.
- Exact bar measurements must be listed on bid forms for sectional and above meets. When selecting meet sites for sectional and above meets, consideration will be given to those facilities that can provide a wider bar setting.
- D. Levels 1-4 non-competitive gymnasts may set the equipment to facilitate the exercise. Level 1, 2 and 3 meets must follow the same standards used at Level 4.
- E. **MATTING HEIGHT SPECIFICATIONS:**
1. **COMPETITION LANDING MATS**
- a. ELITE/PRE-ELITE/Hopes must use FIG specifications 20 cm. (-2 cm tolerance, no + tolerance) mat thickness.
- At Regional qualifiers, 12 cm - 20 cm mats are allowed.
  - **National Qualifiers must use 20 cm. mats.**
  - International Elites MUST use a 10 cm supplemental landing mat for vault and for bars/beam dismounts.
- b. JR. OLYMPIC:
- 1) One 10-12 cm competition landing mat is required; a second 10 -12 cm. may be placed on top of the required mat for compulsory and optional competition. **If a second 10-12 cm mat is used for Optional Levels 7-10, it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.** Maximum height is 24 cm.
  - 2) Maximum height is 24 cm.
  - 3) 20 cm competition landing mats are also allowed (but are not required).
    - a) For vault, if 20 cm mats are used, it is recommended that the Meet Director make every effort to also provide one 10-12 cm competition landing mat.
    - b) For Bars and Beam, in order to use a 20 cm mat, the apparatus must be capable of being raised to the FIG maximum height allowance (High Bar – 246 cm; Beam – 125 cm).
  - 4) A 1¼" base mat must be used if a 10 cm (4") competition landing mat is used. When using 12 – 20 cm mats, a base mat is not required.
    - The 1¼" base mat may be placed underneath or on top of the competition landing mat.
- c. The area under the apparatus and/or in the landing area must be matted with competition landing mats that are uniform in height.
2. **SUPPLEMENTAL MATTING (SKILL CUSHIONS) FOR VAULT, BARS AND BEAM (See V. for Floor Exercise matting)**
- a. ELITE/PRE-ELITE
- 1) Championships: No additional matting other than FIG specifications may be used.
  - 2) Classics: Up to two manufactured sting mats are allowed to be placed separately on the Floor Exercise area.
  - 3) **Zone, National Qualifiers and Challenge Meets:**
    - Up to two manufactured sting mats and/or 10 cm (4") supplemental landing mats may be used on Floor Exercise.
    - A skill cushion (maximum thickness of 8") may be used in addition to the 20 cm (-2 cm tolerance) competition landing mat for release elements on bars.
- b. JR. OLYMPIC
- 1) Up to 9" of any combination of **supplemental** matting [skill cushion(s) and/or sting mat(s)] is allowed in addition to the maximum allowable competition landing surface of 24 cm.
  - 2) Whenever a full 8" skill cushion is used, it must be a minimum of 5' x 10'; however, it is recommended that it be as close as possible to the same dimensions as the competition landing mat.
  - 3) **Whenever a 4" supplemental mat ("throw" skill cushion) is used for Levels 7-10, it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.**
  - 4) **Any dimension of sting mat is allowed.**
- F. **SPRINGBOARD/MOUNTING SPECIFICATIONS**
1. Only unaltered manufactured vaulting boards that meet FIG specifications (22 cm ± 1.5 cm) are approved for USA Gymnastics competitions. The height of the board is measured from the floor to the highest point of the board, including the covering. Exceptions:
    - Levels 1-5 may use a manufactured "Junior" vaulting board.
    - All levels may also use a manufactured mat shaped like a springboard (Mount trainer/mount mat).
  2. Plywood is not permitted underneath the board. (Exception: see Collegiate rules)

- 1) All age divisions may use any of the three choices of heights.
- 2) The mat stack may be placed on top of a solid foam pit.
- 3) A tape line must be placed at 32" from the front edge of the landing surface (placed so that the far edge of the tape is at 32"). The tape line should also extend down the side of the mat.
- 4) An additional mat (minimum of 4") must be placed on the floor behind the mat stack.
- 5) All mats used in forming the mat stack must be a minimum of 5' wide and 10' long.
- 6) An unfolded panel mat may be placed on top of the uppermost surface of the mat stack/resi pit if necessary to provide a more stable landing surface.

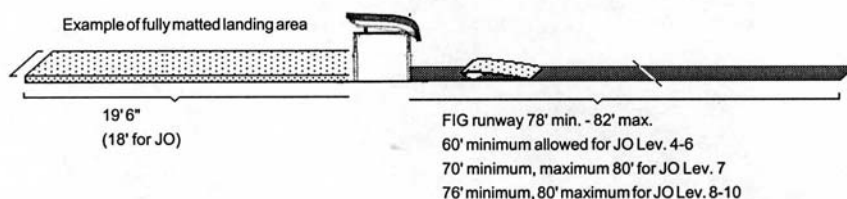
B. Runway - FIG specification: Minimum of 78' (25 m); Maximum of 82'

Measurement is from the front of the vaulting table. The runway should be a clearly defined area that provides a flat, consistent surface, free of cracks, obstructions or seams. The Meet Director must provide a tape measure which must be extended the length of the runway in order for the gymnasts to find the point at which to start their run. Minimum width of the runway should be the width of the board.

1. All Elites/Pre-Elites use FIG runway specifications.  
Hand placement mats for Round-off entry vaults are allowed on the runway (not on the board).
  - FIG Spec: 120 cm x 100 cm (+ 10 cm)
  - Must use a manufactured Round-off entry hand placement mat, using FIG specifications if available.
  - Sting mats are NOT allowed.
2. Jr. Olympic runway lengths:
  - a. A 76' minimum, 82' maximum runway is allowed for Levels 8, 9 and 10.
  - b. A 70' minimum, 80' maximum runway is allowed for Level 7.
  - c. A 60' minimum runway is allowed for Levels 1-6.
3. Jr. Olympic-all levels: A **Hand Placement** mat may be placed on the runway (**but not on the board**) for any vault, provided that it is manufactured by a gymnastics equipment company and does not exceed 2 inches in height.
  - a. All Meet Directors of Level 8 and above competitions MUST provide a minimum of one manufactured Round-off entry mat.
  - b. At East/West & JO National Championships, only the Round-off entry mats manufactured by the equipment company that is supplying the apparatus will be allowed. Clubs may not bring their own mats.
  - c. If the Meet Director cannot supply the abovementioned Round-off entry mats, they may allow clubs to bring their own, provided the mat meets the criteria as stated above.
  - d. Sting mats are not allowed for use as a Round-off entry hand placement mat for vault.
  - e. **If a Hand Placement mat is used, it must be placed Velcro-side down on the runway.**

C. Use of the "VAULTING BOARD SAFETY ZONE MAT" is REQUIRED for all Round-off entry vaults executed at the Elite, Pre-Elite and Jr. Olympic Levels 8, 9 and 10. It may also be used for all other vaults. When used for Round-off entry vaults, the safety zone mat must be placed snugly around the board so that there is no space between the board and the safety zone.

Note: If the Safety Zone mat is used for forward approach vaults, the safety zone mat may be present, but is not required to fit snugly around the board.



D. AREA REQUIRED TO BE MATTED

1. All Elites/Pre-Elites use FIG specifications: The landing area is 8' by 19' 6" (6 m). The FIG landing zone measurements must be marked on the top and side surface of the base mat.
  - a. Classics and USA Championships: 8' x 19½' x 20 cm (-2 cm tolerance) matted landing area.
  - b. Zone/National Qualifiers and Challenge: 8' x 19½' x 20 (or 12) cm (-2 cm tolerance) matted landing area.
    - Hopes, Pre-Elite and Elite gymnasts are allowed to land in a solid-foam pit with the above matting. The Meet Director must indicate this in the meet information.
2. Jr. Olympic
  - a. 1¼ inch Base mats: If 10 cm (4") competition landing mats are used, the following 1¼' base mats are required:
    - 1) A minimum of 6' by 18' for Levels 5/6
    - 2) A minimum of 8' x 18' for Level 7/8/9/10.
    - 3) If 12 cm (4¾") or 20 cm landing mats are used, base mats are not required.

- b. Competition Landing Mats (CLMs):
  - 1) For Levels 1-4, refer to the Jr. Olympic Compulsory book for required matting at each level.
  - 2) For Levels 5-6, a minimum of a 6' by 12' matted area is required.
  - 3) For Levels 7/8/9/10, a minimum of an 8' x 15½' matted area is required.
- c. **For Levels 7-10, whenever a 4" supplemental mat ("throw" skill cushion) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s), it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.**
- d. For USA Gymnastics sanctioned Jr. Olympic competitions up to and including the State Championships for all levels, one (10-12 cm or 20 cm) or two (10-12 cm) competition landing mats (plus the maximum allowable skill cushions) will be allowed to be placed on top of a solid-foam pit provided that this information is stated in the meet information sent to the participating clubs.
  - Landing into a "LOOSE-FOAM PIT" AREA IS NOT ALLOWED FOR COMPETITION, unless the pit area is covered by a stable (wooden or metal) surface.

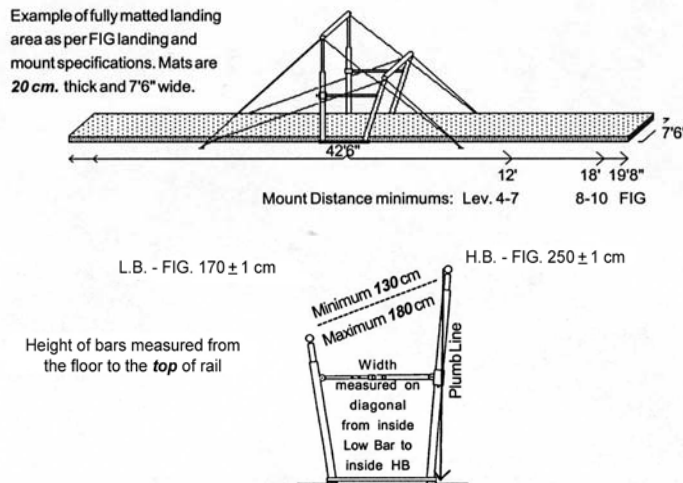
### III. UNEVEN BARS

#### A. Specifications

1. FIG/Elite & Pre-Elite Specifications: High bar: 250 cm ( $\pm 1$  cm); Low bar 170 cm ( $\pm 1$  cm) measured from the floor to the top of the rail. The maximum height difference between the bars is 80 cm  $\pm 3$  cm. Horizontal distance between the bars: Bars must close to a minimum of 130 cm and extend to a maximum spread of 180 cm; spread is measured on the diagonal from the inside of the LB to the inside of the HB.
  - The bar may be raised if the athlete's feet/seat touch the landing mat when swinging. If it is necessary to raise one bar, the other bar MUST also be raised an equal number of notches.
2. Jr. Olympic specifications:
  - a. Based on the best interest of the gymnast's safety, it is permissible to adjust the High Bar and/or Low Bar to a height which exceeds (or is lower than) the FIG specifications. Regardless of the measurement, the rails must be adjusted only to a position that locks-in with a dual locking mechanism that meets the manufacturer's recommended safety parameters.
  - b. The distance (spread) between the bars may be set to the preference of the athlete, provided that after such adjustment, the bars remain within the allowances identified by the manufacturer of the apparatus.
    - For equipment that has a slider mechanism on both bars, it is strongly recommended that the low bar slider remain in the highest position, and that adjustments are made only with the high bars slider. This will expedite changing of bar sets during competition.
  - c. A single bar may be used for Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 competitions; provided that the single bar meets the current Low bar specifications.
3. Fiberglass rails with wood covering are required for all sanctioned meets.
4. Round fiberglass rails are allowed at all USA Gymnastics competitions. Diameter: 39 mm  $\pm 1$  mm.

#### B. FIG MOUNT specifications: 19'8" minimum (6 m) and 26'3" maximum (8 m) measured from a plumb line dropped from the rail. The maximum distance must be marked.

1. All Elites/Pre-Elites use FIG specifications.
2. Levels 7, 8, 9 & 10: 18' minimum is allowed. (No maximum).
3. Level 1-6: 6' minimum is allowed. (No maximum).



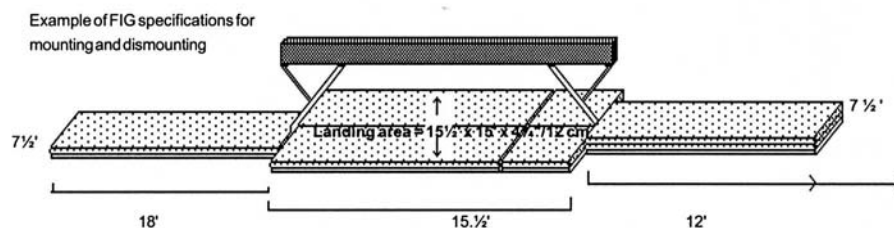
#### C. AREA REQUIRED TO BE MATTED

1. FIG Elite/Pre-Elite requires a 7 meter (22' 11") matted area to both sides of the center point under the bars.

2. Jr. Olympic: The matted area under bars must be:
  - a. a minimum of 6' by 15' for Levels 1-4.
  - b. a minimum of 6' by 24' for Levels 5 & 6.
  - c. **a minimum of 7½' by 36' for Levels 7, 8, 9 & 10.**
3. **For Levels 7-10, whenever a 4" supplemental mat ("throw" skill cushion) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s), it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.**
4. If a 4" mat (skill cushion) is placed on the competition landing mat(s) for dismount purposes, an additional 4" or 8" skill cushion may be used for the purpose of protection on a release element; however, the additional skill cushion must be removed immediately after the release element is performed.
5. When a raised surface is needed to spot release moves, it is recommended that a spotting block or folded mat be used; however, there is no penalty for standing on the board, provided that the board (or spotting device) is removed immediately after the release move is performed.
  - A 0.30 deduction will be taken if the spotting device is not removed.

#### IV. BALANCE BEAM

- A. FIG specifications: 125 (±1) cm total height, measured from the floor to the top of the beam. For all competitions, the balance beam legs must be placed on the floor or a stable surface.
  1. All Elites/Pre-Elites use FIG specifications.
  2. Jr. Olympic height specifications:
    - a. For all sanctioned Jr. Olympic events, the beam **MUST** be adjustable.
    - b. All Levels may use the beam at any height, regardless of age division; however, the height must be within a minimum of 100 cm (± 1 cm) and a maximum of 125 cm (± 1 cm).
  3. Padded manufactured beams are required at all sanctioned competitions.
  4. Beams with a "spring" mechanism are allowed at Jr. Olympic competitions.
  5. It is strongly recommended that padding for the Beam uprights and bases be used, if available from the manufacturer.

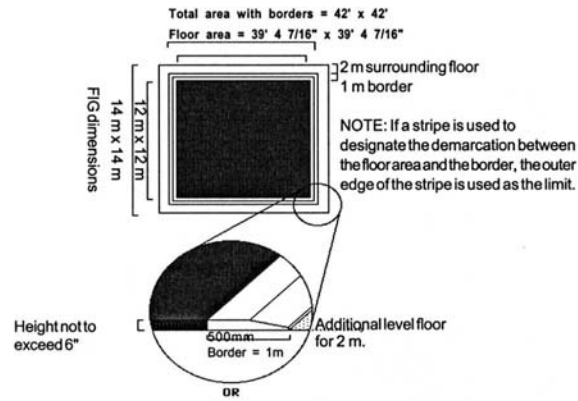


- B. FIG Mount specifications: 19'6" minimum (6 meters) on one end and 26'3" (8 meters) maximum (8 meters) at the other end of beam. For optional mounts from a side approach, a minimum of 12' 6" is required.
  1. Elites/Pre-Elites use FIG specifications. Maximum distance **MUST** be marked.
  2. Levels 7, 8, 9 & 10: 18' minimum is allowed. (No maximum)
  3. Levels 4, 5, & 6: 12' minimum is allowed. (No maximum)
  4. It is strongly recommended that the entire mounting area be level.
- C. AREA REQUIRED TO BE MATTED
  1. FIG/Elite and Pre-Elite requires a minimum of 7½' by 18' matted area at one end, a 7½' by 12' matted area at the other end, and a 15' wide by 15½' long matted area under the beam.
  2. Jr. Olympic
    - a. Levels 7, 8, 9 & 10: requires a minimum of 7½' by 12' matted area at each end, and a minimum of 15' wide by 15½' long matted area under the beam. An 8' wide mat for dismount area is recommended for Levels 7 and above.
      - **For Levels 7-10, whenever a 4" supplemental mat ("throw" skill cushion) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s), it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.**
    - b. Levels 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 requires a minimum of 6' by 12' matted area at each end of the beam (mats may be placed sideways since the dismount is not off the end), and a minimum of 12' wide by 15½' long matted area under the beam.

#### V. FLOOR EXERCISE

- A. FIG specifications: 12 meters X 12 meters (39' 4 7/16" X 39' 4 7/16"). The measurement is from the outside of the tape or where the carpet changes color. The floor surface must be a minimum of 1¼" thick (3.2 cm) to a maximum of 7" thick (17.8 cm). The top of the mat must be joined into one continuous level surface.
  1. When the floor exercise carpet has two colors to distinguish the border rather than a solid color with taped boundary lines, it is permissible to place small pieces of tape (of the same color as the floor area carpet) at the inside corners of the boundary to assist the gymnast's awareness of the boundary.

2. If the Floor Exercise mat sits on a non-padded surface (concrete or wood floor), it is recommended that the outside of the corners be padded with unfolded panel mats or other such matting to protect the gymnast if they go beyond the dimensions of the Floor mat.
- B. Jr. Olympic uses FIG specification for Levels 6 - 10.
  - C. Levels 4 and 5 may use a 36' X 36' area. Level 1-5 may use a tumbling strip area provided it is a minimum of 8' wide and 56' long. If only a strip is available, the Meet Director must indicate this in the pre-meet information.
  - D. If carpeting is used, ¼" pile is maximum height recommended.
  - E. Rebound or spring type floors are required for all Elite/Pre-Elite and JO Levels 8-10 competitions. It is strongly recommended that a spring type floor also be used at Level 7 and below.



- F. Additional matting:
  1. Elite/Pre-Elite:
    - a. USA Championships: No supplemental matting may be placed on the Floor Exercise area.
    - b. Classic Meets: Up to two "sting" mats are allowed to be placed separately on the Floor Exercise area.
    - c. **Zone**/National Qualifying and Challenge meets: Up to two additional mats (up to 4" or 10 cm) are allowed to be placed separately on the Floor Exercise area
  2. Jr. Olympic - all levels: Up to two manufactured mats (maximum thickness of 8"/20 cm) may be placed separately on the Floor Exercise area. If the skill cushion is 8" in thickness, it must be a minimum of 5' x 10'. A "sting" mat may also be used on top of the up to 8" mat.
    - Only one skill cushion per tumbling pass may be used, with no more than two mats on the floor exercise area at any one point in time. A sting mat may be placed on top of the skill cushion(s).
    - Whenever additional matting is placed on the Floor Exercise area and covers any portion of the boundary line(s), the mat must be clearly marked with tape or chalk to indicate the actual boundary line(s).
- G. When a tumbling "strip" is used in place of a full floor exercise area in the training and/or warm-up gym, it must be constructed of the same materials as the spring floor used in the competition gym and must be a minimum of 8' wide and 60' long for Jr. Olympic and Elite/Pre-Elite.

## VI. COLLEGIATE SPECIFICATIONS

For further information on NCAA women's gymnastics programs, contact:

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 Indianapolis, IN 46202  
 Telephone: (317) 917-NCAA, Hotline: 1-800-638-3731