



NEWS RELEASE

FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Vaulting table and composition changes head girls gymnastics rules changes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 27, 2002) —By state association adoption, a vaulting table may be used in addition to the vaulting horse for the 2002 girls gymnastics season. That rule change was the major change among several that were made at the NFHS Girls Gymnastics Rules Committee meeting held February 3-4 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Susan True, NFHS liaison to the Boys and Girls Gymnastics Rules Committees, believes the addition of the vaulting table is the rule that will need the most clarification before the 2002-03 season. “I want to stress that the new vaulting table is not a requirement,” True said.

Rule 6-1-1 now says that, by state association adoption, a vaulting table may be used in addition to the vaulting horse at competitions using NFHS rules. The rationale behind the rule change was that the committee thought that, when appropriate, gymnasts may be allowed, but not required, to use the new vaulting table.

“Gymnasts should not switch back and forth between the horse and the vaulting table,” True said. “The vaulting table is something each gymnast will have to learn how to use.” She added that the new table is broader than the current vaulting horse, and that may pose a problem because it will be deeper than what girls are used to with the vaulting horse. In addition, the table will have a larger hand contact area than the vaulting horse.

The idea behind individual state associations adopting the new addition is that each state association knows what is best for its member schools with gymnastics teams. True questioned how many

schools would purchase the new vaulting table, and added that the vaulting table probably should not be permitted unless at least a majority of the schools in a state have purchased them.

The other major changes that came out of the meeting were to Composition deductions. True said that it was a matter of the committee adopting a philosophy statement. “At the high school level, we ought to be emphasizing artistry, variety and uniqueness of choreography, etc., as opposed to any kind of perceived overemphasis on difficulty.”

She added that the decision on a philosophy statement was due partly to the length of the gymnastics season. In most states, the majority of gymnasts are not “club” gymnasts, so they participate in gymnastics for only three months, not year-round.

Composition deductions in Rule 4-1-2 reflect a return to an emphasis on artistry, variety and uniqueness of choreography as compared to difficulty. The deduction for lack of variety in combining difficulties from different structure groups was increased to up to 0.2. Similarly, the deduction for lack of artistry and uniqueness of choreography was increased up to 0.2 (up to 0.1 for lack of creative skills or combinations of skills and up to 0.1 for lack of unique choreography). The value of back-to-back superiors was reduced to 0.1 each, up to 0.2.

In addition, the rules committee made changes to rules regarding “bonus.” The two bonus high superiors must be different if a gymnast is to receive the full 0.2 for including bonus high superiors in her routine. The committee believes that the higher-level gymnast who includes two different bonus high superiors should receive greater bonus than the gymnast who does two of the same bonus high superiors. This rule change is designed to assist judges in differentiating the higher-level routines without too greatly impacting the score of the average high school gymnast.

A risk-management rule was made regarding the uneven parallel bars being adjusted upward and outward to fit the competitor, provided they are not set beyond the point at which they will dual-lock. Rule 7-1-2 now specifies that the host school mark the maximum setting in red. This will assist judges in knowing whether or not a gymnast has exceeded rule specifications for the bars.

Other decisions by the rules committee include the adoption of a new group of 9.9 vaults, changes to Rule 6-2-4 to delete the deduction for performing a vault other than the one specified, changes in Rule 8-2-3 regarding event requirements on balance beam, and a change to Rule 9-3-1 on floor exercise.

The tuck Tsukahara with a half twist and the full on, 1½ twist off were placed in the new group of vaults with a value of 9.9. The committee determined that the vaults should not have the same value as the 10.0 vaults, and added that they involved more rotations than the other vaults included in the 9.8 group.

Rule 6-2-4 was changed to eliminate the penalty for performing a vault other than the vault designed. The judges will judge the vault performed. The rules committee thought it no longer was appropriate to penalize a gymnast for performing a vault other than the one designated. This is consistent with other gymnastics rules codes.

Rule 8-2-3 was changed on balance beam requiring the dance series of difficulties and the dance-to-tumbling/tumbling-to-dance series of difficulties to be performed ON the balance beam. Neither the mount nor the dismount may be used to fulfill these two event requirements. The rationale for this rule change is to continue to elevate the skill level of balance beam routines.

Rule 9-3-1 was changed so that a gymnast no longer will receive difficulty credit for the third roundoff in her floor exercise routine. The rationale for this change was to increase the value of variety in tumbling passes. A tumbling pass with three tumbling skills of difficulty will not be impacted by this rule change, because it will still contact three tumbling skills performed without interruption with at least one tumbling skill being a difficulty.

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