

How the Judges Score You in a Gymnastics Meet

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March 7, 2010
English

I have been competing in gymnastics for about five years now. From experience, I know that at some meets the judges take it easy, but at other meets the judges mark down every little mistake the gymnast makes. The judges sit at an officials table next to the event. We are expected to respect the judges.

There are 10 levels in gymnastics. Levels 4-10 are competitive. Levels 4-6 are compulsory. Levels 7-10 are Optional. Compulsory levels all have the same routines, on all four events; vault, bars, beam and floor. Optionals all create their own routines for all four events. I became a level 5 last year.

I don't always agree with the score the judges give me, but judges are like referees, they have their reasons. At some meets the judges will write a comment on your score card that tells you what you did wrong.

One year when I was still a level four, I was doing a dismount off the beam (a sideways handstand, then the gymnast picks up one hand, and turns on the other hand then lands on her feet, on the other side of the beam). I was trying to turn so hard that when I did, my foot smacked the beam, I think I would rather get my foot cut off instead of going through that again. But the judges were so nice about it, one judge even asked if I needed an ice pack. I thought my score would be lower than 7.8, my coaches thought so too. But it wasn't it was an 8.0. Sometimes it is surprising what a gymnast gets, you can never really guess a score, it all depends on the judge.

Each routine you do on the events has a start value of 10.00. Each skill or move you do in each routine has a start value too. If you fall on beam you lose 0.8 and only have 10 seconds to get back on the beam. If you fall on bars you also lose 0.8, and only have 30 seconds to chalk up and get back on the bar. That 0.8 is subtracted from your start value, 10.00.

Before and after a gymnast does a routine she has to salute the judge, (not like a soldier would) but with her arms in a high v shape. The judges salutes first, to show that they are ready. Then the gymnast salutes to show that she is ready. The judges have to sit there all day and you want to keep them in a good mood. So you should put a smile on your face while doing the routine to get a few tenths back.

I don't think I would ever want to be a judge. They have to sit there all day watching routines over and over again. It seems really boring. Would you like to be a judge some day?