

Meeting of Prep Optional Subcommittee of

Region 8 USA Gymnastics

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

6:24 pm @ Omni Hotel in Jacksonville, FL

Present: Nancy Hawkins (chair), Deb Walls (AL), Jon Aardema (GA), Brad Harris (JO), Toni Rand (FL), Jennie Adams (NC), Deb Kornegay (Regional Chair), Joanne Child (SC), Larry Corrigan (TN - 7:30), Jackie Latino (LA - 7:50)

Chair Nancy Hawkins opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She stated that the original purpose of the meeting was to tweak the Region 8 Prep Optional Guideline as they currently exist. The decision to hold this meeting was a result of a subcommittee meeting @ Level 9-10 Regionals in Nashville, TN because more time was needed to work on making the current Rules more usable by all states competing Prep Optionals.

She stated that tomorrow's (6-11-09) Region 8 Board meeting would be the time to (1) determine if the Region would endorse and support a Prep Optional Regional and (2) adopt Guidelines for Prep Optionals with the Board's approval.

Discussion:

Brad Harris suggested that the members at the table take a straw vote to indicate the level of support for a Prep Opt Regional. If tomorrow's vote to officially endorse a Regional meet does not pass, then there is little reason to continue the discussion of a "Regional set of Guidelines".

The indication from the total group was positive toward continuing the discussion.

Jon Aardema stated that the most important reason to continue and support the Prep Optional program was (1) the ability to attract and satisfy more gymnasts, and (2) to bring more funding to individual gymnastics clubs as well as to USA Gymnastics.

The question was posed – "If this program grows, what if you have too many gymnasts wanting to enter the Regional competition (more than 600)?" Answer: "We'll deal with that when it happens and hope that we have to".

It was verbally determined that an addition of an Open Division would fulfill the reluctance of some states' to use "bonus" yet continue to allow the states who were passionate about "bonus" to continue the practice.

Lots of topics were bounced around the table:

- What would be the avenue for qualifying to the Regional? Compulsory state meet? Prep Optional state meet only? Other optional state meet?

- How would the level of competition be chosen for the gymnast going to Regionals when the state's levels might be different than the Regional Guidelines?
- It was felt that the National Office had questions about the validity of the program in respect to the fact that Prep Optionals was perceived as a way to "get around compulsories"
- All at the table were adamant that Prep Optionals was not created to circumvent the quality or purpose of compulsories. Clubs still go through the mobility process, just not in the traditional, seasonal approach.
- It was suggested that the requirements for mobility were too easy (31.00 score with possible use of just one judge) and that the National office should make the requirements more stringent.

Jon Aardema saw the future of Prep Optionals as a two rail train track whose destination was the same goal. One track could be used by those trying to get to Level 7 in a non-traditional manner. The other track could be used by those kids who wanted to compete, but just have fun.

The table hoped that the National office would see the need to give each state the ability to create Prep Optional rules that meet each state's needs. Our Regional Guidelines would be a step at cooperation between all 8 states, coming to consensus of basics, yet retaining individual differences. The table hoped that the National office would respect the professionalism that was exhibited to create this program which could benefit all.

Food was served @ 7:30.

Table broke into two groups to "tweak" the upper and lower ends of the levels by the states that had a vested interest. Open Level guidelines were created for presentation at Thursday's meeting.

Meeting was adjourned @ 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie Adams (NC)

Acting secretary