

## What to Expect as Gymnasts and Parents when going to a Junior Olympic Competitions!

**Introduction:** The purpose of attending to Junior Olympic Competitions is to learn and have fun. It's a pre-competitive program designed to bridge a gap between recreational and competitive gymnastics. It shows the kids how to compete and the expectation of coaches and judges. It is not taken as seriously as competitive gymnastics levels. We classify Provincial and higher as competitive.

**Judges:** Each Club is asked to provide at least 1-2 judges for each level (BEGINNER, ADVANCED, PROVINCIAL) competing at each meet. GymSask offers courses that teach you how to judge. If we don't have judges they charge our club a fee for each level competing.

Our club is in need of judges. Please consider volunteering to take the judging clinic so that you can represent our club as a judge at one or two meets per year. You will find the clinic to be very informative and it will give you knowledge of the skills your child is learning. Watching your child compete is more enjoyable when you have an understanding of what it is they are doing!

**What to wear:** All clubs wear matching gym suits and wind suits to competitions. In our club it is mandatory to wear a competitive gym suit, our club jacket and black yoga pant. Hair must be done nicely and out of the face. French braids or one pony tail is the best. Your best bet is to leave any other stuff with your parents so you don't have to drag it around the gym the whole meet. Water bottles are allowed but please label them. JEWELRY is not allowed! (except for stud earrings.) If you are wearing jewellery, the judges will ask you to take it off.

**The Meet – from start to finish:** Make sure your gymnast has eaten (and gone to the bathroom!) prior to the meet and remember to bring everything needed for a competition (competitive suit, club jacket, black pants, ponytail, water bottle etc.). Please arrive and be ready to compete (changed, hair done etc.) at least 15 minutes before the competition begins. Go and find your coach or stay with your parents until you see your coach. Parents are not permitted in competition areas - there is usually designated seating to watch the competition.

Once you have found your coach and everyone arrives, your coach will lead warm activities and stretches on the mat. This usually last 30 minutes. After all clubs are finished warm-ups we line up in the designated area for "March-In". The clubs are together and they line up smallest to tallest. Each club has a sign to carry and the first one in the line carries it. The purpose of this is to introduce the clubs that have come to compete and welcome everyone.

Once the March-In is finished, the gymnasts are broken off into groups. They will stay with the same group the entire competition. Every attempt is made to keep levels and our club gymnasts together. They perform a warm up and a routine on each apparatus (bars, beam, vault, floor). Gymnasts are to "present" before and after each routine to the judges. This tells the judges "I'm ready to show my routine". Once all gymnasts have done all the apparatuses there will about a ½ an hour break to tally up the marks, organize medals and ribbons for awards. After awards we are finished for the day. The meet usually last around 3 hours and your child only performs on each apparatus.

**Awards and Scoring:** Every Junior Olympic gymnast will receive a medal, and ribbons. Placement of medals is determined by the all-around score. The ribbons are determined by what their score was on each apparatus. On each apparatus a gymnast starts with a maximum score of 13.0. There are mandatory skills that must be performed on each apparatus. If a skill is omitted or not completed there is a 0.5 deduction. If a gymnast falls off an apparatus, there is a 1.0 deduction each time they fall. Also, deductions are taken off each time there is a "fault", as follows:

- Small faults: 0.10 - The element is not perfect but the visual image of the body action or body position is only slightly modified (soft legs or arms, for example)
- Medium faults: 0.30 - The element can be recognized but the visual image of the body action or body position is significantly modified (clear bent of the legs, close to 90°).
- Large faults : 0.50- A large fault makes the element almost not recognizable.

Competitions are to display skills that are mastered, not skills that are being worked on. There are no extra marks for harder skills, a cartwheel compared to a back handspring is worth the same points. Gymnasts do not receive bonus points for adding extra skills and if there are any faults while performing an "extra skill", the gymnast will receive deductions. This is why routines are kept simple and usually, only the required elements are performed.

Coaches can stand beside apparatus during a routine, but if the coach has to spot, the gymnast will receive a 1.0 deduction, (plus a 0.5 deduction for "a skill not completed"). There are no deductions for a coach reminding a gymnast during their routine what skill is next but gymnasts are asked to try and have their routines memorized.

Scores are not "flashed" in Junior Olympic (only Provincial and higher). Furthermore, GymSask recommends that the scores be held in confidence by the Coach and accordingly, it is our Club's Policy that no gymnast's score will be released to either the gymnast or their parents. *We appreciate your consideration with the policy and we request that you do not compromise our coaches by asking your child's score.*

We hope that all of our Junior Olympic Gymnasts will attend at least two (2) competitions in each season.