

Meet Assigning Criteria **By Carol Curley**

There are many factors that come into play when assigning judges to meets. They include the following.

Meet director preference:

This is the first thing I consider when assigning judges and in fact it makes my job a bit easier. Requests can be specific such as asking for certain judges or it can be general such as *please assign local judges first*. Requests can also be negative and specific, i.e. *do not assign "x" judge*; or negative and general, e.g., *no judges south of Gainesville please*.

Location of meet and other meets on same weekend:

Unless there are specific requests for judges, I try to assign judges who live within a close proximity of the meet. Often I have to look at other meets scheduled that weekend and, as a result, I may have to send some Jacksonville judges to Tallahassee and some Orlando judges to Jacksonville.

Carpool possibilities:

If I am sending one judge from a distance, it is often more economical to assign as many judges from one geographic area that can travel in one car. Four judges in one car from a distance may be cheaper than four single judges coming from more closely located areas. Some areas have lots of judges: Orlando, Tampa while others do not: Pensacola, Fort Myers.

Judge ratings and affiliation:

It is important to have qualified and experienced Chief Judges. I try to make sure that I follow this criterion each time. I would hesitate to assign 8 new, inexperienced judges to one meet and 8 experienced highly rated judges to another meet. It is sometimes necessary to send judges to a distant meet in order to ensure experienced judges are assigned along with those who are still gaining experience. Also according to regulations, an affiliated judge may not be a Chief Judge. Affiliation means coach, owner, or parent of gymnast at a certain gym.

Judge availability:

I am also limited by judge availability. If you are only available on Sundays or if you are only available on weekends when there are no meets in your area, then your assignments will reflect that. Please do not ask if you may split the meet with another judge. On rare occasions, I may ask a judge to do this, however it is not common practice because it often is not possible due to the meet format (if there are team awards or multiple sessions of gymnasts competing at the same level) or it may add to the expense of a meet. When you sign a contract, you are indicating that you will be available for the entire meet, so pay attention to the

dates on the contract especially in the spring when a 3 day meet is more common than not.

Assigning meets is like working a giant puzzle. I try to be fair to all; judges as well as Meet Directors. I do not know in advance what meets will be cancelled or cut back in judges or those that are not as lucrative as others. Often judges move, obtain a higher rating, lose a rating, become affiliated etc. **An assignment to a certain meet does not guarantee that you will always be assigned to that particular meet in the future.**

Replacements:

If you need to pull off a meet, it is essential that if you, you contact your assigner first. The assigners have the list of available judges and know who should be contacted first as a replacement. If you take it upon yourself to seek a replacement and if a Meet Director has specifically asked for that person not be assigned to their gym, then you have created a burden and an awkward situation for yourself, for the judge whom you asked to replace you, for the assigners, and for the SJD. In addition, the assigners know which judges need additional meets in order to fulfill their Active Status requirements and these judges will be next in line to serve as replacements (all other factors discussed above being considered).

Email is Essential:

I do the majority of my work via the computer. Checking your email regularly insures that you are not missing out on important information. Also if you use hotmail or yahoo, your mailbox will fill up quickly, causing emails to bounce back. Please make sure you empty your mailbox on a regular basis. If you change your email address, please let the assigners, newsletter editor, and SJD know right away so you won't miss important announcements.