

NAWGJ NEWSLETTER

April, 2003

Florida NAWGJ Weapons Policy

As part of the increased security measures following September 11, 2002, public arenas & convention centers have instituted policies restricting users from carrying weapons into the competition venue. Florida Statue 790.06 forbids any person to carry a concealed weapon or firearm into any school administration building; any elementary or secondary school facility; and any college or university facility among other sites (including professional athletic events). Tropicana Field required all entrants of the Gasparilla Gymnastics Meet to allow their bags/purses to be inspected for weapons or other suspect material.

Because it is not possible to know in advance of assigning, the weapon policy of potential venues; and because venues occasionally change after initial assignments have been made; and because no legitimate purpose is served by having weapons on the competition floor; it was therefore proposed and unanimously passed that NAWGJ adopt a policy that judges will not be allowed to carry weapons onto the competitive floor or in the judges meeting rooms. If a judge who is licensed to carry a concealed weapon or firearm prefers to travel to the meet location with a weapon, they should: leave the weapon in a secure location in their car, check it at a secure location provided by the venue, notify any judges in a carpool that they will be carrying a concealed weapon to and from the meet.

- **Guidelines for Judges & Meet Referees concerning Weapons Policy:** If a judge become aware that an NAWGJ official is in possession of a weapon in the competitive arena, the judge should notify the Meet Referee. The meet referee should notify the Meet Director & should ask the judge carrying the weapon to take the weapon out of the gym/arena & store it in a secure, locked location such as the trunk of their car or a lock box provided for weapon storage at the arena/meet site. Following the meet, the meet referee should notify the SJD of the incident who will provide appropriate follow-up in consultation with the NAWGJ Professionalism/Ethics Chair.

Affiliation of Judges

Affiliation of an official at a specific meet refers to (1) an immediate family member of a competing gymnast or of the gymnast's coach(s), or of the club owner whose team is competing (2) A person on the payroll of a competing club (3) A team member or parent of a Women's Artistic team member of a competing club: a parent of a men's or rhythmic team member of a competing club is not considered affiliated; a parent of any child enrolled in a recreational class of a competing club is not considered affiliated. (4) A coach of a club that has gymnast(s) competing in the meet (5) A club owner whose club has a gymnast who is competing in the meet.

When may affiliated judges be assigned:

affiliated judges may be assigned to meets with the following stipulations: (1) An affiliated judge may be assigned as a panel judge or as the meet referee (2) No more than one judge with the same affiliation may be assigned per panel (3) An affiliated judge may not be assigned as a Chief Judge, regardless of certification.

In meets using one judge panels, an affiliated judge may be assigned only when there are not enough non-affiliated at that meet. If the club with which a judge is affiliated is not participating in the meet, the judge is not considered affiliated at that meet. The regulations regarding affiliation are NOT meant to prevent officials from judging, but to prevent the perception of potentially unfair situations for gymnasts.

Refer to the Florida Judges Book:

(Page 4)...If you have a family member or team competing in the same meet you are assigned to judge, you have a responsibility to maintain a high standard of behavior that demonstrates fair & impartial activity. You will be required to take off the "mom" or "coach" hat and put on the "professional hat." You may not acknowledge that you have a child or team in the meet. If your child is too young to understand these different roles, it would be wise to decline a meet in which your child or team is competing. While you are in the NAWGJ uniform, you should not be seen hugging athletes (even if it is your daughter.) Please do not use the Meet Director's telephone

to call your home or gym to inform others of the outcome of your athlete's performance. Do not provide coaches or parents with information about the judging at a particular meet or event. If the coach would like feedback, the gym should invite you or another judge to the gym to evaluate routines & provide consultative assistance. The judgments that occur at a meet should not be shared with others.

Active Status Delinquency Policy

The Florida NAWGJ Board will require all Active Status cards be completed & mailed to the Active Status Coordinator by OCTOBER 15, 2003. The Active Status Coordinator will be required to prepare a status report by November 1, 2003 & send it to both assignors & to the SJD.

Rationale: Although the October 15th deadline is only a few weeks earlier than the current recommendation, it will give our assignors a little more time to replace judges if necessary. Regional Training Camp is October 10-12, 2003 & that is the last realistic opportunity for judges to earn credits except for in-gym work. In order to maximize the chances that judges who receive contracts for January 2004 and beyond, complete & file their Active Status on time.

FL NAWGJ will require these judges to (1) Sign a statement attached to their spring contracts specifying their plans to complete the 2003 Active Status requirements & (2) commit to mailing their card to the Active Status Coordinator no later than October 15, 2003. The form will also include a statement recognizing that failure to submit their cards by October 15, 2003 means that they will be replaced on all January contract and subsequent meets until Active Status cards are received.

Rationale: it is not possible for assignors to know the status of Active Status when they assign spring meets because these assignments start as early as June/July, 2003. This statement will serve as a reminder to all judges to turn in their cards early & will let the assignors know which judges may not be able to complete their requirements.

You don't want to become a member of Cookie's e-mail nag system!! Don't know who the Active Status Coordinator is? Louise Wynn, 390 Border St., Port Charlotte FL 33953.