

AUDREY SCHWEYER

Audrey Schweyer is a great pioneer of gymnastics judging. On July 6, 2025, through a conversation with her by NAWGJ Historian Gina Fuller, we are able to get a glimpse into her world.

- What is your background in gymnastics? I was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania and have lived there my whole life. I didn't have any background in gymnastics. I taught dance. In the 1960's, I saw an exhibition that fascinated me. The group was the Parkettes and I signed up my 9-year-old daughter with the program.
- How were you introduced to judging? There were 5-6 clubs on the East Coast that wanted to develop a league. Muriel Grossfeld, an international gymnast and coach, had judged for years. They needed judges. Donna Strauss, who worked with the Parkettes, knew of my background in dance, and encouraged me to be a judge. I took 4 classes, once a week, in Philadelphia. The 5 clubs got together for a competition. We drove to Muriel's, in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1970, our daughter went to a National AAU meet, compulsory and optionals. The different organizations all had different rules. They needed someone and pulled me out of the stands. I don't know if I even had a rating at that time.
- What were your early judging experiences? Through connections with a friend who knew the FIG president, I took the 3-day course. For local meets in the beginning, we didn't get paid anything, maybe a hamburger. There were no rules, competitions would go until 1:00 in the morning. This motivated the organization of NAWGJ (1974) so there would be rules.
- How did you get involved in international judging? The Olympic Trials for 1972 Olympics needed 10 judges. They needed one more, Greta Treiber called and invited me to judge Olympic Trials. She figured that I had probably seen some decent gymnastics. It was the first time I went on an airplane. I judged vault and uneven bars. I was the one judge that took off a deduction for Kathy Rigby doing the wrong vault. I didn't know I wasn't supposed to take any deductions on Kathy Rigby. We were paid \$50 for 3 days of competition. Jackie Fie invited me to an International Brevet Judging Course in Canada in 1972 and also invited again in 1976. Courses were demanding and given orally. "If the gymnast throws her head back to start a back tuck, is that good or bad?" This was the type of question that was given for the Brevet course.
- What are some experiences you had judging internationally? In 1978, I was invited to judge an annual intercontinental meet in Japan two times and declined, because I didn't want to be away from home and my family. I was invited one more time and told that if I

didn't do it, I wouldn't be asked again. This was the start of my international judging career and it all started to evolve from there. I was asked to go to the Junior European to be one of 10 STCs in Moscow – we didn't have shorthand before this time. We were supposed to develop a shorthand and then judge in it at this meet. My contribution to the symbols of shorthand were the switch leg leap and the aerial cartwheel. I resigned from international competitions in the early 2000's [See <https://www.usagymlegacy.org/hof/class/> for full details of the decades of international competitions judged].

- In what other ways have you been involved in gymnastics judging? In the early years, USGF was the governing organization and the country was divided into regions. Meets started to be organized as far as State and Regional meets. I was then asked to be the equivalent of a Regional Technical Chair. I later became interested and enjoyed teaching in courses and lectures. I also participated in the Certification process and in charge of the practical using 16 mm film at the beginning. Before retiring from judging in 2012, Cheryl Hamilton and I finished writing the age group exams.
- How has gymnastic judging impacted your life? It changed my life in that I never dreamt that I would travel all over the world and have all the experiences that I had. Some of my best friends are all over the country, as well as friends from other countries, because I was judging with them. Delene Darst was a mentor to me.



USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame – Class of 2000

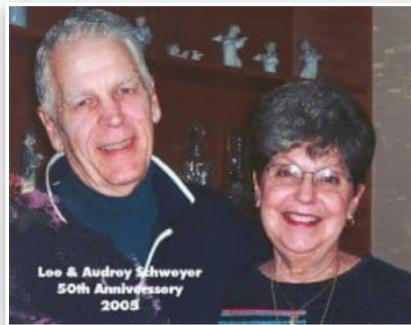
<https://usagym.org/halloffame/inductee/schweyer-audrey/>



INDUCTEE

Audrey Schweyer

Class of **2000** • Disciplines(s): **Women's Artistic** • Inducted as: **Contributor**



Audrey Schweyer is a distinguished judge and contributor to the sport of gymnastics. She judged at the highest levels of elite gymnastics. Her assignments have included the 1984, 1992, and 1996 Olympic Games. She has also judged the U.S. Championships, Olympic Team Trials, American, World Cup, and World Championships. Schweyer is the first American judge to earn "expert" status. She has also received the FIG Judges Honorary Diploma recognizing her for long-time contribution to the sport of gymnastics and her dedication as an international judge.

Schweyer is also an accomplished teacher and lecturer in the sport of gymnastics. She presented at numerous judges courses both nationally and internationally, along with being a speaker at coaching seminars. She has also been a staff member at USA National training camps.

Biography: SCHWEYER, Audrey

July 24, 2023 by [Mary Hudson](#)

USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame 2000

<https://www.usagymlegacy.org/hof/class/>

SCHWEYER, Audrey

Inducted: 2000

Born: Allentown, Pennsylvania

Audrey Schweyer became interested in the world of gymnastics via providing dance instruction at a local gymnastic club. In 1968 she began judging at local, high school, AAU, collegiate, and USGF competitions.

Through hard work and study, Audrey became a distinguished judge and contributed greatly to the development of the sport of gymnastics in America.

She has judged at the highest levels of elite gymnastics. We owe her a debt of gratitude since this writer competed at a time when it was every nation and the gymnasts who represented them had no well-designed program for fair and equitable judging.

Audrey Schweyer helped change judging so that more athletes who perform well win medals and those who do not perform as well do not stand on the winner's podium as much as history tells us they used to be able to do.

Contributions

Elected member of the USAG Women's Technical Committee, (1973); Served as National Elite Technical Committee Chairperson; Served as Technical Chairperson-Region VII; Elected to the position of the Pennsylvania State Chairperson; Served as Assistant Chairperson of the USAG WTC.

Judge

Schweyer is the first American judge to earn "expert" status, (See Honors).

Olympic Games: Judge-Los Angeles, California-USA, (1984); STC Expert Judge-Barcelona, Spain, (1992); Expert Judge-Atlanta, Georgia-USA, (1996).

World Championships: Ms. Schweyer served as a Judge, Control Panel Expert, at eight World Championship competitions.

USAG Championships: Ms. Schweyer served as Judge, Head Judge, Technical Director, or on the video review panel since the inception of these championships through to 2005.

World Cup Championships: Judge-China.

American Cup Championships: Schweyer served as a Judge, Technical Official, or STC at 25 American Cup Championships.

Honors

Recipient of the USAG Service Award; Awarded FIG Honorary Brevet/Diploma that recognizes an individual's length of service, dedication to the sport, and general contributions through the years. The Honorary Award is based on the following: ". . . in recognition of long term contribution and dedication as an International Judge at the World level."

The criteria for the Judges Honorary Diploma are 5 Brevet cycles and 8 FIG competitions. The FIG competitions are: Olympic Games, World Championships, and World Cup Finals. Ms. Schweyer was the first American woman to earn "Expert" status as a national and international judge.

She was chosen to represent the U.S. at five Intercontinental Brevet Courses and two Continental Brevet Courses. Served as Assistant Director/Lecturer at five National Brevet courses; Served as Assistant Director/Teacher at all Junior Olympics National Judges courses.

General

Audrey Schweyer has taught and lectured within the world of gymnastics presenting at numerous judges' courses at the national and international levels. She has also been a featured speaker at various coaching seminars as well as a staff member at training camps for our national teams.

Family

(m) Lee Schweyer, husband of 51 years, (2007). Children: Gary, who is a middle school teacher & Jane, who is a Human Resource Manager for a Philadelphia Company.

Grandchildren: Sarah, 19, is a dance major at DeSalles University, Adam, 17, is an honor student in high school, (2007), & Megan, 12, is also an honor student in middle school, an award winning dancer & Level 8 gymnast.

Sources: Correspondence with Ms. Schweyer plus data provided by Jerry Wright, author of *Gymnastics Who's Who, 2005*. Look for an updated edition due in 2010. Photo courtesy of Ms. Schweyer. Introduction by Jerry Wright with commentary and formatting by Dr. Larry Banner, Web Manager.

By [THE MORNING CALL](#)

UPDATED: October 4, 2021 at 2:58 PM EDT

Steve Nunno was looking to strike a deal for his prize gymnast, and he didn't think it would be that difficult.

After all, Shannon Miller is the most decorated American female in the history of the sport. And Bela Karolyi, the women's team coordinator who also coached Miller in the 1996 Olympic Games, surely would understand.

Karolyi was not responsible for the making of a decision, however. Audrey Schweyer was.

And if it's written in the book, Schweyer is going to rule based on what the rules dictate.

So, when Nunno came to Schweyer prior to the start of the John Hancock U.S. Gymnastics Championships last month in St. Louis, his request was: If Miller

decides she doesn't want to compete in the first round Thursday night, will it be all right if she just does a couple of events on Saturday?

Schweyer didn't have to consult the book. She knew what it said. She told Nunno that Miller, who petitioned into the U.S. Championships and who then suffered a stress fracture in her right tibia in training, would be scratched from the entire meet if she pulled out on Thursday.

Consequently, three times in that first round, Miller presented herself to the judges, touched the apparatus and walked away. Her score: 0.00. She performed her routine only on the uneven bars; and at the end of the night, she was withdrawn from the Championships and immediately submitted a petition for the Olympic Trials.

Schweyer is the women's technical director for USA Gymnastics. For more than 30 years, she has been involved in the sport, starting out doing choreography for the earliest Parkette gymnasts when Donna Strauss still operated the program out of her closet-sized office in Allentown's Trexler Middle School.

Schweyer was persuaded to try her hand at judging, and from that moment on, she began a three-decade love affair with the sport in which she has become among the best in the world at what she does.

Schweyer has worked in three Olympic Games and a total of 14 major international competitions World Championships, World Cups, Olympics. Only three people in the world have ever received the Honor Diploma of Excellence from the International Gymnastics Federation. She is one of them.

And on Saturday night, Schweyer, the wife of Lee Schweyer, an outstanding Allentown High School athlete during the 1950s, and the mother of Janie Schweyer, a PIAA gymnastics champion on the balance beam, will be inducted into the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame in Boston.

Schweyer never thought about election to a Hall of Fame when she got into judging only because no one else seemed willing to do it. And the honor comes at a time when she is thinking about retiring from a sport that has undergone major changes in 30 years, many of them not for the better.

‘This is the most stressful so far as all personalities and ingredients of the whole thing are concerned,’ said Schweyer, who will be in the midst of it all at the U.S. Olympic Trials-Gymnastics in the FleetCenter in Boston.

‘They have tightened up things so much; they have no faith in the judges. I tell judges, ‘Judge what you see, not what you think they want you to do.’ If somebody does the job, we have to give them the score. We’ll have our work cut out for us flatly refuse to change a score.’

Going into the women’s portion of the Trials, there is skepticism about qualifying procedures, the possibility of some kind of preferential treatment for members of the 1996 Olympic team who have decided to try again. Four of those girls Shannon Miller, Dominique Dawes, Dominique Moceanu and Amy Chow will be in Boston.

Karolyi was called out of retirement last November to become team coordinator. About the same time, or even later, Miller, Dawes and Moceanu decided to come back. Their presence only tends to magnify the political aspect of the sport.

‘We’ve always had internal politics, but not with so many people involved,’ Schweyer said. ‘As soon as money became the bottom line, everything changed. Television sponsorship became more important and we lost the meets. TV is telling us what to do, including making a gymnast wait two or three minutes before she can compete so they can get their commercials in.’

The influence of television on the sport is not the only big difference in 30 years.

Gymnasts who once performed floor exercise routines on what was nothing more than a glorified wrestling mat now tumble on springy floors. Balance beams and uneven bars have come a long way, too, allowing for skills that would have been unthinkable.

Schweyer’s first Olympic Games were in 1984 in Los Angeles. She also worked in 1992 in Barcelona and in 1996 in Atlanta. She determined more than two years ago that she did not care to go to Australia for the 2000 Games.

The job has had its perks, too. Perhaps the biggest came years ago during a meet in Paris, France.

Princess Grace of Monaco, the former Grace Kelly, a Philadelphian, was attending the meet and knew a United States delegation was in the building. When Princess Grace learned one of the Americans was from Allentown, she invited Schweyer to her special box.

‘We talked for 10 or 15 minutes,’ Schweyer said. ‘I’ll never forget that.’

Schweyer and her husband are discussing her future in the sport. She has two years remaining on her term as technical director. She may not finish it.

At age 63, Schweyer does not feel a need to compromise her principles. Actually, she never has. That’s why, although people may not always like her decisions, they respect her position and her experience.

Contact Paul Reinhard