

Judge Jumpstart: A Mentorship & Mock Meet Program

Project Name:

Judge Jumpstart: A Mentorship & Mock Meet Program

Purpose:

To improve retention and confidence among new judges by pairing them with experienced mentors and giving them structured, low-pressure opportunities to judge routines before their first official meets.

Challenges Addressed:

- Lack of experience before first meets
- Isolation and uncertainty for new judges
- High cost of entry without guaranteed assignments
- Need for educational and professional development

Who It Serves:

- New and Provisional Judges within their first 1-3 years
- States with low judge density or limited training events
- Existing Judges who want to give back and mentor

Components:

1. Mentorship Program:

- Each new judge is paired with a certified, experienced judge.
- Monthly check-ins, test prep, routine critique, emotional support.

2. Mock Meet Mini-Series:

- Host 1-2 mock meets in the fall.
- New judges rotate events and receive scoring feedback.
- Mentor judges provide shadow support.

3. Low-Cost Support Resources:

- Digital New Judge Handbook
- Mini-scholarships for test fees/uniforms -

Promote carpools and room shares

Implementation Plan:

Timeline:

- July-August: Recruit mentors, gyms, and new judges
- September-October: Match mentors, virtual training -
- October-November: Host Mock Meets
- December-January: Evaluate & prepare report

Materials Needed:

- Signup forms
- Mentor schedules and sample emails
- Planning guide for mock meets
- Budget for small expenses

Replicability:

Any SJD can replicate with:

- 1-2 volunteer leads
- Gym support
- Veteran mentors
- Digital tools and minimal budget

Includes shared folder with editable templates.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved retention and readiness of new judges

- Stronger mentorship culture
- Higher judging confidence and quality
- Better community connection

Optional Add-on:

Host a 'New Judge Celebration' in January to recognize new judges and build camaraderie.

New Judge Celebration: A Meaningful Add-On

To cap off the Judge Jumpstart experience, host a fun and affirming 'New Judge Celebration' each January before the official meet season begins. This event can include:

- Certificate presentations to new judges
- Appreciation speeches from mentors and SJDs
- Social mixer or light refreshments
- Small tokens or NAWGJ swag

This celebration helps build confidence, recognize achievements, and solidify the sense of belonging within the judging community.