



GYMNASTICS

Women's Gymnastics 2024-26 Rules Cycle Rules Newsletter #12 October 15, 2025

REMINDER: please update your USAG Dev Program OPTIONAL CODE OF POINTS and download the USAG Women's Program 2025-26 RULES AND POLICIES.

Rules Resources

The NCAA Rules Interpreter is Janette Doucette, email address wgym.ncaa.rules@outlook.com Please submit any questions for rule interpretation by electronic mail only. Coaches: Please provide your name and institution. Judges: please provide your name and state.

The 2025-26 NCAA Rules Modification Document and Meet Procedures direct link: [Rules Modifications 25-26](#)

Rules Newsletters and Archive are located on the [NCAA Gymnastics Rules of the Game page](#) or on the [NAWGJ NCAA Rules page](#)

The Women's Gymnastics Supplemental Procedures and Forms document, which contains the Inquiry /Routine Summary Form, Video Review Form, and other competition-related forms, *will be posted soon*.

The USAG Women's Developmental Program Optional 2022-26 Code of Points (USAG Dev Prog COP) is purchased at this link: [USAG Dev Prog COP](#) . This page also contains links to updated COP Appendices and Replacement Pages.

To update your current version of the USAG Dev Prog COP follow the directions: [Google Play eBook FAQ](#) The most recent COP version cover page will show "updated Jul 2025" at the bottom.

The Women's Program Rules & Policies 2025-26 direct link: [R & P 25-26](#)

The new element evaluation form can be downloaded from the USAG women's development program website under forms at [USAG New Element Eval Form](#) .

FX Music approval – contact your Regional Technical Committee Chair (RTCC) ([R & P 2025-26](#) pages 2-9)

Rules Modifications Errata:

1. Uneven Bars, Table 3.3 Element Values Different from Level 10 - all 1 ½ pirouette in handstands are Es. An element that is missing from this exception list (those elements still Ds in the COP) is #2.403 uprise backward to handstand on HB with 1 ½ turn (Reeder).
2. Section 8.5, chart for Triangular Meet with 6 judges – correction to the judges' numbers in panels: Beam Panel are J3 & J4, and Floor Panel are J5 & J6.

Change in Rule: Appendix IV: Affiliation Policy

In Appendix IV.4.d, the specification of ****POSTSEASON ONLY**** for the affiliation rule is removed. A significant other or immediate family member of anyone that is currently a part of any NCAA women's gymnastics program, in any paid or unpaid capacity, is ineligible to judge any NCAA competitions. This change is applicable to the 2026 season. *Per vote by the WCGA Board of Directors.*

Update: This summer, USAG reversed its decision, and will allow for Floor Exercise music to contain human voice sounds going forward. Any questionable music would be sent to the institution's Regional Technical Committee Chair (RTCC), as always. Use of voice specifics are found in *USAG Dev Prog COP – Section 5 Floor Ex – Chapter 1.III.A., page FLOOR-3*.

Uneven Bars

Q: With a free hip within groups 3/6/7, would it receive +.1 CV bonus if it is connected to a C with flight/turn (for example, a blind change)?

A: **No.** To receive +.1 CV for C+C on uneven bars, both Cs must have turn or flight. The exception for turn/flight requirement for C elements in Groups 3/6/7 only occurs if BOTH C elements are in Groups 3/6/7, and are different. So, for example, a clear hip handstand (#3.304) connected to a pike toe-on handstand (#7.309) will receive C+C bonus, but the clear hip handstand connected to a back giant handstand with ½ turn (#4.303) will not receive the C+C bonus.

Reference: USAG COP Section 3 Uneven Bars – Chapter 4 Bonus – II.A. under the C+C box on page BARS-40.

Balance Beam

Q: A gymnast performs a front toss (front salto forward off one leg, #8.401) to a BHS (back handspring, #7.208). During the front toss, arm position upon landing is in front of torso and above the knee joint/top of thighs. As gymnast enters the BHS, arms drop below the knee & swings behind the thigh before they swing forward & upward as she executes the BHS. Does this arm swing constitute a break in the series?

A: **No.** This is a counter movement series, which permits the swing of the arms. It comes down to physics – to change direction of movement in a counter series, you need to change the momentum to the other direction. Swinging the arms is often essential in that effort, so it is permitted. To be connected in this case, it requires the athlete to have CONTINUOUS movement and IN LINE with the Beam, which includes any body movement as well.

Reference: USAG Dev Prog COP Section 4 Beam – Chapter 2. III. Clarifications Regarding Series – A.1 and 2, page BEAM-24.

Q: An athlete performs a switch leap mount (#1.401 D) to a straddle jump 1/4 turn (#2.202 C), for a D+C receiving +.1 D/E bonus and +.2 CV bonus. Will this connection fulfill the event Special Requirement for a Dance-Dance series?

A: **Yes.** An athlete who performs a dance (D) designated mount (such as indicated in #1.401 switch leg leap mount) connected to another dance element on the beam will fulfill the Special Requirement of a Dance-Dance series. Elements from Group 1 Mounts, Group 2 Leaps/Hops/Jumps, and Group 3 Turns are permitted for this Special Requirement.

Reference: Rules Modification 4.1.b, page 11; USAG Dev Prog COP Section 4 Beam – Chapter 2 Compositional Categories – IV.F, page BEAM-26.

Q: An athlete performs a flight series of BHS + BHS + back salto layout stepout, then later in the routine performs a dismount series of BHS + back layout with 1 1/2 twist dismount. I am aware that she will not receive VP credit for the third BHS, and therefore, not receive CV for the dismount (but will receive VP for the dismount element). If she does not need the skill VP or CV Bonus, is it okay for her to perform that third BHS?

A: Yes, with a reminder that the routine will need a forward/sideward acro element somewhere for composition, and that any execution deductions would still be applied.

Reference: Rules Modification 1.5.a, 4.1.a & e, and 4.2.a.1 & 2; USAG Dev Prog COP Section 4 Beam – Chapter 1 General – V.4 counting elements, page BEAM-7.

Floor Exercise

Q: If an athlete performs three acro passes, but the third (last) pass was a repeat of a previous pass and receives zero (0) Value Part for the salto, I understand how it would not fulfill the Special Requirement for last salto. In terms of UTL, would the judge look back to the second acro pass and treat that as the last completed pass to fulfill UTL?

A: No. The last acro pass that received zero VP for the repeated salto in the same connection does not mean that the gymnast didn't attempt to perform an acro pass. She still tumbled acro skills from an approach (hurdle or run), and the acro pass will receive deductions according to rules of VP, SR, and composition (UTL). A judge would not consider the previous successful acro pass as the last pass.

Reference: USAG COP Section 5 Floor Exercise – Chapter 1 General Info – VI.A.6. page FLOOR-6, and Chapter 2- Compositional Categories – II.A.4.a.2 and 4.b, page FLOOR-18; Rules Modifications 5.2.c, 5.3.d., page 15; Rules Newsletter March 15, 2025 Floor Ex (pages 12-13 in 2024-25 Archive).

Equipment

Q: The measurements for the Floor Exercise Field of play, 12 m x 12m with allowance of + 3cm does not mention -3cm, which is different than FIG and USAG. Is this accurate?

A: Yes, this is intentional. The WCGA did not want the FX diagonals to be any smaller than what the 12m X 12m sides provide – so they set the allowance to go only up (+3cm), not down, resulting in the minimum of 1697 cm on the diagonals from the exact 12m X 12m measurement.

Reference: Rules Modifications 6.1.k, page 18.

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2025 USAG Committee Meeting Updates that Impact NCAA Rules

Note: These changes are now incorporated in the USAG Women's Program Rules & Policies, and in the updated electronic version of the USAG Dev Prog COP (July 2025). The updates are available in replacement pages format for any printed COP: [COP Update link](https://static.usagym.org/PDFs/Women/Rules/rp/rulespolicies.pdf) . The 2025-26 R&P is available here: <https://static.usagym.org/PDFs/Women/Rules/rp/rulespolicies.pdf>

From the National Technical Committee and from the Joint National Development Program Committee/ National Technical Committee meeting and the NTC meeting on May 12, 2025, items that PASSED.

(notes from Rules Interpreter in italics)

GENERAL / MEET INFORMATION

1. Clarify procedure for all apparatuses: If an athlete requires medical assessment due to injury, they may complete the routine and resume competition within the same session once medically cleared. A 30-second touch warm-up may be allowed upon return. ***(different in NCAA: Rules Modification 1.12 specifies a 2-minute injury assessment, then resume or terminate the routine – cannot resume routine at a later time during the competition. USAG does not have this 2-minute timed injury assessment period)***
2. Remove the 0.30 deduction (Level 6-10) for no dismount (Bars, Beam, Floor) from the Code of Points. ***(Important change to note. This deduction was applied if the dismount (or last acro pass) had zero value, in addition to VP, SR,UTL deductions.)***
3. Recommendation that a sports bra with exposed straps may be black, match the leotard, be the athlete's skin tone, or clear in color.

EQUIPMENT

1. Allow (if available on an event) an alternate skill cushion made of softer foam (minimum of 4 ft. x 6 ft. x 8 in.) to be used in warm-ups at all sanctioned competitions. ***(already permitted in Rules Modifications 6.1.n)***
2. The placement of a springboard on the vaulting table is strictly prohibited at all times, including during open stretch and warm-up periods. The Meet Director is responsible for enforcing this rule. ***(addressed in Rules Modification 6.2.a.)***
3. Add to Chief Judge (CJ) deduction: A deduction will be applied if a coach applies water or chalk to the uneven bars while the athlete is actively competing on the equipment. No warning is required. This does not apply if the athlete has fallen and is off the equipment. ***(clarified in Rules Modification 6.1.o)***
4. Update for equipment failure: If the bar cable tension slips while an athlete is competing (after the coach has tightened the tension prior to the start of the routine), it is considered equipment failure. The 0.50 Fall deduction would not apply.
5. Update for equipment failure: If the Balance Beam end cap detaches while an athlete is in the process of a dismount, it is considered equipment failure. The 0.50 Fall deduction would not apply. The end cap falling off during any other point in the athlete's routine would not be considered equipment failure. ***(different in Rules Modification 6.1.h)***
6. For competitions held in outside facilities, the area to the right and left of the Beam dismount area MUST be padded with a minimum of 4 feet by 4 feet of padding. Acceptable padding options include (but are not limited to) unfolded panel mats, carpet bonded foam, or other such matting.
 - a. The matting MUST extend a minimum of four (4) feet out from the side edge of the Beam dismount area and extend a minimum of four (4) feet from the end of the under-Beam matting.
 - b. Every attempt should be made to match the height of the CLM's to this additional padding to remove the possibility of athlete injury from uneven surfaces.
 - c. The padding should be attached (with Velcro or something similar) to the floor (concrete, foam, carpet, etc.) to avoid separating or slipping.

(This additional matting basically covers the open corner by the beam's support feet between the competition landing mats under the beam and the dismount landing mats.)

7. Update placement of additional matting allowed on Floor Exercise: All matting must be in place PRIOR to the start of the routine and cannot be added once the routine has started. A 0.30 unauthorized use of matting deduction will be applied if matting is added after the exercise has begun. Mats may be removed during a routine only if taken from the nearest boundary line. The person removing the matting should stay outside the floor area as much as possible. Briefly stepping inside the border marking to remove mats will not result in a deduction. ***(this impacts current Rules Modifications and will be discussed by WCGA Committees for NCAA clarification)***

VAULT

1. Add deduction (Level 1 - 10): Gymnast fails to punch board simultaneously with two feet. - 0.20

UNEVEN BARS

1. Increase value of BARS 6.301 "C" to 6.401 "D" - Stalder forward to handstand with 1/1 (360°) turn on one arm after handstand phase (Healy) to L or mixed-L grip. ***(was already a D in Rules Modifications, so now no longer an exception. Has been deleted from exceptions Table 3.3 in current edition).***

BALANCE BEAM

1. New element #2.501- "E" - From side stand Ring Jump (rear leg at head height) with ½ turn (180°) (Pennucci).
2. Add a shoulder stand variation to BEAM #1.108 Chest or Head Stand mount.

FLOOR EXERCISE

1. Decrease the CJ deduction "Absence of music or music with words or song / speech" from -1.00 to -0.50.
2. Establish a music approval subcommittee of national committee members who will define a music approval process to begin August 1, 2026. ***(USAG is retaining the use of voice rules going forward, rescinding the elimination vote from 2024. Currently, still submit questionable floor music to RTCC)***
3. A 0.50 deduction will be applied if a gymnast leaves the floor during the routine. This deduction should not be taken in addition to a fall out of bounds or a fall immediately preceding the gymnast leaving the floor for medical evaluation.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM USAG: Digital Format Transition – 2026

Beginning in 2026 with the Development Program Code of Points, USA Gymnastics will transition the Development Program Code of Points, Xcel Code of Points, and Compulsory Book to a digital-only format.

This change addresses annual committee meeting updates, corrections, and version control issues that made printed materials quickly outdated and hard to maintain. The digital format ensures access to the most current version in one place, with no shipping delays or costs. This transition also resolves ongoing production challenges and allows for faster release of finalized materials without back orders.

Users desiring a printed copy will still have the ability to download a PDF from the digital version to print at home.