



Move-up Policy

Advancing through the levels at HGA

This is a headache of a topic. It has to be one of the hardest aspects of coaching gymnastics. More frustrations revolve around the issues related to when and how to move a gymnast up to the next level. There are more things involved in this than you know and looking from the outside in, it may seem cut and dry. This is never the case, but we want you to know that a lot of thought goes into the considerations as well as coaches meetings all of which is influenced by what is best for the individual gymnast and the entire program.

Inconsistencies

No matter the guidelines, rules, and scores, if you look hard enough, you will see inconsistencies. These inconsistencies are just coaching strategies, as each individual is different. This is where trust comes in. Trust that we will do what is best for the program and the gymnasts. Sometimes the long term goals and benefits are not quite as visible to parents as they are for coaches who have been down these roads before.

Skill Readiness

Often times we hear "how can they get the skills if they never get a chance to work on them?" Well, actually what may seem like repetition of the same old routine IS actually working on advancing the skill level. The repetition produces more consistency and a stronger skill to build on. If the core component of any skill is not refined or even mastered then the advanced version of that skill is destined for learning frustration, safety risks, inconsistent performance issues, and fears. Therefore we spend more time doing basics such as layouts instead of twisting, uphill stacked mat timers rather than flipping vaults, handstands and more handstands rather than transition releases, and layout flyaways instead of double flyaways. If we were to take a different path, I could promise only one thing and that would be an eventual collision with the wall of skill development. USAG has a set of standards to qualify for each level, but here at HGA we raise the bar to help our gymnasts achieve greatness and be competitive. Instead of just having a skill, they need to perform that skill with correct execution, consistency, and control. No one wants their athlete to go to a competition unprepared to deal with their polished and powerful competitors. If you are a 2nd year level 5 with required meet scores and you don't have all your skills to move to level 6, you will be allowed to be moved up when all skills are acquired properly and consistently, even if it is after the season begins.

Girls who have their skills but don't have their required scores, may go to a meet and get their scores and be allowed to move up provided their next level up skills are maintained and are performed with confidence, properly and consistently.

No Hurry

Some gymnasts may remain in the same level for 2 or even 3 years. This is not unheard of and it is for their benefit to do so. You will see this most commonly in level 5 as the skills in level 5 are the building blocks of so many skills in every level to follow.

Mental Readiness

A by product of advancing too fast often manifests itself and rears its head as competition anxiety or inconsistent performance. This can certainly be traced to rushing through the basics, and not learning how to compete aggressively and confidently at a lower skill level prior to increasing the difficulty. We really do try to avoid this and as we become better coaches, it seems the approach is working.

To move up, we require gymnasts to:

- * Obtain 2 scores of 35 or higher at their current level. 1 at and SQM or States
- * Show that you can consistently perform with proper technique the skills required at the next level
- * Regularly attend practice
- * Show respect to coaches, teammates, and self
- * Have a good attitude and effort
- * Good form on all skills with proper technique (right shape, straight legs, pointed toes, etc)
- * Willing to listen and make changes when necessary
- * Aggressive, not breaking down and crying when performing skills
- * Be truthful about assignments (not cheating)

These decisions are at the discretion of the coaches and are not subject to parents opinions. Parents may ask for a parent/coaches meeting at any time during the year to check on progress.