



## **RHYTHMIC XPRESS**

### **MISSION**

1. To offer a competitive rhythmic gymnastics program for athletes with special needs
2. To grow the sport of rhythmic gymnastics by creating a program that integrates athletes with special needs into mainstream events

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Rhythmic Xpress program allows athletes with special needs the opportunity to compete in an official USA Gymnastics setting.

Rhythmic Xpress is similar to the HUGS Artistic program in that it allows an option for athletes to participate alongside typical gymnasts. The expectations are that the fundamentals of the sport are to be taught and performed, and will be evaluated with the technical standards of rhythmic gymnastics.

The rules for Rhythmic Xpress have been laid out to put the focus on personal progress rather than competitive placement. Therefore, athletes can be challenged and happy in a single level for multiple years. We appeal to event host clubs to follow the competition guidelines for this purpose. Simple changes such as posting scores and naming event champions will ultimately undermine this goal.

### **BASIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION**

- Athletes must have a current USAGymnastics Introductory membership.
- Coaches must be USAGymnastics professional members.
- HUGS competition can be included in any session of USAGymnastics sanctioned meets.

Athletes may participate in up to 3 individual apparatus events and 2 group routines at a single competition. Price per entry is to be held at \$15 per individual routine and \$10 per athlete in each group routine. Therefore, the max entry fee for any single athlete will not exceed  $(\$15 \times 3) + (\$10 \times 2) = \$65$ .

In addition each team is encouraged/allowed to compete the TEAM FX Routine. Teams are allowed one routine per each 10 athletes they enter in the competition.

Examples:

- A team has 5 athletes – they may do one FX routine
- A team has 12 athletes – they may do one routine with all 12 or 2 routines with 6 each, split 5 and 7, etc.
- A team has 25 athletes – they may do three FX routines

The routine will be judged and receive achievement awards for the team but will not incur an additional cost.

## **PARTICIPATION LEVELS**

HUGS competition will include 4 levels of individual competition. Group competition will not be divided by levels.

- BRONZE Level is for athletes who perform seated. Corresponds to Special Olympics Levels A and B.
- SILVER Level corresponds to Special Olympics Levels C and 1.
- GOLD Level corresponds to Special Olympics Levels 2 and 3.
- PLATINUM Level corresponds to Special Olympics Level 4.

UNIFIED GROUP – A unified group consists of athletes with and without disabilities. In a unified group, there may be an equal number of athletes with and without disabilities, or the majority of the group must be athletes with disabilities.

## **ROUTINE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS (top half of score sheet)**

- For specific composition requirements, refer to the score sheets for each level.
- It is at the coach's discretion which body and apparatus skills in each routine are listed for credit.
- At any level, athletes may perform the Special Olympics routines or optional choreography. If optional choreography is used for Bronze, Silver, or Gold levels, the maximum time is 1 minute.

## **XPRESS CATEGORIES (bottom half of score sheet)**

Categories are described generally on the score sheet. Xpress categories are intended to encourage variety, originality, risk and performance ability. Refer to the individual score sheets for each level

## **RECOMMENDED EVENT PROCEDURES**

1 judge per individual routine; 2 judges per group routine

Organize rotations by grouping apparatus routines together. Mixed levels are appropriate for smaller events.

Coaches should turn in sheets ahead of warm-up for the session. A designated secretary puts the sheets in order during warm-up period.

Coach or assistant should turn in music when the athlete is on deck and pick up immediately following the routine. An mp3 player may be left with the music production table, but the coach or assistant must confirm which music to play while the athlete is on deck.

Scores are NOT flashed. A secretary is needed to add scores and enter into simple spreadsheet or handwritten log sheet.

Achievement awards are prepared and presented within 10 minutes of the end of the session.

Score sheets are returned to the coaches following the session.

## **JUDGES**

Judges for the Rhythmic Xpress program are not required to have a current JO or FIG judging certification. Teams are encouraged to bring their own Judge (could be an assistant coach or retired athlete) to the event OR the meet director may ask the contracted judges to work the Rhythmic Xpress session. Payment is recommended to be \$1 per routine judged.

## **AWARDS**

Achievement Awards are required for ALL Rhythmic Xpress events.

- 8.0 and up = FIRST/GOLD level Achievement Award
- 6.5 to 7.95 = SECOND/SILVER level Achievement Award
- Below 6.5 = THIRD/BRONZE level Achievement Award

All-around or overall high score Special Award may be presented at the discretion of the Meet Director.