



2018 World Series

Slovakia, France & Japan

Judges Feedback

The following feedback has been prepared for you on behalf of the FINA Artistic Swimming Coaches Sub-Committee based on the judges meeting discussions following each event. This is a first step to increasing communication between judges and coaches. *Note: all feedback is from Senior Open competitions, but are quite appropriate for all levels of routines.*

SR TECHNICAL SOLO

Slovakia:

- Judges would like to see more difficulty in the tech routines. They would like to see more actions before and after the elements. For example: after the combined spin – add double leg, turns, vertical height – this would consider as difficulty. Just simple fast legs are not enough for consideration of difficulty. Less laying on the back, and more eggbeater.
- There was a big discussion about the barracuda element. The height of the actual barracuda is important. To complete the rotations is very important to avoid a “0”. However, from all of the discussions, it was clear that the rotations are the most important.

Japan:

- Execution score – alignment in positions and movements were well done in general, so this needs to be worked on to get higher scores.
- Impression score – extra difficulty before and after the elements makes the difference. Try to use the whole body in the movements. Good propulsion is important if you want to get higher scores.
- Elements score: 1st element - pay attention to the first vertical position, many swimmers seem to go directly to the bent knee vertical position. 5th element – the difficulty of this element is achieved when the Thrust is done as an explosive movement to achieve the highest vertical position (dynamic height). When this is not done, it would be considered a major error. Also, when the 720° spin is not distributed correctly, and the 2nd rotation is done at the ankle level (doing a twist instead of a spin), this would be a major error.

France:

- Stingray Element – many athletes are stopping in the vertical. Please note that this is not part of the description. The vertical is not a bolded position and therefore there should be NO stop in the Vertical Position.
- Barracuda 720° Element – there was a lot of variety in how this element was done and it needs improvement. 1) many athletes are not showing a Thrust, 2) please start in the back pike with the legs on the vertical line. If you do not, you already have a major deduction if your legs are 30 degrees or more off the vertical line.
- Combined Spin – 1) please note the starting height, 2) most important is to work on uniform drop and consistent tempo throughout the spin, 3) ending vertical height should match starting vertical height, 4) please try to avoid the sudden press at the end to achieve the height, it should be uniform motion with the rest of the spin.
- Other Comments – Judges want to see content between the elements. In many routines the elements appear too close together, work to create space and content between the elements.

SR TECHNICAL DUET

Slovakia:

- The duets were not complicated from the judge's point of view, they would like to see more than just elements in the tech routines. The arm strokes were easy, and the judges could see a lot of rest before the elements. Also, in the routines of higher level competitors, the level of difficulty was not enough.
- In the Flying Fish element, the girls must touch the surface of the water to a Fishtail Position to avoid deductions of different levels.

Japan:

- Judges are conscious that it is difficult for them to score 50% synchronization and 50% execution for each element score. Without doing it on purpose they think the execution still weighs more when they give their score. We need everyone to understand rules have changed and if an element deserves a 10 for perfect synchro and a 6.0 for execution, even if it's hard to understand, it deserves an 8.0 score.
- Element #5 – the Flying Fish position needs to have the foot touching the surface of the water. When it is evident that you do not do it, it may get a major deduction for that transition.

France:

- Duet elements overall were stronger than solo elements.
- In the technical routine, duet swimmers need to move in the same direction, one duet changed positions and moved in different directions; this could result in a penalty.
- There was a discussion about major error deduction. If an athlete in duet misses a series of movements, this would be a major deduction in synchronization (element panel). In the duet if an athlete misses movements it is 50% of your team missing movements, therefore it is a major error.
- Pool coverage needs to be better. It is realized that when doing the elements parallel to the panel duets are not covering the pool. We still need to work on maximizing the pool coverage within the choreography of the routine.
- Flying Fish 360° - the foot of the horizontal leg must be on the surface at the height of the Thrust. Height is important but the position must be done correctly as described in the rulebook.

SR TECHNICAL TEAM

Slovakia:

- In the elements of the technical routine, there were problems in the synchronization of the rotation in the first and second elements. The judges could not see the clear positions in many routines.
- During the elements, patterns were moving to unclear positions, and they were difficult to understand. Some teams had difficulty in the lifts, but the lifts were not executed clearly.

Japan:

- Execution score - attention to the execution of the patterns and some teams had very big distances between the athletes.
- Element #2 – remember it is also an error to do more rotations than those required!!! In some teams, it seems swimmers are afraid of getting a zero if they do fewer rotations and stay too high in the last part of the descending spin before reaching the ankles. This may make them do more than the 4 rotations described and that would be also a penalty.
- Other comments – we spoke about uniform motion or rhythm errors during the elements and although we can't decide it as a rule, because it depends on the error, the 2 or 3 examples we spoke about were considered to be minor errors (i.e. a deduction of 0.1 to 0.5 in that transition). In the example of a slow descending spin, it would probably be a higher deduction. Judges also ask coaches to make sure they do clear lines and circles during the routine to try and avoid any doubt from the assistant referee who checks this.

France:

- Cadence Action – when moving to a circle, make sure the action performed by all swimmers is identical with only minor modifications in terms of rotation to achieve the circle.
- In all technical routines, coaches are reminded that execution of elements is judged like figures and figures are in uniform motion and according to the description in the FINA rules. Judges must see your execution of each element to evaluate it.

SR FREE SOLO

Slovakia:

- Topics of the judges meeting were interesting; they would like to see proportionality between armstrokes and leg movements. They would like to see more unique movement in the solos, more creativity.
- Judges awarding the complicity of the routine, flexibility of the body through the whole routine, shoulder flexibility does count as difficulty. In the hybrids, deviation of the vertical line counts as difficulty.
- Difficulty in music – the use of the music, playing with accents by putting difficult actions is welcomed and awarded by the judges.

Japan:

- Judges noticed that swimmers offered many thrusts, boosts, spins but not enough eggbeater. The choreography is too much “up and down”.
- The swimming pool coverage is not balanced enough.
- At the end of the routine, judges noticed synchronized mistakes with the music. The end of the routine and the end of the music are not synchronized.
- A lot of swimmers showed very good first laps, but judges realized less intensity on the last lap.

France:

- The judges identified areas that separate performance of swimmers: use of whole body and transitions into and out of hybrids.
- Artistic Impression judges would like coaches to work on more dynamic pool coverage. They also want coaches to ensure that routines are synchronized with the music.

SR FREE DUET

Slovakia:

- The judges would like to see better pool coverage. The duets have to move and go to both panels equally and not spend too much time on one side of the pool.

Japan:

Prelim:

- Most of the duets had a high level of synchronization, but when it came to being synchronized in height and extension it was not “perfect”.
- Many pairs had errors in transitions.
- Most pairs showed good height, but splashing of water distracted to show clean heights.
- In general, the routines started with very good sharpness in movements, but as they got closer to the end they lost extension.

Final:

- Lack of variety/diversity for the transitions.
- Lack of movements with two arms in eggbeater or kicks.
- Some duets are so concerned about moving that they forget their manner of presentation. It needs balance.
- Be careful to respect the balance between the speeds, it is sometimes too much one way or another.
- Be cautious of the level on both sides. Make good use of the pool’s area (like a cross).

France:

- Synchronization was the most obvious area that needed improvement for all levels.
- Duets seem to be favoring one side of the pool (audience side); work for balance between both sides.
- Music interpretation – if your music is soft, you must change and be with the music.
- Make sure music has a proper ending and you end on your music. This is part of choreography!
- Explore different rhythms within the music for more interest. Many opportunities are being missed to showcase a simple movement matched perfectly with the music.

SR FREE TEAM

Slovakia:

- Judges are looking for the balance in routines. They like to see difficulty and execution are on the same level. Some teams were very easy, but very well executed and synchronized. The other has high difficulty, but had many minor and obvious mistakes. It is hard to judge and have a good score when the difficulty is in the high 8's, but the execution is below 8.

Japan:

- Please avoid the shoulder movement when presenting the solo. The walk-on needs to show strong, fit and creative athletes, not models in a fashion show. It is not good for the sport.

France:

Execution –

- No teams exceeded the 6 acrobatic lifts – great!
- Keep working on the last 1/3 of the routine to improve accuracy. Judges noticed that synchronization, execution, patterns and extension decline towards the end of the routine.
- Judges would like to see continuous movement when tired – more obvious stops or pauses in movement (propulsion) were observed toward the end of the routine.

Artistic Impression –

- Artistic Impression judges feel that manner of presentation is not yet automatic and uniform and coaches need to keep working on this area.
- For teams trying to move to the next category (e.g. 7's to 8's), more pattern changes are needed.
- Judges noticed that most teams are trying to move during figures, which is good, but coaches need to work for complete pattern clarity, especially during complex pattern changes.
- Artistic Impression judges would like to see teams attempt a more unique beginning; many first laps are looking like the same structure. We want to see something new!

Difficulty –

- Marks are being lost in synchronization in difficulty. Look at your routine and ensure a balance between 4/4, 2/2/2/2, cadence, etc. and all 8. 8 swimmers is recognized to be more difficult.
- Most teams have obvious difficulty in first and last figures/laps but the middle of the routine generally lacks difficulty. Work on the middle of routine to find opportunities to increase difficulty.
- Double arm eggbeater and sustained double arms are lacking in most routines.
- Judges recognize most teams have complex difficulty in figures and tight patterns – keep it up!
- Preparation time for highlights and surfaces in some routines is too long.

SR TECHNICAL MIXED DUET

Slovakia:

- Artistic Impression was much better than the rest. Short hybrids & a lot of “swimming” on the back. Short armstroke sections, and after a lot of rest. The judges would like to see longer arms sections, which they would consider as difficulty.
- Minor errors in synchronization.
- Judges would like to see more extension of arms and legs – straight knees and pointed toes.

Japan:

- Judges would like to see more connected movements, but limited number of lifts.

France:

- Mixed duet technical is permitted only one acrobatic movement. Please read the rulebook and ensure that you do not have more than one as this will result in a penalty.
- Judges would like to see more creativity and intricacy between the elements.
- 2018 duets should reflect the new rules which allow for more connection, mirroring, etc. You are encouraged to update the choreography to reflect the new rules.

SR FREE MIXED DUET

France:

- Add double arms for more difficulty.
- Judges appreciated the different interpretations of the mixed duets.
- Want to see a lot of connection; more than just lifting one person.

HIGHLIGHT ROUTINE

France:

- Because the highlight routine is very short, coaches need to use the time between highlights to maximize content (add more content).
- Be careful to place highlights in the best possible place in the pool so they can be appreciated; work to place in center of pool, not in the corners
- Kaleidoscope needs work – we need to see this and it needs to be more complex with more attractive movements, changing movements and changing pattern.

FREE COMBINATION

Slovakia:

- The most important discussion from the meeting was about choreography. The coaches should create choreography with: clear understanding of positions – solo, duet, trio, etc, must swim not far from team, 1-3 meter distance, not more. It must look like one whole thing, one part of the routine comes out of another. If the duet, solo swims too far from team judges can give a penalty. It is also easier for judges to see the routine and don't miss parts. If everything is close and one part goes after another part.
- Judges would like to see variety of throws, lifts. Tempo in the routines giving a good impression for judges. Judges give credit for small positions and sharp moves and tempo.
- Pool coverage is very important, so swimmers can be close to all of the panels of the judges to make eye contact. Judge deduct if the pool coverage isn't good.
- Judges said: in the combination routine must be a balance between team, solo, duet, trio, etc. Not most of the routine just team parts, or just solo/duet. A combination of everything.

Japan:

- The sub-groups must be closer together and the transitions between different parts must be intertwined.
- The combos were more creative, nevertheless certain figures were built with too many basic positions. During figures, it would be better to have more change of patterns.

France:

- Judges appreciated creativity in this event.
- For the mid-level routines, there appeared to be a lot of difficulty in acrobatics but more difficulty in figures and arms is needed.
- Work for better balance of 2/2/2/2/, 5/5, etc. and all 10. As above 8-10 swimmers is recognized as most difficulty (synchronization).
- Judges feel that there are too many throws and partner pushes, would like to see more hybrids.
- At times, judges did not know where to look; e.g. A lift happening during a solo is distracting.
- Choreography needs to follow the music. This should be like a performance at the theater.
- Some spacing in some teams between athletes was way too big and the referee could enforce a penalty, so please check your spacing from all angles.