

2019 UANA PAN AMERICAN ARTISTIC SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS JUDGES COMMENTS FOR ROUTINES

GENERAL COMMENTS:

For **2020** we are asking coaches to continue to focus on **EXTENSION, SYNCHRONIZATION** and **PROPULSION** in all routines. In almost all of the judges' routine comments, extension, synchronization and pool coverage were issues in all age categories in all events.

Check your routines for proper propulsion and pool coverage:

- Strength, power and energy shown in all transitions, strokes, kicking and sculling to move throughout the pool.
- Include traveling hybrids
- Transitions in and out of hybrids should travel to additional parts of the pool to show maximum movement.
- Avoid eggbeater in horizontal positions on the back while performing strokes, it is an improper kicking action and will inhibit maximum travel/propulsion.
- **"IF YOU AREN'T SPINNING OR PERFORMING A VERTICAL DESCENT YOU SHOULD BE MOVING"**

Additional **general comments** that were noted in most routines:

- Eggbeater height was not as good as hybrid/figure height.
- Although walk-ons are not judged, judges commented that they would prefer a more normal way of walking with good posture and confidence instead of the extreme shoulder movements.
- **READ YOUR ARTISTIC SWIMMING COACHES AND JUDGES MANUAL** and make sure to understand the "clarifications" sections. There are periodic changes and clarifications that coaches should constantly check. Elements are receiving penalties for movements and/or sequences that have been taught incorrectly to the athletes.

SPECIFIC JUDGES COMMENTS: Beside Extension, Synchronization and Propulsion issues that were noticed in all routines, the comments below were specific to each event.

FREE ROUTINES:

12 & Under Solos:

- Work on extension, knees and feet.
- There needs to be more difficulty toward the end of the routine.
- Some chose music that was too difficult and complex for them and they could not handle it
- Work on height in strokes and eggbeater.
- Work on propulsion and pool coverage. But judges noticed it was better than last year!
- Pay attention to pool pattern - many had backtracking and did not follow a logical flow. Many swam on one side of the pool. Choreograph the pool pattern!!
- Manner of presentation is not to both panels of judges. Make sure to coach from both sides of the pool to ensure good presentation from both sides.
- Try to end the routines more toward the center of the pool and facing the judges.
- Need more balance between hybrids and strokes

12 & Under Duets:

- Good pool coverage! Good pool pattern and impressed by travel during hybrids.
- Need more eye contact with the judges
- Work on precision and clarity of movements

- Difficulty is high but many times the execution suffered
- Work on Synchronization especially in matching movements.
- Maintain consistent spacing between partners (sometimes far away and sometimes close)
- Artistry in hybrids and leg movements is better than arms
- Work on more interesting, creative strokes
- Many are adding more speed in their routines but sacrificing execution and synchronization
- Work on more interesting transitions in and out of highlights

12 & Under Teams:

- Judges were impressed with highlights - keep this up!
- Balance between stroke and hybrid sections is good.
- Some had great pattern changes and cadences.
- Need more variety of spins without checking each 180 wall for accuracy. This lowers the difficulty.
- Keep manner of presentation and energy up the whole way...2nd half weaker than 1st half
- Try for more variety of movements and positions. (2nd half of routine looks the same as first half)

13-15 Solos:

- Work on strong propulsion to improve pool coverage and pool pattern.
- Laps need to be extended and made longer. Those who did kick hard - try to avoid splashing
- Avoid going up and down, instead always move to a different part of the pool.
- Use of music was good, however, in some routines it was too difficult for the level of the swimmer.
- Work on extension of the knees and feet as well as flexibility.
- Work on eggbeater height. It is lower than vertical height.
- Need more variety in hybrids, especially spins. However, the hybrids had more variety and interest than the arm movements.
- Try to add variety and more artistry on strokes and greater use of the upper body for better interpretation.
- Make sure to finish movements.
- Judges would like to see more eye contact
- Work on routine endurance. Routines seem to fizzle out at the end.
- Include more sustained height, difficult transitions and off angles to increase difficulty

13-15 Duets:

- The judges noticed there seem to be gaps in choreography - try to fill these
- Finish with the music (don't do extra movements once the music has finished)
- The choreography was standard. Strive for more varied, unique movements and transitions including more variety in ending of figures.
- Many got sloppy toward the end. Work on routine endurance
- The top duets set up the highlights quickly
- Keep working on synchronization and matching movements.
- Need better balance between the hybrids and strokes. (There are more legs than arms)

13-15 Mixed Duet:

- Would like to see more in the choreography that makes it look more like a mixed pair as opposed to a regular duet.
- Need more connection between the 2 swimmers.
- Work on synchronization and execution.

13-15 Teams:

- Highlights were great, showing difficulty, variety and unique movements. Risks are being taken and appreciated/rewarded by the judges. .
- There were many pattern changes creating kaleidoscope affects. There were some pattern changes during figures showing artistry and difficulty
- Continue to work on synchronization and clarity of movement so that the good choreography can be appreciated.
- Pay attention to the timing on surfaces and descents and finishing each action clearly and precisely.
- Many are attempting to put speed in their routines. This is good as long as it does not negatively impact execution and synchronization
- Many had very good use of music.
- Highlights need more surprise on the set up
- There was better balance between strokes and hybrids than in the duets.

Junior Solo Free Routines:

- Strive to have the music dictate the choreography. The judges felt that the strong music needed stronger movements.
- Maintain good height in stroking/eggbeater sequences and add more difficulty. Vertical height is better.
- There seem to be dead spots in arm sequences.
- Work on better flow in transitions from stroking to hybrids - no breaks. Maintain good propulsion throughout to cover more pool area.
- Hybrids showed good variety of spins and off angles. Make sure to finish them cleanly.
- Maintain good foot, ankle and knee extension throughout the routine.

Junior and Senior Duet Free Routines:

- Continue to work on synchronization, precision and clarity of movement. Need to make endings cleaner.
- Often, when the routine was very fast, synchronization and execution scores were negatively affected. Judges are deducting for this.
- Highlights were creative and risky. In connected arm movements try for more difficulty.
- Need more difficulty, complexity and memorable moments in stroking sections. Arms were too generic and standard.
- Need more use of the upper body for better presentation.
- Look for balance between stroking sections and hybrid sections. There are more legs than arms.
- Routines need more pool coverage. Make sure your pool patterns are logical and cover all sides of the pool. Many ended up too narrow, swimming on one side of the pool only.
- Judges would like to see more variety in the use of music.
- Spins could be faster and show more variety. They looked "safe".
- There needs to be a continuous flow throughout the routine with no dead spots, especially on transitions.
- Some music was too difficult for the skill level of the swimmers. Need more balance between difficulty and ability.

Junior Mixed Duet Free:

- Overall, the judges were impressed with the routine
- They appreciated that the female lifted the male
- Lifts in general need to be higher
- Highlights worked well together

Junior Team Free Routines:

- Highlights need to be staged. Many were too far down the pool to receive the full benefit of a good view.
- Most routines were creative and used the music well. There were unexpected “wow” moments!
- There was good variety in tempo and the actions reflected the changes in music
- Generally the transitions were good. There were some that did not flow well
- Some routines had too much difficulty for the ability of the swimmer. This distracted from the execution score as well as the artistic impression score. Also, they did not get full credit for their difficulty.
- Synchronization and matching movements was still a problem on some.
- Highlights were good but the judges do not want such long set ups for them. This affects their difficulty as well as the artistic impression.
- Propulsion and pool coverage was better than in the Technical Teams.
- Would like to see more entire group swimming together and less small group combinations. It begins looking too much like a Combo routine.
- Keep patterns tighter.
- Good choreography was lost in some routines due to poor synchronization.

Senior Solo Free Routines:

- Make sure to coach from both sides of the pool so that there is good presentation to both panels.
- Swimmers seem to be swimming for themselves instead of engaging the judges/audience
- Arm strokes need more upper body expression and total body movements to become less generic.
- Stroke sequences appeared to be “rest spots”
- Long underwater swims on the dive affects difficulty and artistry
- Need to see more upper body flexibility on strokes to increase difficulty
- Many swimmers are not swimming to the music and allowing the music to dictate what the choreography should be.
- Pool coverage is poor due to poor pool patterns and lack of strong propulsion.
- Work on routine endurance. There was lack of extension toward the end of the routine.

Senior Duet Free Routines: See Junior Duet Free Comments, above. Judges had the same comments for both.

Senior Team Free Routines:

- The judges were impressed with the variety of strokes and how they used soft arms to reflect the slow parts of the music.
- There were too many parts where the swimmers rested. Need to keep moving
- Good choreography was lost in some routines due to poor synchronization and splashy swimming
- In some routines the music was more difficult than the skill level and ability of the athletes. Try to select music appropriate to age/skill level of the swimmers.

TECHNICAL ROUTINES:

Junior & Senior Solo Technical Routines:

- Choreograph the elements clearly and avoid making other hybrids look like the elements.
- Place difficulty throughout the routine but make sure to perform with good execution.
- Reread the description of the Stingray element. There were 2 zeros given for incorrect sequence.
- On the Barracuda element, spin from the top of the thrust (don't drop and then begin spinning)
- Pay attention to the elements - they count 40%!!!
- Work on eggbeater height.
- End with the music - judges are not rewarding extra choreography after the music has ended.

Junior Duet Technical Routines:

- The best element for the top swimmers was element number 1.
- Some performed good Flying Fish element.
- On most duets, the execution of the elements were performed well showing good routine endurance.
- Pay attention to Synchronization on the Elements. Remember, it counts 50% of the element score for each element.
- On element #2, there is no push up of height in the surface double ballet leg position before the sink. Also, check to make sure swimmers are performing correct Flamingo positions.
- On element #3, the Fishtail turns need to be rapid and maintain consistent height. Some selected slow music for this element which resulted in slow turns.
- Make sure to match the elements to the music.
- The top duets had good content between elements. Others need to work on adding more difficulty and variety between the elements.
- Strategically place the elements to ensure the Impression Panel has things to judge throughout the routine. Some routines had many elements placed in the first lap so that the Impression Panel had very little to judge.
- There were many synchronization deductions on non-element parts. Work on matching and synchronization of all parts of the routine.

Junior Duet Mixed Technical Routine:

- Judges were impressed with the interaction between the partners.
- The choreography was appropriate for a mixed duet.
- Element #3, Barracuda Twirl and element #4, Knight element, need more choreography between them
- Work on extension and finishing movements.
- Good presentation but need to work on upright posture

Junior Team Technical Routines:

- Pool coverage was better
- Some routines had good placement of cadences which created a surprise
- Manner of presentation was great!!
- Strokes need to be higher, especially eggbeater and boosts.
- Many synchronization errors affected the execution score throughout the routine.
- Keep patterns clean and clear so that there is no confusion. They tend to “bleed” from one to another.
- If performing pattern changes during the cadence, make sure they are very clear.

Senior Solo Technical Routines: See Junior Solo Technical routines, above. The judges had the same comments for both.

Senior Duet Technical Routines:

- The parts of the routine outside of the elements were good and filled the routine well.
- Judges appreciated the difficulty placed between elements.
- In general, synchronization was the worst part of the elements.
- Spins on the elements need to be more rapid.
- On the ballet leg element, pay attention to correct positions.
- Try to match the height level of the swimmers. Some had large differences.

Senior Team Technical Routines:

- Manner of presentation was good
- Placement of difficulty was good throughout the routine
- In many routines, when there was a lot of speed, it became splashy and the choreography could not be appreciated. Pay attention to the beginning and finishing of each action and “clear” the arm or leg from the surface to avoid lifting water.
- Transitions and strokes were cleaner than leg actions.

Free Combination Routines:

- Judges rewarded the top routines for their variety and originality.
- Highlights were high, well executed and difficult with multiple rotations and changing positions on throws.
- Judges would like to see better balance of execution between the highlights and the rest of the routine. The highlights had good execution but the rest of the routine was not as good.
- Some highlights looked dangerous when the person being thrown comes down in the same spot and the pusher has to dodge being hit. This was distracting to some judges.
- We saw a lot of variety and originality in the top routines
- The small parts (solos and duets) did not show as good of execution as the rest of the routine. Make sure these featured sections are well executed and synchronized.
- Keep exchanges close together. Some were too far apart
- Make sure to keep the individual parts clear and avoid too much overlapping. Do not do movements to distract from the highlights or the smaller parts.
- Pay attention to pool pattern. Some routines were stuck in the middle of the pool
- If traveling on a diagonal, try to still maintain eye contact with panel