

***Routine Judging-
Technical Merit &
Artistic Impression***

Routine Scoring Breakdown

<i>Technical Merit</i> (the "now" score)	<i>Artistic Impression</i> (the structure, content, & overall image)
<i>Execution</i> • Strokes • Propulsive Methods (kicks, eggbeater, sculling) • Figures, Hybrids, and parts thereof • Transitions • Precision of Patterns <i>Synchronization</i> • With each other • With the music <i>Difficulty</i> • In Figures & Hybrids Airborne weight Strength Height Complexity Cardio-vascular stress Length of time the movement takes & where it is placed in the routine • In Strokes & Propulsion Techniques Airborne height of head, shoulders, and arms Complexity of arm movement Constant movement Energy level of movements • In Synchronization Number of swimmers involved "Matchability" of the swimmers Complexity of the movement Speed of action and/or music Changes of synchronization within musical framework Risk involved in the movement • In Patterns Moving Straight lines Circles & curved lines Blind patterns Surface pattern changes • In Risk Factors • Placement of difficulty	<i>Choreography</i> • Variety • Creativity • Fluidity & pool coverage • Transitions • Patterns <i>Musical Interpretation</i> • Feel, mood, character of the music <i>Manner of Presentation</i> • Spark that makes the routine stand out

Technical Merit

What is Technical Merit?

- **Technical:** of, pertaining to, or derived from technical specialized, formal rather than practical
Merit: Value, excellence, the actual factors, to earn, to deserve, warrant
- The Technical Merit score is the first mark the judge will give.
- Variability of score: This is a “now” score, what is actually happening at the moment. It can vary greatly from performance to performance.
- In order to give credit for all the factors within this score, we must learn to recognize the components...**EXECUTION, SYNCHRONIZATION, and DIFFICULTY**

Execution

What is Execution?

- The Execution value is weighted differently for solos, duets, trios, and teams.
Solos – 50%
Duets/Trios/Teams – 40%
- Execution is a factual assessment. It is exactly what the swimmer is doing now. The Execution can vary within the performance, as for example, when a swimmer may tire at the end of the routine, her performance may be markedly different than that which was shown at the start.
- For duets, trios, and teams, the Execution score is the average of the swimmers involved.

Execution of Strokes

- Look for maximum results with minimal effort. Power without struggle; efficient movement.
- Swimming should be smooth and effortless.
- The arms should lift cleanly out of the water, with no unintentional splashing.
- Where standard strokes are used, the appropriate kick should also be used.

Execution of Propulsive Methods

- **Standard Kicks:**
The kick should propel the swimmer effortlessly through the water. It should be smooth and effortless. The kick should be powerful to enable the movement to flow continuously throughout the entire routine.
- **Eggbeater Kick:**
The eggbeater kick is used to sustain and maintain the airborne weight of the

arms, head, and shoulders in good positions above the surface of the water, both in stationary and traveling modes.

- ***Sculling:***

Sculling is the movement executed with the hands and arms to move the body through the water, or to hold it in space and design.

Correct body position is essential to sculling efficiency.

Look for power, effortlessness, and distance covered

Do not look at the sculling method itself. Methods of sculling are not judged...their effectiveness is judged.

Execution of Figures, Hybrids, and parts thereof

- For routine competition, any figures or parts thereof may be used. If a standard figure is included, it should be easily recognizable. Hybrid figures are a rearrangement of movement sequences.
- The basic principles for judging figures should be applied. Execution should be clean. There should be power without struggle. Effortless, smooth, and controlled, with each section clearly defined. There should be no doubt in the judge's mind as to what was intended.
- The timing within the figure may vary according to the music interpretation, so that a portion of the figure may be faster or slower than when done in figure competition.

Execution of Transitions

- A transition is the movement between figure parts, strokes and figures, figures and strokes, and propulsive techniques. The transitions connect the entire routine into a cohesive whole.
- Judgment of transitions follows the same requirements as for strokes and figures.

Execution of & Precision of Patterns

- Patterns may be small or large, spread or close, and in varying shapes.
- The exactness of the pattern must be clearly evident. There should be no doubt in the judge's mind as to what pattern was intended. The lines should be clear, sharp and definite.

Synchronization

What is Synchronization?

- The Synchronization value is weighted differently for solos, duets, trios, and teams.
Solos – 10%
Duets/Trios/Teams – 30%
- Synchronization is the most easily visible element of judgment. It is either synchronized, or it is not. If it is not, it must be clearly intended by the choreography.

- Synchronization includes not only what is seen above the surface of the water, but also includes the underwater action.

Synchronization with Each Other

- All body positions, arm and leg angles, and head angles should be exact.
- The element of “one with the other” is very visual. When positions or movements are not exact, the routine will have a “fuzzy” look, versus the clean look of Synchronization.

Synchronization with the Music

- This judgment is based on what is seen and heard. The swimmers might be interpreting the beats of the music or the accents. Their intentions should be clearly evident through the performance.
- Solo performers, because they are the only performer, have much more freedom in this area. They may synchronize with the music very differently than duets, trios, or teams.

Difficulty

What is Difficulty?

- Difficulty is weighted differently for solos, duets, trios, and teams.
Solos – 40%
Duets/Trios/Teams – 30%
- Difficulty is the one element that separates the superior routine from the others. Any routine can be well executed and synchronized if it is simple enough. A difficult routine, **that is well executed and synchronized**, should receive the highest marks.
- Be careful not to be confused by a difficult routine. A difficult routine, **that is well executed and synchronized**, should receive the highest marks. **BUT**, a difficult routine **that is NOT well executed or synchronized** should not receive higher marks than a routine that is simple, yet well executed and synchronized. Routines that are too difficult for the swimmers will be poorly executed and synchronized and therefore should receive lower marks.

Difficulty in Figures & Hybrids

- Difficulty in Figures and Hybrids includes...
 - ***Airborne weight & Height:***
Held height, as in sustained verticals or full twists, where comparisons are made on the height above the surface of the water.
Vertical descents, compared to pike-outs, tuck-outs, or other aborted verticals.
 - ***Strength:***
Isolated movements which require a great deal of strength or control of a

specific muscle group. Such as holding double ballet legs or a flamingo position for an extended period of time.

- **Complexity of movement:**
Complex movements such as a figure/hybrid that contains several fast position changes in a row adds difficulty to a routine.
- **Kinesthetic changes and balance requirements:**
The kinesthetic awareness needed for multiple spinal changes, as for example in some of the movements in the Knight or Minerva.
- **Cardio-vascular stress:**
The cardio-vascular stress placed upon the body in long figures requiring airborne weight and/or long underwater sequences, as in a long hybrid followed immediately by a lift.
- **Length of time the movement takes and the placement in the routine:**
The placement of the difficulty throughout the routine must also be considered. The swimmer should be able to properly perform difficult movements at the end as well as the beginning of the routine.

Difficulty in Strokes & Propulsion Techniques

- Difficulty in Strokes & Propulsion Techniques includes...
 - **Airborne height of head, shoulders, and arms:**
Two arms held out of the water for an extended period of time is more difficult than one.
 - **Complexity of arm movements:**
Multiple position changes of the arms during a stroking sequence is more difficult than holding one position.
 - **Speed of arm movements:**
Very quick and complex arm movements are difficult to execute. On the other hand, slow movements are difficult to synchronize.
 - **Constant movement:**
A routine that has constant movement is more difficult than a routine that has pauses for resting. However, floats, which may allow resting, can contribute to the overall choreographic variety and difficulty.
 - **Energy level of movements:**
The swimmer who displays a high energy level throughout increases the difficulty of their execution.

Difficulty in Synchronization

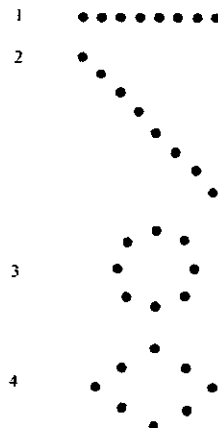
- Difficulty in Synchronization includes...
 - **Number of swimmers involved:**
Eight swimmers are more difficult to synchronize than four swimmers. It is more difficult to be exact with more swimmers. An action which may be difficult itself, such as a spin, becomes much more difficult when the actions of eight swimmers must be exactly synchronized.
 - **Complexity of the movements:**
Complex movements are difficult to synchronize. This includes

movements within the figures as well as movements from propulsion to figures and from figures to propulsive actions.

- ***Speed of action and/or music:***
Difficulty can also be seen in slow, sustained movement. It is quite difficult to match the exactness of angles and movement with music that is difficult to define. Fast music and multiple quick movements also present a synchronization challenge.
- ***Changes of synchronization within the musical framework:***
Music may call for changes in synchronization depending on the musical structure. It is more difficult to vary the timing of the synchronization than to use even beats. Syncopated movements intertwined with the use of accents become very difficult.
- ***Risk involved in the movements:***
A movement which requires split action timing, such as a split rocket, or boost, becomes more difficult to synchronize.

Difficulty in Patterns

- Difficulty in Patterns includes...
 - ***Moving patterns:***
Moving patterns are more difficult to hold than stationary or patterns with little movement.
 - ***Straight lines:***
Straight lines are more difficult to hold than widely spaced patterns. More swimmers in the straight line, and the angle of the line, add to the difficulty of the line.
 - ***Circles and curved lines:***
Circles and curved lines are more difficult to hold than square patterns.
 - ***Blind patterns:***
“Blind” patterns, and pattern changes, where swimmers cannot see one another, add to the difficulty of the pattern.
 - ***Surface pattern changes:***
Surface pattern changes are more difficult to execute than underwater changes.
 - ***Examples of patterns according to difficulty, from the most difficult to those that are easier:***



Difficulty in Risk Factors

- The risk factor is the ultimate in difficulty. It involves taking the chance for maximum performance. These movements involve the risk for failure, either in execution or synchronization, or both...
 - ***Lifts, Platforms, Throws, etc:***
Those actions which involve elevation of one or more swimmers totally out of the water in a variety of actions.
 - ***Rockets:***
Rockets and/or split rockets, which must attain maximum height, timing with the music, and control of the entire movement, are risky and add to the difficulty. Split rockets add the element of the maximum split action and synchronization, both to the music and with the other swimmers.
 - ***Pair boosts:***
Pair boosts, which require maximum height and control of the body throughout the execution, are risky and add to the difficulty.
 - ***Blind pair/group actions:***
“Blind” pair or group actions involving figures, boosts, and pattern changes also add to the risk and difficulty.

Placement of Difficulty

- Difficult actions should be spaced throughout the routine. Those at the end of the routine add to the difficulty of that routine. For example, a lift or spin at the beginning of the routine is not as difficult to perform as it is to perform the same action when fatigue is a factor near the end of the routine.

Artistic Impression

What is Artistic Impression?

- **Artistic:** Showing skill or good taste.
Impression: An effect, an image or feeling.
- The Artistic Impression score is the second mark the judge will give.
- This mark includes all the elements of the choreography or content of the routine, the manner in which the routine is portrayed, and the manner in which the routine is performed.
- The In order to give credit for all the factors within this score, we must learn to recognize the components...**CHOREOGRAPHY, MUSICAL INTERPRETATION, and MANNER OF PRESENTATION.**

Choreography

What is Choreography?

- Choreography is 50% for all routines...solos, duets, trios, and teams.
- Within this element we have the “what” is being done. The routine must fit the space of the pool; figures and figure variations must be planned for the available space and depth. A vertical descent, for example, cannot be done in four feet of water, where a walkout would be better placed.
- Choreography is the total, the entire routine. It is the entire picture in time, the story from beginning to end.
- The elements included in choreography include **variety, creativity, fluidity and pool coverage, transitions, and patterns.**

Variety in Choreography

- Variety in Choreography includes...
 - **Range and balance:**
The use of varied movements to show the ability to master a range of movements and designs. The routine will include a balance of strokes, figures, and propulsive techniques. Variety in a routine will show the use of spins, splits, twists, walkouts, verticals, flexibility and strength moves, strokes, etc. A routine that overuses walkouts, for example, will not show proper variety.
 - **Levels:**
The use of a variety of water levels, above the surface, at the surface, and under the surface. For example, a ballet leg is a figure at the surface, a boost or rocket is above the surface, and underwater transitional movements, such as the tucks out of verticals, are under the surface.

- **Dynamics:**
Fast and slow movements, long and short actions, high and low levels of figures and strokes, and the energy level of the performance. This depends a great deal on musical interpretation. It is the sound of the music expressed in physical action. Fast movements on fast music, slow movements on slow music. The music may have a whirling feeling, which may for example call for a spinning action. Other music may be strong and powerful, calling for large, simple movements. The energy level should match the dynamics of the music.
- **Patterns:**
Use of a variety of pattern designs throughout each length of the routine. Patterns should change logically, efficiently, and with fluidity. No swimmer should be moving across several lanes of the pool underwater to find her position.
- **Synchronization:**
Use of a variety of tempos, musical accents, and numbers of swimmers involved in the action. The use of opposition and pick-up or peel-offs, alternates, and other means of varying the synchronization. Also, the use of varied numbers of swimmers (4/4, 2/2/2/2, 3/5, etc.) involved in the action.

Creativity in Choreography

- Creativity - unique, cause to happen, evolve from thought or imagination, different, a new way to do something."
- Creativity does not necessarily mean something new or different all the time. It can mean a unique or new way of doing a movement, which is exciting to see.
- The element of surprise is usually your best indication of creativeness.
- In solos, for example, creativity generally involved the use of figure elements in a unique manner to fit the musical selection. It also includes the use of the arms in unique expressive actions.
- In duets, for example, the action may also involve mirror image movements or asymmetrical design. In duets, swimmers may add creativity by adding elements where they swim around each other instead of next to each other. Or, they may do actions that play off each other rather than doing them synchronized or in the same way. You may see similar elements in trios.
- In trios, for example, the swimmers develop actions specific for three people.
- In teams, for example, there are unlimited possibilities for creativity. The creative actions may include lifts, joined float actions, or any of the above mentioned actions.

Fluidity and Pool Coverage in Choreography

- Fluidity means continuous flowing action; a routine without breaks in the action from the start to the finish.
- Pool coverage is the pathway the swimmers take through the space in the water. The routine should use as much of the pool area as possible, rather than being done all in one end, or all on one side.

- Constant movement is a must. Watch for swimmers to never pop up in the same place where they went under.
- The direction of movement is also important, so watch for swimmers to always be moving logically around the pool and not backing up on themselves.

Transitions in Choreography

- Transitions have been called the connective links between figures and strokes, and vice versa.
- All transitions must be choreographed to be effective. Good transitions add to the choreography; they make the routine flow.
- There should be a variety of transitions, and a variety of movements involved in the transition.

Examples:

- If a walkout is executed, the following action should continue in the same or close line of direction. The swimmer should not immediately move back over the same path.
- Underwater finishes of vertical descents should be continuous and the same actions choreographed. One swimmer should not be tucking out of a vertical while another pikes out of it.

Patterns in Choreography

- The arrangement and rearrangement of the swimmers should change continuously. One pattern should not be held for too long.

Musical Interpretation

What is Musical Interpretation?

- Musical Interpretation is weighted differently for solos, duets, trios, and teams.
Solos – 20%
Duets/Trios/Teams – 30%
- The musical interpretation is the feel, mood or character of the music. It is the use of the beats, accents, and the melody. The swimmers should be painting a visual interpretation of how they hear and feel the music.
- Phrasing is important in the structure of the routine. A well choreographed routine will synchronize movement changes with music changes.
- The widest latitude for interpretation of the music must be allowed. Music conveys different feelings to different people. The judge must be open minded and disregard their personal musical preferences and interpretation, to allow for the swimmer's interpretation.

Manner of Presentation

What is Manner of Presentation?

- Manner of Presentation is weighted differently for solos, duets, trios, and teams.
Solos – 30%
Duets/Trios/Teams – 20%
- Manner of Presentation is the spark that makes the routine stand out. It includes poise, charisma, a sense of projection, showmanship.
- Expressiveness with the entire body must be shown. There should be total commitment in the performance.
- The ability to reach out and communicate with the audience and judges is an important aspect of this portion of the score.
- The swimmer must be at ease with themselves and demonstrate total command of their performance.
- Each swimmer contributes to this dynamic input. The judges must arrive at an average mark for each routine.

Review of Technical Element & Artistic Impression Point Values

The importance of utilizing all the elements for each of the scores cannot be stressed enough. If athletes and coaches are to learn from their competitions how to improve their performances, they must be given scores that accurately reflect their abilities in each of the judging areas.

The scores include the following...

	<u>Solo</u>	<u>Duet/Trio</u>	<u>Team</u>
<i>Technical Merit</i>			
Execution of strokes, figures & parts thereof, propulsion techniques, precision of patterns	50%	40%	40%
Synchronization one with the other and with the music	10%	30%	30%
Difficulty of strokes, figures and parts thereof, Patterns	40%	30%	30%
<i>Artistic Impression</i>			
Choreography variety, creativity, pool coverage, Patterns, transitions	50%	50%	50%
Musical Interpretation	20%	30%	30%
Manner of Presentation	30%	20%	20%

12. INTRODUCTION

Artistic Swimming is an aquatic discipline that at a competitive level requires a large variety of highly refined athletic skills. Many of these skills take place while athletes are in apnea. Routines are the artistic expression of the discipline. A routine is a choreography to music performed in the water. In routines athletes demonstrate their mastery in skills combining techniques to create movements that match with the selected music.

Routines can start in or out of the water but must finish in the water. How athletes present themselves before the routine starts (walk-on) as well as the movements performed during this period of 20 - 30 seconds is considered under the Artistic Impression Performance mark. Deck movements (10 seconds) are also considered under Artistic Impression Performance mark.

It is recommended that all Judges and Technical Controllers attend routine practice training sessions with the Coach Card to familiarize themselves with the routine and the content of the Coach Card in advance, so everyone is well prepared for the day of competition. Practice session viewing has no impact on results on the day of the competition. On the day of the competition the Judges and Technical Controllers will consider the performance on the day of the competition only. No changes can be made to the Coach Card after it has been submitted.

13. ROUTINE ELEMENTS AND TRANSITIONS

Routines are composed of Elements and Transitions.

1. **Elements** include:

- **Hybrids (free content)**
- **Acrobatics**
- **Technical Required Elements** ("TRE"), which are precisely described combinations of positions and transitions to be performed by all athletes in Technical Routines only

2. **Transitions** are the linking actions between the judged Elements, including propulsion techniques, strokes, ballet leg combinations, flexibility surface actions, surface pattern changes, or pair assisted actions. This includes all movements before and after a TRE and all hybrids in the Acrobatic Routine.

13.1 ROUTINE TYPES

There are two (2) types of routines depending on its content:

1. **Technical Routines**, which require the inclusion of TRE
2. **Free Routines**, which do not include TRE

The routine types by number of participating athletes are:

- Women Solo (1 athlete) and Men Solo (1 athlete) Technical and Free
- Women Duet (2 athletes) and Mixed Duet (2 athletes) Technical and Free
- Team (4 to 8 athletes) Technical and Free
- Acrobatic Routine (4 to 8 athletes) Free
- Free Combination Routine (4 to 10 athletes) Free

13.2 PANELS AND JUDGEMENT OF ROUTINES

13.2.1 Checked or Monitored by Technical Controllers: Difficulty and Synchronization

With the new scoring system to be implemented by January 1, 2023, the difficulty of the Elements that the routine contains is declared by the participants before the competition through the Coach Card. Whether the declared difficulty of the Hybrids and Acrobatics or the correct TRE is executed is checked by **Difficulty Technical Controllers (DTC)** during the competition. DTCs must officiate in all routines. The difficulty of Transitions is not declared or checked as transitions are part of the Artistic Impression score.

The three (3) DTC check the following:

- The number, order of performance and predeclared difficulty of Elements
- The performance and predeclared order of Technical Required Elements (technical routines)

Declared difficulty (DD) values can be found in Appendixes 6 and 7 to the World Aquatics AS Rules and the Coach Card format can be found in Appendix 8 to World Aquatics AS Rules. World Aquatics reserves the right to adjust the components assigned to each category as required.

The three (3) **Synchronization Technical Controllers (STC)** are to observe and record the number and type of synchronization errors. STCs will register the number and magnitude of unequal actions in all routines, except for Solo events (**AS 16.1.1** and **AS 16.1.2**).

Please refer to Section CHAPTER I. - 6 for more information concerning Difficulty Technical Controllers and Synchronization Technical Controllers.

13.2.2 Judged by panel of Judges: Elements Panel and Artistic Impression Panel

As per **AS 16.1** two (2) panels of five (5) Judges must officiate in all routines with one (1) panel for Elements and one (1) panel for Artistic Impression.

1. Elements Panel

Elements panel of five (5) Judges shall award one (1) score for the execution of each Element (Hybrids, Acrobatics and Technical Required Elements).

Judges consider the level of excellence in performing highly specialized skills. Execution of all routine Elements: Technical Required Elements, Hybrids and Acrobatics (**AS 17.2.1**).

2. Artistic Impression Panel

Artistic Impression panel of five (5) Judges shall award three (3) scores:

- One (1) score for **Choreography and Musicality**, the creative skill of composing a routine that combines artistic and technical components. The design and weaving together of variety, creativity, and innovation of all movements: Elements and Transitions. The pool coverage. Expression of the mood of the music, the use of the music's structure and the synchronization of movements with music.
- One (1) score for **Performance**

Performance is the manner in which the athletes present the routine to the viewers as well as the walk-on and the deck movements. The use of body language to

express physical and emotional power, confidence, and total command of the performance.

- One (1) score for **Transitions**.

Judges consider the execution and complexity of varied and purposeful movements, propulsions and strokes that link routine Elements.

As per **AS 17.1** and **AS 17.2** in all Routines each Judge shall award scores from 0-10 points in increments of 0.25:

Perfect	10	Satisfactory	5.75 – 5.0
Near perfect	9.75 – 9.5	Deficient	4.75 – 4.0
Excellent	9.25 – 9.0	Weak	3.75 – 3.0
Very Good	8.75 – 8.0	Very weak	2.75 – 2.0
Good	7.75 – 7.0	Hardly recognizable	1.75 – 0.25
Competent	6.75 – 6.0	Completely failed	0

14. JUDGING ROUTINES - GENERAL OVERVIEW

Accurate judging can only be achieved by a Judge who is well prepared and has become thoroughly familiar with each of the judging categories (Elements and Artistic Impression) and routine components (Elements and Transitions).

Judges must have developed the ability to apply a consistent and validated scale of excellence to each athlete. The Judge must apply those scales while utilizing the criteria objectively. With training and conscientious application of the standards, all Judges should be able to award valid scores.

The ultimate goal for Judges should be **a knowledgeable and objective judging by application of the criteria prescribed in this Manual, the World Aquatics AS Rules and other documents, as applicable, free from prejudice and preconceptions:**

- Each panel of Judges should be independent and should not influence each other.
- Judges must not judge based on what they expected to see or what they saw in the past. Judges must not be influenced by previous results or other factors that are not part of the criteria to base the judgement on.
- In Duets, Team, Free Combination and Acrobatic Routines, Judges must judge the performance of all athletes.

15. JUDGING ELEMENTS

The Elements panel of Judges considers the execution of Elements. Execution is the level of excellence demonstrated through the athlete's mastery of highly specialized skills. Execution is how well the athlete performs the Elements they choose to perform. Elements consist of **Hybrids**, **Acrobatics** and **Technical Required Elements**, judging of which is further described in paragraphs below.

As per Rule AS **14.2**, the performance ends with music accompaniment. Therefore, if an Element is performed but not completed by the time the music ends, Element Judges shall not consider the part of the Element performed after the end of music accompaniment in their mark for that Element.

15.1 Hybrids

A **Hybrid** is defined as a combination of five (5) or more movements performed with lower limbs with intentional apnea (head down under hips level). Note that short hybrid-like movements of four (4) or less movements with or without intentional apnea OR horizontal movements along the surface with lower limb actions that have consequential apnea (rolling over, kicking, etc.) are considered as transitional movement. It is important that Judges review Appendix 6 to familiarize themselves how to count movements in Hybrids.

From a judging perspective, an athlete may perform a Hybrid as described, but due to their skill level, the head might not be perfectly aligned under the hips. Additionally, if a traveling walkout-type movement takes place during the Hybrid, the head may not be directly beneath the hips, yet it can still be considered a Hybrid. Judges should focus more on the presence of intentional apnea than the precise positioning of the head under the hips when determining if the movement is a Hybrid or Transition.

The following factors should be considered when judging Hybrids:

Design

Components of Hybrids may show the precise characteristics of positions, movements or transitions described in the Appendix 1 to the World Aquatics Rules (BP and BM, and Figures) and in the declared difficulty reports, but this does not have to be the case. On many occasions the components will not match any of those described positions or movements at all or only in parts.

Also, Hybrids may be performed close to or far from Judges' position and/or in moving water caused by the (intentional) power of actions, the number of athletes performing, or the moving progression ("travelling") of the Hybrid. Judges must focus on what they see at or over the water surface. It is also common to see Hybrids components performed at a fast speed.

Considering these factors, the design accuracy in Hybrids is defined as to clearly show the intended action/position whether it is vertical, tilted, arched, bent, split, angles, twisting, spinning, travelling etc. For example, a vertical descent can be performed travelling, but body alignment must be present; descending spinning requires the even distribution of rotation during descent, but a rapid spin does not mean that it has to be continuous, the action can be stopped at the ankles, reversed and combined with leg or feet movements during the descent or ascent.

Control

As part of control factors consider the following components:

a) Height

See the Guiding Height Scales for stable and dynamic height in this Manual.

b) Extension, full body extension throughout action

Extension is a range to which something can be stretched to its fullest length. In this case, it is the use of muscular strength to bring a joint to its maximum physiological extension function.

In Hybrids, the knees, ankles, feet, and toes should always be fully extended with no relaxation of extension during any part of the execution, unless clearly intended otherwise in the choreography.

c) Stability

Solid, with equilibrium maintained and unaffected by change of position. Position that is unaffected by movement. Attain position exactly, without correction. Fluid without evidence of strain.

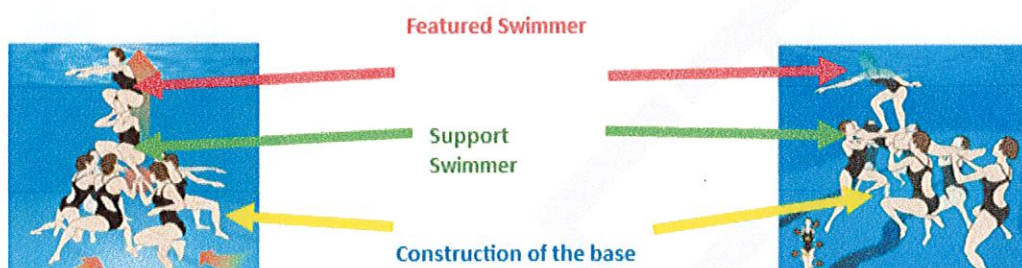
15.1.1 Expanded Marking Scale for Hybrids Execution

CATEGORY	MARK	HYBRIDS EXECUTION				PATTERNS (TEAMS)
		HEIGHT	EXTENSION/ CONTROL	DEVIATIONS	FLEXIBILITY RANGE	
Perfect	10	Maximum- over 9.5 in scale both dynamic and stable	Full control - solid stability Accurate lines in all Hybrids. Full extension of body and all joints. Effortless, clean	No deviations	Extreme flexibility (hips, shoulders, spine)	Sharp, precise, totally controlled pattern and accurate pattern changes during the Hybrid
Near Perfect	9.5-9.75	Near maximum (scale 9.5)	Full extension. Stable, effortless, clean	Only very few (1-2) small deviations	Extreme	Small misplacement of the pattern (1-2) for very short duration of time during the Hybrid
Excellent	9.0-9.25	Average clearly on 9.0-9.5	Full extension. Minimum problems in stability	Few (2-3) small deviations	Extreme	Small misplacement of the pattern (1-2) for very short duration of time during the Hybrid
Very Good	8.0-8.75	Average 8.5 to 9.5	May lose full extension or total stability but for a minimum duration	Few (2-3) small deviations	Large	Few small misplacements during the Hybrid but pattern remains very clear
Good	7.0-7.75	Average 7.5 to 8.5	May lose full extension or total stability for a few moments during Hybrids (obvious)	Small and medium deviations. No large deviation	Average / medium	The pattern during the Hybrid is clear and understandable but may have 1 or 2 athletes 'out' of placement
Competent	6.0-6.75	Average 6.5 to 7.5	Not full extension at any moment, but not poor either. May show obvious lack of stability	Small and medium deviations No large deviation	Medium to small	Misplacements causing the pattern to be imprecise during majority of the Hybrid. Corrections required by 1 or 2 athletes
Satisfactory	5.0-5.75	Average 5.5 to 6.5	Not full extension at any moment, even poor occasionally. Obvious lack of stability	Medium and large deviations	Small	The pattern is not clear for most of the Hybrid. Frequent modifications required by athletes
Deficient	4.0-4.75	Average 4.5 to 5.5.	Poor extension and obvious lack of stability during all Hybrids	Medium and large deviations	Small	Very unclear with continuous, unnecessary movements that do not correct the misplaced pattern during the Hybrid
Weak	3.0-3.75	Low height	Struggling in all aspects	Large deviations	Small to none	Difficult to identify the pattern during the Hybrid

15.2 Acrobatics

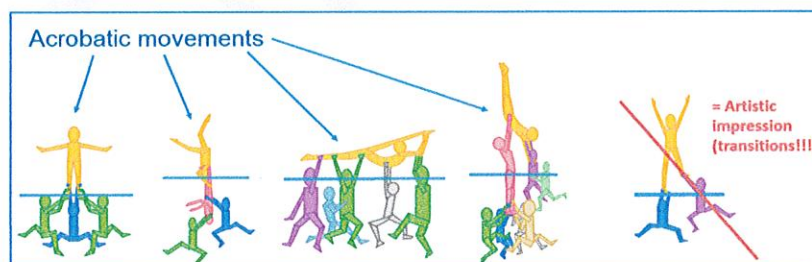
Execution of Acrobatics is judged by the same principles as those guiding other Elements. Judges evaluate the position(s) achieved or the stable platform with the athlete in control on top. The Judge must diligently evaluate the entire acrobatic action, from the setup to its completion (submergence), and the entire Construction visible at or above the water, not just the actions of the Featured Swimmer(s). All Acrobatics must clearly demonstrate height, timing, design, and control with efficiency of movement in the execution.

Athletes' roles in Acrobatic Movements are depicted below:



15.2.1 Acrobatics Terminology

Acrobatic Movement is an integral part of artistic swimming routines that demonstrates spectacular gymnastic feats, risky actions in the air, on a balancing support, or in combination, and are achieved with the assistance of athletes in the Construction. Acrobatic Movements must start and finish in the water. For the Team Acrobatic Movement to be considered an Element it must have four (4) or more athletes (for example: three (3) Base Swimmers + one (1) Featured Swimmer; or two (2) Base Swimmers + one (1) Support Swimmer who pushes one (1) Featured Swimmer) All other actions are considered Pair Acrobatics or Pair Assist actions. Refer to the below diagram that depicts the difference between Acrobatic Movements and other movements that are not considered Acrobatic Movements.



15.2.4 Guiding Scale for Height Quality of Performance – Acrobatics

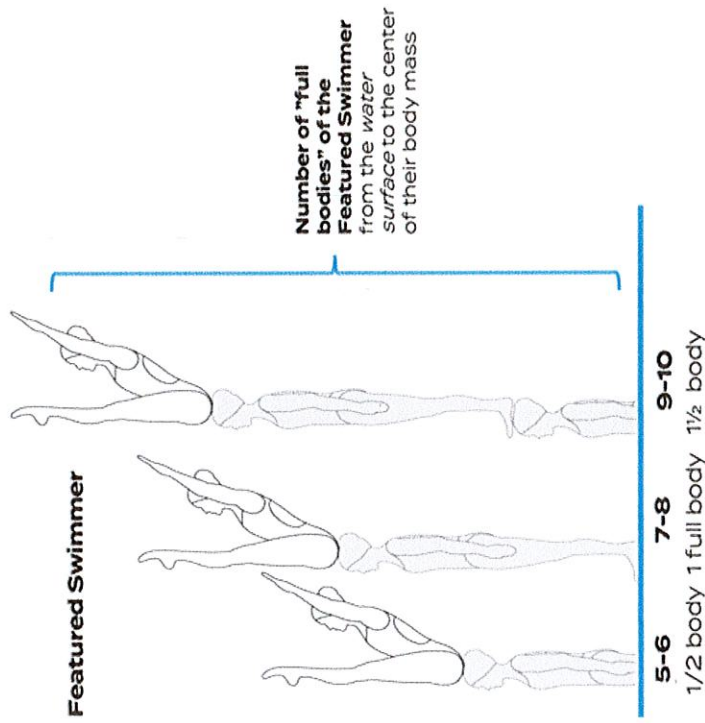
ACRO GROUP	CONSIDER HEIGHT OF:	POSITION / TYPE OF SUPPORT:	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
GROUP A	JUMP / THROW	FEATURED SWIMMER	ANY	One and half (1½) body or more	One (1) body		Half (½) body		Less than half (½) body
GROUP B	LIFT	BASE SWIMMER	ARMS/HANDS	Shoulders (head above water surface)	Chin & upper arms		Half head	Top of head and elbow	Wrist
			HEAD	Shoulders (head above water surface)	Head only (chin dry)		Top of head		Below water surface
			SHOULDERS	Upper Chest	Shoulders		Chin	Top of head	Below water surface
			HEAD UP	Kneecap and higher	Waist	Chest	Neck	Top of head	Below water surface
GROUP C	STACK	SUPPORT SWIMMER	HEAD DOWN	Waist or higher	Mid-thigh or higher	Kneecap	Mid-shin	Ankle	Below water surface
GROUP D	ONTO SUPPORT	BASE SWIMMER	ANY (depends on the acrobatic movement)						
GROUP E	THROUGH SUPPORT	BASE SWIMMER							
GROUP F	STANDARD	FEATURED SWIMMER	Head Up	Feet dry	Ankles	Low Shins	Mid-shins	Under kneecaps	Above kneecap
			Head Down	Top of the head above surface	Chin	Shoulders	Chest	Waist	Top of pelvis
			HEAD UP	Ankle or higher (airborne)	Kneecap	Mid-thigh	Crotch	Lower back	Waist
			HEAD UP JUMP VARIANT	Entire body above surface		Mid-shin		Above kneecap	
GROUP G	LIFT / THROW / JUMP / LIFT / JUMP / JUMP	FEATURED SWIMMER	HEAD DOWN	Head above surface or higher (airborne)	Chin	Armpits	Mid-ribs	Lower back	Crotch
									Mid-thigh

*"Higher" means that a greater portion of the body is above the water

15.2.5 Guiding Scale for Height- Acrobatics Diagrams

15.2.5.1 GROUP A (AIRBORNE)

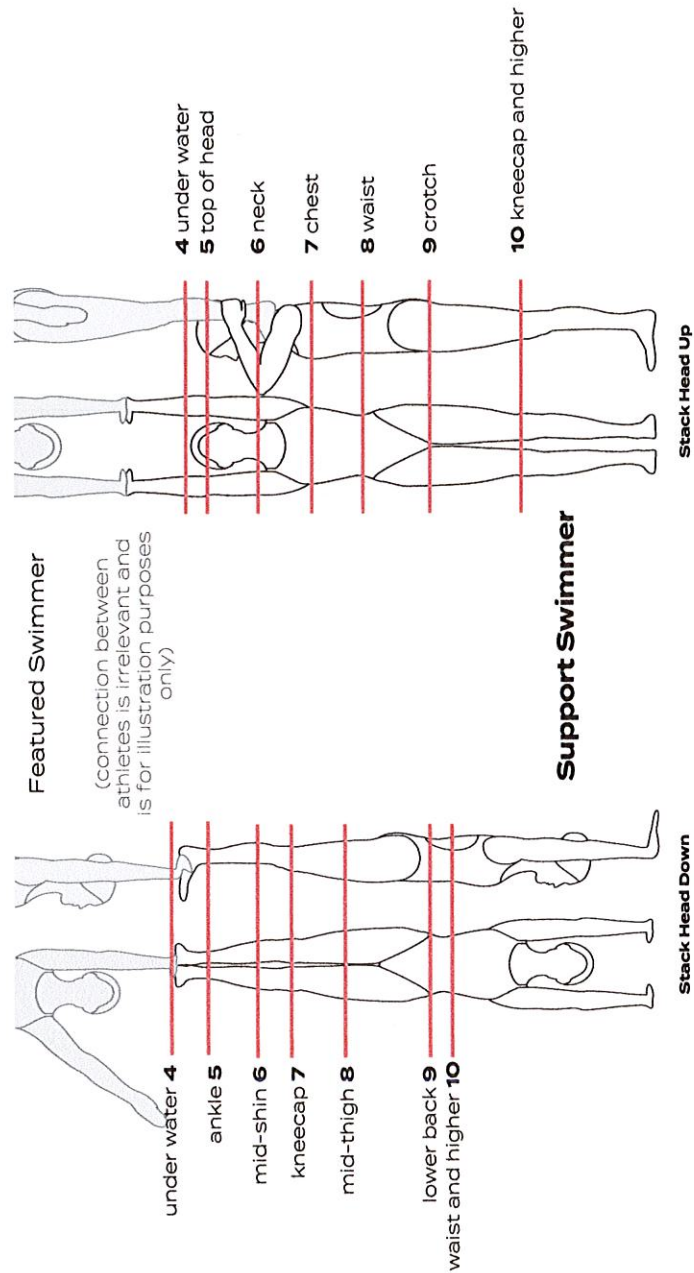
In Group A Judges consider the height of the Featured Swimmer in relation to the surface of the water. Considering that the physical height of each athlete is different, Judges need to visually estimate how many "full bodies" (from head to toe) can fit within the jump amplitude (from the water surface to the point of maximum height in the air). **The point of maximum height** is considered in the **place where "center of mass of Featured Swimmers" gets in the air** (person's center of mass is slightly below their belly button, which is nearly the geometric center of a person. Men and Women have different centers of mass, with Women's centers of mass being lower than those of Men).



15.2.5.2 GROUP B (BALANCE) STACK

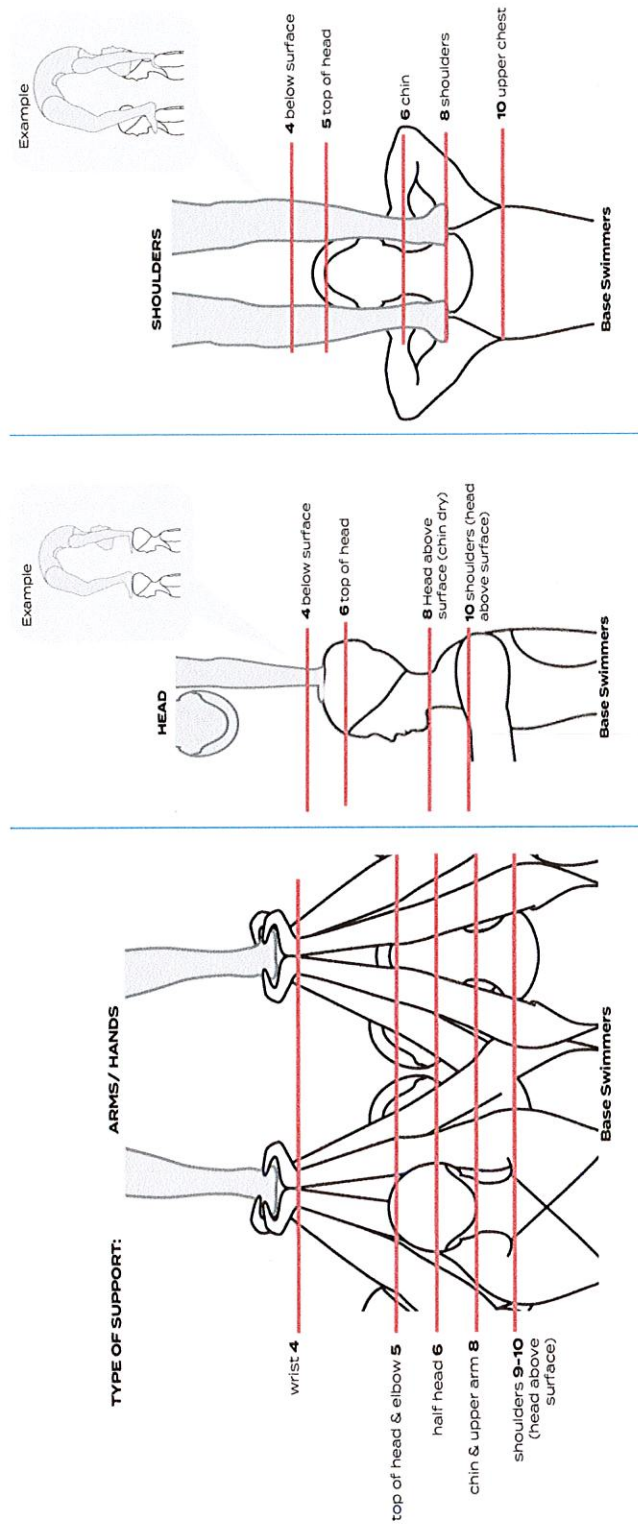
In Group B -Stack, Elements Judges consider the height of the Support Swimmer when the Featured Swimmer reaches a slight stop/pause at the maximum height.

Note that in **Stacks with two (2) Support Swimmers** the height is calculated as the **average height of two (2) Support Swimmers**. For example, if one (1) Support Swimmer was lifted *head-up* to "waist" height level (8 points) but the second Support Swimmer was lifted *head-down* to "waist and higher" height level (10 points), the Judges calculate the average of 8 and 10, which is 9. If two identical stacks occur at the same time, Elements Judges average scores for each Stack.



15.2.5.3 GROUP B (BALANCE) LIFT

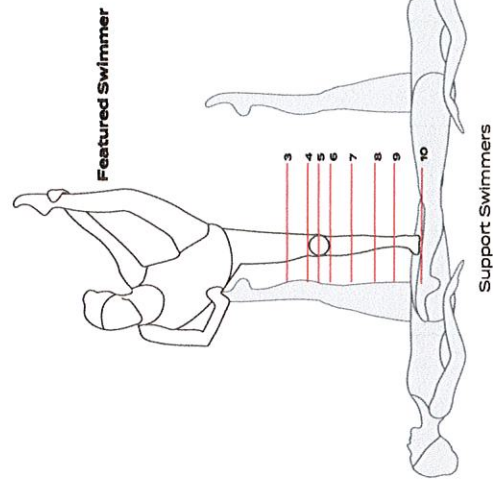
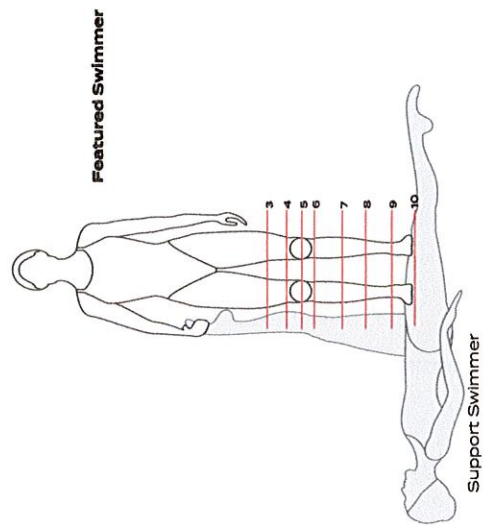
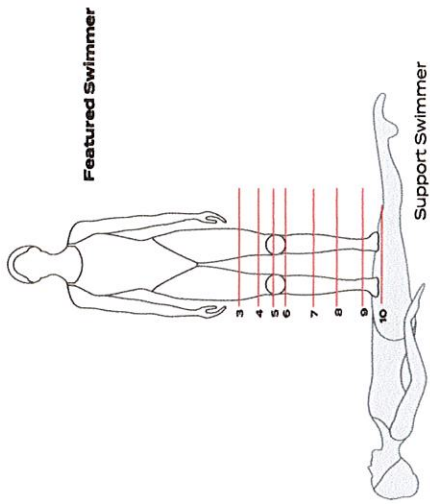
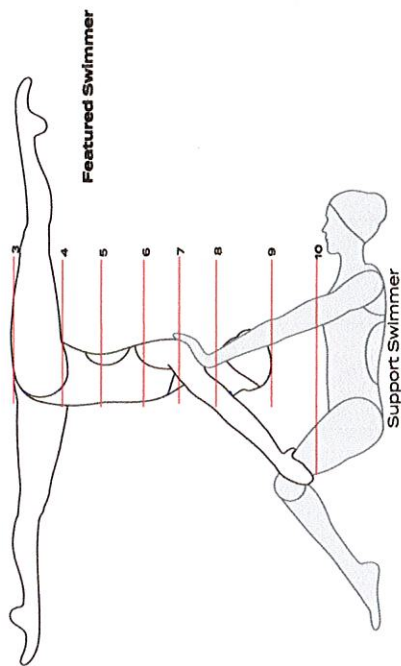
In Group B -Lift Elements Judges consider the height of Base Swimmers. Since typically there will be more than one Base Swimmer supporting the Featured Swimmer, the height is calculated as the average height of all Base Swimmers supporting the Featured Swimmer.



15.2.5.4 GROUP P (PLATFORM)

In Group P Elements Judges consider the height of the Featured Swimmer during the entire Main Phase of this Acrobatic Movement. Because Platforms typically takes longer to perform than other Acrobatics, the height is calculated as average height of the Featured Swimmer during the entire Main Phase. For example, if the Featured Swimmer reached the height level in the Perfect category at the beginning of the Main Phase but by the end of the Main Phase their height gradually decreased to the height level in Good category, the final height level will be in Excellent category taking into consideration how long the Featured Swimmer maintain the height level in any of the categories.

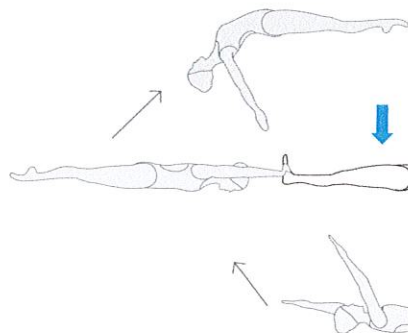
Please also note that if the Acrobatic Movement ends with a dismount of the Featured Swimmer (such as somersault, dive etc.), it is considered a part of the End phase of the Platform Acrobatic Movement. Judges should evaluate Featured Swimmer's dismount and any inaccuracy has to be reflected in the score, similarly to other inaccuracies in Featured Swimmer's actions (e.g. lack of balance, lack of extension, additional movements, poor split, etc) during the entire performance, from the Beginning phase to Ending phase. Judges should also observe if the submergence of the Construction was efficient, clean, and clear.



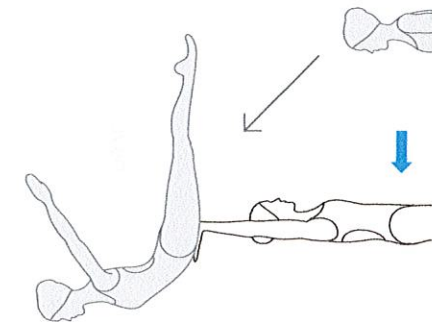
15.2.5.5 GROUP C (Combined)

In Group C, the applicable height chart is based on the type of Acrobatics in the main Formation (Platform, Stack, etc.) of the Construction. Once the Acrobatics type is determined, a height chart for that acrobatic Group is used.

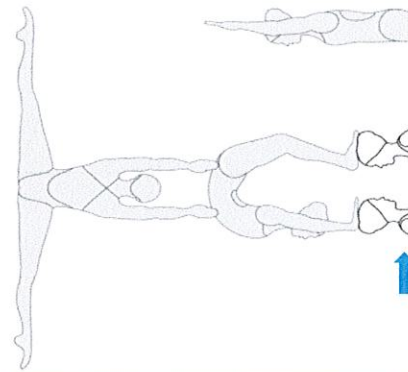
Below are examples of Group C Acrobatics indicating the athlete that Judges should focus on to determine the height at the moment right AFTER the Featured Swimmer lands on the main Formation (for all cases: when there is a jump on the main formation and the Featured Swimmer remains on it until submergence; when there is a pass through on the main formation and the Featured Swimmer continues moving until entering the water).



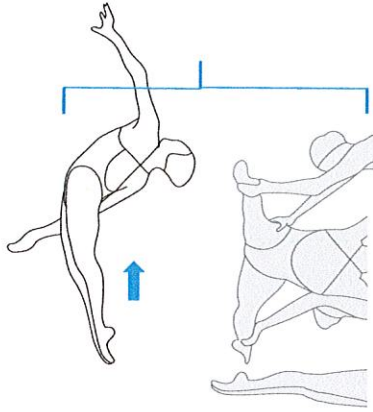
For "Jump/transit through or onto head- down Stack" apply the height chart for Group B – Stack head down at the time right after the Featured Swimmer arrives on the Support Swimmer of the Stack and remain on it until submergence or before continue moving and entering water.



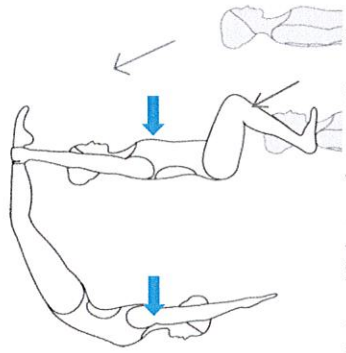
For Jump/Transit "Onto Stack from spotter" or "Through Stack" from Throw apply the height chart for Group B – Stack head up as the Featured Swimmer lands on the Supporting Swimmer of the Stack and remain on it until submergence or before continue moving and entering water.



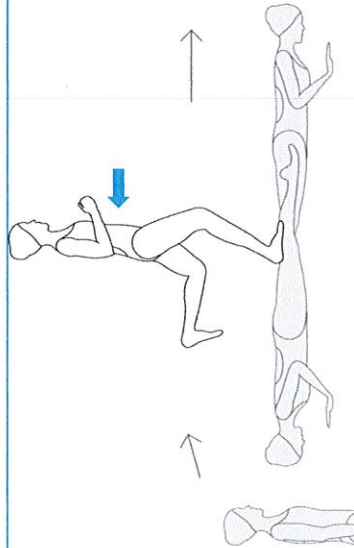
For "Fly above Lift on heads from any kind of throw", where the Featured Swimmer is performing Bridge position (or any other position) and the 2nd Formation is Jump/Throw (Group A), with the second Featured Swimmer jumping over the 1st Formation (fly above, with touching/landing and continue moving and entering water or remain on 1st Featured Swimmer until submergence). Apply the height chart for Group B – lift on heads. The same rule applies if "flying" Featured Swimmer fly above lift on heads without touching. Judges look at the height of the Lift (on heads). Judges look at height at the moment when Featured Swimmer lands/pass through lift on heads formation.



For "Fly above Second formation" (Lift, Pair Acrobatics, Stack-head-down, Stack) beginning from any kind of Throw where the Featured Swimmer is performing a Split position (or any other position) and the 2nd Formation is Group A Acrobatics (Jump / Throw), with the second Featured Swimmer jumping over the 1st Formation (fly above, no touching). Apply the height chart for Group A.



For "2 Jumps from throws" (2 Featured Swimmers in connection with each other) apply the height chart for Group A to each of the two Featured Swimmers and calculate the average mark. Judges look at the average height for both Featured Swimmers in the moment when their Centre of Mass reaches maximum height.

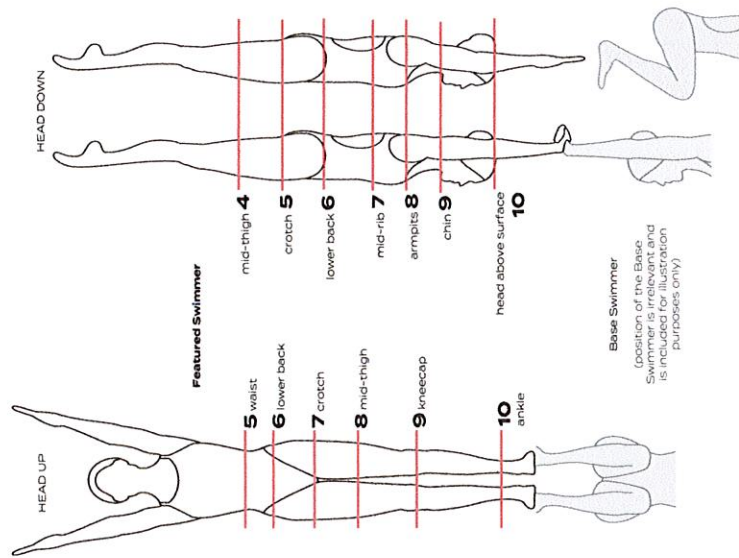


For two (2) or more floats (swimmers floating on a surface connected to each other) from any kind of "throw" apply the height chart for Group P - Platform the entire time when the Featured Swimmer is on the Supporting Swimmer(s) in the Platform and before entering the water.

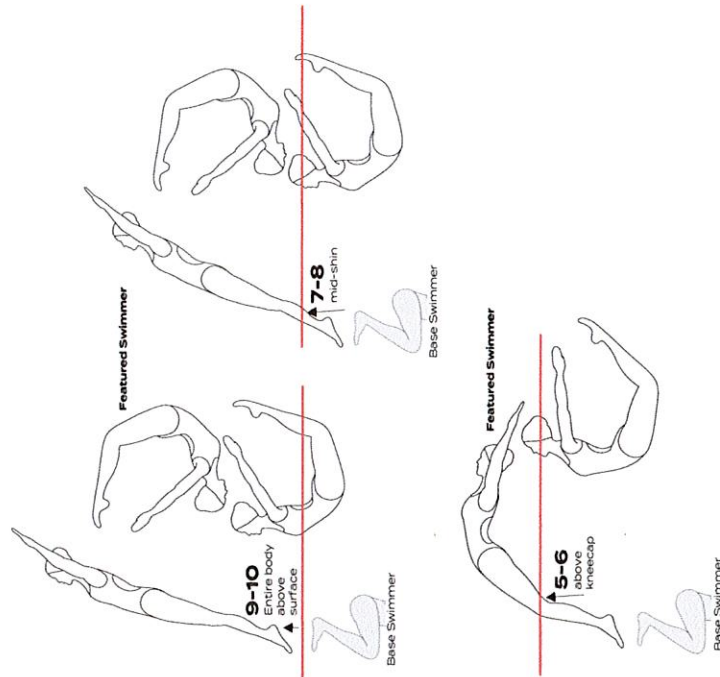
15.2.5.7 PAIR ACROBATICS

To be able to apply Elements score for the Pair Acrobatics (Lifts, Jumps, or Throws) Judges need to evaluate a general impression of the Acrobatic Movement based on the main control factors of the Featured Swimmer (height, clarity, angles, extension). Judges must also evaluate the design, stability, and sustainability of the entire Acrobatic Movement, including the Base Swimmer and the Featured Swimmer and the way they interact. Judges are looking for a clear water entry, and pay attention to unintentional falls, push problems and other execution issues.

PAIR LIFT / THROW / JUMP (Acro codes L, SL, W, J)



PAIR JUMP VARIANT (Acro codes Jf, Jd, Jp, Js)



15.2.6 Expanded Marking Scale for Acrobatics Execution

CATEGORY	MARK	ACROBATIC EXECUTION		FALL / FAIL
		HEIGHT (minimum)	OVERALL IMPRESSION	
Perfect	10	Maximum over 9.5 in scale	• Very strong and powerful. Effortless. Clean. Perfect control in all phases (beginning to entry). Ease of performance. • Featured Swimmer performs clearly defined actions. Precise, accurate positions, directions, distance and movements. Full extension, where required. • Construction is in full control, solid and stable throughout. • No inaccuracies. Flawless.	NO FALL
Near Perfect	9.5 – 9.75	Near Maximum	• Featured Swimmer performs clearly defined actions. Precise, accurate positions, directions, distance and movements. Full extension, where required. Clean water entry with minimum splashing • Construction is in full control, solid and stable throughout. • A single small inaccuracy from perfection.	NO FALL
Excellent	9.0 – 9.25	9.0	• Featured Swimmer may have a minor lapse in clearly defined actions. Only a minor problem may occur in one of these areas; precision, accuracy of positions, directions, extension, distance and movements. Clean water entry with minimum splashing • Construction may have small inaccuracies in full control, solidity and stability. • Small inaccuracy (1 or 2) from perfection in either the Construction or featured swimmer	NO FALL
Very Good	8.0 – 8.75	8.0	• Mostly strong and powerful. Very high, stable and convincing. Featured Swimmer performs clean and clear. A small error may be detected but none are significant. Clean water entry with some splashing. • Construction may lose stability but for a minimum duration and only affects one phase. Some noticeable set-up and recovery time. • A couple (2) small inaccuracies.	NO FALL
Good	7.0 – 7.75	7.0	• A good display of strength and power (but not Perfect or extreme). • Featured Swimmer may have obvious inaccuracies in extension, control, direction, distance or water entry. • Construction may lose obvious stability/control during one phase. Noticeable setup time and recovery time. • Inaccuracies may include multiple small (2+) or two (2) obvious or one (1) major.	NO FALL
Competent	6.0 – 6.75	6.0	• Lack of strength and power. • Featured Swimmer may inaccurately achieve positions. The water entry is not clean. Construction may show obvious lack of stability during two (2) phases. Obvious/long set-up and recovery time. • Inaccuracies may include multiple small (2+) or two (2) obvious or two (2) majors.	AFTER MAIN PHASE / DURING END PHASE Depends on Execution category of Acrobatic prior to the Fall.

Expanded Marking Scale for Acrobatics Execution (cont.)

The descriptions of categories five (5) and below pertain to Acrobatics that exhibit significant inaccuracies throughout and/or a low height. Once a Judge classifies the Acrobatics as Deficient or lower due to a Fall or Fail, Judges are not required to apply cumulative deductions.

CATEGORY	MARK	ACROBATIC EXECUTION		FALL / FAIL
		HEIGHT (minimum)	OVERALL IMPRESSION	
Satisfactory*	5.0 – 5.75	5.0	- Lack strength and power. Mediocre overall effect. - Featured Swimmer has obvious and or major inaccuracies. May appear as though they are about to fail. Excessive water upon entry. - Obvious lack of stability in the Construction. Instability may affect all phases. Very long set-up and/or recovery time possible.	AFTER MAIN PHASE / DURING END PHASE Depends on Execution category of Acrobatic prior to the Fail.
Deficient *	4.0 – 4.75	4.0	- Deficient strength and power. Major problems. May be limited by skill level. - Featured Swimmer displays large inaccuracies in many areas, clarity, directions, extension, distance. Poor water entry. - Construction is low and unstable throughout. Very long and obvious set-up and/or recovery time.	IN MAIN PHASE
Weak *	3.0 – 3.75	Under 4	- Very low, unstable, and unclear. Looks failed. No control. Limited by skill level - Struggling in all aspects - Hardly recognizable except at surface.	IN BEGINNING PHASE / Main Phase attempted
Very Weak	2.0		The Beginning Phase is hardly identifiable and then deconstructs. At surface level only.	PARTIAL FAIL / Fail at the start of the Beginning Phase is surracing / Main Phase not attempted
Hardly Recognizable	1.0		No Construction. No identifiable criteria for judging.	COMPLETE FAIL / Acrobatic did not happen

After determining the Acrobatic height, Judges should assess the overall impression of the acrobatic performance to determine the appropriate category according to the Acrobatic Execution Marking Scale. If the Acrobatic Movement does not align with the Overall Impression category on the Marking Scale Chart due to additional inaccuracies noted by the Judge, the Judge should refer to the inaccuracy table to adjust the score as needed. It is important that deductions are not overly cumulative; for instance, Judges should avoid simply adding up multiple small deductions. Instead, an acrobatic performance with several small errors may be better classified as having an obvious deduction.

Accumulating inaccuracies / Inaccuracy Count is the sum of inaccuracies and their value (depending on type/size).

Inaccuracy type	Inaccuracy Count	Deduction Total
Small	1 - 2	0.25
Small	3+	0.5
Obvious	1 - 2	0.5
Obvious	3+	1.0
Major (no Fail or Fall)	1+	1.0

15.2.7 Inaccuracy Identification Table for Acrobatics

PHASE	SWIMMER(S)	INNACURACY TYPE	INNACURACY DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
BEGINNING / MAIN PHASE	(BASE / SUPPORT SWIMMERS)	Push problem	Difficulty with supporting the featured swimmer.	A: Support Swimmer is unable to push-up the Featured Swimmer with their feet and their legs remain bent and/or shaking. Appears very unstable. B: Support is shaking with visible difficulty pushing Featured Swimmer (for example in "twins" grip) P: In a "Ballet leg" Construction the Support Swimmer is unable to extend the vertical leg on which they attempt to push up the Featured Swimmer B: Support Swimmer is unable to lift-up the Featured Swimmer above the head and their arms remain bent and/or shaking. Appears very unstable and almost falls. C: Acrobatic Movement from subgroup "Snake-stack type" that barely lifts out of the water and is done on the surface.
		Design	Visibly poor design.	A: Throw from surface is not synchronized when pushing the Featured Swimmer in the air. B: Poor timing in two (2) stacks or a Split position lift when one (1) leg is lifted before the other leg. C: Poor timing between 2 formations. P: Clear arch required in the Construction, but the arch is not visible.
		Stability	Unplanned assistance to featured swimmer	P: B: One (1) (or more) Base Swimmer decides to give additional support to a Featured Swimmer to prevent a fall.
		Angles	Support Swimmer(s) deviates from an ideal position.	S - 5° - 15° deviation of the Support Swimmer from an ideal position. O - 16° - 44° deviation of the Support Swimmer from an ideal position. M - 45° and more deviation of the Support Swimmer from an ideal position.
		Extension	Support Swimmer displays a lack of extension during the movement.	S - Not fully extended for a small/minute part of the movement (knees, feet, elbows, hips) O - Not fully extended for most of the movement M - Obvious lack of extension for majority of movement.
	FEATURED SWIMMER	Angles	Featured Swimmer deviates from an ideal position.	S - 5° - 15° deviation of the Featured Swimmer from an ideal position. O - 16° - 44° deviation of the Featured Swimmer from an ideal position. M - 45° and more deviation of the Featured Swimmer from an ideal position.
		Stability/Control	Featured Swimmer displays a lack of control causing unintentional actions or extra movements.	A: Hands splashing before stack or uncontrolled kicking of legs at surface while submerging. B: Featured Swimmer stands up slowly and/or hips go before head. May achieve position but passes through first position. B: Slip of hand or leg during balancing but Featured Swimmer does not fall. C: Featured Swimmer jumps from one formation onto the other and lands on 1 foot. The arm of the Featured Swimmer moves sideways. That means the Featured Swimmer does not stay aligned on vertical axis with support swimmer. And Featured Swimmer enter the water beside support swimmer. P: Featured Swimmer performs position standing on 1 leg and this leg that is connected to support is bent and/or shaking. The same goes for handstand where arms of the Featured Swimmer are shaking or unintentionally bending.
		Extension	Featured Swimmer /or Support Swimmer displays a lack of extension during the movement.	S - Not fully extended for a small/minute part of the movement (knees, feet, elbows, hips) O - Not fully extended for most of the movement. M - Obvious lack of extension for majority of movement.

			An incorrect "direction" line of the Featured Swimmer during the jump/throw. This influences the general impression of the Acrobatic Movement and can may be dangerous for other athletes.	A: The jump or throw does not follow the direct intended line from the Construction. A: The jump or throw should not be too far from the Construction (unless choreographed). A: The jump or throw should not be too close to the Construction. B: To Support Swimmers, stay too far from each-other that causes Featured Swimmer not to rise-up where she/he should but stay flat and horizontal (or the same problem but Featured Swimmer is the one who pushes 2 supports to sides not "pressing on them" and rising C: "Onto support/ throw on a platform" Featured Swimmer jumps but platform is too far, Feature s Swimmer does not jump on the designated part of the body of the 2nd Formation (trying to save Acrobatic Movement) and is very unstable. P: Featured Swimmer jumps off platform but lands too close to the Construction.
END PHASE / WATER ENTRY			Water entry of the Featured Swimmer is unintentional and may have excess water.	A, C: Featured Swimmer's jump is inaccurate and causes an unintended splash. B, P: Entry into the water is not fully controlled A, C: When the water entry is excessively splashy and unclear A, C: Featured Swimmer performs a somersault/pike rotation, but the swimmer does not complete full rotations around 90° and "smacks" the water surface.
FALL / FAIL				
Falls can occur at any phase of the Acrobatics. If a Fall occurs, Element Judges award maximum score of 6.75 points for the Acrobatics, depending on the phase in which the Fall occurs according to the Expanded Marking Scale for Execution of Acrobatics. Element Judges need to distinguish between the Fall and lack of stability not resulting in a Fall.				
PHASE	FALL/ FAIL	EXAMPLES		
Beginning Phase	Fall	Partial Fall occurs when the Acrobatics falls once the Beginning Phase is attempted. This includes when there are only heads, feet, or bubbles at the surface. For example: The Acrobatic Movement starts rising and falls back into the water. Complete Fall refers to when there is no Beginning Phase identified resulting in nothing to judge. Featured Swimmer: A: During take-off Featured Swimmer attempts to jump but slips and does not achieve maximum height. C: Jumps from a simple throw and attempts to do a cartwheel through support on the surface, but the push was not enough resulting in a fall C: In "Through Base Swimmer from simple throw", jumps on the hands of the base but due to unsynchronized action within the Construction, falls in the water not completing the action. C: During "Run on the back" slips and falls. B, P: Falls from or falls with the Support Swimmer to a side during rotation while performing "positioning" or/and achieving maximum height (not take-off or uprising phase of the Acrobatics) Featured Swimmer: C: During "Jump on the stack" Featured Swimmer did what was declared but could not hold the balance and falls. A: During a return of the Featured Swimmer to the Construction the legs of the Featured Swimmer slip through or off the Construction. A: returns on the Support Swimmer's hands, but the Support Swimmer does not hold well, and the Featured Swimmer slips in the water B, P: After showing main phase movements Feature Swimmer slips and fall into the water		
Main Phase	Fall	P: In "Float from two (2) parallel supports" or the "Rhombus" Float- one (1) of the supports disconnects and swims away. P: In a "bent knee" Construction, knees are not stable causing the Featured Swimmer to fall. B: Legs of the Support Swimmer from the vertical or a "Y" position open and the Featured Swimmer falls. B: Both the Support Swimmer and the Featured Swimmer fall, or the Support Swimmer falls while the Featured Swimmer stands inaccurately.		
End Phase	Fall			
Any Phase	Fall			