

Re: New Modifications Xcel Silver Bars and Xcel Gold Bars
From: Liz Nichols, AAU Gymnastics National Chair

District chairs, please see below the new modifications concerning xcel bars silver and gold adopted for our national AAU rules and policies. I wanted to bring these new modifications to your attention. It will be included on our modifications sheet and posted on the national web site as well. Please share with any of your judges and coaches if you are using national rules. The need for this modification was brought to my attention by Kathy Stuenkel and after consideration with the following explanation below from Kathy of why this modification is needed for our AAU program, they will be part of our national AAU program. You do not have to adopt this modification for your district program but it will be instituted for the national program for all AAU regional and national events. I have attached a copy of the updated modifications as posted on the web site. You should always refer coaches and judges to the web site so that they have access to the latest modifications. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rational submitted by Kathy Stuenkel – Florida District Chair:

Gymnastics is and always has been one of the many sports within the AAU that holds the idea of the Amateur Athletic Union's "Sports For All" philosophy first and foremost in how and why our program is conducted. AAU Gymnastics offers positive, success-oriented competition to athletes of all abilities. Our goal is to ensure that every gymnast has an experience that instills a feeling of confidence and self-worth as all amateur sports should do. While AAU gymnastics is comprised of all levels of competition, the inception of the Xcel program has created an avenue for many gymnasts to pursue their dream of becoming a competitive athlete. This rather new program is literally exploding in popularity and is a huge success. AAU Gymnastics has also seen a huge increase in the number of athletes competing within the Xcel program. Like with any successful program, to keep it benefitting its participants in the most positive way possible, it needs to be looked from time to time at when a rule or clarification is put into question as to how it is affecting many of our AAU athletes. As a 40+ year coach and a 36 year judge, I see far more positive benefit and a fairer way of evaluating the Xcel Silver and Gold casts (Bars) utilizing level 3 and 4 deductions but still awarding the special requirement. Judges will then be able to differentiate between a skill that ends slightly below horizontal in Gold or 45 degrees in Silver and one that is much lower with appropriate execution deductions. And the risk of losing an additional special requirement is avoided as well, without having to add an additional needless skills such as yet another cast, glide returns, shoot through, etc. Xcel Silver bars does not require 10 skills as in Level 3, nor does Xcel Gold bars require a kip on bars, yet currently both Silver and Gold are required to perform a cast equal to or greater than the requirement level 3s and 4s have or risk losing up to 1.00 in Start Value. Xcel Silver and Gold bar requirements will not change, only the rules regarding the awarding of the special requirements.

The following modification deductions will be applied to Xcel Silver and Gold uneven bars in the AAU National Program.

AAU XCEL SILVER BARS MODIFICATION

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: CAST TO MINIMUM OF 45 DEGREES BELOW HORIZONTAL

Special Requirement **WILL** be awarded with the following execution deductions:

- *Below 45 degrees: 0.05 - 0.2

CLARIFICATIONS XCEL SILVER BARS:

- *Only one cast/skill needs to fulfill SR.
- *General execution deductions may apply to all skills. Total deductions **cannot exceed the value of the SR.**
- * If hips do not leave the bar in any cast performed, then **SR** is not rewarded.

AAU XCEL GOLD BARS MODIFICATION

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: A SKILL FINISHING IN A CLEAR SUPPORT (NOT MOUNT OR DISMOUNT)

Special Requirement **WILL** be awarded with the following execution deductions:

- *1 - 45 degrees below horizontal: 0.05 - 0.15
- *46 degrees or more below horizontal: 0.20 - 0.30

CLARIFICATIONS XCEL GOLD BARS:

- *Only one cast/skill needs to fulfill **SR**.
- *General execution deductions may apply to all skills. Total deductions cannot exceed the value of the **SR**.