

April, 2021

# ILNAWGJ NOTES

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*“IN”*

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Can it be April already? The season flew by and we are now knee-deep in state meets, then regionals and nationals. So many things went right this season and yet there were times when the gymnastics world seemed to lose its focus on what to do during a meet. Observing COVID protocols took center stage and everyone was very excited to return to competition. There were times, however, when maintaining a culture that “honors the sport” was compromised. I’m not talking about major diversions from rule enforcement but rather those nicks that happen at meets that erode the role that officials play in shaping a positive culture for sport. It isn’t necessarily the knowledge of the rules but how we view and conduct ourselves as professionals. There is very little opportunity during a season to set aside time to review the expectations that NAWGJ demands of its members. We have time now, as the season ends, to explore the principles that keep us grounded as an organization.

Those principles begin with one word, professionalism. What is it, who has it and how can all of us achieve it. Professionalism in sport is everyone’s responsibility. According to Webster it is the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or professional person. Professionalism includes the qualities that an organization expects of its members that are fundamental to the foundation of the organization. Linda Thorberg, the RTC from Region 4, describes professionalism “as being characterized by or conforming to the technical and ethical standards of a profession.” Linda continues on to describe the technical standards which include our education and knowledge of the rules, our

organizational skills, our experience and our practical application of the rules. Those standards are not as hard to meet compared to the ethical standards. Linda Thorberg describes ethical standards as our morals and our values/principles of conduct as an organization. It is our honesty, integrity, fairness and the supportive nature with which we treat our fellow officials that make an organization good.

We use ethical standards to distinguish between right and wrong human actions governing each of us as individuals and collectively as a group. Those are the standards, the ethical standards, that elude us time-and-time again. An official can have an incredible impact on a competition, especially in the sport of gymnastics. If we are not on the right side of human actions, then we are not honoring the sport.

In the months ahead, we will review the Cannons and Rules as well as integrated topics in the study of ethical standards such as:

- Honesty and Fairness = Integrity
- Which Hat Are You Wearing?
- Where Do We Draw The Professional Line?
- R E S P E C T
- On Being Social
- On Living With Safe Sport
- On Being Supportive

If we are to honor the sport we can do so by creating a culture that is professional where we abide by the technical and the ethical standards of NAWGJ. We must look at ourselves, identify and root out behaviors that nick our professionalism. Every organization has members who do not live up to the standards of professionalism. Those in our profession who stir the pot for self-interest, who are not supportive of fellow members, who connive to make it difficult for someone else to enjoy their judging experience are the same judges who need to move on to a new chapter in their lives. Let us show respect for each other. Be a part of the solution and not a part of the problem. We are ONE!

These topics and many more will be the subject of an on-going discussion in the “IN”.

I'm interested in what you would like to see included in the “IN” or any other comments you may have. You can contact me, Kathy Krebs at [ilnawgjkathy@gmail.com](mailto:ilnawgjkathy@gmail.com).

**NOTEWORTH NOTES FROM YOUR SJD – Linda McDonald**

Spring is finally arriving and we are not having to travel in snow storms every weekend. The judging season has 2 months left before we begin the break between the seasons. Use this time to catch up with everything that you set aside during the judging season. Vacations may or may not be in the cards for you this year but try to take a break from the uncertainty that was a part of this entire season because of COVID. The Technical Committee will meet in May to decide on any changes to the rules in the Junior Development Program and the Xcel program. Hosts for clinics and Congresses are yet to be determined but I will let you know details as soon as I receive them. Don't forget Wendee Weiss will be our clinician in July to teach Illinois judges the new compulsories. Christi Kearns is coordinating our compulsory clinic and we will have more information in the May "IN". My message to you this month is to maintain your focus until the end of the season. Celebrate the fact that we have been able to have in-person meets and support opportunities for young athletes to experience the joy of competing.

**SAD NEWS TO SHARE**

It is with great sadness to share with you the passing of Sue Brosnan's mother. Sue's mom suffered a massive stroke on March 13 and passed on March 23. Services have been held celebrating her mother's life. Please keep Sue and her family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.