

All Around News

REGIONAL

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I have agreed to take over the position of the Regional Elite chair for a variety of reasons. First, no one else that was eligible offered to run for the position. Second, as we train international elites at our gym I knew that I would be at the Classic meets already and would be able to attend the National meeting without too much problem and I also am familiar with the elite program having spent a lot of time at the training camps at the ranch as well as being a brevet judge. My main goal as the regional chair will be to provide information to interested parties and to set up a calendar that will work for the clubs involved and our region. Although, the **TOPs program** is under my jurisdiction, I would prefer to maintain a strong TOPS administrator that will handle most of the aspects of the TOPS program and I am hopeful that **James Linderholm** will remain in his current position so that program will continue to run smoothly and without problems.

The elite program is a constantly changing and challenging program. Athletes and coaches that wish to compete at this level will need to stay informed and understand that this is not the JO program.

Rules and Code: All competitions for pre elite and International elites will use the FIG code rules. Start values, values of skills, bonus are the same for any elite or pre-elite competition that you enter. Every athlete will compete under the same rules and the score that they achieve will determine if they qualify to the Classic or the Challenge.

How do you qualify to enter an elite or pre elite regional or elite national invitational? There is no score or level requirement, you may enter any athlete that you feel is ready for the elite program in an elite competition. I do recommend, however, that you study the rules and evaluate your athlete's skills and talents very carefully before you take the leap, as you do not want to compromise your athlete by subjecting them to an embarrassing situation.

Pre-Elite Level: This is a name change for the old National program. Other than the name not much else has changed in this program. The name change was done for the following reasons:

To allow athletes the opportunity to go into the pre elite level without having to give up their JO status. An athlete will only earn the title of ELITE when she starts the first event at a Classic meet so this allows the athlete to enter the pre elite division, test it out and see if this is something that she wants or can handle and if not, allow her open access back into the JO program with no petition or penalty.

Pre-Elites will be able to compete in as many regional competitions and national qualifiers as they want. From these events they will be able to qualify to the Challenge Competition, which will be held in conjunction with the Classic, meets. Athletes in this level are NOT considered Elite even if they compete in a Challenge competition. To qualify to the Challenge a pre-elite will need at 33.00AA in the testing & the following score based on age:

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Child 10-12 | 30.00AA, |
| Junior 13-15 | 31.00AA, |
| Senior 16 & over | 33.00AA |

TOPS athletes: A TOPS athlete that qualified to the National TOPS testing may enter a pre elite meet and compete the compulsory testing routine — if they score a 30.00AA they may enter the Challenge. At the Challenge they will compete the testing compulsory routines (50% of score) and the physical abilities (50%)

Elite Level - International Elite: This is the only level that is considered Elite and athletes are NOT considered elite until they enter and compete in a Classic competition. To qualify to this level, athletes must obtain a 35.00AA on the Elite testing. In optional, juniors 11-15 must obtain a 34.00 and seniors 16 & over a 35.00 at a designated Elite International regional or National Invitational qualifier. Not all regional competitions will be international qualifiers. Each region may only conduct one International elite qualifier per season and athletes that are trying to enter the International elite level may only attend

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ONE regional international qualifier per season. However, athletes that are trying to qualify to the International elite level may attend as many of the NATIONAL invitational qualifiers as they would like in addition to their ONE regional international qualifier. It is very important that athletes that are considering the International Elite program go to the National qualifiers. Something to keep in mind if you have a pre elite: If you enter a pre elite regional qualifier that is not a designated international elite qualifier and your athlete has the meet of her life and scores the qualifying score for International Elite, you may NOT use this score to enter the Classic meet.

Competitions for our region: Our region will use the Sand Dollar National qualifier as our 1st season regional international qualifier. The region **will not** offer any other competitions during this season. In the 2nd season (after the American Classic in March) the region will offer one regional international competition at level 8 regionals on April 16 & 17th, 2004. This will be the only international competition offered in this season. Clubs that have pre-elites and are trying to qualify to the Challenge as a pre-elite may elect to host additional pre-elite qualifiers at their facility with the following stipulations:

The Club is responsible for all expenses for the competition

The Club must contact Marian Dykes, RTCC for assignment of judges & inform Toni Rand, RECC

The Club must send out information about the competition 30 or more days before the date of the meet to all clubs in the region and it is recommended that this information also be available for regional and state newsletters. The club is responsible to pay for this expense as well.

There is no limit to the number of competitions a pre-elite may attend. Please remember that these meets may only be used for qualification to the Pre-Elite Challenge — they may not be used to qualify to the Elite international Classic meet.

**Athletes that have the International Optional score could use these meets to obtain their 35.00AA in the testing if needed. Athletes may compete the testing routines as many times as needed.

What must I be prepared to compete at each level at all meets? At the Regional or National invitational qualifiers, athletes will compete testing if needed and optional routines.

If you qualify to the Challenge, athletes will compete the following at the Challenge:

Compulsory testing for 20% of your score

Physical Abilities Test for 20% of your score

Optional routines for 60% of your score

TOPS athletes will compete elite testing routines and physical abilities only at Challenge

If you qualify to the Classic Meets, the athlete will compete optional only. At USA Championships the athletes will compete optional routines on 2 separate days.

Automatic qualification to Classic 2004 — If an athlete achieved a 34.00AA as a Junior or a 35.00AA as a senior at either the 2003 Classics or Championships, that athlete is qualified to the 2004 Classic at that level. If a Junior is moving into the Senior division, they would need to have scored a 35.00AA or higher to automatically qualify to Classics — If not, they will need to enter an International qualifier prior to Classics.

Elite Competitions and Events for the 2003-04 Season

December 19, 20 & 21

Testing and clinic in Orlando at Orlando Metro

The testing competition will be held Friday evening around 6:00pm — the clinic will be held on Saturday and Sunday — ending by 12:00 on Sunday to allow travel home. Use form in newsletter for entry to clinic and competition. The clinic will involve a testing and explanation of the physical abilities test, information on the elite testing routines, National team warmup and a “verification” of optional skills of the athletes by our Brevet Judges with a written critique.

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January 23-25th

National qualifier with **Sand Dollar** invite in Orlando **

** Region 8 designated regional international elite qualifier

February 6-7

National qualifier with **Pikes Peak Cup** in Colorado Springs

February 13-15

National qualifier with **Excalibur Cup** in Virginia Beach

March 4-7

American Classic and Challenge meet in Ontario, California

For qualified International elite and pre-elite athletes

From this meet, the Elite athletes will qualify to USA Championships

Athletes in the Challenge competition may use this meet to achieve the qualifying scores to US Classic in May

Second season begins after the American Classic

Friday April 16th

Elite International and pre-elite regional qualifier in Tampa, Florida

Saturday April 17th

Testing competition for any athlete that needs it

** This will be the ONLY qualifier for Elite international offered in this season. Please remember that athletes may only compete in ONE regional elite international qualifier per season. Athletes that are just trying to get to the Challenge may attend more than one competition.

May 13-16th

US Classic and Challenge in Rochester, NY for qualified athletes

June 3-6th

USA Championships for Elites who qualified from one of the Classics in Nashville, Tennessee

Elite Results

US Classic

Junior International

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 4th | Jana Bieger | American Twisters |
| 5th | Grace Taylor | Aiken Gymnastics |
| 19th | Lauren Johnson | Gwinnett Gymnastics |

Senior International

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|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 26th | Katie Kivisto | American Twisters |
|------|----------------------|-------------------|

US Classic Team Cup

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|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 8th | Jana Bieger | American Twisters |
| 14th | Grace Taylor | Aiken Gymnastics |
| 19th | Shayla Worley | Orlando Metro |

US Challenge

Junior Nationals

| | | |
|------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 7th | Olga Bodrikova | The Gym Company |
| 8th | Brittney Emmons | First City Gymnastics |
| 13th | Kritina Beck | Starlight Gymnastics |

US National Championships

Junior International

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 4th | Shayla Worley | Orlando Metro |
| 9th | Kassi Price | American Twisters |
| 11th | Grace Taylor | Aiken Gymnastics |
| 15th | Jana Bieger | American Twisters |
| 18th | Lauren Johnson | Gwinnett Gymnastics |

Senior International

Katie Kivisto American Twisters injured and did not compete last event.

SCHEDULE

TESTING AND CLINIC IN ORLANDO, FL

December 19-21, 2003

Tammy Biggs is a tentative clinician

(check Region 8 Web site for confirmation)

Friday, Dec. 19

6:00 p.m. Testing Competition

Saturday, Dec. 20

12:00 - 7:00 p.m. Clinic

Sunday, Dec. 21

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Clinic