

Judging

In evaluating **Symmetry** for both bodybuilders and figure competitors, a judge should be concerned with the harmony and proportion of the physique. This evaluation should begin with the skeletal structure itself. Although a competitor may be limited by his/her genetic structure, the judge has to honestly examine this characteristic to make necessary distinctions between athletes. The ideal structure should include a near-equal ratio of torso to leg length, broad shoulders, narrow hips, and flared quads (an **X** shape). Skeletal deformations must be judged as imperfections despite the athlete's inability to change them.

Symmetry also includes judgment of muscular development and the muscles themselves. The upper body and lower body development should be synergistic and fit together well. The arms and legs should also be in proportion to one another, and also within each front and back. The physique should look balanced from the front, back, and side, with no angle overshadowing the others. Within the muscles themselves, balance must be existent pertaining to the quality of muscle peak, height, development, length, shape, and proportion.

The final aspect involves definition and hardness. There should be evenness between hardness in the upper and lower body, between extremities and the torso, and between corresponding sides of muscle groups.

In comparing **Muscularity** among bodybuilders, the judge should look for muscularity that is greater than average. An impressive development of muscle, and not the definition of average muscularity achieved simply by dieting. The judge should examine the degree of muscularity over the entire body.

► In the arms, judges should look for prominent peaks in the biceps, and separate distinct development of the brachialis and coracobrachialis. All three heads of the tricep should be visible, and exhibit appropriate thickness and size. Muscle in the forearms should give the appearance of having 75% of the circumference of the upper arms, and have necessary detail.

► The shoulders should exhibit all three heads of the deltoids in a balanced development, separated distinctly from the trapezius, chest, and muscles of the arm. In the back region, the trapezius should clearly extend down into the center back muscles, and the infraspinatus and teres minor groups should be visible. From these, the lat sweeps widely from the spinal insertions to beneath the arms, giving the back width. There should also be a deep furrow along the lower spine reflecting thickness in the erector spinal muscles.

► The chest should exhibit developed pectorals with upper and lower portions distinguishable, thick and defined. The abdominal area should be clearly visible, with at least three horizontal grooves, the third being at the level of, or slightly below the naval. A vertical groove should be visible along the midline, with the abs clearly separated from the external obliques by lines which arc around and

extend down and inward. The serratus interior should be visible above the obliques, and below, the interia obliques and tensor fasciae latae should be visible above the hips.

► The legs should feature balanced development of the quadriceps at the front, as well as that of the adductors along the inner thigh. Each of the quads should be clearly delineated with thick development in both the lateralis and medialis. From the rear, the gluteus should be of a muscular nature, squared and trim, rather than soft and round. Separate and distinct development should be evident in the hamstrings when all rear poses are done. Calf muscles should be prominent from the frontal tibialis, and rear gastrocnemius which should be noticeable divided between the two muscle heads. Calves should have a 60% circumference ratio when compared to the upper legs.

In looking at these muscle groupings, judges should be aware of the shape, size, definition, and hardness of each muscle. Muscles should have a pleasing contour with insertions that give them the appearance of appropriate placement within the anatomy. Average or long-bellied muscles are more desirable than short bellied in that they do not leave gaps in the physique (such as a gap near the inside elbow for a person with a short bicep, or a long gap in the achilles area for someone with short calf muscles). Size is not necessarily the key determining factor, but evidence of thick muscularity is desirable in comparing bodybuilders.

The aspect of definition is also important in judging muscularity. It must be possible to distinguish between muscles and muscle groups, as well as the visibility of striations between fibers within a separate muscle. Definition within the confines of a well-muscled physique is what the judges should be looking for. Definition and hardness are signs of a finished physique, and the absence of body fat and limited retention of body fluid is preferred. Vascularity is a sign of defined muscularity.

Physique as it pertains to a score for figure competitors will include some of the concepts outlined in the muscularity explanation for bodybuilders. Muscular development is encouraged, but overly bulky muscles are not. Since actual flexed poses are not performed, during quarter turns, the judges are looking for good leanness- the absence of body fat with full and healthy-looking muscularity. Definition is important, while significant degrees of muscular striations and vascularity are not desirable.

Scoring for Bodybuilder Symmetry, Bodybuilder Muscularity, and Figure Symmetry, Figure Physique:

As a judge is comparing competitors in each of these categories, a score in the form of rank will be assigned. In each area, the most outstanding athlete receives a score of 1. The second best athlete would receive a 2, and so on. If there are seven competitors in the class, the poorest representation of the judging criteria would receive a 7.

In that both bodybuilders and figure competitors have two rounds/scores, a competitor may score differently in each area, and several “ties” may occur. For example, a competitor may achieve a 1 in symmetry and a 3 in muscularity, while another competitor achieves a 2 in symmetry and a 2 in muscularity. Both competitors have an overall score of 4, and so the **Presentation** score will then be added to break the tie.

The focus of the **Presentation score** for bodybuilders is on all aspects of the performance other than the physique itself. Elements of display such as posing ability, posture, projection, attire, skin tone, and grooming are all concerned. Presentation scoring begins in the symmetry round in examining how the athlete presents him/herself. Competitors should follow the mandatory poses, as well as the requests of the head judge. Any movement (twisting, bouncing, flexing, etc.) which impairs the judges’ ability to look at the physique in comparison to other athletes will be reflected in presentation scoring. Slouching or lack of attention between requested poses will also be viewed negatively.

Posing execution is extremely important to present your muscularity to the judging panel. If a judge can’t see the muscles by virtue of a competitor not displaying them (i.e. not flexing hamstrings), then that muscularity can’t be compared to the other athletes’. *“If the judges can’t see it, it doesn’t exist”.*

Grooming is examined as well in which the emphasis is on an athlete’s ability to present a well-prepared and attractive appearance. Included here are evaluations of skin tone (free of blemishes not under his/her control), tan quality and evenness, discoloring of the skin, stretch marks, sagging skin, etc. Jewelry other than wedding rings is prohibited for bodybuilders during prejudging. Style and cut of posing suits, hair grooming, absence of body hair, appropriate use of oil are also evaluated. The individual’s score will range from 1 to 5 as the competitor is judged upon their own ability (not in comparison to others in the group). A score of 1 represents outstanding presentation of a person’s overall stage presence as described above. Presentation involves a significant amount of pre-contest preparation.

The **Presentation score** for figure competitors will be given during their “T” walk. Each competitor will individually walk stage left, stage right, center stage and then exit, hitting three specific poses. These poses should accent the competitor’s physique and enhance their presentation. Variations from mandatory quarter turns in terms of arm and leg placement are appropriate while eccentric or bodybuilding type poses are not. The judges will score based upon three key elements: Appearance which includes tone, color, and complexion,

Style which includes choice of suit, heels, and grooming, and Stage presence including walk, gracefulness on stage, and confidence. Judges will consider all aspects of these elements and determine a score ranging from 1 to 5 as the competitor is judged upon their own ability (not in comparison to others in the group). A score of 1 represents outstanding presentation of a person's overall stage presentation as described above.

For both bodybuilders and figure competitors, the presentation score (1-5) will be added to the Symmetry/Muscularity or Symmetry/Physique scores. This combined score will then be totaled for each competitor, and will determine a final placing. If a tie exists among total scores, the judge must make a decision of the athlete's overall placing.

The seven judges' results will then be passed to the scorekeeper who will check each sheet for calculation accuracies, and log the seven judges' overall placings. For each competitor, the highest and lowest placement is crossed out. The remaining five placement scores are added, and the lowest score determiners the winner. If ties continue to exist, tie-breaking policies are followed: the competitor with the most higher placements will prevail.

It should be noted that judging is a subjective endeavor, and each judge will have their own physique preferences. With a solid variety of experienced judges forming a panel, the end result will be a winner who presents the **Best overall package of the described judging criteria**.

California Natural Muscle and all prior Capital City Bodybuilding events have specifically adhered to the required policies and procedures regarding judging panels. Judging panels always include representation of male and female judges, bodybuilder and figure athletes, and judges from out of the Sacramento region. All judges have a history of competition themselves. Although bodybuilding is a close-knit community, efforts are made to ensure that judges do not have close relationships to the contestants (i.e., personal trainers). If a close relationship does exist (marriage, sibling, etc.) a particular judge will not score that competitor's class. All judges are reminded to be aware of personal biases, relationships with competitors, experience in seeing contestants repeatedly, not judging on potential, etc. Judges are always expected to conduct themselves professionally before, during, and after events.

Judges meetings occur before every event, and following prejudging in order to discuss various criteria, issues, concerns. Consultation and input from the head judge is on-going and prior to all events. Additionally, all judges are encouraged to judge as many events as possible, review other competition results, etc. in order to practice their skills. All judges' results are thoroughly reviewed by the head judge as well as the promoters for subjective consistencies, scoring accuracies, appropriate commentary, etc. Test judges are provided with literature and are educated regarding all judging criteria. A test judge must pass an 80% consistency with overall placements in order to be invited back to judge officially.

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