

FROM HERE, WE SOAR

Gymnastics for All: Event Handbook

April 12, 2021



P: 613.748.5637 | F: 613.748.5691 | E: info@gymcan.org | 120-1900 promenade City Park Drive, Ottawa, ON K1J 1A3

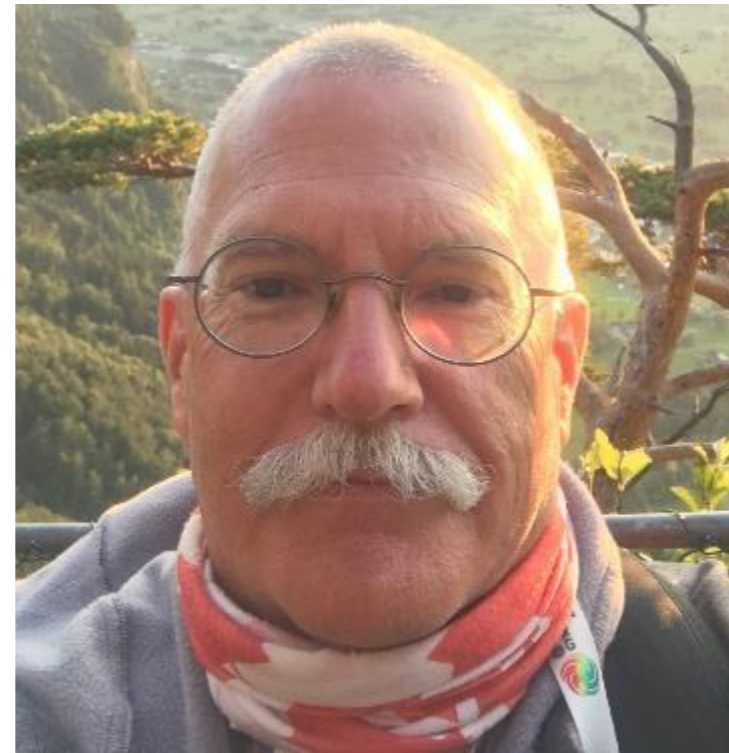
WWW.GYMCAN.ORG

WELCOME!



Introduction to Gym for All

Presented By:



David Brown (Halifax, NS)

Technical Director – Gymnastics Nova Scotia

“I believe that everyone has an inner gymnast, and Gym for All programming is an important piece in the “Active for life” goal. My passion for this belief was reignited at the 2019 World Gymnaestrada in Dornbirn, Austria where I served as a member of the GymCan Management Team.”



Bobby Kriangkum (Calgary, AB)

Gymnastics for All Manager – Alberta Gymnastics Federation

“The thing I love most about GfA is the flexibility of gymnastics to be modified to allow participants of all ages and ability levels to participate and find their own success. As a true believer that sport is for all, gymnastics is a great gateway for any participant to be involved in.”

What is “Gymnastics for All”?

Recognized as an official sport discipline by the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG), “the Gymnastics for All movement strives to bring nations together through a world of movement and physical activity, contributing to global health, fitness, and friendship. Anyone, regardless of age, shape, or ability can take part in Gymnastics for All activities as part of a daily fitness routine.” (FIG Gymnastics for All - History)

The focus of Gymnastics for All is

FUN, FITNESS, FUNDAMENTALS, FRIENDSHIP!



Gymnastics for All in Canada

An integral part of gymnastics programming across Canada,
Gymnastics for All (GfA):

- Is the foundation of all gymnastic disciplines.
- Offers a wide variety of participation regardless of age, gender/gender identity, physical ability, or background.
- Contributes to personal health, fitness, and well-being (physical, social, cognitive, emotional).
- Develops the fundamentals of movement in a fun, inclusive environment.
- Promotes personal/group achievement, celebrates diversity, and creates meaningful friendships!



Gymnastics for All Activities

GfA activities may be incorporated into an individual's daily fitness routine, or showcased through group demonstrations, performances and even competitive team events.



GfA events offer participants an incentive to:

- Improve physical ability
- Sharpen mental skills
- Learn and perfect new techniques
- Indulge in creative expression
- Celebrate different cultures, traditions, and communities
- Demonstrate their hard work to an appreciative audience



Gymnastics for All Definitions



- Routine/Demonstration/Performance
- Display/Show
- Gala/Showcase
- Gymnaestrada
- Gym for Life Challenge
- Participant
- Gymnast/Performer
- Coach
- Group Leader
- Chaperone
- Supporter
- Adjudicator/Feedbacker



GfA Performances and Events

There are many GfA events and activities offered across the country and beyond.

Each initiative is unique to the interests and goals of the participants, community, and host organizers.

While performance opportunities and events may differ, the overarching purpose is always rooted in **Fun, Fitness, Fundamentals, and Friendship**.

Today we will be presenting information about the following GfA event opportunities:

- Club events
- Provincial Gymnaestradas
- Canadian Gymnaestrada
- FIG World Gymnaestrada
- FIG World Gym for Life Challenge



Club Events

Presented By:

Rhonda Helmeczi (Calgary, AB)

Masters Performing Show Group Coach - NorGlen Rhythmic Gymnastics Club

Head Coach – Calgary Gymnaestrada Team



“I love GfA because it allows you to explore your interest in a sport at any age. Whether it is continuing your love of an activity you developed as a young child or discovering a sport as a teen or adult, there is room for everyone.”



GfA Club Events

1. Club displays or demonstrations:

- Often held in conjunction with a community event, holiday celebration, Canadian Gymnastics Week, etc.;
- Usually held in a community space (i.e., shopping mall, school, community centre, outdoors, etc.);
- Some clubs have a dedicated demo team/performance group as part of their regular club programming.



2. Club shows:

- Often organized to celebrate the end of a session, or the end of the gymnastics year;
- Usually held in the gym club or a community gym/arena with spectator seating available;
- Might include group performances, individual demonstrations, large group/mass choreographed routines, etc.

3. Special guest performances:

- Often integrated into a special event (i.e., part of an opening ceremony, half-time show, etc.);
- Usually held in a competitive arena, concert hall, stadium, etc.



Benefits of Club Events

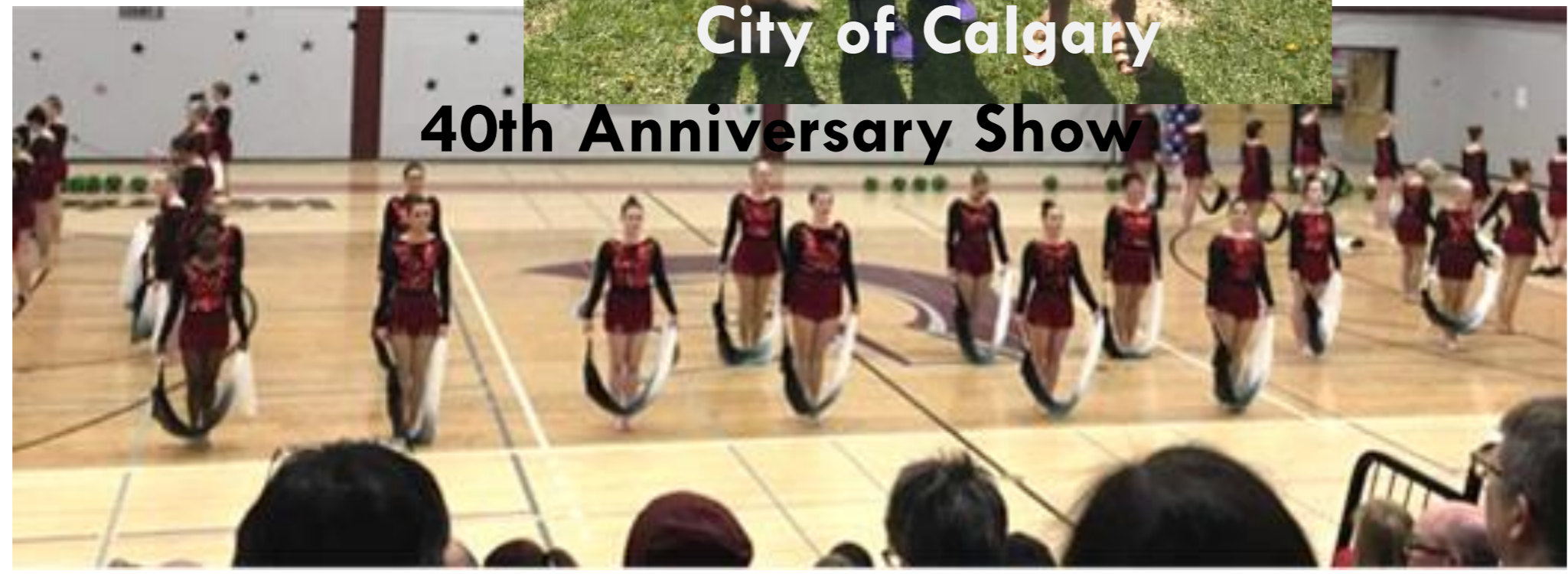
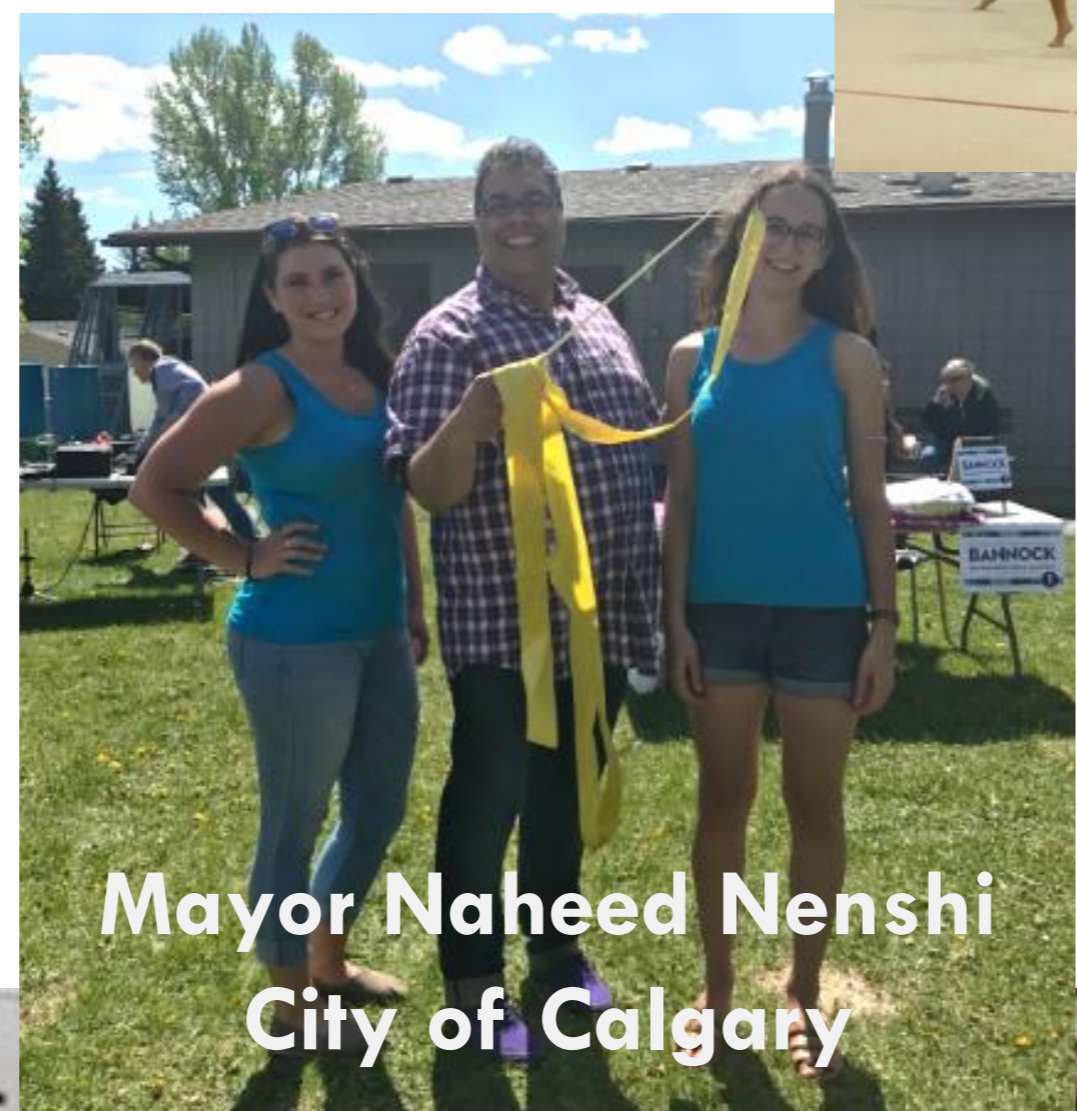
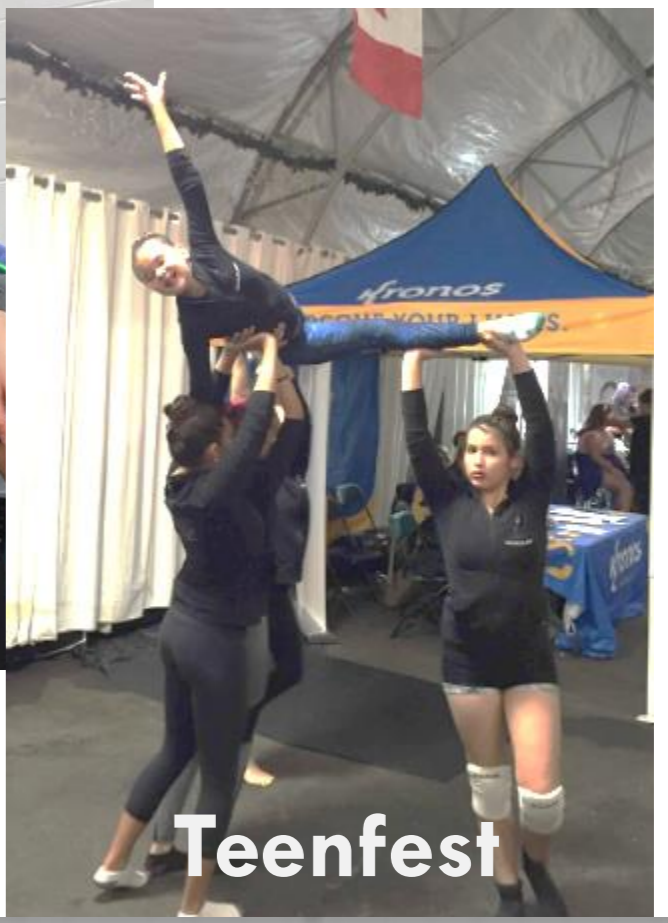
Club GfA events provide a valuable opportunity for:

- Gymnasts to perform with their peers in a fun and exciting environment while showcasing their skills and abilities in front of an audience;
- Family and friends to see their gymnasts' progress and celebrate their accomplishments from year to year (or session to session);
- Clubs to promote their programs within the community and to a wider public,
- New member recruitment;
- Fundraising;
- Building gym culture/community.



Club Event Reflections

- Allows for the team to work towards a common goal
- Helps gymnasts improve, progress and be exposed to the variety within the sport
- Increase club/sport exposure
- Prepares your team for the unknown
- Builds resiliency & adaptability



Provincial/Territorial GfA Events

Presented By:

Kaitlynn Ellis (Langley, BC)

Xcel Coordinator – White Rock Gymnastics Athletics Society

“I love GfA because it is inclusive and gives so many athletes the opportunity to perform on a world stage, regardless of age and ability. The World Gymnaestrada truly is the opportunity of a lifetime for many people in the gymnastics world, including myself!”



Hayley Silberg (Calgary, AB)

Club Owner and Coach - CAPTivate Gymnastics

“It’s a place for everyone to work towards a common goal, to develop a sense of trust and play, and to belong to something bigger than oneself, all while having lots of fun!” (CAPTivate Gymnastics in her own words)

Provincial/Territorial Gymnaestrada

Many Provincial/Territorial Gymnastics Organizations (P/TOs) offer an annual Gymfest or Gymnaestrada so their clubs and members can come together to celebrate all forms of movement, share group performances, and learn from one another.



P/T Event Formats

Most P/T Gymnaestrada events share common elements such as:

- A theme revealed several months prior to inspire the group routines.
- Educational workshops for coaches and gymnasts.
- Group performances for registered clubs (no individual routines).
- An opening and closing march-in and optional evening gala event.



Local Benefits of P/T Events

- Providing gymnasts of all ages and abilities with a chance to perform on a regional stage
- Watching different group routines and finding inspiration and motivation from other performances
- Providing the opportunity to experience “team travel”
- Promoting gymnastics within the wider community
- Participating in team-building cross-training workshops for gymnasts
- Professional development workshops and networking for coaches



CG/WG Benefits of P/T Events

- Providing feedback to groups preparing to attend the CG and/or WG
- Facilitating connections between groups wishing to combine for CG and/or WG
- Neighbouring organizations may organize regional events (i.e., Western Gymnaestrada) so that their clubs have a larger GfA event every 2 years.



Canadian Gymnaestrada

Presented By:

Megan Bialowas (Regina, SK)

Club Head Coach and Program Director – Regina Rhythmic Gymnastic Club

“What I enjoy most about Gym for All is the encompassing of everyone and everything. It does not focus on just one apparatus or gymnastics stream - it shows how everyone can work together to celebrate their love of gymnastics for life!”

Rhonda Helmeczi (Calgary, AB)

Masters Performing Show Group Coach - NorGlen Rhythmic Gymnastics Club

Head Coach – Calgary Gymnaestrada Team



Canadian Gymnaestrada

- The Canadian Gymnaestrada (CG) is a nation-wide GfA event hosted every 4 years.
- The event provides a national platform for groups of 10 or more gymnasts from across the country to come together and share their passion and love of gymnastics.
- By featuring performances in both indoor and outdoor venues, the event format not only draws local spectators in, but it also brings the event out to the local community.



Canadian Gymnaestrada Objectives

- . Promote the value and diversity of gymnastics to a wider public;
- . Encourage the growth of Gymnastics for All across Canada;
- . Celebrate creativity, innovation, and inclusion;
- . Showcase regional/national culture, traditions, music, etc.;
- . Inspire joy in exercise and physical activity;
- . Foster collaboration and friendship between groups from across the country;
- . Deliver educational workshops for gymnasts and coaches;
- . Establish the Canadian delegation for the following year's World Gymnaestrada.



Benefits of the Canadian Gymnaestrada

- Providing gymnasts at all levels, abilities, ages, etc. the opportunity to perform on a national stage;
- Providing participants with the chance to become spectators at a national event, gaining inspiration, motivation, and new ideas from other group performances;
- Allowing groups to learn about and experience out-of-province “team travel”;



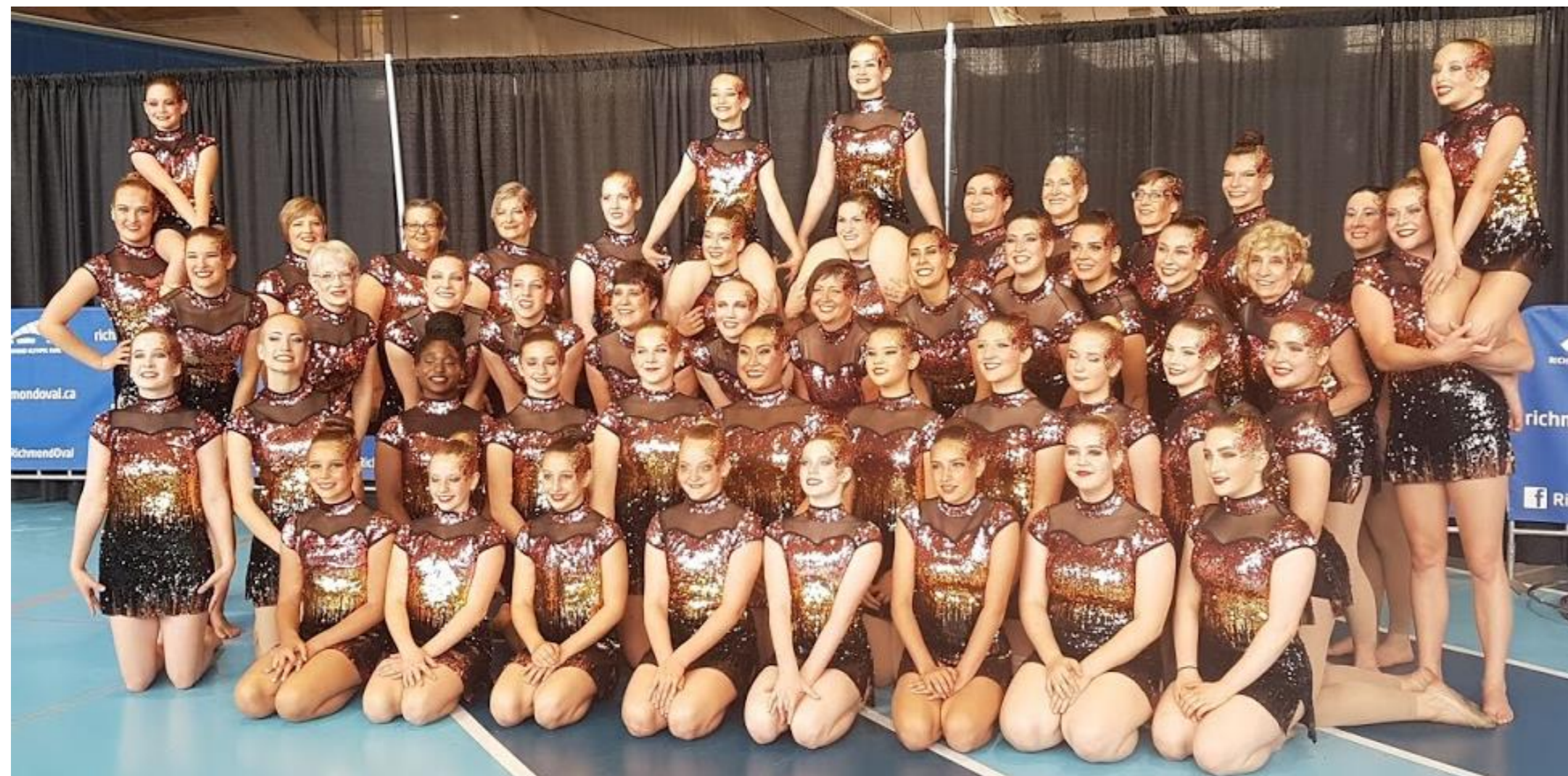
Benefits of the Canadian Gymnaestrada



- Featuring leaders and educators from the GfA community as workshop facilitators/ presenters for coaches and gymnasts;
- Embracing a culture of continued development and improvement by providing feedback to groups and if applicable, helping them prepare for the World Gymnaestrada;
- Facilitating connections and collaborations between groups wishing to attend the WG (combining groups is an option since it allows for a more diverse presentation and increases the number of gymnasts involved in the performance);

Benefits of the Canadian Gymnaestrada

- Promoting and educating groups about the upcoming FIG World Gymnaestrada and World Gym for Life Challenge;
- Providing groups with the chance to try on the Team Canada uniform kit and determine specific sizing requirements in preparation for joining the Canadian delegation at the World Gymnaestrada.



Canadian Gymnaestrada Event Format

24

The Canadian Gymnaestrada typically takes place over the span of 4 days and is made up of the following components:

- Rehearsals
- Educational and practical workshops for coaches and gymnasts
- Opening ceremony
- Indoor Group Performances
 - Indoor Groups perform twice in the indoor venue
- City Group Performances
 - City groups perform twice, once in the indoor venue and once in the outdoor venue;
 - Outdoor performance is hosted in conjunction with the local community's Canada Day celebrations.
- Showcase/Closing Gala



Canadian Gymnaestrada Reflections



“The opportunity and fellowship with a diverse group of Canadians all sharing the love of gymnastics” – Vivian Slinn, former TSG Gymnast



Canadian Gymnaestrada Reflections



FIG World Gymnaestrada

Presented By:

Julie Levasseur (Victoria, BC)

Head Coach – Team Saskatchewan Gymnaestrada 2019

"Gymnaestrada is a celebration of physical literacy and community; it's a party and everyone's invited!"

Kara Thorpe (Prince Alberta, SK)

Assistant Coach – Team Saskatchewan Gymnaestrada

"Gymnastics for All meets the individual where they are at and move forward, no matter the starting place. Celebrating the successes at every level makes for a rewarding and inspiring environment for everyone!"



FIG Gymnastics for All Events

Internationally, the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastic (FIG) offers two signature events within the discipline of GfA: The World Gymnaestrada and The World Gym for Life Challenge.

These events are open to participants from all FIG member federations on a four-year cycle and alternate every two years.

Example:

- World Gym for Life Challenge 2017
- World Gymnaestrada 2019
- World Gym for Life Challenge 2021
- World Gymnaestrada 2023



FIG World Gymnaestrada

- The World Gymnaestrada (WG) is a week-long festival that attracts the largest gathering of gymnasts (typically over 20,000 participants) from around the globe.
- Every four years, gymnasts come together to perform group routines of 10 or more people in exhibition halls and/or large mass group performances of 200+ people in sports stadiums.



FIG World Gymnaestrada Objectives

- Promoting the value and diversity of gymnastics;
- Encouraging the growth of Gymnastics for All worldwide;
- Providing incentives for meaningful work within FIG Member Federations;
- Inspiring enjoyment in exercise and encouraging personal activity;
- Demonstrating the unlimited possibilities of different ideas of Gymnastics for All;
- Presenting the most recent findings and developments;
- Bringing together gymnasts from all over the world as a contribution towards the friendship of nations;
- Presenting the diversity of gymnastics to a wider public;
- Offering an interesting and exciting event in gymnastics for the participants and the audience.



(Source: FIG Rules - Gymnastics for All Manual, 2019, p. 9)

FIG World Gymnaestrada Event Format

- **Opening ceremony**
- **Educational Forum**
 - Provides a platform for the LOC, FIG, and national federations to share research, technical practices, interactive workshops, and other learning opportunities with the participants of the WG.
- **Open-air stage performances (“City Performances”)**
 - City performances are not a formal component of the World Gymnaestrada;
 - The FIG regulations state that an LOC may organize special side events during the event as long as they do not conflict with the nature of the event (example, no competitive events) and do not require additional days to be added to the week-long festival.
- **Group performances**
 - Held in the main venue and involve the majority of WG participants as performers and spectators;
 - Groups must have a minimum of 10 active gymnasts on the floor;
 - Groups perform three times over the week of the Gymnaestrada.

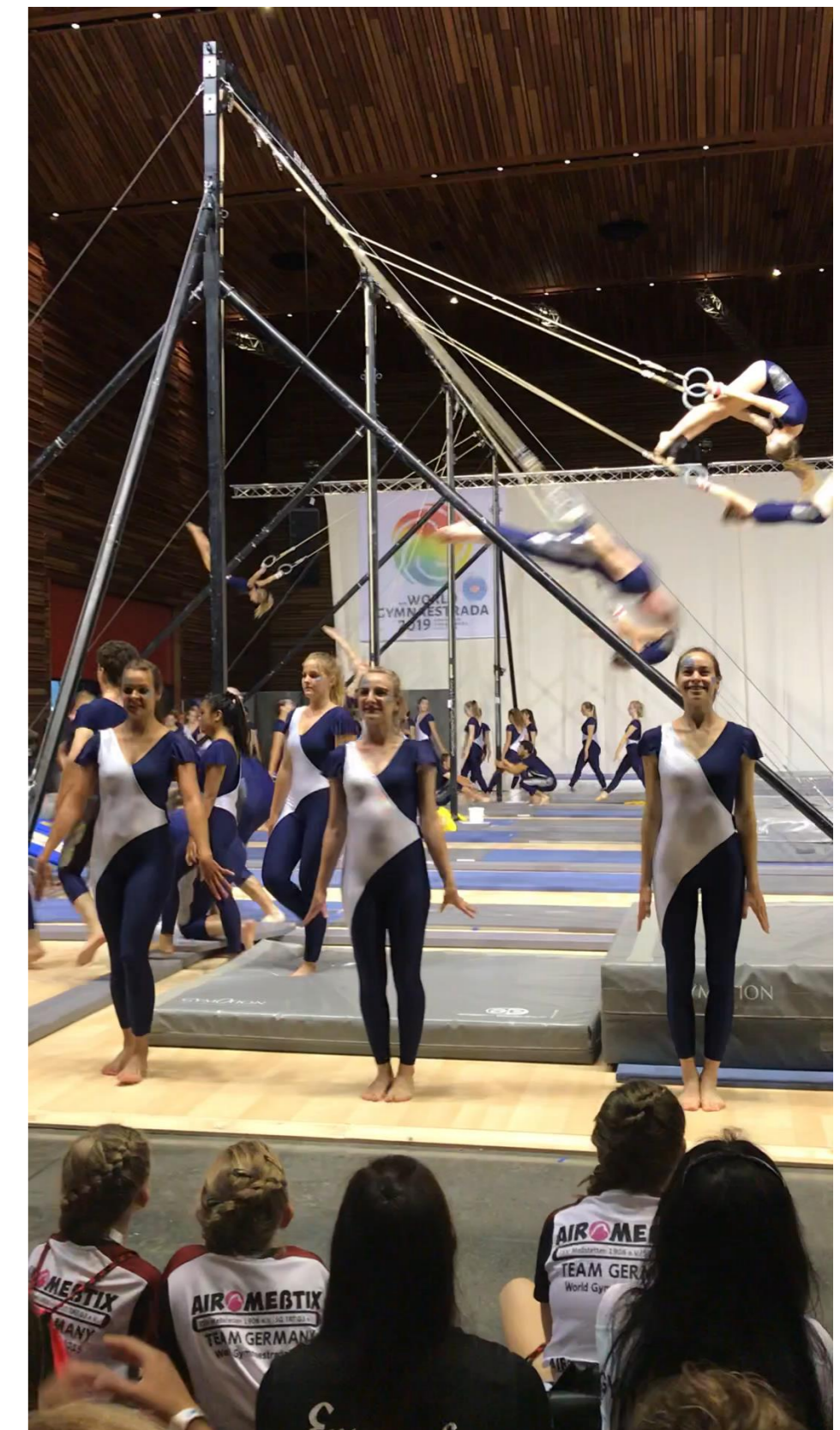


FIG World Gymnaestrada Event Format 32

- **Large group performances**
 - Held in large stadiums (indoor or outdoors);
 - A minimum of 200 active gymnasts is required to register a Large Group;
 - One or more national federations may work together to create a performance;
 - Large groups perform three times over the week of the Gymnaestrada.
- **National/continental performances**
 - Held in one or two exhibition/sports halls in the main event venue;
 - One nation/continent takes center stage to present a 1.5 hr show featuring gymnastics, folklore, cultures, music and/or other characteristics that are unique to their country or continent.

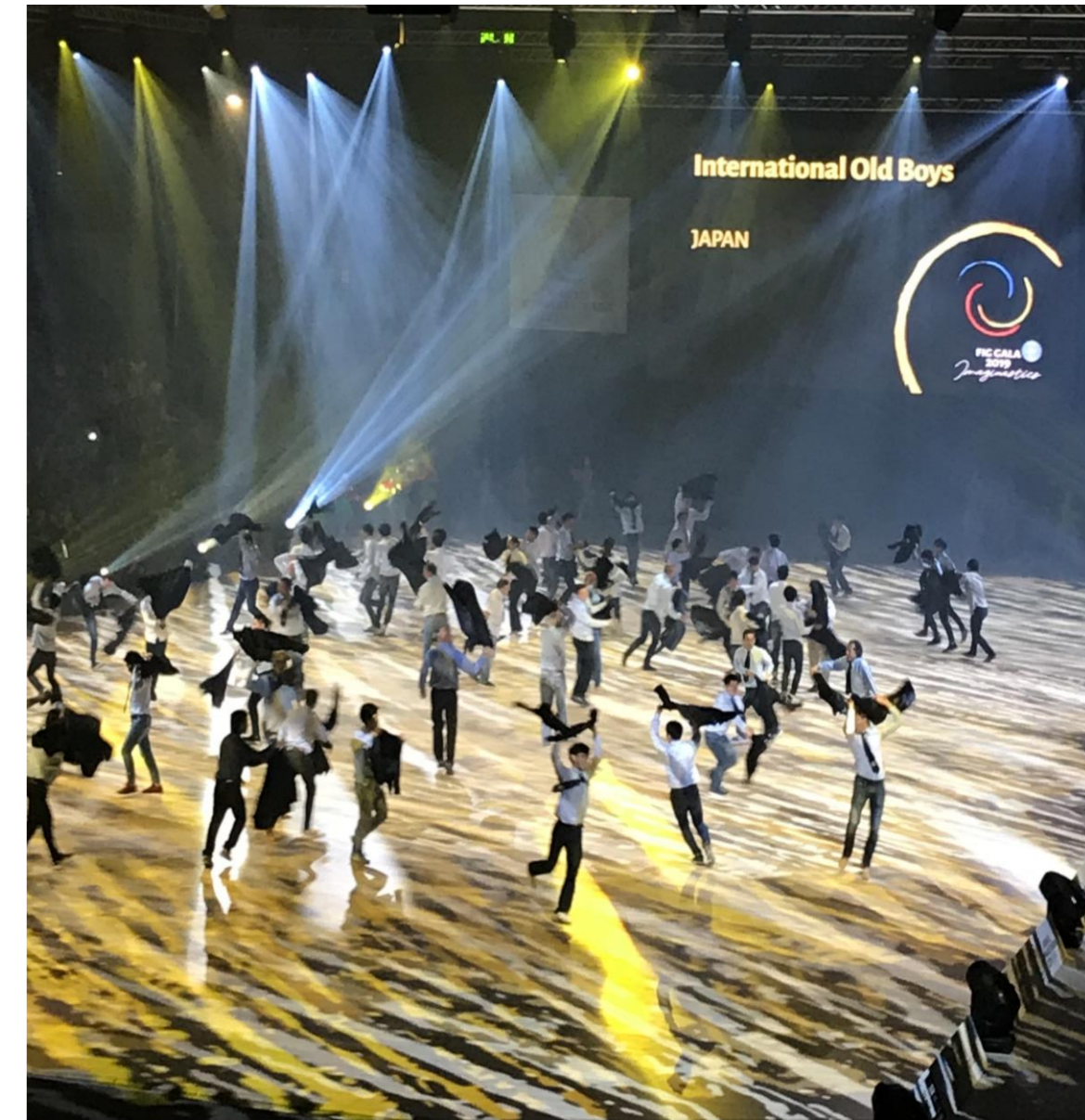


FIG World Gymnaestrada Event Format

- **FIG Gala**
 - Held in a large exhibition/sports hall in the main event venue;
 - The Gala is a specially choreographed and selected show presented by the FIG to highlight the diversity of Gymnastics for All;
 - A member of the FIG GfA Committee and the FIG Gala Choreographer work together to develop the idea, theme, concept, and management of the 1.5 hr FIG Gala.
- **Closing ceremony**



World Gymnaestrada Reflections



World Gymnaestrada Testimonial – Brent Ertman (TSG)

“World Gymnaestrada was one of the greatest experiences of my life. It is often forgotten in today's world that sport isn't just about winning. It's about the experience of traveling, learning to dedicate yourself, and making friends with people of all ages and cultures who share something in common with you. Gymnastics is a language, and it can be taught to anyone willing to learn. That really is the magic of it.”



FIG World Gym for Life Challenge

Presented By:

Meredith Warner (Ottawa, ON)

Program Manager, Sport Development
Gymnastics Canada



“Something special happens when we come together in celebration of movement and physical activity. There is a unique energy and excitement that lives within the discipline of Gymnastics for All and it has an incredible way of drawing people in for a lifetime of fun!”



FIG World Gym for Life Challenge

In answer to the growing interest world-wide to participate in FIG GfA festivals, the first FIG World Gym for Life Challenge was held in Dornbirn, Austria in 2009.

The addition of the World Gym for Life Challenge (WGFLC) has allowed the FIG to offer their member federations the option to attend an international GfA event every two years.



World Gym for Life Challenge Objectives



Building on the inclusive philosophy of the WG, the objectives of the WGFLC include:

- Promoting the value and diversity of gymnastics;
- Encouraging the growth of Gymnastics for All worldwide;
- Providing incentives for meaningful work within FIG Member Federations;
- Inspiring enjoyment in exercise and encouraging personal activity;
- Demonstrating the unlimited possibilities of different ideas of Gymnastics for All;
- Bringing together gymnasts from all over the world as a contribution towards the friendship of nations;
- Presenting the diversity of gymnastics to a wider public;
- Providing a second FIG event for gymnastic groups;
- Offering gymnastic groups the opportunity to participate in a contest and to have their performances evaluated;
- Offering an interesting and exciting event in gymnastics for the participants and the audience;
- Presenting interesting workshops for gymnasts and coaches.

(FIG Rules - Gymnastics for All Manual, 2019, p. 37)



World Gym for Life Challenge Format

- Opening Ceremony
- The Contest
- World Gym for Life Gala
- Workshops
- Show Performances (“City stage”)
- Closing Ceremony



WGFLC: The Contest

“The Contest” is what makes the FIG World Gym for Life Challenge unique!

Registered groups are divided into four categories based on the type of performance and size of group:

- Gymnastics and Dance, small group (20 or less gymnasts)
- Gymnastics and Dance, large group (21+ gymnasts)
- Gymnastics on/with large apparatus, small group (20 or less gymnasts)
- Gymnastics on/with large apparatus, large group (21+ gymnasts)



WGFLC: EVALUATION

Each performance is evaluated by a panel of experts according to the following criterion (*each worth 5 points for a max total of 20 points*):

- Entertainment value
- Innovation, originality and variety
- Technique, quality and safety
- Overall impression



In addition to the evaluation, groups are given the opportunity to meet with an expert for a **feedback** session.



WGFLC - RESULTS

Within each category, a ranking list is created using the total score. The ranking determines an award for each group.

Every group member is presented with a medal:

- Gold
- Silver
- Bronze

Only the award is announced, not the total score.





WGFLC GALA



A maximum of 14 GOLD awards will be presented during the Contest

All groups awarded Gold plus two wild card groups will participate in the Gala (16 group performances total).

The Gala includes:

- **Evaluation** made by the expert panel along with one representative from each participating federation. Each evaluator will identify their preference for the top three rankings based on the same four criterion used for the contest.
- **Results** determined by adding each group's ranking values to establish the total scores.
- **Award Ceremony** for the group with the highest total score (named the champion of the WGFLC and awarded the "Bruno Grandi Trophy").



How does WGFLC differ from World Gymnaestrada?

WORLD GYM FOR LIFE CHALLENGE	WORLD GYMNAESTRADA
Contest + awards (Gold, Silver, Bronze medals)	Performance
1 “contest” performance (indoor venue) + 1 “show performance” (city stage) + 1 Gala (Gold medal groups only)	3 performances (indoor venue) + 1 city performance (optional)
Rehearsals in performance venue	No rehearsals in performance venue
Expert feedback sessions	No formal feedback
2,000 participants, 23 countries (2017)	18,000 participants, 65 countries (2019)
5-day event	Week-long event



GfA Long Term Planning Suggestions

As presented, there are many performance opportunities within the discipline of Gym for All.

The Event Handbook includes suggestions to consider in your long-term planning:

Year 1: Club Showcase	Year 2: P/T Gymnaestrada or Gymfest
Year 3: Canadian Gymnaestrada	Year 4: World Gymnaestrada

The suggested order is not mandatory but is meant to gradually introduce groups to performance gymnastics and team travel while allowing time for program development, fundraising, and on-going recruitment of group members.



What's Next?

Thanks to the ongoing dedication of Gymnastics Canada's Gym for All Council along with the valuable contributions of their member GfA Committees/Working Groups, we are excited to announce the upcoming publication of our next GfA resource:



Getting Started Guide: Performance Groups and Demo Teams



This resource provides practical recommendations and instructions to help coaches and club administrators get started with GfA demonstration teams or performance groups. The “Getting Started Guide” serves as a partner resource to the “Gym for All Event Handbook”.



Stay tuned... **May 2021.**

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the many individuals and groups for their contributions to the development of the *Gymnastics for All Event Handbook*, including the Gymnastics Canada Gym for All Council members and their provincial/territorial GfA Committees/Working Groups. This resources was originally initiated under the dedicated leadership of GymCan's former Director of Education and Sport Development, Elisabeth Bureaud.

References:

FIG Gymnastics for All - History. (n.d.). Retrieved from Federation Internationale de Gymnastique:
<https://www.gymnastics.sport/site/pages/disciplines/hist-gfa.php>

FIG Rules - Gymnastics for All Manual. (2019). Retrieved from Federation Internationale de Gymnastique website:
https://www.gymnastics.sport/publicdir/rules/files/en_Gymnastics%20for%20All%20Manual,%20Edition%202019.pdf

Purvis, F., Smilie, R. & Fox, R. (1998). *Demonstration Gymnastics*. Ottawa, ON: Gymnastics Canada.

Photo Credits:

Canadian Gymnaestrada official event photographer

World Gym for Life Challenge 2017 official event photographer

World Gymnaestrada 2019 official event photographer

Additional photos provided by the webinar presenters and member provincial/territorial organizations.



Q&A – Presenter Panel





Thank you for joining!

For more information regarding the GfA events available in your area, please contact your [provincial/territorial gymnastics organization](#) or GymCan (info@gymcan.org).

Presenter Contacts (available for individual questions, advice, mentorship)

David Brown gnscoach@sportnovascotia.ca

Bobby Kriangkum rec@abgym.ab.ca

Rhonda Helmeczi rhondah19@gmail.com

Julie Levasseur j.levasseur@sasktel.net

Kara Thorpe karathorpehome@gmail.com

Meredith Warner mwarner@gymcan.org

