

What Judges Are Looking For

MDTA Fall Coaches Conference
November 8, 2014

Scoresheets

- The scoresheet for any contest is an important tool for you as a coach
- It lets you know the items that will be evaluated
- It also lets you know the point value assigned to those items

Pom/Mix/Dance/Kick

- Appearance: 10 points
- Choreography: 25 points*
- Technique/Execution: 20 points*
- Synchronization: 20 points*
- Showmanship: 15
- General Effect: 10

Appearance

- Uniforms: clean, neat, appropriate to theme. Effort put into costume, matching but doesn't have to be pricey. Creative alternatives are often refreshing.
- Hair back from face. No particular style is mandatory. Just make it uniform.
- Makeup: appropriate. Most teams use "show makeup."

Choreography

- This category has the most points. Very important!
- Routine/music compatibility: Is what we're seeing the same as what we're hearing? Use the music: lyrics, tempo, accents and style.
- Routine builds to a climax. The climax is the most memorable part of the routine. Also very important to have a strong beginning and end.
- Steps flow smoothly. Transitions should be danced through. No awkward pauses.

Choreography

- Good use of performing area: Formations are not forced and they use all parts of the floor. Variety of formations.
- Appropriate difficulty: Challenge yourselves, but make difficulty level appropriate for your team. Choreography needs to be above and beyond a halftime performance.

Technique/Execution

- This category is one of the top three in importance.
- Deals with technique, how the moves are executed and the style with which they are performed.
- How well are they performing the choreography?

Technique/Execution

- Body extension: body needs to be elongated from core to outer edges. Total opposite of curled up in a fetal position. ;) “Performing through the chest.”
- Kicks (if applicable), extension: performing with proper kick technique. Shoulders back, sharp leg motion, pointed feet.
- Proper position of arms, leg, body. You usually want the top of the feet and hands to be what is facing the audience. Of course there’s always an exception. Also, using proper hip and shoulder orientation. CONTROL

Technique/Execution

- Posture: Shoulders back, chin up
- Strength of movements: Performing movements in a large way, to the top row or “back of the house.”
- Alignment, spacing: keeping lines and formations intact throughout routine
- Pointed toes: pointed all the way through the foot, unless the style or choreo dictates otherwise
- Uniformity in style: are all dancers performing the choreo in the same way

Synchronization

- This category is part of the top three as well.
- This is where points are deducted for memory mistakes and timing errors.
- Dance movements performed together and in unison.
- Rhythm/timing: can the dancers complete the movements?
- Memory: no mistakes

Showmanship

- Entertainment factor: How clever was this piece?
- Personality, smiles throughout (if appropriate): Was the routine performed with confidence, and not just with smiles, but with eye contact as well?
- Enthusiasm: Was the audience “included” and engaged? Don't just dance, make a connection.

General Effect

- Overall impression: on a scale of 1-10, how would I rate this routine, all things considered?
- Dance moves combine to provide pleasing, visual effect: how do I rate the overall presentation I just viewed?

Pom Video

- Lindbergh had the highest scoring pom routine last year out of all pom routines performed at State.
- They scored 287.5 out of 300
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xfA8qBL-Tc>

Pom Video Recap

- Danced through their transitions, making them smooth.
- Great use of visuals. A lot of thought went into how this would look from the audience.
- Good use of the floor. Variety of formations.
- Not just moving from “thing” to “thing.” Nice buildup.
- Creative and clever. Lots of memorable moments.

Mix Video

- Whitfield had the highest scoring mix routine last year out of all mix routines performed at State.
- They scored 279.5 out of 300
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9oBkfUvjv8>

Mix Video Recap

- The team is small in size, but the routine was packed with good choreography.
- They used angles to create visuals since they didn't have a lot of members on their team
- Did a great job of spotlighting skills
- So much personality!

Dance Video

- Lee's Summit West had the highest scoring dance routine out of all dance routines at State.
- They scored 290.5 out of 300
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT62XUIAuj0>

Dance Video Recap

- Very strong combination of character and skill
- Difficult and technical elements performed by entire team
- Seamless transitions
- Different and engaging due to style

Kick Video

- Notre Dame de Sion and Lindbergh had the highest scoring kick routine of the day at State last year. Both routines received 285 out of 300
- We already saw Lindbergh's pom, so we'll watch Sion.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L10k0QFkkxI>

Kick Video Recap

- Did a great job of “layering.” Lots going on at all times.
- Very visual
- Great use of patterns on floor
- Kicked and danced through most transitions

Hip Hop

- Appearance: 10 points
- Choreography: 25 points*
- Synchronization: 25 points*
- Group Technique: 20 points*
- Communication/Projection: 10 points
- Overall Effect: 10 points

Appearance

- Costumes: clean, neat, appropriate and entertaining for audiences; adds to overall look and attitude of performance
- Hair: appropriately groomed for routine style; not distracting
- Effort put into costume, matching but doesn't have to be pricey. Creative alternatives are often refreshing.
- Make sure you can still see "lines," which is hard to do if the costume is too baggy

Choreography

- One of the most important categories because of its 25 point value.
- Musical interpretation: musicality is key. Utilize lyrics, accents, and tempo changes.
- Use of levels: floor work is a must.
- Use of new, innovative, nontraditional dance moves: hip hop is a very creative, innovative category, it's not a collection of pom moves done without poms

Choreography

- Tempo variation: covered in musicality
- Use of body isolation: use of torso is key, but don't forget big, visual motions as well.
- No suggestive or inappropriate moves: keep it clean

Synchronization

- The other most important category due to its 25 point value.
- This is where points are deducted for memory, timing, or spacing errors.

Group Technique

- Body extension: moves should be BIG
- Body control/placement: moves should also be controlled
- Athletic technical skills (jumps, jump variations, combo jumps, other tricks and/or illusions): how well does the team execute the tricks and skills in the routine

Communication/Projection

- Communicating enthusiasm to crowd with eye contact: hip hop routines should be performed with confidence and an ability to engage and connect with the audience.
- Showmanship: Are they performing or “dancing at the club?”
- Attitude appropriate to routine style: if it’s an aggressive routine, it should be performed with an aggressive and challenging persona

Overall Effect

- On a scale of 1-10, my impression of this hip hop routine all things considered
- The bullets in this section basically mean: Was this hip hop routine appealing and entertaining, while still being appropriate for a high school dance team to perform in a family environment?

Hip Hop Video

- Francis Howell scored the highest with their hip hop routine last year at State.
- They received 284.5 out of 300
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wckCIOWk90c>

Hip Hop Video Recap

- Great use of music and accents
- Attitude and personality
- Utilization of levels and angles
- Spotlighted strengths, but still had full team skills
- Great transitions and synchronization

Prop

- Appearance: 10 points
- Choreography: 25 points*
- Prop Usage: 25 points*
- Execution/Synchronization: 20 points*
- Showmanship/Entertainment Factor: 10 points
- General Effect: 10 points

Appearance

- Similar to other categories, but prop is taken into consideration as well.
- Effort put into costume and prop
- Props need to be “show-ready” and eye-catching

Choreography

- One of the two most important categories because it's worth the most points.
- Music/routine compatibility: choreo should use music, tempo, style, lyrics, accents.
- Appropriate difficulty: challenge your team, but make sure they can perform the routine well.
- Steps flow smoothly: shouldn't be choppy
- Good use of performing area: entire floor should be used
- Dance moves incorporated into routine: don't forget to dance, not just lift props

Prop Usage

- The second of the most important categories worth 25 points as well.
- Full usage of props to create effect: really utilize props to the fullest. They should be the focus.
- Prop transitions smooth: When utilizing more than one prop, the goal is to be seamless.
- Creative use of props: Make “pictures” with props. Use visuals and levels and explore all creative ways that the prop can be used.

Prop Usage

- Appropriate safety measures
- Prop handling clean and crisp: shouldn't appear forced or rushed.
- Balance of arm, leg movements, props: don't forget to dance and use your body from the waist down as well.

Execution/Synchronization

- One of the most important categories, worth 20 points.
- Technique and synchronization is important, and the addition of props to the routine opens up a whole new area where tech and synch come into play. Your eye is drawn to the prop, so be mindful of this when you use them or place them on the floor.
- Appropriate safety measures.

Showmanship/Entertainment Factor

- Routine is performed with smiles and enthusiasm
- Performed with eye contact and a connection with the audience

General Effect

- On a scale of 1-10, how do I rate this routine, all things considered?
- Was this routine pleasing to watch?

Prop Video

- Lee's Summit West had the highest score for prop routines last year at State.
- They scored 288.5 out of 300.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uW2AIEZ7fuk>

Prop Video Recap

- Great use of music
- Wonderful utilization of skills and technique
- Seamless use of props, especially surprise fan
- Engaged audience, very entertaining
- It was argued that props weren't really a focus for this routine, but there's no denying it was well done and the overall package was superior