

# INTERNATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND PODIUM PERFORMANCES

Gymnasts in this stage are at the highest level of international competition. They are representing Canada at World Championships, Olympic Games and other major games, are on the World Cup circuit and are invited to the most prestigious international events. MAG and WAG gymnasts may be event specialists. Gymnasts often compete as both individuals and as team members, which requires a shift in attitude and in some aspects of competitive preparation.

Many Trampoline and MAG gymnasts will remain in this stage for 8-10 years. WAG and RG gymnasts will normally remain in this stage for one Olympic cycle before retiring or continuing their education on a sport scholarship at university.

With international success comes recognition, media attention and the possibility of sponsorships and endorsements. These gymnasts may have many sources of distraction but should continue to focus on maintaining consistently high levels of performance. They may spend several weeks or months of the year traveling to competitions and will often be training outside of their home gym.

## What qualities will be developed in this stage?

- Refine routine skills performed at high quality and intensity; develop/refine unique skills.
- Consolidate and increase the variety of elements and artistry.
- Achieve highest international standards of difficulty, composition and performance
- Gymnast retains total command of the routine, regardless of competitive environment and situation.
- Maintain physical attributes: strength, power, flexibility and endurance
- Focus on recovery and regeneration strategies
- Fully developed mental preparation skills: imagery, concentration, emotional control, positive self-talk and relaxation
- Well developed self-regulation, decision-making, and coping skills. Gymnasts should have a strong sense of adaptive perfectionism and self-confidence
- International team competitive events bring different pressures, and require development and management of team work skills
- Capable of managing interviews and media events
- Capable of managing distractions and interruptions in training, while maintaining peak performance over the long term
- Takes a stronger role in decision-making, working in partnership with the coach
- Self-discipline governs safety and accepted social behaviour. The participant accepts consequences of behaviour
- Sport ethics should include ethical issues relating to competition and social maturity
- Maintains life balance through outside interests and friends, education
- Preparation for retirement and transition from sport that can include exploration of career and educational options

## Performance Qualities

- Performance standards are FIG Senior requirements
- Consistent performances of the highest international quality
- Goal is to reach finals and podium

## Amount of Time in Gymnastics

- WAG and MAG gymnasts: 5 to 6 times per week for 4 to 5 hours per session
- Many top Canadian WAG and MAG gymnasts train 24 hours per week
- RG gymnasts: 6 times per week for 5.5 to 6 hours per session, including dance preparation and conditioning
- TG gymnasts: 12 – 15 hours per week
- 48 weeks per year
- Double or multiple peak periodization, depending on international competitive schedule.

## Role of Parents

- Parents' role in managing the gymnast's schedule decreases as the gymnast becomes older and more independent. Parents may encourage the gymnast to learn to drive, so that they can reduce the time commitment for transport to training.
- Parents continue to offer unconditional support and a positive push.
- The primary contribution in this stage is financial, as there are training and competition expenses, however these may be partially defrayed if the gymnast is a provincially or nationally carded athlete.
- Parents take an active role in helping the gymnast make decisions about university, scholarships, living environment and life after sport.

## Monitoring

- As intensity and volume of training increase, general health must be monitored regularly
- Ongoing screening for hip and knee alignment, imbalances in strength and flexibility
- Monitor height and weight quarterly for baseline measurements
- Blood tests should be done yearly to monitor iron levels
- Physical abilities testing
- Skills, technique and difficulty assessment
- Recovery and regeneration status should be assessed daily
- Injury prevention and injury management
- Monitor ability of gymnasts to compete as a member of a team

## Events and Activities

- Canadian Championships
- Selection events
- Training and preparation camps
- Special performances and demonstrations (club, provincial, national)
- Selected international FIG senior competitions
- World Championships
- Olympic Games
- World Cup events
- Major Games and Championships

**GCG Programs:** National Team Program

GCG National Coaching Certification Program

GCG Judges Training Program

**Type of Coach:**  
NCCP Competition – High Performance

