**UANA Pan American Championships 2014– Competition Routine De-brief Comments**

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1. **Extension:** 
   1. Focus on ensuring that the feet are extended and together. Heels together, ankles extended and pretty feet. Maintain foot and ankle extension on fast movements. Keep heels and ankles together on all endings (verticals, pike outs and tucks).
   2. When moving quickly, focus on fully finishing ALL movements for added clarity and extension.
   3. Focus on building specific endurance and fitness in the second half of the routine to enable the athletes to be able to hold full extension of movements when fatigued.
   4. Head position in layouts on back with maximum stretch in all back layout positions in routine swimming. Dry positions.
   5. Point toes and ankles on walk outs in deck.
   6. Fast Movements need to be clearly defined. – If movements are fast, ensure the pathway and extension is completed before starting the next.
   7. During transitions of a figure/hybrid, extension needs to be maintained.
2. **Swimming on top of Water:** 
   1. Swim on top of water, not under a blanket of water. Provide the illusion of ‘light’; not heavy. Swim on the surface.
   2. Achieving clean dry positions prior to a lift will eliminate excess water being lifted.
   3. This is all related to extension and fully stretching ‘out and up’ with arms and legs.
   4. Energy ‘up’ on downward movements to eliminate unnecessary splash.
   5. Horizontal extension in layouts, pikes, swirlees.
   6. Preparation counts need to be precise and defined.
   7. Swim on top of water not through water.
   8. Keep movements light.
   9. Pay attention to beginning and endings (ups and unders) of movements.
   10. In walkout endings, move powerfully in torpedo sculling (no rest)
   11. Coach tempo in all kicks (flutter, eggbeater,)
3. **Routine Transitions**:
   1. Focus on **holding posture and body extension** during a kick transition from eggbeater to side kicking or side position to a pike position.
   2. Coach the **leg transitions** – how to move with flow and maximum speed during a transitional movement. The legs should accelerate (significant tempo increase) during a transition.
4. **Clarity of movements**:
   1. Define the ending of one position before starting another.
   2. Fully extend and finish each movement.
   3. Learn to ‘Stick positions” and hold positions with full extension in ‘silence’ without vibrating or rebounding. Hit a position and hold with maximum stretch.
5. **Posture and Head Position:** 
   1. Focus on coaching **accurate head position** (ears in line with shoulders) for all stroking. (When the head is forward, the shoulders appear rounded).
   2. Arm Strokes: Need to lift from underneath, not from tops of shoulders. Extend through all strokes **making arms look longer**.
   3. Extension during downward movements (arms or legs). Anytime a movement goes to the surface, **extend out and up** to make the movement appear ‘lighter’ and more extended.
6. **Eggbeater:**
   1. Posture and height in eggbeater needs to improve.
   2. More variety in surface actions
   3. Maintain posture on boost descents and transitions from vertical to horizontal.
   4. Use more upper body and head expression.
   5. Upper body movement: using torso to enhance artistic impression.
7. **Surface Presentation:** 
   1. Do not release air until the mouth has cleared the surface.
8. **Pool Pattern Balance:** 
   1. Try to ensure that your routines **use all 4 quadrants of the pool**, with a good balance of choreography in all 4 quadrants. Use a ‘mapping’ guide to ensure **balance of content as well as balance of focus to both sides of the poo**l. It is important to always coach from both sides of the pool as well as coach from the angles and ends to see the full picture of your routine.
   2. Coaches need to map out Pool patterns so that each quadrant of the pool has equal balance of difficulty and creativity of movement.
   3. Use angles whenever possible to enhance the visual effect.
   4. Avoid swimming straight across the pool. This will enable you to cover more space.
   5. Project arm strokes and present to the largest audience.
   6. Ensure that highlights and technical hybrids are placed strategically in the pool.
   7. Accuracy of patterns and pattern changes – need to be faster and more precise. “Start and click”
9. **Choreography:** 
   1. Most athletes are becoming more expressive with arms/legs. The next step is to use more space and planes (levels). Use more upper body to engage the trunk in stroking (instead of only arms).
   2. Drill tip: do strokes without arms on land, then in the water to exaggerate the use of the body. Then add the arms back in.
   3. Transitions:
   4. All transitions must be choreographed (one position and the next). It is the thread that connects one movement to another.
   5. The thread needs to flow in the direction of travel.
   6. The thread should never be broken. It needs to flow continuously.
   7. Begin and end routines in centre stage (where possible).
   8. Variety:
   9. Ensure that your routine has variety in beginning and endings of hybrids. (too many pike outs).
   10. Need a variety of single and double leg and arm actions .
   11. Need more difficulty in double arm and leg actions.
   12. Ensure Choreography matches the ability level of the swimmer.
   13. Lower level routines have improved! Great. Still need to focus on flexibility and extension.
   14. Transitions need to be logical and demonstrate fluidity. Never back track in your pool pattern.
   15. More sustained height is a comment the judges made.
   16. More difficulty throughout the routine.
   17. More variety of difficulty; not simply vertical height.
   18. More variety in highlights.
   19. Top swimmers show extension and flexibility, but middle to low countries need to focus on this.
   20. Eliminate dead moments.
   21. Make routine appropriate for the level of athlete. (if you add a spin in a routine, ensure that the athlete can do a vertical and spin properly).
   22. Try to look natural and not mechanical.
   23. Watch to innovate endings of hybrids (fishtail to swirlee is too common).
   24. Need to show emotion when presenting to judges.
   25. In some, the routine and music did not match. Have the music dictate the movement.
   26. Music needs to match the level of the athlete. (skill level).
10. **Propulsion:** 
    1. Wherever possible, use flutter kick rather than eggbeater on back.
    2. Move in eggbeater stroking. Coach what is under the water (leg kick tempo) to ensure strong propulsion during eggbeater sections.
11. **Highlight timing:** 
    1. Rise and press counts in highlights.
    2. Explosive flow and strong legs into press counts.
    3. Eliminate waiting on surface prior to the acrobat getting lifted.
12. **Underwater recoveries:** 
    1. Pay attention to neat and tidy recoveries and coaches need to choreograph the recoveries.
    2. After a tuck, move up toward the surface on an angle(instead of popping up in the same space) to maximize pool coverage and flow.
13. **Energy!** 
    1. Maintain energy from beginning to end. This is related to fitness specific to the routine.
    2. Need to have a clear pathway of movement. Point ‘A’ to point ‘B”
    3. Define the place or point that you want to move to and how to get there. This all needs to be choreographed. The power, strength and conviction of the movement will create energy.
14. **Height and Difficulty:** 
    1. Ensure that there is a uniform height standard in hybrids and stroking (team and duets) among all athletes.
    2. Hybrids were generally higher in difficulty than stroking. Work for a better balance of difficulty.
    3. Need to maintain height in transitions, rotations and propulsion.
15. **Make up:**
16. Ensure that all make up is natural and athletic.
17. Ensure make up is age appropriate.
18. Eyeliner that is too thick and extended out from eyes too far is not natural.