

Dive Scoring for New Judges
Or
“How did they get THAT score!?!???”

Part I

As a new judge one can be filled with anxiety when faced with scoring a diving competition for the first time. The suggestions and tips in this document may help you in your early scoring. Any suggestions for improvement of this document are **most** welcome.

When looking at the Dive Table what do the numbers mean? All non-twisting dives have three numbers assigned to them. The first number tells you the position (Forward-1, Back-2, Reverse-3, Inward-4), the second is a zero (unless it is the relatively rare “Flying” dive-then it is a #1), and the third is the number of $\frac{1}{2}$ **somersaults**. This is followed by a letter that specifies the position (Straight-A, Pike-B, and Tuck-C).

So...a 305B is a...

3 (Reverse), 0, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ somersault (five -1/2 somersaults), Pike position

All twisting dives start with the # 5. Here the second number is the position (Forward, etc) the third number is the # of $\frac{1}{2}$ somersaults, and the fourth is the # of $\frac{1}{2}$ **twists**. Twisting dives also have one extra position letter designation. “D” stands for Free position.

So... a 5221D is a..

5	2	2	1	D
Twist dive	Back	1 Somersault (two- $\frac{1}{2}$ somersaults)	$\frac{1}{2}$ twist	Free position.

Described as Back, 1 SS, $\frac{1}{2}$ Twist, Free position.

Okay, so now we know what the dive list numbers mean.

In order to score a dive you should first have in your mind’s eye the dive you expect to see the competitor perform. This way you can quickly spot deviations. So, how do you rapidly do this? Two things happen before the diver starts. The dive number and verbal description are announced. Then, if you have a good Dive Referee, he/she will repeat the verbal description. When the **verbal description** is announced...

1. If the number of **somersaults** are a WHOLE NUMBER (1, 2, 3, etc) the diver will enter the water FEET FIRST. (note: all dives that are only $\frac{1}{2}$ somersault are simply read as “Forward dive, Pike position. Back dive, Tuck position. Reverse dive, $\frac{1}{2}$ Twist, Straight position” etc. The $\frac{1}{2}$ somersaults aren’t mentioned.)

2. If they land FEET FIRST w/o any twists they contact the water FACING the SAME direction they STARTED the dive just before leaving the board.

3. It then follows that if the **somersaults** have a $\frac{1}{2}$ **component** the diver will enter the water HANDS FIRST and facing the OPPOSITE direction from how s/he was standing on the board at the start of the dive.

Now let's add **twists**

The previous somersault rule applies for feet vs. hands-first water entry (whole # vs. $\frac{1}{2}$) but...

4. If the number of twists AND somersaults ADD UP to a WHOLE NUMBER the diver will enter the water FACING THE SAME DIRECTION THAT THEY STARTED THE DIVE JUST BEFORE LEAVING ON THE BOARD!

Example.. the relatively easy 5111A..Forward Dive, $\frac{1}{2}$ Twist, Straight Position.

This is a $\frac{1}{2}$ somersault dive with a $\frac{1}{2}$ twist. The twists and somersaults add up to a whole number (1). So, the diver does a forward dive facing away from the board. S/he should then enter the water hands first ($\frac{1}{2}$ somersault rule) facing the board BUT it is a $\frac{1}{2}$ twist dive so...

s/he does a $\frac{1}{2}$ twist and ends up facing the SAME direction as s/he started (facing away from the board) as s/he enters the water!

5. Conversely, any time you get the somersaults and twists adding up to a number ending with a $\frac{1}{2}$, the diver will enter the water facing the OPPOSITE direction from how they were standing on the board at the start of the dive.

So, now just by hearing the **verbal dive description**, you can quickly say whether it will be a hands or feet-first entry dive and which way the diver should be facing at water contact. Now you can concentrate on looking at form and making sure they do the correct dive with the right number of somersaults/twists.

I strongly suggest using a toy figure or something as simple as your whistle to simulate a variety of dives in order to convince yourself the above is true in all dives.

It seems initially hard but it comes quickly! Good luck.

Gregg M. Farrell
EMSOA President

Dive Scoring for New Judges Part II

Now that you know how the diver is going to enter the water and what direction s/he will be facing it is time to review factors that determine the dive score.

Dive scores range from a 0 for a Failed dive upwards in ½ point increments till you reach a perfect 10 for Exceptional (no visible flaws.) Good is worth 6-7 points.

The USA Diving DVD suggests that each dive is a potential 10 and you simply work your way down as the flaws are observed. I find that too cumbersome to use quickly. Instead I use an approach shown at the Bowdoin Dive Clinic last year. While judging a dive think in terms of “Good, Satisfactory, Deficient, Unsatisfactory, and Failed.” The clinic instructor had us score dives using cards with only the letters “G, S, D, U, F” on them. It simplified the scoring and by determining the “grade” of the dive first then you could decide where to put it in the point range for that “grade”. (We only used up to ‘G’ as, realistically, it is rare to see a dive that goes beyond the maximum points of “Good” (7) in our typical dual meets.) Of course, you do need to know the point ranges and criteria that make up the “grades.”

These are...

Exceptional 9-10

Excellent 7 ½ -8 ½

Good 6-7

Satisfactory 4 ½ - 5 ½

Deficient 2 ½ - 4

Unsatisfactory ½ - 2

Failed 0

(also found on page 77 of the Rules Book)

A **Judge** may give whatever score s/he feels the dive deserves unless directed otherwise by the **Referee**! If the Referee declares a dive “Unsatisfactory” the judges CANNOT score the dive higher than a 2! Like-wise, if the Referee declares the dive “Failed” don’t even show a score..it’s a 0!

As each **Judge** sees a slightly different perspective of a dive, *unless otherwise directed by the Referee*, s/he can score it as they see fit including a failed score of 0!

TIP: Keep your Lt hand fingers in the score cards at 3, 4, 5, 6...makes it easier to find when scores are requested.

There are certain performance criteria that automatically categorize a dive to a certain score range. These can be seen on page 68 of the rule book and in the attached “cheat sheet”.

A dive is **Deficient** and therefore cannot score above a 4 if...

1. The diver *partially* alters the position of the dive in flight
2. The diver enters the water with one/both hand/s incorrect relative to the shoulders on a feet-first or hands-first dive.

A dive is **Unsatisfactory** (max score 2) if ..

1. Done in a position other than described on the diving score sheet
2. The diver hits the board
3. The diver does not attempt to come out of a tuck/pike position

I strongly suggest that you look at Appendix C on page 77 and the following dive silhouettes. The Appendix gives you hints on what to look for in each aspect of a dive whereas the silhouettes point out specifics of certain dives.

Please find attached two “Diving Cheat Sheets.”

One is from Kate Wardwell...our VP and a former diver herself. The other is my condensed version that I put on my clipboard. (It's smaller so it's easier to attach but harder to read and uses very brief descriptors more as reminders than a true description.)

Dive Judging Part III

Which dives do the competitors get to do??

We have gone over the groups (Front>Twist) of dives but what determines what dives we are going to see? The dives are broken down into two categories for each meet; Voluntary and Optional. Now, I don't know who came up with that nomenclature but I think of voluntary/optional meaning the same thing. But in diving they don't! Voluntary means REQUIRED???! (I remember this by equating how they do things in the Army, you are "volunteered" to do something ie: REQUIRED!)

In regular season dual meets each week has a different **Voluntary** (required) group (Front >Twist) that the diver must choose a dive from to perform FIRST. This dive must have the number and degree of difficulty CIRCLED on the submitted dive sheet

This Voluntary dive is followed by 5 dives that are called **Optional**. They must come from 4 out of the 5 dive groups and a dive cannot be repeated. (A dive is considered repeated if it has the same dive number even if the position is different.)

Note: I will not get into the complexities of Championship diving which involves different numbers of voluntary vs optional dives in each stage of the pre-lims.