



## From behind the judges table

### Don't underestimate Quarter Turns & Compulsory Poses

● **Why is it necessary for athletes to do quarter turns and compulsory poses and why is this so important?** These poses are used to assess the athlete's physique.

Imagine seeing the athletes from the judges table; athletes walking onto the stage one after another, standing in one line. Some athletes flex, some turn sideways, some stand relaxed, waiting for the Chief Judge's calls. For the judges to judge these athletes, there needs to be conformance in the way the athletes stand and pose. Hence the IFBB has rules and regulations for each division and explain quarter turns and compulsory poses that are required for each division.

From the moment an athlete walks onto the stage, he/she is being assessed. These assessments are very quick, giving the judges an idea of the quality and length of the line-up. During these assessments judges will also look for the overall criteria of each line-up. If an athlete doesn't comply to the criteria or the athlete entered the wrong division, the judges will usually be able to see it during these quick assessments. Sometimes it is difficult, as some athletes might be 'border line' on the criteria and this is where the judges' training and experience comes into play on deciding if the athlete meets the criteria for that division. The athletes will perform the quarter turns and compulsory poses – this is where the actual judging starts.

All the divisions are required to do quarter turns. Bodybuilding divisions have seven compulsory poses as well, but the purpose of the compulsory poses and the quarter turns are the same – to assess the athletes from head to toe. To be able to correctly judge an athlete, the judges need to see all the athletes 'in the same position at the same time' to be able to compare one athlete against the next.

Remember that the quarter turns and the compulsory poses are being done very quickly – meaning that if you will be required to hold the pose for 30 seconds and there are 6 athletes on stage, it gives the judges 5 seconds per athlete to do the assessment. Once again this is where the IFBB judges' training and experience comes into play. You as an athlete never know which judge is looking at you as each judge must go through the line-up, so it is important to hold the compulsory pose for as long as needed before the Chief Judge calls for the next callout. This gives each judge ample opportunity to assess you, and to judge you correctly – to see what they have to see. It is not the responsibility of the judges to assume how your physique looks because you took too long to get into the pose – you have to show the judges. Also, you need to assume the pose as quickly as possible, allowing the judge enough time to scrutinize your physique. If you take too

long to assume a pose you could be placing yourself at a disadvantage. This could mean that a judge could move on to judging the next athlete who is already in the pose.

Remember if you are not called out for a comparison and you are standing at the back, judges will still be looking at you and judging you if they need to make a final decision, because the judges have to place all athletes. Don't stand at the back relaxed, as you are still being judged.

When posing classes and seminars are being presented, please make use of these opportunities. You will learn how to pose properly, and when you can pose properly it gives you confidence. When you are confident, it will be easy for you to get into a pose quickly and to hold the pose, which will give the judges the opportunity to judge you properly.

Interesting fact: While athletes are being judged, judges are also being 'assessed'. After each competition the judges receive a judging score, determining the judges' class. Judges also need to keep up their scores and experience to be able to progress to the next level of judging – with IFBB Elite Pro being the highest level of judging. So, judges will make sure to place athletes correctly at a show, as this will also determine the judges' future.

**If you have any specific requests or suggestions for our next column, please send an e-mail to [ifbbsapa@gmail.com](mailto:ifbbsapa@gmail.com)**

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