

Midlakes Dive – Why We Do It Our Way

Midlakes Dive League does a few things differently than you'll see at other dive competitions. The reasons for our methods date back more than a decade and there is reasoning behind them. Here are a few of our differences and why we do it "our way".

Required Forward Dive has DD 1.9

Dive # 101 is a Forward Dive. It is a foundation element in diving and is the base of many other dives. It has a Degree of Difficulty of 1.2 in Tuck, 1.3 in Pike, and 1.4 in Straight position. Midlakes Diving requires all divers older than 8 years old to dive the Forward Dive as their first dive and we assign a DD of 1.9 regardless of the dive position.

Why Does Midlakes Set the Forward Dive DD So High?

- Having a high DD of 1.9 incents every diver to make this foundation dive a focus.
- Setting DD at 1.9 regardless of dive position (T/P/S) allows divers to work on position skills (tuck, pike, straight) with no detriment to their score.
- Using the Forward Dive as a required dive with a 1.9 DD evens the playing field somewhat so that divers with lower overall DDs can still score competitively with more experienced divers.

8 and Under Required First Dive = Forward Jump or Forward Dive with DD of 1.0

- 8 and Under "B" divers must compete the skill **100 Forward Jump** as their first dive in the meet with a DD of 1.0 regardless of position; "B" divers may compete 101 Forward Dive at the standard DDs of 1.2, 1.3, or 1.4 in a later round at the dive meet.
- 8 and Under "A" divers are required to use **101 Forward Dive** as their first dive with a DD of 1.0 regardless of position. "A" divers may compete the skill #100 Forward Jump with a DD of 1.0 regardless of position in a later round at the dive meet.

Max Score of 4.0 When Less Than 3 Steps in Forward Approach

The takeoff for dives with a forward approach (Forward dives, Forward jumps, Reverses) "may be performed either standing or running at the option of the diver" according to USA Diving and FINA regulations.

A forward dive that is performed from a standing position will lack height and power compared to the same dive done with a running start, i.e. a multi-step approach. Midlakes scoring sets a Maximum Score of 4.0 for forward dives that lack at least a 3-step approach even though this is not a requirement for national competition.

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Why Set a Maximum for Forward Takeoffs That Lack a 3- (or more) Step Approach?

- Midlakes saw that parent volunteer judges historically did not appropriately reduce scores for dives that were performed well but from a standing position or that used a 1-step approach.
- The lack of training and experience of our parent volunteers often meant that a diver with a clean but much less powerful dive would outscore a diver whose momentum carried them higher but who perhaps had less control as they used the multi-step “running” approach.
- Setting a maximum of 4.0 for dives lacking a multi-step “running” approach helped parent volunteer judges with appropriate scoring.
- This also creates a strong incentive for coaches to instruct divers to learn the running approach which will help with dives that require a stronger takeoff in order to execute rotations and twists.

5211 Back Dive Half Twist – “The Midlakes Special”

Dive 5211 is the Back Dive Half Twist. It has a DD of 1.8 which is among the highest for all the dives the kids are able to do at this recreational level. The dive is a Back Dive in which the diver leaves the board backwards, then twists in the air, and enters the water as a forward dive while keeping a straight body throughout the execution.

This is not a dive that most divers in high school and college do. It's a very hard dive to do well.

Why do we use this dive in Midlakes Diving so much?

The youngest age groups only need 2 dive groups (forward, backward) to compete at a meet. As they age up and progress to "A" diver level, they need to add a 3rd dive group.

- Adding a 3rd dive group means including a reverse dive (300 group), inward dive (400 group), or a twisting dive (5000s group).
- Reverse dives are intimidating for novice divers and are unlikely to be used. Inward dives can also be intimidating, so that leaves twists.
- We've found that the back Dive Half Twist (5211) is a twist dive that a young diver can kind of do since while it starts backward-facing, it basically twists into a less intimidating forward dive.

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Why Does Midlakes Set DD as 1.0 for Junior Divers (8 and Under and 10 and Under)?

- Midlakes would prefer that divers learn inward dives as the third group. Inwards start at DD of 1.4 and go up.
- Because of the high DD of 1.8 for dive 5211, coaches and divers might focus on this dive to get points at competitions rather than learning the 401 Inward Dive.
- By making the 5211 Back Dive Half Twist a low DD for junior divers like a skill, this takes away the incentive to use the dive except as an extra for divers who haven't succeeded at adding the inward group or another twist dive like the 5121 – Front 1 SS, ½ twist.

What Is Different in How Midlakes Scores This Dive?

FINA diving rules state “In dives with twist, the twisting shall not be manifestly done from the springboard or platform. If the twisting is manifestly done from the springboard or platform, each judge shall deduct ½ to 2 points, according to his opinion.”

Parent volunteer judges do not have a strong understanding of what the 5211 dive is supposed to look like, i.e. that it is a *back dive* that twists after the diver leaves the board and then has the diver enter the water as a forward dive. Midlakes has taken the recommended judge scoring deduction one step farther to assist parent volunteer judges by setting a maximum score based on the severity of the infraction.

- This dive has a very high DD of 1.8 for senior divers so if they are not doing it properly, then it should be called out.
- Most divers cannot do this dive well and they often twist too early.
- When the dive starts out already twisted from the board instead of starting out going up and back like a back dive, then it's kind of like cheating.
- Midlakes Dive reps (prior to 2016), designed a system to set max scores of 2.0, 3.0, and 4.0 depending on where the twist happens.
 - Max 2.0 when the twist happens at the feet, i.e. one or more feet move on the springboard to begin the twist.
 - Max 3.0 when the twist happens at the hips, i.e. the diver has started twist rotation while still on the spring board.
 - Max 4.0 when the twist happens as the diver falls away from the diving board, i.e. the diver did not launch upwards into a back dive before initiating the twist and simply fell backwards to avoid the obvious hip twist but still did not engage the dive in the desired manner of activating the twist in the air.
- The Meet Referee should carefully watch each 5211 Back Dive Half Twist dive to set the maximum score for early twisting since most parent volunteer judges do not understand how to evaluate the dive.
- Having severe maximum score penalties for early twisting removes the incentive for coaches and divers to add the 5211 dive simply to gain points at competition.



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“The Midlakes Way”

These are several of the special Midlakes scoring modifications that we have implemented over time to support our fun recreational novice dive league. Since these incongruities are not officially recognized at national competitions, they are also subject to change over time as Midlakes finds even better ways to create the environment we desire for our dive league.

If you have suggestions for additional modifications or alterations in the current ones, please contact us at midlakesdiving@gmail.com to present your ideas.