

## Officials Committee Fall 2020 Newsletter



Welcome to the new skating season which up to this point is certainly not what we are used to our sport looking like. We are launching into the Fall season with the first in a series of quarterly newsletters to keep officials informed and up to date.

### **Officials Committee Start Up:**

The Officials Committee has invested significant time and energy over the past two months in restructuring the committee's operations and have expanded the volunteer base within the committee to support an ambitious array of workplan activities.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce the committee and explain a little bit about the new and refreshed operating structure. The core officials committee consists of the following positions: Officials Committee Lead, Data Specialists Representative, Judge/Evaluator Representative, Technical Officials Representative, Synchro Officials Representative and a Member at Large.

In the interest of providing additional support to each area we have inserted co-leads and co-representatives to allow for a partner to engage with and follow a job-sharing philosophy. This committee manages a very full workplan and the new structure is intended to provide support, balance workloads and generally involve more officials with an eye to ensuring that succession planning can naturally evolve in the committee. Core committee members have a vote on the committee, are responsible for conducting or overseeing workplan activities and will attend and contribute at meetings when they are called.

The committee has also introduced an advisory circle. The advisors are tasked with specific areas of responsibility that mostly represent official's development areas, but assessments and competition organization and tech reps are also included. Advisors are invited and have the option of attending Officials Committee meetings, are invited into discussions at the meetings but have no vote at meetings. They will conduct various workplan related activities and have a core committee member that is assigned to monitor and support them in the work they carry out on behalf of the committee. We expect the advisory circle to evolve over the course of the season and involve additional officials as we get specific areas refreshed and up and running. In time we expect that some advisors may move onto the core committee as they gain experience or feel they can devote the time to a core committee role.

### **Officials Core Committee Members:**

Officials Committee Co-Lead – [Leslie Lawrence](#)

Officials Committee Co-Lead – [Brenda Hart](#)

Technical Officials Co-Representative – [Devan Nychka](#)

Technical Officials Co-Representative – [Robin Forsyth](#)

Data Specialists Representative – [Krista Sellers](#)

Synchronized Skating Officials Co-Representative – [Chelsey Schaffel](#)

Synchronized Skating Officials Co-Representative – [Amanda Jassman](#)

Judge/Evaluator Co-Representative – [Leslie Lawrence](#)

Judge/Evaluator Co-Representative – [Brenda Hart](#)

Member at Large and Education Advisor – [Lynne Dey](#)

**Advisory Circle:**

STAR 1-4 Training Advisor – [Marg Andriuk](#)

STAR 1-4 Training Advisor – [Deirdre Coburn](#)

Singles Judge Training Advisors (Juvenile to Senior) – [Deirdre Coburn](#) and [Leslie Lawrence](#)

Senior Judge Advisor – [Krystyna Banas](#)

Evaluator Advisor – [Renee Tatro](#)

Base Level Technical Official Advisor – [Dallas Daniel](#)

Technical Officials Advisors – [Devan Nychka](#), [Robin Forsyth](#), [Lynne Dey](#) and [Leslie Lawrence](#)

Interim Section Assessment Liaisons – [Leslie Lawrence](#) and [Brenda Hart](#)

Competition and Tech Rep Advisors – [Leslie Lawrence](#) and [Brenda Hart](#)

We are grateful to core committee members and advisors for their support and dedication demonstrated over the summer months as we reviewed, collaborated, and set plans in motion for the upcoming year. We are humbled by their passion and creativity and for saying yes to serving and giving their time and expertise on the committee this season.

*Leslie Lawrence and Brenda Hart*

### Officials Committee Highlights



**Start of the season check-in for membership and course work:**

The Skate Canada membership season begins September 1 – Have you contacted your club to register for the 2020-2021 season? Please kindly do this now so contact lists can be confirmed as activities begin this fall. Officials must be registered to participate in competitions and assessments.

Login to the Members site, go to My Profile and General Information to check your membership registration and course completions on the Official Dashboard. Online courses are available to all members on the Skate Canada eLearning site. Take a moment to review what is available to you. A new webinar on Essential Soft Skills for Officials was recently added to the eLearning site. An excellent webinar that we highly recommend all Section officials to view. This webinar is a mandatory requirement for Challenge and higher officials for assignment to events this season.

Please confirm that the following items (as applicable to your officiating qualifications and roles) are up to date on your Skate Canada online membership profile:

- ✓ Skate Canada membership for 2020-2021
- ✓ Code of Ethics online course certificate for 2020-2021

- ✓ Respect in Sport online course certificate. This course is valid for three years but for anyone who has yet to complete it please follow the steps and check that off your to do list
- ✓ Judges: +5 –5 online webinar and marking guideline exercises. A reminder to all judges that this is a mandatory course in each discipline in order to be assigned to events and officiate in that discipline
- ✓ Evaluators: STAR 6-Gold Introduction, Freeskate, Dance, Artistic and Skills modules are all refreshed and available. The modules have been streamlined and exams are all updated. If you previously completed the modules and received a certificate it is not necessary to take the exam again. It is recommended that you go through the modules again as it will serve as a refresher and different video clips are now incorporated. If you wish to take the exam again you will receive a second certificate/achievement for the course work.

Please reach out to the Judge/Evaluator Representatives if you have any questions on the coursework.

### **Documents Update:**

Did we tell you about our documents yet? Well... we had many discussions and more than a few laughs as we edited together. We toiled over wording, phrases, clarity and who can forget the capitalization and punctuation discussion! We are grateful for the teachers on our committee for helping set us straight on grammar topics. We felt a tad bit like we needed to return to school in September to address our deficiencies!

Seriously though, over the years this committee has drafted many informative and helpful documents to guide officials on topics ranging from assignment criteria, performance management, expense reimbursement, next steps to promotions and procedures relating to monitoring and mentoring. Lots of helpful information!!

Please check the Section Officials Committee page on the website to read these newly refreshed documents. If further updates occur, the updated content will be underlined so you can easily capture what was added or changed.

And please make it a habit to check in on this page regularly throughout the season for more updated content and information pertaining to officials' topics. As we introduce new procedures we do expect to edit and add content as we learn and try new things!

### **Skate Canada Info Centre:**

Have you checked out the Officials Guide on Skate Canada Info Centre? This newly launched area now offers one stop clicking to find the following topics:

- ✓ Section Contact List
- ✓ Officials Pathways for Judge, Evaluator, Coach Assessor, Referee, Technical Official and Data Specialist
- ✓ Officials Pathway Resources – Judge Assessments, Technical Panel Phase II Assessments, Data Specialists
- ✓ Officials Registration
- ✓ Eligibility to Officiate Resources
- ✓ Rules Pertaining to Officials
- ✓ Officials Resources – Competition Resources, Assessment Resources, Video Resources
- ✓ Officials Worksheets – Judge, STAR, Technical Panel, Special Olympics
- ✓ Online Learning

Please go explore and bookmark this as an easy reference throughout the season to find what you need!

**Workplan Update:**

Over the course of many meetings within the various arms of the committee, we were able to put together a thoughtful workplan to address recruitment, training, communication, support, assignment and retention of officials. Further to this, the core committee and advisors developed and initiated surveys to gather current information and feedback from evaluators, new evaluator candidates, juvenile to senior singles judges in training, base level technical officials, section level technical officials and tech reps. From this feedback we have begun to brainstorm ideas for virtual continuing education of officials and region support roles, set up officials training opportunities, refreshed the contact and assignment for evaluators and coach assessors, and generally just think outside the box on how to approach the year with Covid-19 lurking in the background!

**Evaluators:**

Any evaluators who completed online training modules for STAR 6 – Gold over the summer and have not submitted for a promotion or have completed additional disciplines are reminded to send certificates in so the promotion paperwork can be put in process. Please include the Introductory certificate and any other disciplines that you have completed. Certificates should be sent to Lisa Bonderove [lisa@skateabnwnun.ca](mailto:lisa@skateabnwnun.ca) with a cc. to Leslie [lesklawrence@gmail.com](mailto:lesklawrence@gmail.com) and Brenda [1brenda.hart@gmail.com](mailto:1brenda.hart@gmail.com)

Any evaluators with partial levels will be receiving emails to help arrange mentorship, co-evaluations and/or mentored assessment opportunities once assessments are permitted again.

**Juvenile, Novice and Senior Invitational Judge Follow Up:**

A survey was sent to judges who participated in the Juvenile to Senior Invitational Judge training in March 2019. Thank you to all who responded. Virtual sessions will be arranged to assist judges to move forward with their development, to move up a level or to complete the Senior Sectional Judge requirements for promotion. Stay tuned for further details.

**Return to Competitions:**

With the recent release and approval by the Government of the Section's Return to Competition Protocol, the Section will be moving ahead with competition planning. As we face a lot of unknowns about how the season will unfold, we are taking a step by step approach and employing thought and care into all decisions. Rest assured that planning will focus on staging an event that is compliant with health protocols with significant attention will be devoted to keeping officials physically distant and safe while volunteering. We will be working collaboratively with the Section Competition Committee and the Athlete Development Committee with approaches and adaptations that are necessary for events.

**Sectionals Planning:**

The first step of 2021 Sectionals Championships planning will be to reconfirm availability among Juvenile to Senior Judges and Section Technical Officials. If you haven't responded to that survey, please do so today!

Future availability surveys will be sent out to all officials to address many other upcoming events. Please kindly make it a priority to promptly reply to all surveys as you receive them.

Planning for Sectionals will also launch a new approach of mentored learning to address tech rep training for Section managed events.

### **Tech Rep Team Mentorship:**

The Officials Committee has taken over the role of recruiting, training, mentoring and assignment of Tech Reps for all competitions in the Section. The Officials Committee is introducing a new initiative called a Tech Rep Team. The Tech Rep Team will focus on recruitment, mentoring of new tech reps on competition scheduling and officials' assignments with an emphasis on soft skills and leadership development. This approach will be utilized for each competition this season. Using Google drive the Tech Rep Team will show and tell and share and learn together as new tech reps build their repertoire of consistent processes using Section templates and tools.

A survey was sent to Tech Reps who had volunteered over several seasons. Feedback from that survey will be used to guide us this season. As always, if you wish to be involved or have comments share please reach out to us.

### **Assessments:**

The process for contact and assignment of evaluators and coach assessors has been reviewed and refreshed with a greater emphasis on removing existing barriers within the system and providing a variety of ways for skaters to access assessments. We will be working with the Coaches Committee to qualify Coach Assessors to officiate Skills, will open up the opportunity for skaters to attempt not only Free Skate Programs but also Artistic assessments at all competitions and encourage clubs to schedule assessments on their regular club ice when possible. Traditional Assessments Days will also happen, but we hope to encourage more centralizing given our shortage of evaluators. Help is on that way on that front as we will be commencing training of a new group of candidates in September.

With this refresh and following recent changes to Skate Canada guidelines, evaluators are no longer required to be assigned by the Section High Test Administrator. Clubs and/or the Region Assessment Coordinator (RAC) on their behalf will be responsible for finding their own evaluators. The fall meetings of the regions will be happening over the next two months where the RAC for each region will be identified and they will be presented with the new procedures covering Assessments. At this time, we anticipate that Assessment protocol approval will be forthcoming soon from the government and that Assessment Day dates will begin to be populated. We will be moving forward cautiously as we want to ensure the safety of officials as we navigate the return to assessments.

The Section's new procedure will require more engagement and a learning period for the RACs. We feel that supporting the RACs as they navigate the new procedure will go a long way to ensuring a smooth transition. To that end, we are looking for officials to assist and mentor the RAC in their region and serve as a buddy to be the familiar voice on the other end of the line that can quickly answer a question or point them in the right direction, suggest an evaluator to call or review their schedule.

### **Feedback and Comments:**

As a committee, we are always open to receiving feedback. Please reach out to us if you have thoughts or comments about volunteering this season. We have learned a lot from discussions and surveys this summer and value what you have to say. Continue to share your ideas and voice with us.



### **Welcome!**

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Jennifer Keliher who has relocated from Nova Scotia, Canada's Ocean Playground to landlocked Blue-Sky Country Calgary. We are excited to have Jennifer join us on the judge's stand as soon as we are all back in the arena. If you happen to see a new face in

the official's room this season, please take a moment to introduce yourself and the rest of the family hanging around the water cooler. Just kidding about the water cooler. It along with the handshakes and hugs are still off limits.

### **Minding Your P's and G's (or do we mean q's??)**

A new season arrives with not only the whiff of autumn leaves and Zamboni fumes, but this is also the time that the ISU presents tweaks and changes to how we score performances and the elements within each program. Major revamps by the ISU are generally tied to the start of each new Olympic cycle or quadrennial. As we are in the middle of that time frame there are fortunately only a few revisions, but they are new to us and we will need to familiarize ourselves with them as they will impact how we award both GOEs and PCs.

The revisions outlined here will be directed at judges and referees as our Tech Panel officials have been taking part in weekly virtual training over the course of the summer months. Changes to how elements are called have already been incorporated into their discussions. These virtual sessions which were imagined by Devan and nurtured over time into reality with the able assistance of Robin and Dallas in singles have been an invaluable aid to boosting the confidence and knowledge of our Technical Officials at every level of qualification. Please reach out to Devan if you are interested in attending a session to see how the on-line training works and/or if becoming a technical official might be in your future. Devan's project has now caught the attention of other sections and technical officials across Canada and we are immensely proud that his vision and hard work are being recognized!



### **Singles**

The ISU has introduced a further differentiation of incomplete jump rotation. The Tech Panel will now use the symbol "q" to note a jump that is landed on the quarter or missing a quarter of the full rotation. The "q" will appear beside the element on the judge's screen. The revised GOE reductions are as follows:

- Less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  rotation missing (no sign) -1
- Landed on the quarter (q) -2
- Under rotated – missing  $>\frac{1}{4}$  but  $<\frac{1}{2}$  full rotation (<) -2 to -3
- Downgrade – missing  $>\frac{1}{2}$  full rotation (<<) -3 to -4

1Eu will be called a downgrade (<<) if missing more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  a revolution and the judges will apply the reduction for a downgrade. If, however the 1Eu is missing less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a revolution, the Tech Panel will not consider it as either "<" or "q" and the judges will apply a reduction in GOE if it is not clearly jumped or executed as a stepover.

New GOE ranges for errors in jump execution:

- Wrong take off edge for F or Lz (“e”) -2 to -4
- Unclear take off edge of F or Lz (“!”) -1 to -2
- Poor take off -1 to -3
- Loss of flow/direction/rhythm between jumps in combo/seq -1 to -3

Spins may now have a difficult exit as well as a difficult entrance. This added feature is a consideration for level of difficulty assessed by the tech panel but may also impact the GOE.

Movements in the Choreographic Sequence must be connected and should reflect and support the composition of the program. There should not be gaps between movements, but the movements must be threaded together and the GOE should be adjusted accordingly.

Lack of connection between choreo movements -2 to -3

Reminder of GOE Restrictions:

In the case of the following errors, the starting GOE for the evaluation can NOT be higher than +2

- Fall
- Landing on two feet
- Wrong edge (e)
- Downgrade (<<)
- Step/Choreo Sequence do not correspond to the music
- \*\* (New) Multiple errors in any element (eg.in a jump with both “!” and “<”)

Program Components:

Maximum PC scores are defined in programs containing serious errors. Serious errors are identified as falls, interruptions during the program and technical mistakes that impact the integrity/continuity/fluidity of the composition and/or its relation to the music.

Max score for a program with a serious error:

Skating skills, Transitions, Composition	9.75
Performance, Interpretation	9.50

Max score for a program with serious errors:

Skating skills, Transitions, Composition	9.25
Performance, Interpretation	8.75

## Dance

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was made to maintain the basic requirements of the 2019-2020 season for the 2020-2021 season. Therefore, the Jr Rhythm Dance will retain the Tea Time Foxtrot as the Pattern Dance Element and the Finnstep will be the Sr Pattern Dance Element.

We do have potentially one Sr Dance team in the Section and therefore the possibility exists of judging the Finnstep at Sectionals.

Good references for review of both these dances may be found in the following ISU Communications: #1497 (Finnstep) and # 2241 (Tea Time Foxtrot)

Daily Motion has archived video of Rhythm dances from last season for both Challenge and Canadians if you would like to review these prior to judging them. The only change affecting the judging of dance events is a new music deduction which may be considered for both the Rhythm Dance and Free Dance segments. The deduction would be applied to the score if taken by a majority of the judges + referee on the panel.

The new restriction reads as follows:

“To comply with the ethical values of sports, any music chosen for Ice Dance Competitions must not include aggressive and/or offending lyrics.”

### **Synchro Update – Chelsey Schaffel & Amanda Jassman**

A virtual Junior/Senior Judge & Referee Clinic was held from May – August 2020. This was primarily facilitated by Jennifer Betts with support from Chelsey, and guest presenters from Alberta and Ontario. 17 participants from BC, AB, SK, and ON attended the 9 sessions. Some were working towards promotion, and others just continuing education. Feedback from participants was very positive and the clinic served as an excellent model to build on for future remote clinics and education.



Planning for a virtual Novice Judge Clinic to be held this fall is underway. Dates will be communicated once finalized. Please contact [info@skateabnwtun.ca](mailto:info@skateabnwtun.ca) if you are interested in attending, or for more information.

Jennifer Betts is leading the creation of a Domestic Technical Update presentation that will be available on the Skate Canada eLearning page.

Finally, we are currently working on and identifying training and education needs for the upcoming season, officials to act as mentors, and Tech Reps for our competitions should they go ahead.

### **Technical Officials Update – Devan Nychka & Robin Forsyth**



As we head into the 2020 skating season, there are many unknowns. Many of you will have changing schedules, commitments and priorities, and we want to start off by acknowledging these limitations and stressors. Please know, it's okay to not know what is going to happen in the coming weeks and months and that you will not be disappointing anyone if you need to change or adapt your commitment to online learning. At this point, everyone knows how to use the technology to access

sessions and the programming is intentionally set-up to be user-friendly so you can sign-up, change or cancel your participation as you see fit. Just know, we understand everyone is doing their best.

With that in mind, we have a few changes to scheduling in September and October. We will be offering an occasional session on Sunday nights for those coaches who are working on weekday nights. We also had to change some of the times to October classes as Skate Canada is offering their first virtual training



session and 2 of our session leaders are attending. Please see the online sign-up on the website for these changes, which have been underlined.

The upcoming virtual Sectional Pairs course will be an experiment by Skate Canada in offering online training, and everyone is interested to see how it is delivered. From this course, we will begin to learn what other assessment opportunities will be available for officials at all levels. Of course, this means we do not know when we will be able to do assessments in our own Section. Until then, we will continue to focus on improving our skills, so that when assessments are available, we will be ready. When we do know more about assessment timelines, our OC will stay in touch with all of you to provide details on next steps.

To conclude, we'd like to acknowledge all the things we're "jazzed" about (thank you Leslie Lawrence for our new favorite phrase!) To start, thank you to Robin Forsyth for organizing an informative and well-attended pairs practice. Also, good luck to Robin, Rebecca and Devan as they attend the Skate Canada Pairs training next month. Lastly, to all of you who have connected with each other through online practice- congratulations on your participation, for asking questions, and fostering a positive online community. We are honestly jazzed that you choose to share your time with us.



### **Upcoming Events**

STAR 6 – Gold Evaluator Soft Skills Virtual Training for new evaluator candidates with Learning Facilitator Renee Tatro - September 23, 30 and October 1, 2020

Sectional Championships – Seven Chiefs Sportsplex, Calgary - October 29 to November 1, 2020

Skate Canada Challenge Championships – Terwillegar Rec Centre, Edmonton – November 25 to 27, 2020