

# Decisions of the ISU Council relating to consequences of the COVID-19 crisis with an impact on the 2020/21 season for the Figure Skating Branch

## Excerpt of [ISU Communication no. 2345](#)

### 1. ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Season 2020/21

The ISU Council reiterated its support for the decision announced in [ISU Communication No. 2339](#) according to which the individual events of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating will be staged as domestically run events. In addition to the necessary cooperation with and support for the six organizing ISU Members, the ISU Council also agreed to financially assist the other participating ISU Members.

All relevant details, such as the disciplines included in each ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event, the number and selection criteria/conditions/restrictions of invited Competitor entries, qualification criteria for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, cost responsibilities, qualifications and number of Officials, ISU financial and other assistance to the organizing ISU Members, including Prize Money, are being worked out by a dedicated ISU Council appointed Working Group in cooperation with the six organizing ISU Members of the individual Grand Prix events and, subject to Council approval, will be published as soon as possible.

The staging of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, which is for the time being scheduled to be held on December 10-13, 2020 in Beijing as a Test Event for the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, remains under discussion with the ISU's Chinese counterparts in order to conclude whether and when the Final can be held and under which conditions. The ISU will update the stakeholders as soon as a conclusion can be confirmed.

### 3. ISU Guidelines for ISU Events during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The ISU Council approved the Guidelines for ISU Events during the COVID-19 Pandemic produced by the Working Groups for Figure Skating and Speed Skating, the ISU Medical Commission and ISU Legal Advisors. The Council decided that these Guidelines will be mandatory for ISU Championships, the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, the ISU World Cups in Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating as well as the ISU World Team Trophy. For other International Competitions as well as the individual ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating events that are run as domestic events and for which the guidelines of the competent local authorities apply, the ISU Guidelines are strongly recommended.

The Guidelines are available through the following link: <https://www.isu.org/inside-isu/covid-19>.

### 4. Challenger Series in Figure Skating & Synchronized Skating

Considering the negative impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the availability and flexibility of Skaters to travel and compete internationally, the ISU Council agreed that the previous maximum number of entries per ISU Member of 3 Competitors per discipline and ISU Member for Figure Skating and 2 Teams per ISU Member in Juniors or Seniors for Synchronized Skating shall no longer apply and that there will be no maximum number of entries per ISU Member.

Considering the different adjustments to the Announcements of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating and Synchronized Skating, it has been decided to publish updated Announcements (with changes being underlined) which are available [here for Figure Skating](#) and [here for Synchronized Skating](#).

### 5. Clarification International Synchronized Skating Competitions Season 2020/21

Further to [ISU Communications 2339](#) (Decisions of the Council August 3, 2020) and [2341](#) (Decisions of the Council International Figure Skating Competitions Season 2020/21), the Council herewith clarifies that for the Challenger Series in Synchronized Skating and Synchronized Skating International Competitions during season 2020/21, the same conditions apply as for Figure Skating competitions. This means that, for the sake of fairness, no World Standing/Ranking points will be awarded.

### 6. Meetings, Seminars, Examinations of ISU bodies

The Council agreed to maintain its policy published in [ISU Communication No. 2335](#), Decisions of the Council of July 6, 2020, namely that all meetings, seminars, examinations or similar of ISU internal bodies shall, until further Council notice, be held on-line or postponed.

## [ISU Communication 2341](#)

## Except of [ISU Communication No. 2339](#)

### 1. ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating season 2020/21

Considering the continued critical COVID-19 developments involving many travel and other restrictions and especially risks around the World, the Council reiterated its basic policy decided during its April 28, 2020 Council meeting (ISU Communication 2320), namely that the health and safety of the participants of international ice skating events remains the number one priority. Mindful of the concern for health and safety related to COVID-19 but also the need to give Skaters the best possible opportunities to compete internationally, the ISU will give its utmost support to ISU Members in order to stage all international competitions that can safely be held during the season 2020/21.

Considering the above mentioned exceptional circumstances, the basic ISU policy and with the objective to limit COVID-19 risky international traveling to the minimum, the Council considered a proposal received from the six organizing ISU Members of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series (Canada, China, France, Japan, Russia, USA). In line with the powers granted to the Council as per Article 17.1.q) of ISU Constitution, the Council agreed in principle to the proposal that each individual ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event of the season 2020/21 becomes a domestic run event. The Council agreement in principle remains subject to the ISU and each of the six organizing ISU Grand Prix Members reaching a detailed agreement.

The participation in each individual ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event would be limited to

- i) Competitors and Officials of the host country and
- ii) Competitors regularly training in the respective host country and
- iii) Competitors from other ISU Members who will be assigned to a Grand Prix of Figure Skating event in the respective geographical area, always subject to the applicable travel, entry and sanitary restrictions of the concerned countries.

All relevant details such as applicable disciplines included in each ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event, number and criteria/ conditions/restrictions of invited Competitors' entries, qualification criteria for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, cost responsibilities, qualification and number of Officials, ISU financial & other assistance including Prize Money to the organizing ISU Members, will be worked out by a dedicated ISU Council appointed Working Group in cooperation with the six organizing ISU Members of the individual Grand Prix events and, subject to Council approval, will be published as soon as possible.

Each ISU Grand Prix event will be organized in accordance with the host country's national health/sanitary requirements. Unless being in conflict with such national health/sanitary requirements, the *ISU Guidelines to hold ISU Events during the COVID-19 Pandemic* shall basically also apply. These Guidelines are currently being prepared and will be published as soon as possible.

For the sake of fairness, no World Standing/Ranking points will be awarded and the scores obtained by the Competitors shall not count towards the Minimum Total Elements Scores applicable for ISU Championships (Point 3 below to be considered in this respect).

The ISU Grand Prix events will in principle be broadcasted by the usual right holding media partners of the ISU respectively the organizing ISU Members.

For the 2020/21 season, the six events of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating remain scheduled as follows:

Skate America	October 23-25, 2020	Las Vegas, NV	USA
Skate Canada International	October 30-November 1, 2020	Ottawa	CAN
Cup of China	November 6-8, 2020	Chongqing	FRA
Internationaux de France	November 13-15, 2020	Grenoble	CHN
Rostelecom Cup	November 20-22, 2020	Moscow	RUS
NHK Trophy	November 27-29, 2020	Sapporo	JPN

The staging of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, time being planned to be held on December 10-13, 2020 in Beijing as Test Event for the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, will be discussed with the ISU's Chinese counterparts in order to conclude whether and when the Final can be held and under which conditions. The ISU will update the stakeholders as soon as a conclusion can be confirmed.

## **2. Challenger Series in Figure Skating**

Similar to the situation of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating, the holding of Challenger Series events during the season 2020/21 will most likely be complicated and if held, only be accessible to a limited number of Competitors. The Council therefore decided that for the sake of fairness, no World Standing/Ranking points will be awarded and the scores obtained by the Competitors shall count towards the Minimum Total Elements Scores only if the respective ISU Rules (Rule 420 and ISU Communication 2303) are respected (Point 3 below also to be considered in this respect).

### **Excerpt of [ISU Communication No. 2332](#)**

#### **5. ISU Communication 2323 (Single & Pair Skating Scale of Values season 2020/21) and ISU Communication 2324 (Single & Pair Skating Levels of Difficulty and Guidelines for making Grade of Execution and Program Components Season 2020/21)**

Considering the worldwide COVID-19 developments and the slow re-opening of ice rinks and training activities and also based on feedback received from ISU Members, the Council decided to suspend with immediate effect the above-mentioned ISU Communications 2323 and 2324. The corresponding previous ISU Communications 2253 and 2254 remain basically in force.

The Council, in cooperation with the Single & Pair Skating Technical Committee, is currently evaluating whether and to what extent some clarifications and minor adjustments to ISU Communications 2253 and 2254 would be necessary, and if so, will issue a new ISU Communication shortly.

#### **6. Judges Draw – ISU Figure Skating Championships 2021**

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2020 and ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships 2020 were not held, but a Judges draw was done for them and was not used, therefore the unused draw will remain valid and shall be used for the 2021 Championships.

For the remaining 2021 ISU Figure Skating Championships, the annual Judges Draw shall be held on the morning of Thursday October 15, 2020. If the Council meeting scheduled for October 16-18, 2020 takes place in Geneva, Switzerland then the draw will also take place there. If the Council meeting is held online, then the Judges Draw will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The Judges draw for the ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships 2021 will include the ISU Members present at the 2020 Championships in Nottingham, GBR and also the five ISU Members that were obliged to withdraw from those Championships, namely, France, Italy, Japan, Spain and USA.

### **Excerpt of [ISU Communication No. 2320](#)**

#### **2. Planning Season 2020/21**

The Council confirmed that the health and safety of the participants of international ice skating events remains the number one priority. Mindful of the concern for health and safety related to COVID-19 but also the need to give Skaters the best possible opportunities to compete internationally, the ISU will give its utmost support to ISU Members in order to stage all international competitions that can safely be held during the season 2020/21.

The Council decided on the following time frame/deadline for cancellations

ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating events:

Latest by June 15, 2020 for the first event (CAN August 26-29, 2020) which means latest 10 weeks before the event. This ten-week deadline will also apply for subsequent ISU Junior Grand Prix events.

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating events:

Latest by August 1, 2020 for first event (Skate America, October 23-25, 2020) which means 12 weeks before the event. This twelve-week deadline will also apply for subsequent ISU Grand Prix events.

A Working Group has been created consisting of:

- Mr. Alexander Lakernik, ISU Vice President Figure Skating
- Mr. David Raith, Executive Director US Figure Skating acting as liaison to the six ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating ISU Members
- Mr. Wieland Lüders, ISU Figure Skating Event Coordinator
- Ms. Patricia Mayor, ISU Sport Manager Figure Skating
- Ms. Christine Cardis, ISU Anti-Doping Manager acting as liaison to the ISU Medical Commission.

The objective of the Working Group is to work out and monitor, in consultation with the concerned organizing

ISU Members and the Athletes Commission, the following:

- a. Safety/health protection measures to be implemented at all events;
- b. Evaluate any cancellations which could become necessary due to the sanitary situation in the host city and around the World, travel/meeting restrictions, perceived threat/fear to travel and the necessary ice time for Skaters around the World to prepare for the event;
- c. Evaluate postponements and/or replacements of cancelled events;
- d. Evaluate and decide upon possibly holding certain events without spectators;
- e. Evaluate solutions related to consequences of multiple cancellations of events of a series (ISU Junior Grand Prix, ISU (senior) Grand Prix, Challenger Series) and working out options/solutions in order to maintain and/or adapt the respective ranking and allow the holding of the final event;
- f. Evaluate the financial consequences of cancellations, postponements and replacements and working out (creative) solutions in order to ensure that all events that can possibly be held are ensured of the necessary ISU support regardless on whether the ranking of the series can be maintained or not.
- g. Submit proposals on the above issues to the ISU Council for a final ISU Council decision.

## Excerpt of [ISU Communication No. 2316](#)

### **1. Status of postponed ISU Championships season 2019/20**

Mindful of the escalating negative COVID-19 developments, the resulting world-wide human tragedy and the measures taken by the public authorities as well as logistical challenges, the ISU Council concluded that a postponement of the pending 2020 ISU Championships is not possible. Consequently, the ISU Council has decided that the following ISU Championships must be definitely cancelled:

ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships, Seoul, March 13-15, 2020

ISU World Figure Skating Championships, Montreal, March 16-22, 2020

ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships, Lake Placid, April 3-5, 2020.

In regard to the planning of the 2020/21 skating season and considering the uncertain development of the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the staging of international sports events, the ISU Council will hold another on-line meeting on April 28 when different scenarios of the COVID-19 developments and impact on the ISU Event calendar will be discussed. The objective is to work out, and communicate to all stakeholders, options suitable for different scenarios in order to limit the uncertainty to the strict minimum. This evaluation will also consider the ISU Skating Awards in Figure Skating.

### **2. Novice/Junior Ice Dance & Synchronized Skating upper age limit for season 2020/21**

The ISU Council considered that especially in Ice Dance and Synchronized Skating the ISU Rules for programs of the different age categories (Novice/Junior/Senior) vary greatly and the preparation of new programs for the transition to the next age category requires substantial ice training. Since currently such ice training is on hold and training opportunities will be substantially reduced due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Council decided in line with Article 17.1.q), that exceptionally, for the 2020/21 season only and for Ice Dance and Synchronized Skating only, the Novice and Junior upper age limits will be extended by one year. However, this extended age limit applies only for Novice and Junior Ice Dance Couples and Novice and Junior Synchronized Skating Teams that were already competing together during the 2019/20 season and in cases where the same programs as for season 2019/20 are maintained. In Synchronized Skating, if a Junior or Novice Team changes Skater(s), the new Skater(s) must be of the Junior/Novice age according to Rule 108, paragraph 4 of the 2018 ISU General Regulations.

ISU Members with Novice and/or Junior Ice Dance Couples and/or Synchronized Teams opting for such extension of the Novice or Junior upper age limit must send a corresponding request to the Chair of the respective ISU Technical Committee in order to obtain a certificate confirming the exception for the Couple or Team concerned.

This Council decision does not relate to Single and Pair Skating.

Further to the above-mentioned decision as well as the decisions announced in ISU Communication No. 2312, point 5 (Figure Skating Officials Status) and point 6 (Figure Skating Requirements season 2020/21), the Council, in consultation with the Technical Committees, is further evaluating other potential consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, such as the lack of ice training, and will publish any extraordinary measures the Council deems necessary in due time.

## Excerpt of [ISU Communication No. 2312](#)

### 5. Figure Skating Officials Status

The ISU Council discussed information provided by the Vice President Alexander Lakernik on the activity and status of Figure Skating Officials, based on his discussions with the Chair of the three Figure Skating Branch Technical Committees and Sports Director, Charlie Cyr.

a) Because of Covid-19 pandemic, all seminars and competitions of the end of the season 2019/20 were cancelled which resulted in a lack of re-certification requirements for some Officials.

In these exceptional circumstances the Council decided that the Lists of Officials for the season 2019/20 will also be valid for the season 2020/21, except for those Officials who no longer fulfil the age requirements.

b) Because of Covid-19 pandemic, the Frankfurt Global Seminar (with Examination) 2020 was cancelled. This year it was planned for the Seminar to include Technical Panel members for promotion from International to ISU categories and new candidates for all Officials positions. Now this Seminar will have to be moved to 2021. However, some Officials who fulfil all requirements in 2020 might not fulfil them in 2021.

In these exceptional circumstances the Council decided that in 2021 Technical Panel members for promotion from International to ISU categories and new candidates for all Officials positions will be accepted if they fulfil the requirements of the year 2020 or the requirements of the year 2021 (or both).

Full details will be sent to ISU Members shortly.

### 6. Figure Skating Requirements season 2020/21

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic many Skaters will not be able to prepare properly for the next season and it will be very difficult for them to learn new programs. Bearing this in mind, the three Technical Committees (SPTC, IDTC, SySTC) proposed, and the Council decided, to maintain the basic requirements of the season 2019/20 for the season 2020/21. The situation varies between disciplines because for Ice Dance and Synchronized Skating all new requirements are published in ISU Communications, but for Single and Pair Skating some of these requirements are in the Rule Book. The details are indicated below.

- Ice Dance: the Pattern Dances for all Novice categories and the Rhythm Dance for Juniors and Seniors will not be changed.
- Synchronized Skating: the requirements for the Well Balanced Short and Free Programs for all categories will not be changed.
- Single and Pair Skating: the requirements for the Short Program as specified in the Single and Pair Skating Technical Rules 611 and 620 for season 2020/21 will be valid.

All 3 Committees propose for the next season slight changes in SOV, Levels and GOE which will be published in ISU Communications in due course.