



SKATE CANADA'S OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENT AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

A Sincere Thank You to All Officials!

On behalf of the Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee (OAP) as well as Skate Canada, we are very grateful for all of your contributions to domestic events in the 2016-2017 season. Your continued dedication to make our events of 2017 Skate Canada Challenge in Montreal, 2017 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships in Ottawa and the 2017 Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Championships in Calgary, as well as any other event you may have served at, a success, it is very much appreciated! Without the time and effort that each and every one of you commit to our wonderful sport, these events could not function and provide an optimal competitive environment for all of our athletes.

2016-2017 SEASON

During this past season, the OAP continued many initiatives from the 2015-2016 season, embraced a few new ones and focused on collaboration with other organizational committees, all with the goal of fostering a supportive, collegial and collaborative environment. The next few pages outline initiatives of the OAP this year.

Webinar: Going Deeper with Mindfulness

At the beginning of the 2016-2017 season, a sequel webinar was created in response to our initial webinar on mindfulness, empathy and leadership from last year. A link to this sequel video was sent to all assigned officials at our domestic events and again we received positive feedback on this follow-up webinar.

All Section Evaluator/Judges Chairs were encouraged to share this webinar with officials within their section, in order to build on the mindfulness culture at all levels of officiating. Thank you to everyone involved in the filming of this second video, and thank you to all who embraced the positive messaging of this video and demonstrated this at events throughout this season.



"In my 51 years as a Skate Canada judge/evaluator, the changes have been monumental as have the changes in skating, and mostly for the better. One change that may not seem important but I greatly respect, is the openness of the official committees to the requirements for promotion. Also at this end of my career, I appreciated the recognition of years of volunteering as a judge. In the past that has not always happened."

— Jane Derby, Canadian Official

Conference Calls with Challenge and Canadian Referees and Technical Controllers:



In November, two separate conference calls were held to collaborate with both referees and technical controllers assigned to Challenge in Montreal. On each of these calls, many leadership items related to these roles were discussed, such as: roles and responsibilities, leadership, and social media expectations of officials. Susan Heffernan presented on creating optimal environments for judging panels, while Sally Rehorick discussed pre-event meeting items, required reports, and time for open discussion in relation to technical panels. For Referees and

Technical Controllers assigned to Canadians, a combined call was held in early January which focused on all of these items as well as the important role that all officials play in delivery excellence to the television viewing audience. The Tech Rep teams for both events were included in all of these calls, as they have an integral role in all aspects of event delivery.

"I believe there was an enormous benefit to our pre-event phone calls prior to Challenge and the National Championships. A theme that was emphasized throughout the calls was "professional volunteers." By giving the leaders----our Referee and Technical Controllers similar messages we elevated the "professionalism" of all our officials. The combination of technical information and mindfulness work of Carolyn McEwen allowed all our Officials to operate at their highest levels. I would certainly encourage similar calls in the future."

—Susan Heffernan, former ISU Official

Mentorship Initiative:

This year the focus of our mentorship initiative was to support all of our technical panel officials and referees to enhance their skill sets. For this initiative, we were fortunate to again enlist Susan Heffernan to mentor and provide feedback to many of these officials. In addition to the mentorship program, Susan worked with the OAP to provide some exam candidate evaluations on domestic officials in addition to mentoring them during the competition. We are grateful to Susan for continuing in this role this past season and we hope to continue the mentorship program as a regular piece of the OAP's yearly work plan.

"Mentorship is such an important part of learning and improving skills. We are lucky to have so many amazing officials in Canada that have literally seen and done it all. Being able to tap into that expertise, learn from it and grow together as officials is an incredible opportunity. As for working with Susan, where do I start? Her passion for sport, our skaters and the role of officials is second to none! Whether she was sharing her firsthand experiences, offering guidance or pushing us to look at things differently, Susan created an incredibly supportive and collaborative environment – one that I know has made me a better official."

— Erika Topolski, Canadian Official



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Referees Webinar:

At the ISU Seminar for International Judges and Referees in May 2016 in Toronto, a webinar was filmed to serve as a preparation tool for referees at the invitational and/or sectional level. Following the release of this webinar on Info Centre, we heard from several international referees as well as domestic level judges who shared with us that they viewed this webinar prior to an event and found it of great benefit. Whether you are a referee or a judge at any level, do take the time to use this tool as a refresher in your preparations for any and all events you attend. We would also like to thank The Officials Development Committee for their support on this project.



"I found the Referees Webinar to be particularly helpful before acting as Referee for my first international event for the 2016-17 season. The presenters touched on topics that all Referees need to be aware of and it gave me renewed confidence heading into my first international referee assignment of the new season."

-Jeannie Senft, ISU Official

"I watched the referee video that was created. It's excellent. I've saved it to my favorites so I can easily watch it as a refresher before I head to the rink. The examples were very helpful. Thank you for putting this information together so succinctly. I would also like to share that we asked all of our judges to watch the webinar prior to arriving at our pre-event meeting at the Skate Manitoba Sectionals this past fall. The information was then discussed in detail and the entire panel headed onto the stand up-to-date and excited to judge some exciting skating."

- Karren Antymniuk, Sectional Official

Career Planning Interviews and Retirement Conversations:

The OAP meets with officials who are entering their final 10 years of eligibility for officiating at the ISU level (as per the ISU age eligibility rule of 70 years of age) in order to gather feedback and determine their goals moving forward. This year we met with one individual. Following the spring domestic availability survey distributed in April 2016, one judge and one data specialist indicated this would be their last season as an official while one other official shared with us that she planned to retire in the next two years. With the success of the career planning interviews we had conducted for international officials, we decided to initiate a pilot project of conducting retirement conversations with domestic officials.

Timer Notes:

Following Challenge 2016 in Edmonton, Sally Rehorick shared with us the information sheet she had prepared for her timers at this event. We collaborated on developing this item further, and would like to thank Reagan Fortin for her feedback. In July 2016, it was posted to the Info Centre for all officials to use at any level of event. Further to that, Janice Hunter shared her chart on program times which was added to this document during the fall season. If you have not yet seen this item, please go to the Info Centre to download it for future use and do share it at competitions where you are provided with a timer – it is a great tool!

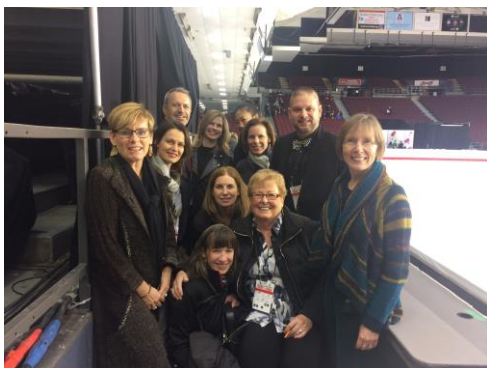
Fireside Chats with Exam Candidates:

This year we had numerous exams at our domestic events and several fireside chats were conducted. In addition to the discussions related to each candidate's exam, they shared many great ideas for future consideration.

2018 Olympic Winter Games – Initial Selection Pool of Four Officials Announced:

In response to feedback received from coaches of Tier One athletes, a subcommittee was formed and an accelerated timeline and process was developed last fall for selection of potential Olympic Judges. This Olympic Judge Selection Working Group (OJSWG) began with a conference call in September, two face-to-face meetings in October at ACI and SCI followed by another face-to-face meeting at Canadians in Ottawa. At this January meeting, selections were finalized by the OJSWG and then forwarded to the Skate Canada Board of Directors for ratification on January 22nd. A mentorship program has also been planned by the OJSWG to support these officials in the lead up to the Official ISU Draw to be held in September 2017 and beyond to the Games in February. At the draw to be held by the ISU in September 2017, we will learn of the number of judging spots that Canada will have at the upcoming OWG. At that time, final selections and assignments to the disciplines will be determined. Congratulations to Leanna Caron, Beth Crane, Nicole LeBlanc-Richard and Jeff Lukasik on their nomination to this initial selection pool!

Honouring Our Retired Officials



The Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee continued their initiative of honouring retired officials this past season. At both the 2017 Challenge and 2018 Canadian Championships, **Jane Derby** was honoured by the officials' community for her long time dedication to the sport.

"It is my privilege to write a few words to thank my mom, Jane Derby, for her many years of service as a National Level Judge for Skate Canada.

My mom has spent decades dedicating her time volunteering for Skate Canada. In addition to officiating, she has been a leader in Eastern Ontario Section, working in various roles including team leader, skater development and Chair of EOS. Like numerous other volunteers, she was a busy mom working full time with three children involved in countless activities. And yet she still found time to contribute to this wonderful sport of figure skating. Jane's role in skating has always been selfless...this is my biggest "take-away" from watching her all of these years. For Jane, it has always been about the skater and the sport, and ultimately how to make a positive contribution to both. Fair and honest to a fault, my mom has lead by example. She has inspired and encouraged many young officials to pursue their goals in this volunteer role. My mom made the decision to retire as a National level judge in 2017. I am confident this is not where her contribution to skating ends. She has been a role model and mentor to me, not just in skating but also in life...and I am very thankful for that. Congratulations Mom!"

-Andrea Derby, ISU Official

In addition to the honouring of Jane, **Josie Howard** was also honoured at the 2018 Skate Canada Synchro Nationals event. Soon after Josie's family moved to Saskatchewan in 1981, Josie became involved as a skating mom at the Regina Skating Club, where her two children skated. She volunteered with many activities with the Club, including club treasurer, a job she held for about 10 years. Josie also volunteered for various positions at national and international figure skating competitions that were hosted in Regina over the years.

Josie received her first promotion as a competition accountant in 1983. Since that time she has been a very active Skate Canada official, working at several competitions every season, including everything from Chief Data Specialist to Results System Manager. Her last promotion was in 2011 when she achieved her Level III Data Specialist qualification. Josie is diligent in her preparation for competitions, very knowledgeable of rules and regulations, conscientious, hardworking, and organized, keeping the skaters at heart in all competitions that she officiates.

Since the introduction of CPC and CSS in 2005, one of Josie's largest volunteer contributions to the operation of competitions has been in the updating and operation of rink side equipment in Saskatchewan. This was a task that required many hours of patience, learning and re-learning, trying and re-trying. She continues to share her knowledge, and training, being a leader amongst the DS's across Canada.



"The Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee released an availability survey, which includes a question for all officials about their plans regarding retirement. This year Josie identified that this would be her last year of officiating. Not only was this a decision that demonstrates Josie's self-reflection and leadership, it allowed for the OAP to bring her to her last National competition, to be able to celebrate her career. She was honoured for her contributions to Skate Canada at a celebration at the 2017 Synchronized Skating Championships in Calgary, her last assignment as an official. Josie plans to continue to volunteer in other capacities with skating, such as at the upcoming Skate Canada International in Regina. Skate Saskatchewan and Skate Canada have been so fortunate to have had volunteer services of Josie Howard, and wish her all the best."

-Contributions from Nadia Stevenson, Sharon Dahl and Sabrina Wong

A little bit of extra fun:

With the goal of creating positive conversations in the officials' hospitality room at Canadians, every official was asked to submit a photo of their favourite pair of shoes. This year Sabrina Wong created a power point presentation with all the shoe photo submissions and it generated some great laughs for all those in attendance. Thank you to Sabrina for her time commitment with this fun item!

"Our officials faced some tough choices when choosing their favourite shoes... But clearly demonstrated creativity and individuality in their choices! It was fun for people to try and guess who owns which shoes?"

– Sabrina Wong, International Official



Looking ahead...

In looking forward to the 2017-2018 season, the OAP plans to further develop and/or refine many of the initiatives of the past two seasons as well as move forward with a few new priorities. Below is a snapshot of some of these items:



Suggested Readings: In response to the initiatives of the mindfulness webinars and the mentorship opportunities, several articles were suggested as great tools for officials in continuing to be mindful in all of their interactions and examining various aspects of leadership. It is our intent to share these suggested readings with you in the new season.



International Partnerships: During the past season, the Icelandic and Mexican Federations reached out to Skate Canada for officials to support several of their national and international competitions. This created many additional opportunities for officials to attend their events. It is our hope that this will continue into the future as the reciprocity of this relationship works well for all involved.



Data Specialists Conference Call: In moving forward with our priority on communication and collaboration in the officials' community, it is our intent for the upcoming season to have a conference call with all data specialists assigned to Challenge, Canadians and Synchro Nationals. We look forward to this initiative for data specialists and supporting this role as well in their important work at our events.



Event Reports and Performance Feedback: Referees and Technical Controllers are required to complete a report for each event at domestic competitions. This report provides an opportunity for them to give feedback and recommendations to the Skate Canada Event Team on logistics as well as to OAP on the officiating performances of the judging/technical panels. I would like to again take this opportunity to share with you below the criteria used on these two reports:



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INDIVIDUAL RATINGS

Using the rating scale listed below, please provide a rating for each of the judges/technical members on your panels for this event. Consider the following under each category:

Technical Skills:

Judges: Understanding of rules, integration of quality in GOE assessments, effective use of positive GOE's, accuracy of reductions, appropriate assignment of PC scores, reflects PC differences when warranted

Technical Panel: Understanding of technical knowledge/rules, calling process, review process, team work

Leadership/Deportment: Self-management during competition and ability to manage stress, open-mindedness to other opinions, acts appropriately in situations, interacts well and/or demonstrates respect for athletes, officials, SC staff, volunteers, stakeholders

M-Meeting expectations of judging level of this event
*no comment necessary or per referee's/tc's discretion

U-Unsure of ability/skill set/deportment at this event
*please provide comments for the OAP committee

The objective of this performance management aspect of the event report is to watch for a pattern and not a "one off" bad day which can happen to any of us. With the goal of transparency of these reports, it was felt it was important to share this with all Challenge and higher level officials. If a pattern is noted throughout a competition, the OAP will provide the individual official with this feedback once all reports have been received, as well as provide them with suggestions on how to address the areas of development.

In closing, it has once again been a wonderful year of great skating served by our officials in all roles at all levels across Canada and at International events around the world. Again, we thank you for your dedication to our sport, and your tremendous efforts throughout the year.

Sincerely,

The Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee of the 2016-17 season

Chair: Karen Howard

Members: Andre-Marc Allain, Marie Bowness, Susan Blatz, Jayson Peace, Karen Robertson, Jean Senft, Debbie MacMurdo, Benoit Lavoie.

Skate Canada Staff: Laura Baker, Mike Slipchuk, Olivia Toner