

Competitions Committee



ISU Judging System (IJS) at Non Qualifying Competitions

This version is for the 2007-2008 Competition season and dated August 21, 2007

Many of our non qualifying competitions this season will be using the new ISU Judging System (IJS) for their events. The IJS system was used at all qualifying competitions during the 2006-2007 qualifying competition season as well as a number of non qualifying competitions. Expanded use of IJS is scheduled for the 2007-2008 competition season. Much has been learned from the more consistent use of the IJS.

The intent of this document is to describe aspects of running an IJS competition so your club can be prepared. The Chief Referee is in charge of the competition, so please be sure he or she is “kept in the loop” for all activities taking place in the rink. In addition, the regional and sectional vice chairs of the competition committee can also offer assistance and answer questions. Do not let the length of this document deter you from reading and reviewing the whole document. There is a checklist at the end which highlights important activities and tasks.

The main difference between the IJS and the 6.0 judging system is that the skater accumulates points for each and every technical element performed as well as five program component marks (similar to the “presentation” mark in the 6.0 system). While the desired result is basically the same – the best skater wins – there are several differences when using IJS.

Using IJS:

- Prepares skaters for qualifying competitions
- Offers feedback to skaters and coaches from judges and technical panel. Computer printouts are made available for the skaters to analyze where they earned points.
- Can use any number of judges (not just an odd number) from three to nine. Three or four judges will use the average of all of the judges’ marks. Five or more will drop high and low scores for each element/program component and then average the rest.
- Must allow 1 ½ to 2 ½ minutes between skaters for review when using IJS.
- Requires additional personnel – technical panel, runners, accounting room
- Well-balanced programs may need to be verified manually for juvenile, intermediate and novice. In some cases, the technical controller will need to manually verify the elements of the well-balanced program. Typically, this is needed during the period after the rules have been changed (May) and before the IceCalc accounting software has been updated for the upcoming season (September).

Things to consider when doing a competition using IJS

Know Thy Terminology/Jargon

Acronyms are becoming the norm. It’s best to learn them...

The IJS (International Judging System) requires the use of a Technical Panel (TP). Each Technical Panel consists of a Technical Controller (TC), a Technical Specialist (TS), and an Assistant Technical Specialist (ATS). If a mini-system is used, a Data Entry Operator (D), a Video Replay person (V), and a Technical Accountant/System Specialist (TA/SS) are also needed. And don’t confuse any of these with your Chief Accountant (CA), or Chief Referee (CR) who puts the whole competition schedule together on a grid called a “104”. Skaters fill out a Planned Program Content Sheet (PPCS) listing, in order, the elements they will include in their program. IceCalc is the accounting program used to calculate the results. At this time, it’s the only authorized program permitted to be used at USFS competitions.

Money -> Mini or Manual

IJS events may be calculated using a manual method or using a mini-system. Which system is used will impact the bottom line of a competition budget, officials invited, volunteers needed, timing of events and even use of rinks.

With the **manual method**, elements and scores are recorded on marking sheets and entered into the computer by the accountants using the IceCalc application. Manual accounting is much more labor intensive during the competition for the accountants than the use of the mini system. Some accountants will not do competitions using the manual IJS so be sure to specify in your invitation which way you are going to work.

The **mini system** is an integrated system of hardware that allows the elements and marks to be entered using touch screen devices which have been set up at rink side. Elements are entered by the D from the direction of the TS. Scores are entered by the judges. Video review by the Technical Panel is available only with the mini system

Mini System Components:

A mini-system is comprised of touch screens for each judge and the referee and is used to enter the marks. The video recorder also has a touch screen to facilitate the “tagging” of the elements on the video recording as they are skated in order that they can be replayed by the Technical Panel. Entry of the element by the D is done on a larger touch screen display while the TC, TS and ATS review the elements on a video monitor. These devices are tied together using a small local area network (LAN) which interfaces to a video server to replay the elements. Two dedicated laptops to record and calculate the elements and scores are also part of the setup. And finally, there is a printer to print results and sometimes a UPS (uninterrupted power source) to keep all this going in case of a power failure. It makes good sense to have a UPS available for the mini system since a loss of power during an event will cause an interruption in the event as the system is reset and brought back “on-line”. When securing hardware for the event, ask the organization if a UPS is part of the hardware kit or if this is an LOC responsibility.

And one last item, an intercom system using headsets which allows the Technical Panel to communicate during the skating and for the reviews is also needed. This technical panel intercom system cannot be the same one that the LOC uses for communicating among volunteers, announcers, monitors etc. This is typically part of a min-system package, but check to be sure they are included.

IceCalc, the accounting software, integrates with the IVR (interactive video replay) system – the touch screens and video replay function - to allow for the input of elements and marks and then the generation of results at the end of each event. This is truly an integrated scoring application with multiple components.

Mini System Setup:

The mini system takes at least 1 to 2 hours to set up—sometimes longer if pieces are missing, broken, or not working—and another hour to test before the first event of the competition. Please factor this time into the competition setup needed at the rink. If the rink is available, it is helpful to set up the system the night before the competition starts. It simply lessens the stress level of getting started on time. The system cannot be set up until the judges stand is built and there cannot be hockey games played once construction has started on the judges stand. Do not expect the TA/SS to setup the equipment after midnight or before 6am.

In addition, each day before the start of the first event, the system should again be tested for functionality and to make sure it's working properly for the competition.

Mini System Hardware Rental:

US Figure Skating has 3 mini systems available for rental. The web site www.usfigureskating.org has contact information for renting the hardware. This is under the Members Only area – you will need your US Figure Skating number and password to access this page. Select IJS Rental Information currently on the bottom of the left navigation panel. The top of the Rental Information page has links to the documents for renting hardware from US Figure Skating.

In addition, some inter club associations and larger clubs have purchased mini-systems. Contact these organizations directly for rental information. This information is also available on the IJS Rental Information page in a section called Private Mini System Owners.

Some organizations will rent to outside clubs, others rent to those close by but will not ship, some will ship. Typically rental rates start at \$500/first day and \$100/day thereafter. For a 3-day competition, the rental would be \$700, but could be more depending on the rental fees and any shipping fees charged. In addition, the competition may need to invite a Technical Accountant (TA/SS). This person sets up and tears down the system and ensures it runs smoothly during the event.

If you are renting hardware from US Figure Skating, the rental agreement requires the use of trained TA/SS for the competition.

While many accountants are familiar with the operation of the mini-system, the accounting crew at your event may request a TA/SS. Check with the Chief Accountant on whether a TA will be needed for the competition.

Mini System Specific Staffing:

With the mini system, you will need a TA/SS, V, and D. Many of the Technical Panel people also do “double duty” meaning they may serve multiple roles and also be judges or accountants. They will all still need breaks in their days, so don’t count on them being able to switch from “judge” to “data” without a break. Consult the directory and work with the Chief Referee to determine how Technical Panel positions can be staffed. More people are being certified in these positions.

In order to keep the schedule in hand, the CR should talk to the TCs and TSs before the IJS events begin about how much time he/she has allowed between skaters and they can agree together on a review policy. A good TP finds ways to stay on schedule.

When using the mini-system more time is needed after the last skater is done in order for the Accountant to finish, print, and clear the event before the next event starts. This usually can be completed during the 5-6 minute warm-up of the next event. Be aware that you can no longer save time by warming up two small events together. The computer must run them completely separately and time needs to be allowed between them for the Accountant to complete printing the paperwork.

For a 3-day competition, using the mini-system and bringing in additional people to fill the TA/SS, D, and V roles, the cost is estimated to be in the \$2500.00 or more range. Clubs need to decide if they can absorb the additional expense for the event. While you think you can shrink the number of officials invited to an event, that is not necessarily so. You may need fewer judges on a panel, but the overall number of officials needed for each panel is at least the same and usually higher (depending on manual or mini-system). The TP needs to be given breaks as least as often as judges. A one-rink competition should plan on two full panels of officials.

Manual System Staffing:

If manual IJS accounting is used for the event, additional runners may be needed to take the paper back to the accounting room for entry after each skater in an event. Depending on the number of IJS events and the competition schedule, additional accountant(s) may be needed. Check with the Chief Accountant on the number of people needed to staff the accounting room. The CR needs to know which system is being used in order to set the schedule appropriately.

Also, do not be surprised if the accountants request to arrive a day earlier than usual since it takes them so much longer to ‘build events’ – that is, produce all the papers needed for all the officials. And you will probably need to buy them several extra cases of paper. The amount of paper used is the same for manual or mini system – and it will all get used.

Prior to the Competition – Planned Program Content Sheet (PPCS)

Prior to the competition, you’ll need to get the planned program content from the competitors. This can be obtained from the skater as a form they submit with their entry or, preferably, can be completed on line by the skater at the U.S. Figure Skating website. It is necessary to contact US Figure Skating Headquarters Member Services at the time you are working on your announcement and arrange to have your competition listed on the USFS website. Be sure to give them the name of the Chief Accountant as the authorized person to download the pre-entered PPCS when they need it. And yes, it is still possible for the skaters to go into the system and update or change their elements until the accountants have downloaded them. In some cases, competitions are charging a fee for those skaters who do NOT submit the PPCS in a timely manner, or who turn in paper when on line submission is required. In a small competition with a limited number of manual IJS events, it is possible to have the skaters turn in (or fill out) a PPCS at registration. These can then be turned over to the TP before the event. Generally, the ATS likes to have the planned program content during the event.

Depending on the preferences of the accountants and technical panel, the planned program content can be input into the accounting software prior to the competition. Some accountants like to have this entered into the computer to save data entry during the competition while others would rather input after each skater since the skaters don’t always do what was planned. Either way, you need to gather the information and have the PPCS prior to the competition

People – Judges, Technical Panel, Accountants,

Over the past two years, seminars have been held across the country to train **judges** of all levels in the system. Some judges may still not have been trained to use the IJS system; others have simply decided not to learn it. You will want to ask or confirm in your officials' invitations if the judge has been trained for IJS. Also beware that while some have been "trained for IJS", they may have little experience in using a mini-system, so ask if they need time to review its usage before the competition starts. It may be necessary to have some sort of brief review or training time. Ask your referee or technical accountant about this.

Consult with the CR on the number and type of officials that need to be invited. The number needed depends on the number of IJS events at the competition. The **Technical Panel** officials should be rotated in and out of events in the same manner that judges are scheduled. The referee will schedule these people on the 104 as he/she does the judges and referees. A *small* one-rink competition may get away with 1 TC, 2 TS, 2 D/V with equipment or 3TP (1TC, 1TS and one to serve as ATS – either TS or TC) with the manual system.

Seminars have been held to train technical panel personnel, including three in April, 2007. Technical controllers must be judges. Technical specialists are typically former competitors and former or current coaches who have been trained by U.S. Figure Skating. They may also be judges. Note: while many of these TS may be found in local coaching ranks, there is a drawback to using them. They often have a conflict of interest. If they have a competitor in that level of event, or have worked with someone in the event, they are not allowed to officiate it. They may also have skaters who have practice ice or an event which conflict with the IJS event, if the competition is in a multiple-rink facility. Their conflicts can make it very difficult on the chief referee trying to make a workable schedule. Also some coaches have reported that it is difficult to wear two hats at the same competition, to go from coaching on one side of the rink to being an official on the other side. So while it may seem cost-effective to use local specialists, there is a different sort of price to pay. Just beware. There are listings of controllers and specialists on the US Figure Skating web site and in the directory.

Singles, pairs, dance and synchronized skating all have separately trained technical panel personnel. There are far more specialists and controllers trained in singles than in pairs, dance or synchronized events at this time.

The **accounting community** has also been trained on the IceCalc software used for IJS events. You'll want to choose a Chief Accountant who has been trained and feels comfortable with IJS. There is additional set-up required for IJS events and more forms are needed for the judges and other officials. Basically 1 sheet of paper for each skater per judge as opposed to 1 sheet for each event per judge with 6.0. If you are using both IJS and 6.0 at the same competition, it is wise to have separate computers for each type of judging system. If you are using IJS without the mini-system, it has also been found that alternating IJS and 6.0 events during the day will help the accounting room keep up with the extra work involved in IJS. As more IJS events are held at competitions, this may not be possible. In some cases, you may need an additional accountant or two, depending on whether the calculation is manual or mini and the number of IJS events scheduled. Consult with the CA on the number of accountants needed for the competition.

Places – Judges Stand, Power, Paper

When using manual IJS accounting, during the actual skating, the Technical Panel will determine what elements the skater has performed and the judges will give each element a grade of execution (GOE). In order to keep the judges in synch, they need to know what elements are being identified by the TP. If you are using a mini system, this is handled by the touch screens at each judges seat.

If using the manual system and you are using a small number of judges, they can sometimes be seated where they can hear the call of the specialist. In most circumstances, you'll need to set up communication via headsets between the technical panel and the judges. Once skaters have completed their programs, you need to have runners available after each skater to take the judges' and technical panel's sheets to the accounting room if the accountants are not rink side. For juvenile, intermediate and novice events, the technical controller may need to verify the elements in the program for the well-balanced rules before they are entered into the accounting software.

The Technical Controller will need time to review the print-out/result sheet of the event before it is signed. This sometimes is done with the Referee or Data person to speed up the process. If these officials are all busy with the next event, there can be a delay in posting the results. If an error is found, it needs to be corrected in the computer and if the next event has

started, the correction cannot happen until the current event is completed and the system is available. This can create another delay. If there are delays in posting results, it is helpful to notify the registration area so they are able to answer questions on why the results are taking so long to be posted.

The IJS comprises a much larger group of people needed to be on the **judges' stand** than does the 6.0 system. A judges' stand using a mini system now needs to accommodate 12-13 officials — judges (5-6), technical panel (5), referee, technical accountant/system specialist and the mini system hardware. Calculated at 2.5 to 3 ft of space per person, that means your new judges' stand needs to be 30 to 40 feet long. Some competitions have been able to squeeze behind 4 8ft tables (32 ft. total) – and the operative word here is *squeeze*. If the stand is built on top of hockey boxes, the people at the ends are at risk of falling off so be sure to have safety railings and space for chairs to move. It's easier if this is one contiguous space, but multiple spaces can be used. Also watch the depth of the tables being used in hockey boxes. Standard 30 inch tables put the panel too far back from the boards and may result in an obstructed view and so 18 inch tables are best used in this situation. The technical panel and associated hardware all need to be together. They can be on the opposite hockey box, or on a riser behind the judges if the allotted space is deep enough and the view unobstructed. Remember, the judges, referee and technical panel all need to be on the same side of the rink.

Photographs of various mini system set-ups that have been used can be found at www.umich.edu/~jacht/ijsstands.

If the manual system is being used, the stand only needs to accommodate 9-10 people - judges (5-6), technical panel (3), and the referee.

If the mini system is used, be aware that **adequate power** will be needed at the judges' stand. The system only requires a regular 110 V circuit, but often skating rinks do not have electric outlets near where you may put your judges' stand. Check that your rink has adequate power before committing to a mini-system. The circuit should be dedicated to the mini-system and not put on the same circuit as the music system, space heaters, copiers, coffee pots, food warmers or other such items that could blow the whole circuit and effectively bring the competition to a halt.

The mini system also requires cooperation from your videographer. Contact the company you are using to make sure that they are able/willing to provide a feed for the video review system. You may also have to discuss where you want their cameras located.

The IJS system generates more **paper** than the 6.0 system. Copiers should be robust enough to handle 5,000+ copies in a 3-day competition. Ask your accountant how many cases of paper that room will need before the competition starts. Remember for each event, each judge gets a sheet of paper for each skater and the technical panel also gets paperwork for each skater as well. Be sure the copier can handle the load and have a plan in place if the copier breaks down. This might include having a service contract and/or paying extra for weekend support coverage. It may also be wise to have a second copier for printing results. The accountants' copier is quite busy and results sales can get tricky depending on how you are selling them (whole-event packages, individual, a mix). Some competitions have the second copier located at the point of sales.

Results

The accounting software program works for all qualifying levels, but for events at the novice level and below there are manual checks that need to be performed to ensure well-balanced programs are calculated properly. For events lower than juvenile, not all elements normally performed have values assigned as yet and it is not recommended to use IJS with IceCalc software at this time. It is also recommended to use IJS only for Free Skating at the Juvenile level, not Short Program, unless it's identical to Intermediate Short Program. At the present time, there is not a Juvenile Short Program defined by USFS for the accounting program.

The manual accounting for IJS is presently more labor-intensive than the 6.0 system. For example, for a Senior Men's FS there are 14 element marks and five program component marks that need to be input for each skater for each judge. With 6.0, there are two marks for each skater for each judge – 19 marks with IJS vs. 2 with 6.0. One advantage is that the marks can be entered immediately after each skater has finished as opposed to after all the skaters are done under 6.0. For an IJS event, if marks are entered after each skater, the results will be available shortly after the end of the event, just as they are for 6.0 events.

After the event has completed, copies of the scores can be available for a predetermined charge so skaters can see where they earned points. They can analyze the elements that were given credit, levels of spins and footwork, and see how each judge evaluated each element and their overall program component marks. It's up to the club to determine how it wants to sell results and how much should be charged for what items. Prices may vary depending on how large the flight of skaters is.

Individual results can/may include: Final results, panel of officials, summary of results, detail of the individual skater.
 Event package can/may include: Final results, panel of officials, detail of all skaters in the event.

Help

The best advice in making the decision to use IJS at your competition is to consult with your Chief Referee and Chief Accountant. Your Sectional and Regional Vice Chairs of the Competitions Committee are also available to provide any assistance you might need. Consult the US Figure Skating Directory for names and contact information. Additional resources to tap are other competitions that have run recent IJS events.

Reference Information

Mark Entry Comparison

	Marks entered IJS	Marks entered 6.0
10 skaters	19 per skater	2 per skater
Total marks Entered per event per judge	190	20

Paper Usage

	Paper usage 6.0	Paper Usage IJS
10 skaters - judges/ref	8 x 1 = 8	7 x 10 = 70
Tech panel	NA	3 x 10 = 30
Results	2 sheets	12 sheets
TOTAL	10 sheets	112 sheets

IJS Checklist

This version is for the 2007-2008 Competition season and dated July 31, 2007

For Manual IJS System

- ◆ Select referee experienced with IJS
- ◆ Select accountant experienced with IJS
- ◆ Include in judges availability if they are trained for IJS
- ◆ Include in judges availability if they are trained for technical panel (controller and/or specialist)
- ◆ Invite sufficient number of technical panel personnel if there are not sufficient numbers among the judges
- ◆ Order quantity of copy paper & have reliable copier(s) on hand
- ◆ Provide ample space for judges, referee & technical panel
- ◆ Provide hands-free microphone for technical specialist
- ◆ Provide all judges with headsets to hear calls
- ◆ Have runners available after each skater to run sheets to accounting room
- ◆ Provide for sale of protocol to skaters after each event

For mini system IJS System

- ◆ Select referee experienced with IJS
- ◆ Select accountant experienced with IJS
- ◆ Make arrangements for computer equipment to be shipped/delivered to rink
- ◆ Include in judges' availability if they are trained for IJS (including use of mini-system)
- ◆ Include in judges' availability if they are trained for technical panel positions
- ◆ Invite sufficient number of technical panel personnel if there are not sufficient numbers among the judges
- ◆ Invite technical accountant/system specialist to oversee installation & maintenance of computer system
- ◆ Order large quantity of copy paper & have reliable copier(s) on hand
- ◆ Allow for set-up time for computer system prior to the first event using IJS.
Be sure that it will be undisturbed when not in use.
- ◆ Arrange for set-up of video operator & camera location
- ◆ Ensure that mini system has intercom system as part of usage
- ◆ Provide for sale protocol to skaters after each event

Glossary

Chief Referee	CR
Chief Accountant	CA
Technical Controller	TC
Technical Specialist	TS
Asst Technical Specialist	ATS
Data Entry Operator	D
Video Replay	V
Referee	Ref
Judges	Judges
Technical Accountant or System Specialist	TA SS