

Communication No. 2477

Mass Start and Team races at ISU Speed Skating Events – Safety measures, promotion initiatives and organization of races

(Complementing ISU Special Regulations Rule 223, paragraph 1, and the following ISU Technical Rules: Rule 253, paragraph 4, Rule 255, 256, 257, and Rule 265 paragraphs 5, 6 and 7)

1. General

This Communication replaces ISU Communication No. 2195 and will apply for the season 2022/2023 and beyond. It contains important regulations on safety measures and provides requirements and recommendations for Competitors to wear particular safety gear and racing suits with specific qualities and design.

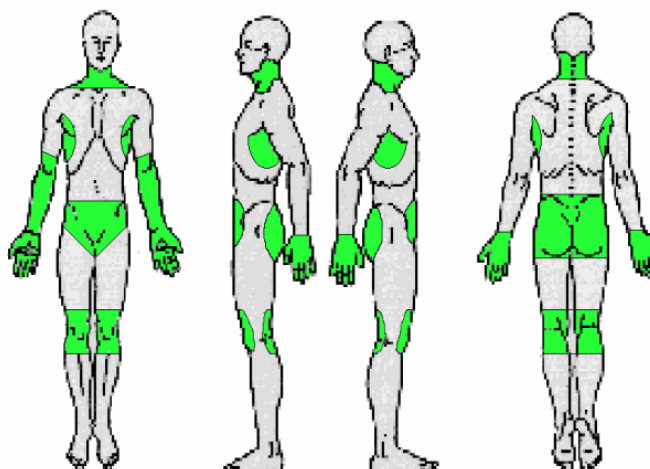
A more detailed reference to and guidance on safety measures and safety standards is given in ISU Communication No. 2400 Cut Resistant Clothing & Protection equipment in Short Track Speed Skating.

2. Safety measures and initiatives for promotion

2.1. Safety measures

No part of the body, except for the face, should be uncovered at any part of the race.

At a minimum, all of the areas specified in the drawing below are to be protected by the cut resistant fabric specified in this Communication.



All Competitors at ISU Senior Events, and starting from the season 2023/24 also for ISU Junior Events, must wear racing suits with cut resistant protection of level 3 as follows:

Racing suit with an integrated cut resistant protection or cut resistant underwear suit. The racing suit must always cover entirely the neck regardless of the Skater's position.

All Competitors at ISU Junior Events during season 2022/23 who do not have a racing suit with integrated cut resistant protection or cut resistant underwear suit must wear:

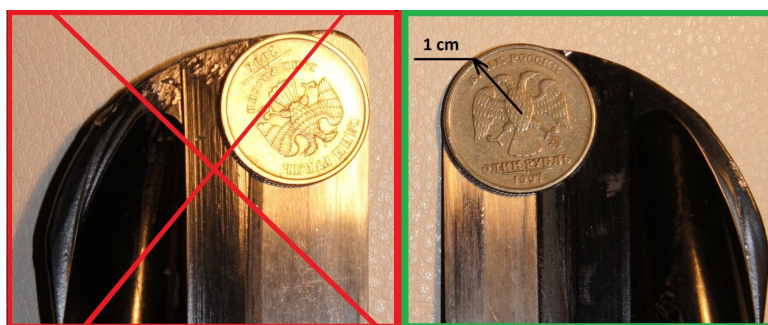
- Cut resistant neck protection. This protection must be placed under the suit in such a way that a blade cannot slide under the neck protection;
- Cut resistant ankle protection;
- Cut resistant shin and knee protection.

Moreover, Competitors must wear:

- Cut resistant gloves;
- Skaters of all levels must wear helmets that are in compliance with the current ASTM standard (American Society for Testing and Materials) or other standard that would be approved by the ISU. The helmets must have a regular shape (round or oval) and may not have protrusions unless these are small and completely integrated in the overall shape of the helmet.

Skaters must make sure the helmet strap is tied properly so that the helmet stays in a firm and correct position during the entire race. The entire race means: until finish of the last Competitor.

- The front and back part of the blades must be rounded off, with a radius of 1 cm, as follows:



2.2. Control of safety measures

Safety measures will be controlled at a “check-in point” before the race, located at the transponder distribution area or as described during the Team leaders' meeting;

Each Skater is responsible for wearing skates and protective equipment, as described above, when appearing at the start and during the whole race.

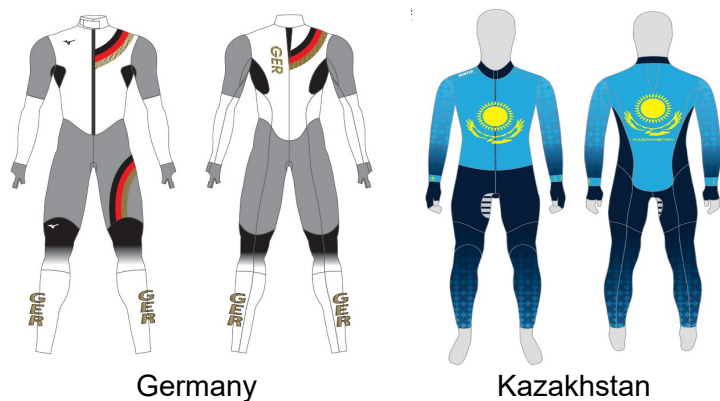
2.3. Racing suit design guidelines for ISU Senior Events

In order to clearly identify and recognize the athletes and national teams competing in Mass Start and Team races and to create a TV and spectator friendly exposure, design guidelines for racing suits as indicated below shall be respected:

- a) Racing suits show a design clearly distinguishing the participating ISU Members (nations).
- b) The racing suits clearly show the national identity / flag colors. Simple artwork will be accepted. For all ISU Members having flags similar to other Members in shape and color (i.e., Netherlands – France - Russia, Italy – Hungary – Bulgaria, Germany – Belgium, – etc.) a unique artwork shall be defined showing the national colors for the remaining part of the Racing Suits.
- c) The country name or official ISU abbreviation must be displayed on the back part of the racing suit.

This also means that ISU Members may use racing suits with one design for Mass Start/Team competitions and with a different design for individual distances.

Indicative design examples from racing suits:



3. Distances and Track for Mass Start races

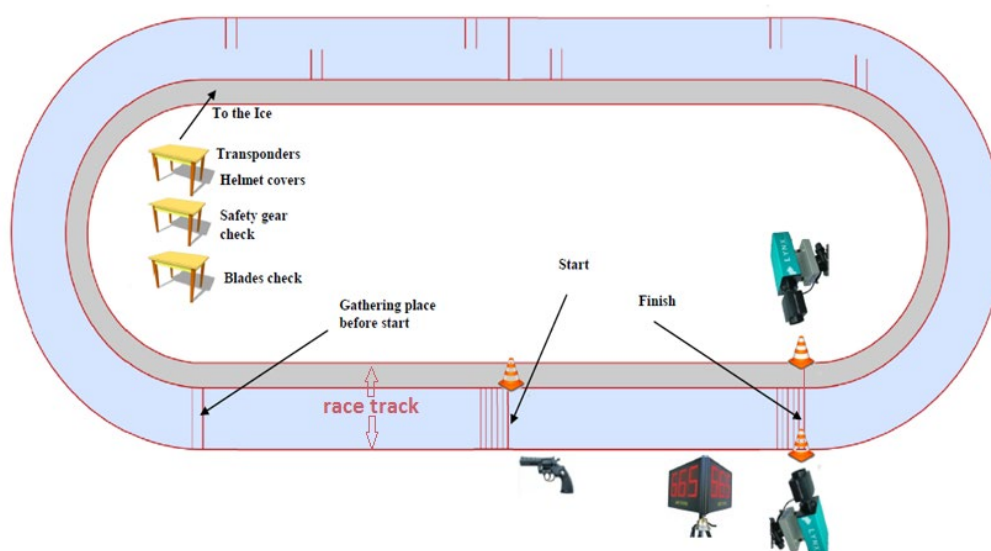
3.1. Distances

- 16 laps for Ladies and Men;
- 10 laps for Junior Ladies, Junior Men and for "Neo-Seniors" (Ladies & Men) competing at ISU Junior World Cup Competitions.

3.2. Track demarcation

Use of the warm up lane: The competition track generally includes the warm-up lane. However, if deemed necessary to keep an adequate and safe radius of the competition track, a demarcation restricting use of the innermost part of the ordinary warm up lane can be implemented upon decision of the Referees in consultation with the Representative of the ISU Speed Skating Technical Committee.

3.3. Track organizational diagram



4. Race procedures for Mass Start races

4.1. Technical competition Equipment of Competitors (Rule 279)

Competitors must wear following equipment:

- *Transponders for timekeeping;*
- *Helmet covers with numbers corresponding to the start list;*
- *Other gadgets or devices to conduct judging and safety of the race.*

4.2. Preparation of the races

- Start positions are assigned according to the respective ISU Communication;
- If races are organized with Semi-Finals, entered Skaters will be placed in the Semi-Finals according to their seeding or Ranking, according to the following procedure:
 - Top seeded Skater: Semi-Final A;
 - 2nd and 3rd seeded Skaters: Semi-Final B;
 - 4th and 5th seeded Skaters: Semi-Final A, etc.
- If the rules of the Competition restrict the number of Skaters from the same country in each Semi-Final, the allocation of Skaters to the Semi-Finals will be adjusted accordingly;
- The Final shall consist of a limited number of the best ranked Skaters from each Semi-Final, with the same number of Skaters qualifying from each Semi-Final. However, in case of advancement additional skater(s) may be added which may exceed the pre-defined limited number of Skaters in the final.
- In the case of withdrawal of a Skater qualified for the Final, this Skater will be replaced in the Final by the next ranked Skater from the Semi-Final concerned:
 - If a qualified Skater from Semi-Final A would withdraw from the Final, this Skater will be replaced in the Final with the next ranked Skater from Semi-Final A;
 - If a qualified Skater from Semi-Final B would withdraw from the Final, this Skater will be replaced in the Final with the next ranked Skater from Semi-Final B.

4.3. Starting procedures

The Competitors gather at the 500m start area and will then be called to the start line by the Starter or announcer.

- The start will be in the middle of the finishing straight (1000m finishing line);
- Line up at the start in rows of 6 Skaters each, with a distance of at least 1 meter between each row. Only the ordinary (inner and outer) racing lanes are used for the start rows. For presentation reasons, after the first row (6 Skaters) have been presented, the starter/announcer may call entire rows to the start.

4.4. Races set up

- After the first lap, before the main (500m) finishing line, a shot will be fired by the Starter. Acceleration to gain a better position in the pack is allowed only from this moment on;
- Intermediate sprints and final sprint:
 - For Junior competitions there will be 2 (two), for Senior competitions 3 (three), intermediate sprints before the final sprint. For each sprint, Competitors will score points that count towards their ranking in the final result of the race;
 - For Junior competitions the sprints will be concluded after 4, 7 and 10 laps (counting the first lap). A bell signal will be given one lap before each sprint; that means when the lap counter shows 7 laps, 4 laps and 1 lap remaining;
 - For Senior competitions the sprints will be concluded after 4, 8, 12 and 16 laps (counting the first lap). A bell signal will be given one lap before each sprint; that means when the lap counter shows 13 laps, 9 laps, 5 laps and 1 lap remaining;
- The finish of the race and each of the intermediate sprints will occur at the end of the finishing straight (500m finishing line);

- Photo finish equipment will be used to verify the position of the Competitors at the intermediate and final sprints;
- No coaching is allowed from the ice. Except medical personnel, no team officials, staff or coaches are admitted infield before and during the race.

5. Mass Start racing rules

5.1. General (see also Rule 255)

- “Fair play” as the basic rule: no obstruction of other Competitors;
- Skaters must take care during racing to avoid causing dangerous situations;
- Competitors overtaken with one full lap by the leading Skater must abandon the race immediately. Lapped Competitors and other Competitors abandoning the race must move to the outer part of the track and enter the coaches' box on the crossing straight as soon as possible after, they have been overtaken or have abandoned the race and shall remain in the coaches' box until the race is over. Technical equipment may be used for signalling overtaking;
- Any unsportsmanlike behavior against other Competitors can lead to disqualification. The Referee has the authority to disqualify the Competitor(s) concerned. An obstructed Competitor may be advanced to the next round at the sole discretion of the Referee;
- The Referee shall stop the race (Rule 216, paragraph 2.g) if there are safety concerns in the case of a fallen or injured Competitor(s). The race will then be stopped by a gunshot or whistle from the Starter or by the Referee. Technical equipment may be used for signalling a stop of the race:
 - The Referee decides if and when a fresh start of the race will be held;
 - The full distance of the race shall be re-skated if the race is stopped for safety concerns and a fresh start will be held;
 - No fresh start will be allowed for Competitors who were disqualified for rule violations, who were lapped or abandoned the race before the incident happened that caused the stop of the race;
- If a “crash” occurs during the first lap with a large group (6 or more) of Skaters involved, the race will be stopped, and a fresh start will then follow immediately.

5.2. Disqualifications

- Competitors moving forward and out of their starting row before the shot is fired will be disqualified;
- The first lap must be skated “in one group” without fast accelerations. Breach of this rule will lead to a disqualification;
- Skaters who do not meet the safety requirements (see paragraph 2.1 above) will not be allowed to compete, or will be disqualified if violating these requirements during the race;
- The Referee, at his discretion, may give “warning” to a Skater in order to prevent unsportsmanlike behaviour.
- Serious obstructions or other unsportsmanlike behaviour against other Competitor(s) can lead to a disqualification.

6. Mass Start ranking rules and sprint points

In each Semi-Final and Final the accumulated points gained at the intermediate sprints and at the final sprint will determine the ranking. Further ranking of the other Competitors is determined by their order of finish at the final sprint.

6.1. Allocation of sprint points:

The points awarded for the sprints are as follows:

- Intermediate sprints:
 - The first three (3) Skaters will earn: 3 - 2 - 1 sprint points;

- Final sprint: The first six (6) Skaters will earn:
 - Senior competitions: 60 - 40 - 20 - 10 - 6- 3 sprint points;
 - Junior competitions: 30 - 20 - 10 - 4 - 2 - 1 sprint points.

6.2. Race results

- The ranking of the Competitors will be determined by the accumulated sprint points in the intermediate and final sprints. Consequently, the first three skaters of the final sprint (places 1 to 3) will be ranked 1 - 2 - 3 in the race.
- For Competitors with the same total of sprint points, final time at the finish will break the tie.
- Competitors without sprint points will be ranked according to their final time at the finish.
- Competitors not finishing the race will be ranked according to the number of laps they have completed before being lapped or otherwise having abandoned the race. If two or more Competitors abandon the race for any reason (e.g. fall, injury, broken skates) on the same lap, they will be ranked according to their last intermediate split time.

For Competitors that do not finish the race, points earned in the intermediate sprints will not be considered for the final race result, these intermediate sprint points will not be reallocated to other Competitors.

7. Distances and track for Team races

7.1. Distances

- 3 laps for Team Sprint races;
- 6 laps for Team Pursuit races for Ladies, Junior Ladies and "Neo-Senior" Ladies competing at ISU Junior World Cup Competitions;
- 8 laps for Team Pursuit races for Men, Junior Men and "Neo-Senior" Men competing at ISU Junior World Cup Competitions.

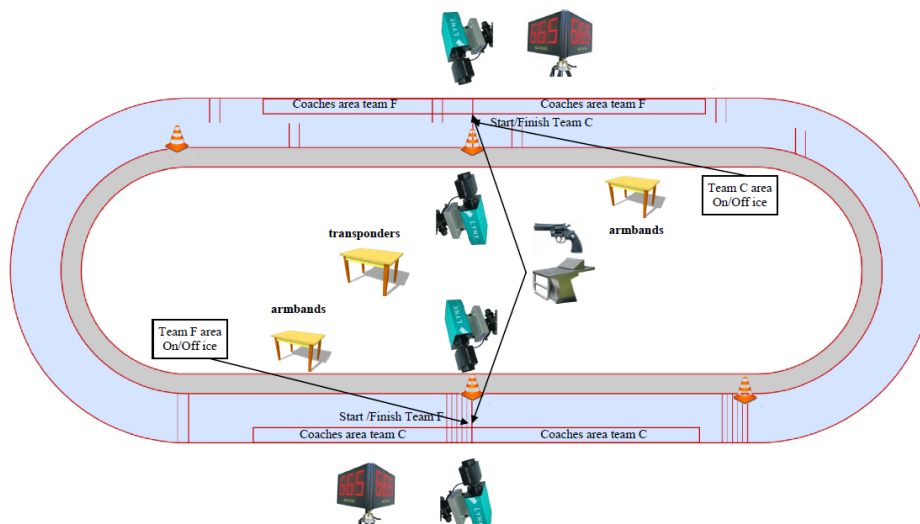
7.2. Track demarcation and set up

The track must be laid out with only one competition lane, e.g. by making use only of the demarcation between the inner lane and the warm-up lane on a standard track.

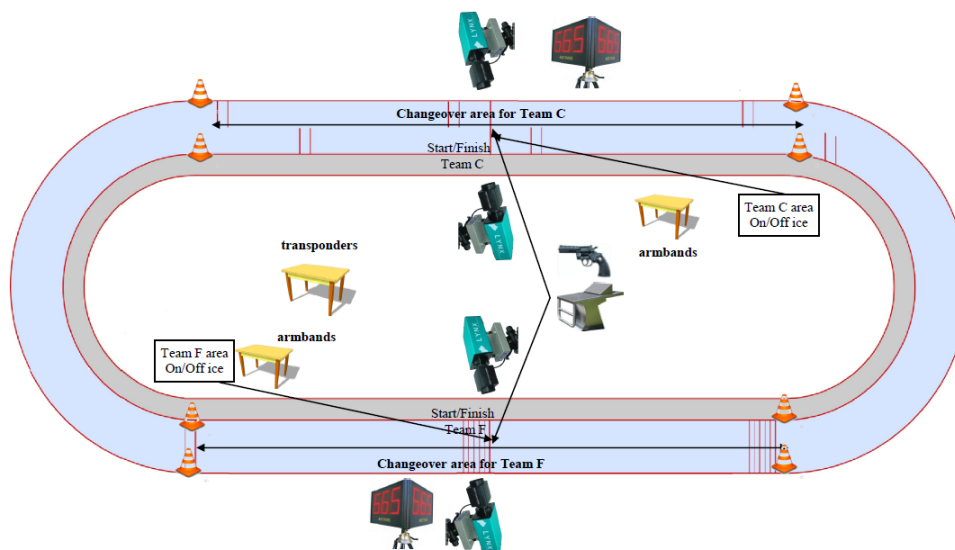
Two Skaters' preparation areas are installed infield:

- At the "500m start" – **on/off Ice Team F Area** for teams starting on the finishing straight;
- At the "1500m start" – **on/off Ice Team C Area** for teams starting on the crossing straight.
- At the "1500m start" – **on/off Ice Team C Area** for teams starting on the crossing straight.

7.3. Track organizational diagram for Team Pursuit races



7.4. Track organizational diagram for Team Sprint races



8. Race procedures for Team races

8.1. Technical competition Equipment of Competitors (Rule 256)

- Transponders for timekeeping must be worn by Competitors;
- **For Team Pursuit races** - Skater No.1 in the team shall wear white armbands with №1, Skater No.2 shall wear red armbands with №2, Skater No.3 shall wear yellow armbands with №3, Skater No.4 shall wear blue armbands with №4;
- **For Team Sprint races** - each Skater shall wear different identification defining their role in the race. Skater No.1 in the team shall wear white armbands with №1, Skater No.2 shall wear red armbands with №2, Skater No.3 shall wear yellow armbands with №3, Skater No.4 (in the case of 4 Skaters in the team) shall wear blue armbands with №4;
- Rule 279 applies;
- At the discretion of the Referee, helmet covers may be used for identification of the Skaters in each Team instead of armbands.

8.2. Preparation of the races

- Only the two competing teams (or one if there is only one team racing) are allowed on the ice during a race. All non-competing teams will remain in or near their ON/OFF ICE preparation areas in the infield;
- Teams will be allowed to enter the ice from their preparation area after the conclusion of the previous heat. In the case of the first heat, the teams will be instructed when to enter the ice (approximately one minute before the start time). The teams shall move directly from their preparation area to their respective start lines;
- To enter the ice, Skaters use the designated ON/OFF ICE area. Skaters will have approximately 50m from entering the ice to the starting line. A countdown clock may be used to inform the Skaters when to appear at the start;
- To exit the ice, Skaters use the designated ON/OFF ICE area. After the finish of the race the Skaters will have approximately 350m to exit the ice;
- For Team Pursuit races, coaches are not allowed to pass through the starting area during the starting procedure (after the “go to the start” command) OR through the finishing area while the competing teams pass through the finishing area on the final lap. Coaches must stay 20m away from both the Starter and starting line during the starting procedure. The coaches will enter and exit the ice in the same locations as the Skaters. After the race the coaches will move directly from their coaching area to their respective exit area;
- For Team Sprint races coaches are not allowed in the coaches' area.

8.3. Starting procedures

- The start will be in the middle of each straight;
- Two teams shall start simultaneously at each side of the track. If the heats have been composed according to a ranking of the teams, the best ranked team shall start on the finishing straight. Otherwise, the starting positions will be determined by a draw;
- Order and position of the Skaters at the start are at the discretion of the teams. However, for Team Sprint races Skaters must be skating in numerical order (No. 1 – white, No. 2 – red, No. 3 – yellow) before reaching the end of changeover area in the starting straight.

9. Team races – racing rules (see also Rule 256)

- During **Team Pursuit races** tactics and changeover are at the discretion of the teams;
- During **Team Sprint races** The first leg is skated with the Skater assigned as No. 1 leading the team, with the other Skaters of the team staying behind. At the end of each leg, the Skater leading the team has to leave to the outer part of the track, and the next assigned Skater (assigned as No.2) has to lead the team during the next leg. The last assigned Skater shall skate the last leg alone and finish the race for the team. Changeover to the next assigned Skater in the team must take place between the beginning of the finishing straight of the team and before the entry to the curve. The leading skater has to clearly show, by moving to outer lane, that changeover has taken place. Cones may mark the beginning and end of the changeover area.

10. Liability

ISU General Regulations, Rule 119, applies.

Tubbergen,
May 6, 2022
Lausanne,

Jan Dijkema, President

Fredi Schmid, Director General