

ISU Synchronized Skating Media Guide

2023/24

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Introduction

Originally called “Precision Team Skating”, Synchronized Skating was introduced in the 1950s. The ISU officially recognized the discipline in 1992 and changed the name in 1999 to what it is known as today. The first ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships took place in 2000 and were held in Minneapolis (USA). It is the only competitive Team Sport within the ISU, and a team consists of 16 skaters (plus up to 4 alternates).

It is a highly technical form of Figure Skating characterized by speed, precisions, unison, and intricate formations, synchronized skating elements, difficult footwork, spectacular lifts and exciting transitions.

The first ever ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships took place in Helsinki, Finland in March 2013. The event was initially to be held every two years but from the 2017 season on, it will be held as an annual event.

ISU Office Holders and ISU Members

The list of [ISU Office Holders](#) and the [ISU Members](#) are updated as and when necessary.

Rules and Regulations

General Rules

ISU Championships are held in accordance with the International Skating Union (ISU) Regulations. The ISU Judging System used at the Figure Skating events is the one adopted by the 2004 ISU Congress. It is constructed as follows:

Championships Officials

For all ISU Championships the following Officials are necessary:

1. A Referee
2. A panel of minimum five (5), if possible and a maximum of nine (9) Judges
3. A Technical Controller
4. A Technical Specialist
5. An Assistant Technical Specialist
6. A Data Operator
7. A Replay Operator

Technical Panel

The Technical Panel is composed of the Technical Controller, the Technical Specialist and the Assistant Technical Specialist, each one from different ISU Members (countries). A Data Operator assists them for recording purposes. An instantaneous slow-motion video replay system operated by a Replay Operator supports the Technical Panel in the identification of the performed elements.

The Technical Specialist, assisted by the Assistant Technical Specialist, identifies and calls the performed elements and the specific Levels of Difficulty of certain performed elements (e.g. Group Lift Element, Intersection Element, Linear Element/Block or Line, Move Element, No Hold Element, Pair Element, Rotating Element/Circle or Wheel etc.). He/She also identifies illegal or additional elements and falls.

The Technical Controller authorizes and/or corrects all calls, supervises the Data Operator and can propose corrections, if necessary. In case of disagreement, the majority among the three Officials prevails.

Judges

Under the ISU Judging System (the same as in Figure Skating and Ice Dance), the Judges focus entirely on evaluating the quality of each element performed (Technical Score) and the quality of the performance (Presentation Score).

Their scores will be based on specific quality criteria for each Element and will provide a comprehensive assessment of each Team's skills and performance, without comparing each Team in relation to all others. The Judge enters the scores through a touch screen unit. At ISU Events Judges may review, in real time, certain Elements of the Teams' performances by means of an instantaneous Video Replay System.

There will be a panel of a maximum of 9 Judges per segment. The scores of these 9 Judges will form the result. Out of these scores, the highest and lowest score of each Element and Program Component are ignored and the average will be taken from the remainder, generating the trimmed mean (average score).

Technical Score

The score for the Element is composed of a "Base Value" of each element (Technical Panel) and the so-called "Grade of Execution - GOE" (Judges).

A group of experts, including experienced skaters and coaches, have worked out a summary list of each Element's Base Value as well as its "Level of Difficulty". The level of points of the Base Value depends on the difficulty of the Element.

These element Base Values and Levels of Difficulty ensure that Teams receive the appropriate and consistent credit for every element performed. The Base Value of all recognized elements are reviewed and published annually by the ISU in a Communication.

The name of the identified element will be listed instantaneously on the Judge's screen. The Judge then simply grades the quality of the element on a scale of +5, +4, +3, +2, +1, 0, -1, -2, -3, -4, -5. With this scale and the resulting "quality judgment", the Judge can either increase or decrease the Base Value of each performed Element.

The trimmed mean is then calculated by deleting the highest and the lowest values and calculating the average of the remaining values. In the case when there are fewer than five (5) Judges, the highest and lowest values are not deleted from the calculation. This average will become the final GOE of an individual Element. The panel's score for each Element is determined by adding the trimmed mean GOE of this Element to its Base Value. The panel's scores for all the Elements are added giving thus the Total Elements Score which is the Technical Score.

Presentation Score

In addition to the Technical Score, the Judges will award points on a scale from 0.25 to 10.00 with increments of 0.25 for the Presentation Score to grade the overall presentation of the performance with three (3) Program Components: Composition, Presentation, Skating Skills.

The Components definitions and criteria have been reduced from five to three in 2022 and have been updated in order to avoid possible overlapping and make the criteria more understandable and clear. Please refer to the Program Components FAQ for further information.

- **Composition** refers to how the program is designed in relation to the music and contains connection between and within the elements, pattern/ice coverage, multidimensional movement and use of space, choreography reflecting musical phrase and form.

- **Presentation** evaluates how the program is performed and includes expressiveness and projection, variety and contrast of energy and movements, musical sensitivity and timing; unison oneness and awareness of space (for Pair Skating, Ice Dance and Synchronized Skating).

- **Skating Skills** is defined by variety and clarity of edges, steps, movements, turns and directions, body control, balance and glide, flow, power and speed.

The panel's points for each Program Component are then multiplied by a factor as follows (same for Junior and Senior):

Short Program: 1.33

Free Skating: 2.67

The factored results are rounded to two (2) decimal and added. The sum is the Presentation Score/Program Component Score.

Final Score

The Total Segment Score is obtained from the Technical Score plus the Presentation Score/Program Component Score, after having subtracted any deduction (for example

1.0 for a fall of one person). Then, the Short Program and the Free Skating scores are added together to form the final score. The Team with the highest total score wins.

Availability of Data and Statistics

At the end of each segment, a list will be published which includes all relevant scoring data for Teams.

Under the ISU Judging System there is far more data available to analyze than before. This data can help the National Federations, athletes and coaches to improve future performances.

The media, skating fans and general public can find statistics and detailed data on the ISU website: www.isu.org

Officials Accountability

The Teams performances are video recorded and can be reviewed on DVD at any time.

A computer checks and identifies possible anomalies of the Technical Panel or the Judges. If anomalies are identified action is taken. Officials who make repeated errors are subject to sanctions.

Most important changes accepted by the ISU Congress 2022

1) The minimum age for participation in ISU senior-level competitions will be gradually raised to seventeen. The age eligibility of 15 years remained the same for the season 2022/23. For the 2023/24 season, only Skaters who have reached at least the age of sixteen before July 1 preceding the event are eligible for international senior-level competitions and ISU senior-level Championships. From the season 2024/25 onwards, the age limit for international senior-level competitions will be raised to seventeen years. For more information please refer to the Age limit FAQ.

2) The Program Components have been reduced from five to three. For more information please refer to the [Program Components FAQ](#).

For more details, refer to [ISU Communication 2495](#).

Required Elements

Short Program

The Short Program is a program of up to 2 min 50 seconds duration that includes specific required Elements that are selected each season, by the ISU Synchronized Skating Technical Committee, from a list of Synchronized Skating Elements (similar to the required Elements in Figure Skating). The sequence of Elements is optional. Synchronized Skating Elements consists of, but are not limited to, shapes that are easily identified by the average audience member.

For the season 2023/24 the following five required Elements were selected:

SENIOR/SENIOR ELITE 12 Short Program

Must include the following five (5) required elements:

1. Intersection Element

- Triangle Intersection is required
- Additional Feature – Point of Intersection (pi) is required

2. Move Element

- All Skaters must execute the "same free skating move (fm)"
- A second fm is permitted only as a part of a Feature
- Different feet are permitted

3. No Hold Element

- Step Sequence – Additional Feature is required
- A maximum of No Hold Element Base (NHEB) will be called

4. Twizzle Element

Plus a choice of one of the following Artistic Elements listed in number 5

5. Choice of Artistic Element

Artistic Element – Circle

or

Artistic Element – Wheel

JUNIOR Short Program

Must include the following five (5) required elements:

1. Intersection Element

- Angled Intersection
- Additional Feature – Point of Intersection (pi) is required

2. Move Element

- All Skaters must execute the "same free skating move (fm)"
- A second fm is permitted only as a part of a Feature
- Different feet are permitted

3. No Hold Element

- Features are required
- A maximum of Step Sequence Base (sB) will be called

4. Pivoting Element – Block

- Pivoting must be executed in four lines

5. Twizzle Element

Free Skating Program

The Free Skating program contains different Elements that are also selected from a list of Synchronized Skating Elements, and are linked together by a variety of transitional

elements and moves. The free skating program for Senior is 4 min +/- 10 seconds in length. The free skating program for Junior is 3 min 30 seconds +/- 10 seconds in length.

For the season 2023/24 the following required Elements were selected:

SENIOR/SENIOR Elite 12 Free Skating

Must include the following ten (10) required elements:

1. Creative Element – Lift

2. Group Lift Element

3. & 4. Two Different Intersection Elements

- Triangle Intersection is not permitted as a choice for either Intersection Elements
- Intersections may be done in any order
- Intersection #1 – Additional Feature – Point of Intersection (pi) will be called
- Intersection #2 – Must include a movement at the axis of Intersection other than the Additional Feature (pi rotation)
- A maximum of Point of Intersection Base (piB) will be called

5. Move Element

- A maximum of four different types of free skating moves (fms) are permitted
- Only two different types of fms are permitted at the same time

6. No Hold Element

- Features are required
- A maximum of Step Sequence Base (sB) will be called

7. Pair Element

8. Pivoting Element – Block

9. Synchronized Spin Element

10. Traveling Element

JUNIOR Free Skating Program

Must include the following eight (8) required elements:

1. Creative Element – Group Lift

2. & 3. Two different Intersection Elements

- Angled Intersection is not permitted as a choice for either Intersections #1 and #2 Intersection Elements
- Additional Feature – Point of Intersection (pi) will be called

4. Linear Element – Line

5. No Hold Element

- Step Sequence, Additional Feature is required
- A maximum of No Hold Element Base (NHEB) will be called

6. Synchronized Spin Element

7. Traveling Element

Plus a choice of one of the following Move or Pair Elements listed in number 8

8. Move Element

- A maximum of four different types of fms are permitted
 - Only two different types of fms are permitted at the same time
- or

Pair Element

For more information about required elements and well balanced programs, please refer to [ISU Communication 2553](#).

ISU Events and Championships Calendar for 2023/24

The full list of Synchronized Skating events is available on www.isu.org

March 2024		
15 – 16	ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships	Neuchâtel, SUI
April 2024		
05 - 06	ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships	Zagreb, CRO

Media Accreditation

The ISU recently launched the ISU Online Media Accreditation System for ISU Championships. The system is to be used by all media including writing press journalists, photographers, freelancers, television/radio non-right holders and right holders. Each individual creates their personalized profile in the system that will enable them to apply for accreditation to multiple Championships.

Television and radio right holders should contact the ISU Media Team in order to obtain access to the system.

Access the [ISU Online Media Accreditation System](#) now to apply for your media accreditation.

Medal Tables

ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships

Overall

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Finland	9	12	8	29
2	Sweden	6	5	1	12
3	Canada	4	4	6	14

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4	Russia	3	0	2	5
5	USA	0	1	5	6

Medalists

ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships

The ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships 2020 and 2021 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results of the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships 2024 are available [here](#).

Year	Place	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2023	Lake Placid (USA)	Canada – Les Supremes	Finland – Helsinki Rockettes	Finland – Team Unique
2022	Hamilton (CAN)	Canada – Les Supremes	Finland – Marigold Ice Unity	Finland – Helsinki Rockettes
2021	Zagreb (CRO)	Cancelled		
2020	Lake Placid (USA)	Cancelled		
2019	Helsinki (FIN)	Russia – Team Paradise	Finland – Marigold Ice Unity	Finland – Helsinki Rockettes
2018	Stockholm (SWE)	Finland – Marigold Ice Unity	Sweden – Surprise	Russia - Paradise
2017	Colorado Springs (USA)	Russia - Paradise	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Canada - Nexxice
2016	Budapest (HUN)	Russia - Paradise	Finland - Rockettes	USA - Haydenettes
2015	Hamilton (CAN)	Canada - Nexxice	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Russia - Paradise
2014	Coumayeur (ITA)	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Canada - Nexxice	Finland - Rockettes
2013	Boston (USA)	Finland - Team Unique	Canada - Nexxice	USA - Haydenettes
2012	Gothenburg (SWE)	Sweden - Team Surprise	Canada - Nexxice	USA - Haydenettes
2011	Helsinki (FIN)	Finland - Rockettes	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	USA - Haydenettes
2010	Colorado Springs (USA)	Finland - Rockettes	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	USA - Haydenettes
2009	Zagreb (CRO)	Canada - Nexxice	Finland - Team Unique	Sweden - Team Surprise
2008	Budapest (HUN)	Finland - Rockettes	Sweden - Team Surprise	Canada - Nexxice
2007	London (CAN)	Sweden - Team Surprise	USA - Miami University	Canada - Nexxice
2006	Prague (CZE)	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Sweden - Team Surprise	Finland - Rockettes
2005	Gothenburg (SWE)	Sweden - Team Surprise	Finland - Rockettes	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity
2004	Zagreb (CRO)	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Sweden - Team Surprise	Finland - Rockettes
2003	Ottawa (CAN)	Sweden - Team Surprise	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Canada - Les Suprêmes
2002	Rouen (FRA)	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity	Sweden - Team Surprise	Canada - black ice
2001	Helsinki (FIN)	Sweden - Team Surprise	Finland - Rockettes	Canada - black ice
2000	Minneapolis (USA)	Sweden - Team Surprise	Canada - black ice	Finland - Marigold Ice Unity

Medal Tables

ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships

Overall

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Finland	5	4	1	10
2	Russia	3	2	3	8
3	USA	0	2	4	6
4	Canada	1	1	1	3

Medalists

ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships

The ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships 2021 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results of the ISU World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships 2024 are available [here](#).

Year	Place	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2024	Neuchâtel (SUI)	Canada – Les Suprêmes Junior	Finland – Fintastic	USA - Skyliners
2023	Angers (FRA)	Finland - Fintastic	Canada – Nexxice	USA - Skyliners
2022	Innsbruck (AUT)	Finland – Fintastic	USA - Skyliners	USA - Elite
2021	Lyon (FRA)	Cancelled		
2020	Nottingham (GBR)	Finland – Fintastic	Russia – Junost	Russia – Crystal Ice
2019	Neuchâtel (SUI)	Russia – Junost	Russia –Crystal Ice	USA – Team Skyliners
2018	Zagreb (CRO)	Russia – Junost	USA – Skyliners	Russia – Crystal Ice
2017	Mississauga (CAN)	Russia - Junost	Finland - Fintastic	Finland - Musketeers
2015	Zagreb (CRO)	Finland - Musketeers	Finland - Fintastic	Canada - Les Supremes
2013	Helsinki (FIN)	Finland - Musketeers	Finland - Fintastic	Russia - Junost