

## Status Report for the ISU 2018 Congress on the Four Year Plan 2014/15-2017/18

**Committee:** Short Track Speed Skating Technical Committee

**Project/Function/Area of Activity:** Coaches/Skaters education & monitoring of Technical Rules

For the period since the 56th ISU Congress in Dubrovnik, the Short Track TC has followed the adopted plan for the period 2014-2018. In link with the Statement of specific results & benefits to be obtained during the period, the STSSTC has placed its focus on the following priorities:

- Safety of athletes
- Continued education of Short Track Speed Skating Coaches and indirectly of athletes
- Continued maintenance and development of up to date technical rules in line with the growth and the marketing of the sport
- Sharing ideas and best practices with other ISU disciplines

### **1. Athletes' safety:**

In collaboration with the Sport Director, the medical commission and the Council, the STSSTC has continued its work to ensure the best possible environment for the athletes. The outcome is that as of season 2018-2019, all ISU Events will be hosted on rinks that have movable padding system or hybrid systems and following the guidance from the new communication 2128. The committee has also pursued ongoing work with the medical commission collecting DATA on most common racing injuries (videos and reports) and also gather information from a few teams investigating helmet testing and concussions.

### **2. Continued education of Short Track Speed Skating Coaches and indirectly of athletes:**

Under the project of coaches/skaters education, the committee has made it a priority to organise regular meetings with the coaches and team leaders throughout the last 2 season. For the season 2016-2017, 3 meetings took place, and for season 2017-2018, also 3 were organised with the last one being at the occasion of the World Championships in Montreal. With each meeting, the goal was to give the possibility to all TL + coaches to ask questions, voice preoccupations or issues but also to explain some of the rule changes that were accepted in 2016, some of the new ideas the committee is currently working on, explaining some of the guidance provided to the officials regarding some of the racing rules, exchanging on the direction the TC is working on with certain rule proposals and also new events and race format to further develop the sport. These meeting seem to be well received so it is the intention to keep them for the next quadrennial and in relation with the education of athletes to also host a workshop directly with the athletes.

With the adoption of the new decisions of the last Congress in Dublin, ISU Championships' format has changed, with the first day being a qualifying round, followed by two days – main competition program. This has led to a significant reduction in the total time of race days, which is more acceptable for TV broadcaster as well.

Concerning the sport-technical level of athletes, corresponding with the level of Championships as well, we can confidently say that in recent years it has obviously risen. As it comes to the rest of international competitions, to name the "Danubia" and the "Star class" - positive results have also been observed.

In this regard, the support of the development program for these and other competition series in different regions is of great benefit and has produced the desired results.

YOG 2016 - held in Lillehammer - 22 years after the Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer showed good level as well as strong desire of young athletes for high sporting results and realization.

### **3. Continued maintenance and development of up to date technical rules in line with the growth and the marketing of the sport:**

The TC has been working very hard over the past two years on the development of a new event that could eventually be added to our existing distances and racing format in our world cup circuit, and eventually perhaps also championships and Olympic Games. An official proposal with the collaboration of the Sport Director and the council was put forward in October to the IOC with the hope of an extra Event for short track at the occasion of the 2022 Olympic. Over the next 2 years the goal is to fine tune the event to come with final rules at the occasion of the 2020 Congress.

The sport continues to grow quite fast in both the number of participants and countries and also the calibre of skating. There was an all-time record number of countries participating in the World Cup during the season 2017-2018 with 43 countries. At the junior level, the format of the World Championship needs to change as there are now too many participants; and the actual format doesn't fit in a 3 days competition anymore. This is a happy problem and also a tribute that some of the development projects are successful. The Star Class and Danubia circuits are a model to export in other regions of the world. Regarding the Junior World Championships, the committee has been working on rule proposals for a change from an overall format to a single distance format. This will be a solution to reduce the overall number of races in the event without limiting the overall total number of participants. It is also a part of a broader plan which is to also change all championships over the next quadrennial.

Another big change that the committee worked on is to have in every race, the optimal number of skaters for the best show possible while keeping safety as a priority. As a result, there were already 2 years ago some rule changes enabling an extra skaters in some of the races over 500m, 1000m and also 1500m. This was successful in creating more exciting races with more speed and more action. Now the next step of rule proposals this year will make it possible to have that optimal number of skaters all the way to the finals with less cases of exceeding it when there are advancements. More skaters per races not only creates more exciting races but also makes it possible to keep growing the number of participants without extending the duration of the overall competition which is already in the world cup circuit becoming a preoccupation.

Recognizing that the relay races are becoming more and more competitive, and that we were seeing a growing number of instances where recovering skaters were interfering with the races, the TC has also worked on some new rules in the hope to prevent falls and contacts that are sometimes spoiling our show and creating unfair results.

Those are the 4 main areas where the TC spent a lot of time working and are concluded by some rule proposals.

### **4. Sharing ideas and best practices with other ISU disciplines/commission**

During the last 2 years the STSSTC had the opportunity to do a joint meeting with the SSTC In June 2017 also with the presence of the VP Speed Tron Espeli, Sport Director Hugo Herrnhof and Development Commission member Jildou Gemser. On a few more occasions, the committee had the chance to welcome Jildou Gemser, some council members, and also

work with some of the medical commission members. These meetings and occasions to get insight from other working groups inside the ISU have been incredibly valuable and helpful for all of us and the work we are trying to accomplish.

In closing, on behalf of the Technical Committee, I would like to thank the ISU President, the Vice-President Speed, the Council Members, the legal advisors, the commissions members, Alexander Kibalko and the members of the SSTC for their great support and cooperation during the past two-year. I would also like to thank all the Staff of the ISU Office for all the help and support, and especially Hugo Herrnhof and Fabrice Prahin.

The Short Track TC members are very much appreciative of everyone's collaboration.

On a more personal note, we have welcomed 3 new committee members for that 2 year cycle: Elected member Xu Xun, coaches' Representative Wim de Deyne and skater's Representative Christoph Milz. All of them, have been great addition to our committee and along with the long-time members Satoru Terao and Reinier Oostheim have worked really hard to contribute to the sport we all love, so we are grateful for the great collaboration of everyone.

May 2018