

Status Report to the 2022 ISU Congress on the Four-Year Plan 2018/20 – 2021/22

Committee/Commission: Synchronized Skating Technical Committee
(SySTC)
Project/Function/Area of activity: Coaches/Skaters Education
Officials Education

The SySTC has carried out and performed the planned activities and achieved the goals that were specified in the Four-Year Plan.

IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE OFFICIAL'S EDUCATION PROGRAM.

The Synchronized Skating Technical Committee has continued to review and expand the delivery of education to our coaches and Officials, both virtual and in person opportunities, with a view to targeting more closely the needs of different groups and regions. In pursuit of this goal, the structure of SyS Coaches, Judges, Referees, Technical Specialists and Controllers education seminars has been further updated to achieve a balance between on ice practicality and in classroom theory-based training. With the increased interest in the discipline worldwide, we ran a very successful seminar in Ankara, Turkey in 2019, to aid with the development of the sport in the region, and another seminar in China during the 2019 Shanghai Trophy.

During the 2020 covid crisis, the Synchronized Skating community was the most affected. Teams were unable to train or could train with difficulty due to local restrictions, and were unable to compete at the National and International level. We organized an Online Element Evaluation/Monitoring for Teams and Officials and over 30 Teams from Japan, Australia, USA, Canada and Europe participated. For both categories (Junior and Senior), over 80 Officials participated in the online evaluation and debriefings were held with each Team and each Technical Panel.

The Championship Officials Training Seminar and Camp, which is designed to fully prepare the judges and technical panels to perform their duties at the two World Synchronized Skating Championships has been a great success over the years. Following the success of this seminar, we decided to create "One" Seminar, which is considered a very effective and interesting approach to provide practical on-ice training combined with classroom information on rules and program evaluation. This seminar is opened to all International and ISU Officials and will be held in a different location each year, the first one was held in Lyon France in November 2021. Over 30 Officials from 18 Members participated. This seminar will be held every two years after a Congress year.

The development seminar for Junior level skaters and their coaches has been held for the past ten years. In 2020 and 2021, the seminar was cancelled due to the covid situation. This year the seminar took place and was a success with 20 junior Teams representing 20 Members, with new Members participating at the Junior level such as Lithuania, Estonia, Norway and New Zealand. The skaters and coaches who attended these seminars are already participating and showing improvement in events at international level and ISU level which is a testament to the success of the program.

The SyS Technical Committee was delighted to be able to participate in the regular Frankfurt seminar which, as always, was perfectly organised and very successful in

delivering the seminar and exam workload. Although Frankfurt was cancelled for two seasons, we were able to organise online exams for Recertification of Technical Panels, Judges and Referees in 2021 to promote new International Judges and Referees. We will continue to offer National level technical education to support ISU members who are newer to the discipline of Synchronized Skating.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

1. The SySTC has been working with the help of the Development Commission to bring new Members into the international competitive circuit. Over the past seasons we had a seminar in Norway; an ISU traveling coach for support in China (virtual coaching due to Covid), Latvia and Turkey; and a development camp in Denmark. We were delighted that China competed for the 1st time at the 2019 ISU World Championships in Helsinki, Finland.
2. The Synchronized Skating competitive calendar changed with the introduction of the Challenger Series during the 2019/20 season. With four total International Competitions the first season (three in Europe, one in North America) Synchronized Skating is getting structured. The first competition in Asia was postponed and will take place in the future. Challenger Series competitions for Synchronized Skating were spread out around the World with the first international event in California, USA. Other competitions took place in SWE, ITA, POL, NED, and the last one was held in Rouen, FRA. The SYSTC was delighted and wish to extend their congratulations for the success to all Members and Organizing Committee which hosted the Challenger Series. The Challenger Series competitions were of very high level and provided an excellent tool for Teams to prepare for competing in our upcoming ISU Championships, as well as earning higher World Standing Points than those earned at 'regular' International competitions. For the second time, the top three placed Teams received ISU Prize Money in each category. The Challenger Series opportunities require further support for locations outside of Europe. The SYSTC continues to provide support and advice for countries looking to host new events and for countries who have existent competitions.
2. The covid crisis had an impact on the highest Synchronized Skating competitions and for two seasons the World Synchronized Skating Championships and for one season the World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships could not be held. The SySTC wishes to express its thanks to all Members who were affected by these cancellations. The Junior World Synchronized Skating Championships and World Synchronized Skating Championships are proving to be a great success. Thanks to the excellent organization and support given by the host countries in the past and this season. Participation continues to grow and the technical standard continues to impress.
3. The SySTC has issued simplified guidelines for Judges and Referees in a new handbook, as well as providing a simplified handbook for our technical specialists and controllers for calling elements.
4. The SySTC is delighted with the growth of the Shanghai Trophy to incorporate all figure skating disciplines. As the founding discipline (with Short Track), Synchronized Skating is very happy to add to the development of this new competition format. It is hoped that this will be the beginning of being part of the Challenger Series for SyS in the future. This is a testament to how innovative approaches can help move our sport forward for the benefit of all disciplines.

5. The SySTC has continued to review the rules and regulations with the involvement of our senior coaches for the SyS discipline and taking into account advice received from representatives of major TV companies. Further recommendations for significant changes in program construction and evaluation have resulted from this consultation process. This will afford more creative freedom to the team coaches that we believe will result in further development of the discipline and more varied and interesting programs for the public and media.
6. The SySTC was delighted to be able to work in co-operation with the ISU Development Commission to support a number of events targeted at grass roots competitive development, and training camps all over the World (AUS, CHN, HKG, ITA, CRO, FRA). We look forward to continued successful co-operation with the Development Commission.
7. The SySTC has been working with the Development Commission on the development of an e-learning platform for Skaters, Coaches and Officials. We had a very successful first event at the Global Seminar in Frankfurt where SyS Officials were the first to be able to take their exams -recertification online. All Officials, Judges, Referees, Technical Specialists and Controllers can now take their recertification online. A library of Synchronized Skating Elements, Features is still being created by eLearning. Broadcast of several meetings and seminars are now available on the new e-learning system, as well as other educational resources such as Program Components. The SySTC was aware of a demand from Officials for annual e-learning refresher courses for Judges, Referees and Technical Panel and we were the first Technical Committee to create online refresher activities for our Officials.
8. The SySTC continues to work towards the inclusion of the discipline in the Winter Olympic program. The support that SyS be included in the OWG program has been clearly communicated from many ISU members with supporting letters sent to their National Olympic Committees. An application was made in November 2021 and sent to the IOC with a new category: Elite 12. By reducing the number of Skaters in a Team, the SySTC hopes that the IOC will recognize that the ISU SySTC made an attempt to meet the athlete quota criteria set by the IOC and include the discipline in its program for the 2026 Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina. Furthermore, with this new category, the SySTC hopes that new Members will be interested, that new Teams will be created and will participate in International competitions in the future.

On behalf of the ISU Synchronized Skating Technical Committee
Philippe Maitrot
Chair

March 2022