



SKATE CANADA'S OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENT AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

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A Sincere Thank You to All Officials!



On behalf of the Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee (OAP) as well as Skate Canada, we are very grateful for your contributions to domestic events in the 2018-2019 season. Your continued dedication to make our events of 2019 Skate Canada Challenge in Edmonton, 2019 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships in Saint John, 2019 Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Championships in Waterloo, and the 2019 Canada Winter Games in Red Deer, as well as all other events you may have served at, a success, it is very much appreciated! Without the time and effort that each and every one of you commit to our wonderful sport, these events could not function and provide an optimal competitive environment for our athletes.

2018-2019 SEASON

The 2018-2019 season was one of change! With many rule changes, including the new expanded +5/-5 GOE scale for all disciplines, thank you to all judges for embracing change and applying your new learnings at events this season. On the technology front, officials at national events were also busy testing our new and improved event scoring system.

What happened at the Event: 2019 Challenge in Edmonton



Challenge is the event that brings together the largest number of officials. It provides an opportunity for our officials coast to coast to connect with old friends, and make new connections! A Special thanks go out to Beth Crane and Deirdre Coburn for organizing the fun filled evenings of games and activities, and for making the Christmas spirit come alive at Challenge in Edmonton this year!

I enjoyed the hospitality suite each night, and thought they did a great job of having different activities each day. I particularly enjoyed how much effort some people put into their Christmas sweater, or in some cases elaborate costume!

Jayson Peace, ISU Technical Specialist

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Honouring of Jean Senft:



The OAP continued to honour retired officials this past season. At the 2019 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships, Jean Senft was honoured by the officials' community for her long-time dedication to the sport. Jeannie was as an ISU Judge and Referee. Lauren Senft, Jeannie's daughter, and ISU Ice Dance Technical Specialist, eloquently described Jeannie in a beautiful speech. Below is an excerpt of this speech.



I have seen you go through the ups and downs that this sport can bring, all while juggling so many hats beyond the cold walls of an ice rink. You have travelled the world, created amazing memories and are forever apart of this sport's history. Thank you for sharing this amazing journey with all of us. You are incredible and it is an honour for me to witness you enter your marks at your last competition to what has been an outstanding career.



Lauren Senft – Jean's daughter, and ISU Technical Specialist

Canada Winter Games:

There is something very special about a multisport event and even before arriving in Red Deer, there was evidence that the Games were about to take place. In the Vancouver airport, teams of athletes from Nunavut (badminton), Yukon (alpine skiing) and British Columbia (figure skating), all dressed in their team uniforms, looked more than just a little excited to see other athletes heading to the Games. I have been fortunate to attend numerous multisport Games including the Canada Winter Games and Olympic Winter (and summer Games) and for me, it is always a highlight to observe athletes interacting with their fellow athletes from other sports. Also

ISU Judge, Karen Howard was a torch bearer for Canada Games, as it went through Regina.



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fascinating were the anxious looks of the airlines staff as the teams checked their extensive collections of equipment needed for their sport -- 10 pairs of skis belonging to one of the alpine skiers! All teams and officials arrived via the Calgary airport and were met by a massive group of greeters holding balloons, noise-makers and cameras. This was merely the beginning of our week in the host city of Red Deer, where we were constantly aware of the warmth and support of the whole community for these Games. Figure skating shared a beautiful new venue with badminton and squash, so it was easy to pop in to see some matches.

All three sports attracted a full house for most of the week. I met officials in both of those sports as well as two judo referees who briefed me on how judo scoring is done, including a new branch of that sport which is choreographed to music!! It is this kind of serendipity that makes the CWG special. For our skaters, they will have made friends from many sports, experienced life in the athletes' village, performed before a packed house of enthusiastic fans, and had the opportunity to march in the closing ceremonies -- a unique combination that makes these Games a kind of mini-Olympics.

Here are two articles written by Skate Canada's Marty Henwood that bring the CWG to life and reflect what we all felt while in Red Deer.

[Special O: "On the ice, I feel unstoppable!"](#)

[Packed house for thrilling final day of figure skating at Canada Winter Games](#)



And here is a great photo of the whole group of officials from Skate Canada together with a [short video](#) of us at work and at play (our Oscars party....!).

Written by: Sally Rehorick, Skate Canada Official, and Member of the Skate Canada Board of Directors

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In Memory of Kathy Cseff:



Kathy was a long-time official of Skate Canada who passed away in February 2019. Kathy had many roles, including Chair of the Skate Ontario Data Specialists Committee, however she was most well known for her work behind the scenes as a Data Specialist. As a Level III Data Specialist, she acted as chief data specialist at many Skate Canada events, and volunteered countless hours with Skate Ontario and the Milton Skating Club. Kathy was a big part of the skating family and will be deeply missed.

I have so many fond memories of Kathy, she had such a positive attitude, and was such a caring person. Whenever someone walked into the "DS Room", her first comment was always, "is there anything I can do for you?", and if you asked her, the answer was always "Yes, I can do that". Her positive energy, knowledge, and passion for the sport will be deeply missed.

Laura Baker – Skate Canada High Performance Manager

In Memory of Sylvain Guibord:



Sylvain Guibord became an official in 2002, and in 2017 Sylvain became an ISU level judge. Ever passionate about figure skating, Sylvain was a member on the Patinage Québec Board of Directors and the Skate Canada Board of Directors. Among his achievements with Patinage Québec, he chaired several committees, including the Officials' Committee, the Skaters' Development Committee and the Competitions Committee, in addition to being the Vice-President of High Performance Development. Nationally, Sylvain sat on the Governance Committee, the CEO Operational Review Committee and the Finance and Enterprise Risk Management Committee. Sylvain was an important contributor to figure skating within our country. He accompanied several athletes and coaches during their development from the regional level up to the Olympics level. With his bold vision, commitment, and perseverance, Sylvain left his mark on the skating world. His tenacity and his dream to always continue developing the sport made him a model for many of us to emulate. The loss of our friend Sylvain was tragic. That is why we are paying tribute today to the great volunteer he was. Thank you for everything Sly!

To pay tribute to Sylvain, Patinage Québec has created an award known as the Prix Sylvain Guibord to be given to an official who, like Sylvain, stands out beyond his or her role as an official. In addition, Sylvain was inducted posthumously to the Patinage Québec Hall of Fame at their recent annual general meeting in May.

Written by: Pier-Luc Paquet, Canadian Official and Patinage Quebec Board Member

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Good News Story: The Benoit-Lavoie Invitational



Are you familiar with the Benoit-Lavoie Invitational competition?

Spring generally means rest for those of us who are officials. Weekends begin to free up, and we temporarily store our coats after a busy season spent in arenas across the country. In early April, the tiny community of Baie-Saint-Paul some 100 km east of Quebec springs into action to put on one of the season's last events (and not just any event) – the Benoit-Lavoie Invitational competition.

This event bears the name of the exceptional person it pays tribute to - Benoit Lavoie. Benoit is an ISU-level official, former president of Skate Canada, and current International Skating Union Council member. Everyone knows Benoit in Baie-Saint-Paul, it is where he grew up, where he put his skates on for the first time, and where he has the pleasure of returning to, to share his experience and (numerous) stories, as well as catch up with those who have supported him from day one.

Baie-Saint-Paul Invitational, first held 41 years ago, was renamed Benoit-Lavoie Invitational in 2009. For more than 35 years, the competition has been masterfully directed by the same technical representative, Nicole St-Gelais. Some officials have taken part since the first year the competition started. The event is held at the Luc-et-Marie-Claude arena. The arena is named after Marie-Claude Savard-Gagnon and Luc Bradet, who won three medals for Canada in pairs, and participated in the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano in 1998.

Last year, for the 40th anniversary of the event, Benoit himself sat on the panel. Don't imagine for a moment that being a judge was all that he did! His schedule included medal awards, an interview with a university student, mentoring officials, a meeting with a former skater who came out to discover what officiating was all about, and valuable time spent with his two nieces who volunteered for the occasion. Every minute was accounted for but very much appreciated!

One thing is for sure – the Benoit-Lavoie Invitational, like the man himself, is an institution in the Quebec Region, and the event is undoubtedly the best way to wrap up the skating season for officials from the surrounding area and elsewhere!

[Crédit photos : Photo Pierre Rochette](#)



Written by: Fanny-Eve Tapp, Challenge Official

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Volunteer/Life Balance – How do you Balance your Career, Volunteer, Family and other Roles?

“Striking a balance” is not easy! As officials, many of us want to do it all. We have careers and families, and we also want to be the ultimate volunteer as a Skate Canada official.

Saying “no” is not easy! There are so many opportunities; remote test days, STAR and competitive competitions, and skater monitoring sessions. Officials are in demand and there is something every weekend. We also dedicate time to our own officials’ development through continuing education, and many officials are involved on boards and committees.

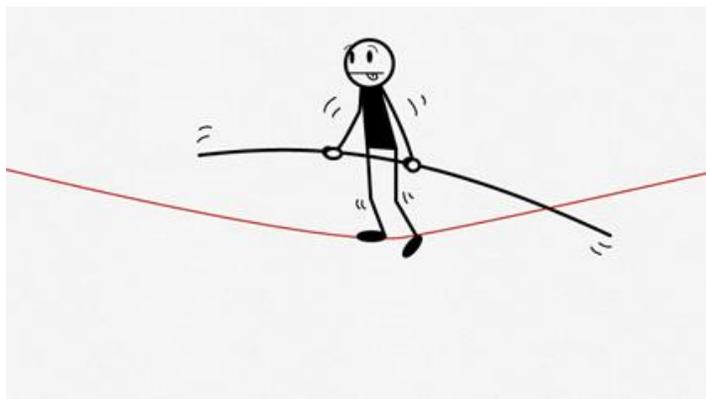
But wait a minute ... Being a judge, evaluator, technical official or data specialist is much more than a commitment of time! There is so much to be gained from being a volunteer. Aside from the confidence and positive gains that result from learning new skills (think +5 to -5 GOEs) and taking on challenges, most of all, being a Skate Canada official allows us to meet people, make new friends, be a part of a community, and be a part of the Skate Canada family. Not only do we make a positive difference with athletes and coaches, but we have fun while we’re at it!

Although we all share a common passion for our sport and want to be the best official we can be, we also need to be conscious of volunteer fatigue, stress and burnout. We need to remind ourselves that it is not just important to be a good volunteer, but it is just as important to be a healthy volunteer. And, to be a healthy volunteer, we need to strike that “balance”.

Feeling a little overwhelmed by volunteer duties? Need to strike a better volunteer-life balance? Take a break and check out the **Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)** at <https://cmha.ca/> to learn more about mental well-being and access great resources and links:

- What’s Your Stress Index? <https://cmha.ca/whats-your-stress-index>
- Take the Work-Life Balance Quiz <https://cmha.ca/resources/work-life-balance-make-it-your-business#.Vyuxo4QrldU>
- Check out the Mental Health Meter <https://cmha.ca/mental-health-meter>

Written by: Nicole LeBlanc Richard, OAP Chair, ISU Judge, and Member of Skate Canada Board of Directors



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2018-19 Exam Candidates:

This year we had numerous successful exams at our domestic events and would like to congratulate the candidates:

Amie Garras	CHA Judge Singles
Annie Thibodeau	CAN Technical Specialist Pair
Dave Dove	DS Level III
Elizabeth Rivard	CHA Technical Specialist Singles
Erin Chellew	CHA Technical Specialist Pair
Ethan Swinburnson	CHA Judge Pair
Genevieve Rosa	CAN Judge Pair
Glenn Fortin	CAN Referee Singles/Pair
Jeff Lukasik	CAN Referee Singles
Limin Jao	CHA Judge Pair CAN Judge Dance
Lynne Dey	CHA Referee Pair
Marie-Pierre Landry	SYS Technical Specialist
Mark Scott	CHA Technical Specialist Singles
Melissa Houle	CAN Judge Singles
Patty Klein	CHA Technical Controller Pair
Pier-Luc Pacquet	CAN Technical Specialist Singles
Ryan Sutherland	CAN Technical Specialist Singles
Sabrina Wong	CHA Referee Dance
William Lindsay	CHA Judge Singles

In addition, we have several officials who will be headed to Frankfurt this summer for promotions. Best of luck to all!

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Looking ahead...

In looking forward to the 2019-2020 season, the OAP plans to further develop and/or refine many of the initiatives of the past two seasons, as well as move forward with a few new priorities. Below is a snapshot of some of these items:



Event Reports and Performance Feedback: Referees and Technical Controllers are required to complete a report for each event at domestic competitions. This report provides an opportunity for them to give feedback and recommendations to the Skate Canada Event Team on logistics as well as to OAP on the officiating performances of the judging/technical panels. I would like to again take this opportunity to share with you below the criteria used on these two reports:

INDIVIDUAL RATINGS

Using the rating scale listed below, please provide a rating for each of the judges/technical members on your panels for this event. Consider the following under each category:

Technical Skills:

Judges: Understanding of rules, integration of quality in GOE assessments, effective use of positive GOE's, accuracy of reductions, appropriate assignment of PC scores, reflects PC differences when warranted

Technical Panel: Understanding of technical knowledge/rules, calling process, review process, team work

Leadership/Department: Self-management during competition and ability to manage stress, open-mindedness to other opinions, acts appropriately in situations, interacts well and/or demonstrates respect for athletes, officials, SC staff, volunteers, stakeholders

M-Meeting expectations of judging level of this event
*no comment necessary or per referee's/tc's discretion

U-Unsure of ability/skill set/department at this event
*please provide comments for the OAP committee

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The objective of this performance management aspect of the event report is to watch for a pattern and not a "one off" bad day which can happen to any of us. With the goal of transparency of these reports, it was felt it was important to share this with all Challenge and higher level officials. If a pattern is noted throughout a competition, the OAP will provide the individual official with this feedback once all reports have been received, as well as provide them with suggestions on how to address the areas of development.



Referee and Technical Controller Feedback: New this year, judges and technical panels were given the opportunity to provide feedback on their respective referees and technical controllers. We now have 360 degree feedback in order to help us determine our strengths and areas for development, which will help guide our training initiatives.



Tea Time FoxTrot: Skate Canada has teamed up with United States Figure Skating and the ISU to offer a seminar on the new junior pattern dance for the Rhythm Dance next season. All Skate Canada International and ISU Ice Dance officials were invited to join this seminar, as well as a few national level officials. The seminar was held in Detroit at the end of April, and the officials that attended the seminar are able to help educate fellow officials in Canada.

In closing, it has once again been a wonderful year of great skating served by our officials in all roles at all levels across Canada and at International events around the world. Again, we thank you for your dedication to our sport, and your tremendous efforts throughout the year.

Sincerely,

The Officials Assignment and Promotion Committee of the 2018-19 season

Chair: Nicole LeBlanc-Richard

Members: Jodi Abbott, Jennifer Betts, Marie Bowness, Andrea Derby, Karen Howard, Benoit Lavoie, Jayson Peace

Skate Canada Staff: Debra Armstrong, Laura Baker, Mike Slipchuk, Olivia Toner, Kennedy Laing

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