



SKATE CANADA'S OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENT AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

261 - 1200 St. Laurent Blvd. (Box 15) Ottawa, ON Canada K1K 3B8
SkateCanada.ca - PatinageCanada.ca

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 participation in the various online educational sessions and section run competitions this past season. Your continued dedication to make our events of 2022 Skate Canada Challenge in Regina, 2022 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships in Ottawa and Calgary, 2022 Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Championships also in Calgary, as well as all other events you have served at, a success, is very much appreciated! Although the circumstances of the COVID-19 Pandemic continued to pose challenges to the season, the time and effort that each of you committed enabled our skaters to have, enjoy and grow from their competitive experiences.

2021-2022 SEASON

There are many successes to be celebrated from the 2021-2022 season. With the commitment and adaptability of our officiating community, we continued to support each other as we served at both virtual and in-person events across the country. Although we were often physically far apart, the continued dedication of our officials enabled our skating family to come together. With vaccines now widely available and restrictions lifted, there is hope on the horizon, and we all look forward to being in a rink together in a more normal setting in the upcoming season. Stay safe and stay healthy.

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COVID Resilience



The past 2 years have been like none other. The landscape of skating has changed, and continues to change as we navigate through unprecedented territory. The constant however, has been the support of Skate Canada officials to adapt and be flexible under varying circumstances and COVID restrictions. From virtual judging to in person officiating, with strict protocols and procedures in place that we are not used to, skaters, coaches and officials all rose to the challenge.

“As officials we have the best seats in the house and are fortunate to see up close the emotions of the skaters as they perform. This past year with many events held with minimal audiences or none at all, the energy level we would usually feel from a filled arena was not there. But what we did feel and witness were skaters truly skating for themselves and to be part of those special moments was a privilege for us all” – Glenn Fortin, International Pairs and Singles Judge

World Synchronized Skating Championships 2022



Skate Canada hosted an Officials Development Program at the 2022 ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships in Hamilton Ontario. Eight officials were selected by the OAP committee and supported by their section to participate in this program, facilitated by Joanne Shaw, Cynthia Alepin and Cathy Dalton. The program provided candidates with exposure to live international level skating. Guest speakers including ISU delegates and international coaches and judges from around the world presented to the program. Thank-you to everyone who participated and contributed to this program.

“It's been an experience that I won't forget and has absolutely inspired me to continue finding more opportunities to get involved, give back to the sport, and further explore the international landscape”- Limin Jao, International Singles, Pairs and Dance Judge, & Canadian Synchronized Skating Referee

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Olympic Winter Games

Skate Canada was fortunate to have five officials from Canada present at the Beijing Olympic Winter Games. Cynthia Benson, Andrea Derby, Janice Hunter and Nicole LeBlanc-Richard were all active as judges in the Team and/or individual events, and Kelly Cruickshank was assigned by the ISU as a technical specialist for the Women's event. Stamped by COVID, these 2022 Games were very different from past Games and will forever be engrained in our officials', athletes' and coaches' memories. From 14-day pre-departure health monitoring and testing, to challenging travel experiences, to daily testing and masking on-site, there are many stories to tell! Despite some challenging moments for our athletes, there were also wonderful bright moments that our officials were privileged to witness! Congratulations to our Canadian athletes for their perseverance, adaptability, and resilience over the past two pandemic years as they strived to qualify for the Games, and for proudly representing Canada.



"The lights go down, a keyboard appears, beautiful music fills the rink. This year's Olympic theme plays out magically on the ice surface ending by capturing the 5 rings at centre ice. I get chills all over, YES, I am at the Olympics, I am ready....Let's go!" - Kelly Cruickshank, ISU Singles Technical Specialist

Virtual Technology/Streaming

As we close out a competition season like no other, it is important to look back at the year that was. From the start of this competition season in the summer of 2021, approximately 130 competitions were held across the country where over 30,000 competitive performances occurred. Thanks to remote officiating technology, nearly 40 of these events were delivered where all officials and announcers were remote. Over 500 officials and announcers were assigned to and attended these events. These remotely officiated events provided meaningful competitive opportunities to over 6000 competitors including 200 Synchronized Skating teams. As each Synchronized Skating team is comprised of several individuals, the total Skate Canada registrants competing at these events is likely

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closer to 7000. When asked what impact access to remote officiating technology had on the Section's ability to deliver events this past season, the following feedback was provided:

- Permitted competitors to participate remotely in events out of Section. This gave a sense of how they relate to competitors in other parts of the country without the cost associated with travel.
- Thanks to reliable and easy to set up technology, a more consistent look was provided to the live stream of events. The platform also allowed for consistent highlighting of sponsors and other stakeholders during these live streams.
- Ensured delivery of competitions across all regions of the Section. Without remote technology, these events would not have taken place.
- Provided a qualified panel for pair and dance events which is usually very hard to achieve due to the high costs associated with bringing in officials from other Sections.

To be sure, there were challenges associated with the delivery of remote competitions. However, without this technology, many competitors would have had far less access to meaningful competitive opportunities. And of course, without the courage and efforts of the individuals involved in the delivery of these events, the technology would not have worked to provide support to these events.

Skate Canada wishes to thank the many officials and the countless other volunteers and Section staff that supported not only these remotely officiated events, but all competitions held across the country this past season. Thanks to this, Skate Canada registrants can live out the vision of Skate Canada and embrace the joy of skating!

Thank you to Norm Proft, Competition Services Director for his contribution to this newsletter

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A Day in the life of an Official



Imagine for a moment being tasked with penning an article about a day in the life of a remote official – seems easy... but is it really? As I went over my virtual officiating routine in my mind, I questioned if anyone was remotely (see what I did there) interested in how many pairs of sweatpants I owned or the struggle to find healthy and filling snacks from the chocolate/sugar food group. Would anyone care about the end game or in life as in sport, would it be more interesting to reflect and enjoy the journey we all took with blind trust so we could eventually embrace the ultimate destination of being ready, willing, and able to do what we do so well in front of a computer screen? Do you remember how we got here, or have you hit the block button?

What follows is my recollection of a journey I never saw coming which may or may not be historically accurate but probably close enough. While discretion suggests it appropriate to change names to avoid identifying people, I realized everyone would instantly recognize Norm and the omnipresent role he plays. I think we can all agree he has more than earned his star billing.

When word started circulating in the Summer of 2020 that a process was being hatched to allow competitions to take place via platforms that we were just getting introduced to in the new world order, I'll admit I was dubious. I was still attending meetings via conference calls (remember those?) and these new programs like Zoom seemed like a cool idea, but would they really catch on?

My section asked me to attend a virtual meeting being led by Norm to introduce the Remote Officiating Pilot that he and others had been developing. The presentation left me dazed and shaken to my core as it was clear that this was going to happen, and it was a lot to take in for someone who had never been able to call technology their best friend. However, I was strangely comforted by something that took me back to those days in the distant past that always triggered my parasympathetic nervous system to chill from whatever discomfort the day had produced. That old gem for those who lived the experience was the beloved clock radio with the sleep timer and the FM dial. That late night FM host with the soft dulcet tones playing the music lulling you to sleep...that voice could have been, maybe it was...Norm. Could his voice on each presentation we attended have been any more authoritative but at the same time quietly reassuring?

I enjoyed the initial presentation so much, that it seemed I couldn't get enough of it. Between initial training, attending training for competitions in other sections, helping with training over several days in

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my section and review sessions for Challenge, I spent more time virtually in Norm's basement than was culturally appropriate.

Once the initial training was mastered, the calls for help from other sections started landing in our inboxes. With a mix of excitement and trepidation, we answered the call to action and ended up back in the training matrix, only upon review it started feeling more familiar and less daunting. I had more time to relax on these sessions as the uninitiated went through the paces and hence way more time to observe all those squares on the screen that had actual familiar faces in them.

Whether it was MS Teams or Zoom, it started to become obvious to me that there were some among us who had spent most of their working days in our new world in virtual meetings and had clearly perfected the nuances of the applications. Feeling good about myself for being able to manage joining the sessions with both audio and video soon led to astonishment at seeing colleagues apparently sitting on a sunny beach under palm trees or in the midst of an exquisite library. What was that sorcery? Who knew unless you worked in actual television that lighting was critical to being able to make out the features of the human in the square? I was beginning to understand what it meant to be a trailblazer – not me personally of course but I did witness many fine examples in those little square boxes of fellow officials demonstrating outstanding Technical Merit. We owe them all a debt of gratitude for showing us the way to nail Composition.

All those hours of training in no way guaranteed a stress-free game day experience. It turns out there are a great many variables that we have no control over and, in almost all cases, we never see it coming. Personally, I did not see any warning from the Apple Corporation about Air Pods being prone to spontaneously launching themselves out of ears generally in the middle of a program. Then you are faced with deciding on the best retrieval strategy – disappear from your Hollywood Square to search and hope your referee doesn't notice, or discretely sliding partway out of your chair so you can stomp your feet along the carpet until you feel something and try to maneuver your toes around it only to be foiled by the thick socks that seemed like a good idea when you slipped into your favourite sweat pants that morning.

Eventually I grew weary of all the ways my Air Pods were trying to sabotage me. Between their periodical escape attempts to disconnecting themselves at inopportune times, I realized that the relationship was just not working for me and alas I initiated a trial separation. Perhaps there is a reconciliation in our future but for now until they modify their behavior, I have reverted to the serenity of an old school head set and honestly, it might be the one.

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Having conquered the challenge of getting my devices lined up and hooked up, I wasn't prepared for the revelation of just how much I was getting ripped off by my internet provider. We are talking indecent exposure levels of really poor service. After a few events and copious beads of sweat sprouting each time I froze mid-sentence, or the video stopped and resumed after skipping over several elements, I knew I needed to act. I wanted to be stable, so I went and got a cable. Turns out that even with a cable, weak internet gets only marginally better. Fortunately, the skating gods always have our backs, and I was notified that my street was next to be switched over to fiber optics. My appointed installation day arrived and after endless challenges I discovered that my new modem was now going to be in my basement, a full two floors away from my computer/judges stand. Most people would be pleased at having the modem out of sight, but I could only focus on the next event I was judging and would question if I have enough Wi-Fi juice to power me through. I went there – I cornered the installer and explained that I judge skating competitions with two computers going and video and things can't freeze... after a long blank stare from him that maybe was his way of assessing my stability, he proceeded to speed test every corner of my house and reassure me that it was all good. My computers are now living their best lives and the cable is keeping my exiled Air Pods company.

While the pandemic was the great disruptor of all that was familiar and comfortable in our lives, it can also be said that it was the great instigator of innovation. We have all benefitted from our ability to adapt and learn and then adapt again. From Remote Competitions and then the adaptation to Remote Assessments, we now have two fantastic tools that will serve us whenever obstacles block the familiar road ahead. To the Staff and all our colleagues who devoted so much time to developing these programs from concept to completion – Bravo. An extra special thanks for also teaching us the value of knowing every time zone in Canada in relation to your own.

With apologies to Garth Brooks;

"I could have missed the pain, but I'd have had to miss the Pattern Dance, the Rhythm Dance and the Free Dance."

Written by Leslie Lawrence – Canadian Judge, and Challenge Referee

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OAP Goal Meetings

The OAP hosted individual meetings for officials who were interested in discussing their future officiating goals and ambitions. There was an overwhelming response with 53 officials attending these goal meetings. Many officials were thankful for the opportunity to speak with an OAP Member. The OAP has decided to continue with this initiative and encourages any official that wants to discuss their officiating goals to sign up for next season.

2021-22 Exam Candidates:

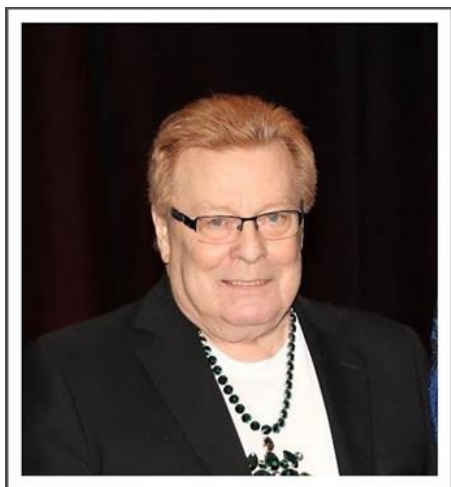
This year, we had numerous successful exams at our domestic events and would like to congratulate the following candidates:

Amie Garras	Challenge Pairs Judge
Joanne Brandon	Challenge Pair Judge
Erin Chellew	Challenge Singles Judge
Shannon Downing	Challenge Singles Judge
Julia Mullins	Challenge Dance Judge
Reaghan Fortin	Challenge Pair Referee
Ron Conacher	Challenge Dance Referee
Leslie Lawrence	Challenge Singles Referee
Jeff Cann	Challenge Singles Technical Specialist
Kevin Reynolds	Challenge Singles Technical Specialist
Jonathan Okrainetz	Challenge Dance Technical Specialist
Hilary Quick	Challenge Dance Technical Controller
Corey Sutherland	Challenge Pair Technical Specialist

Lynne Dey	Challenge Pair Technical Controller
Christine Bordeau	Canadian Singles Judge
Fanny Eve Tapp	Canadian Pair Judge
Hilary Quick	Canadian Dance Judge
Ethan Swinburnson	Canadian Dance Judge
Sabrina Wong	Canadian Dance Referee
Veronique Gosselin	Canadian Singles Technical Controller
John Stevenson	Canadian Dance Technical Controller
Devan Nychka	Canadian Singles Technical Specialist
Michelle Woll	Canadians Synchronized Skating Referee
Chelsey Schaffel	Canadian Synchronized Skating Technical Controller
Katie Kennedy	Canadian Synchronized Skating Technical Specialist

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Peter Gibbons



Peter Gibbons was a familiar face on the Synchronized skating panels at Canadian events throughout the years. It is with extreme sadness that we acknowledge Peter's passing. Peter had recently announced his retirement and was honoured at the BC Section AGM on April 30th and presented with a token of appreciation for his years of service, his time, dedication, and expertise to the synchronized skating discipline. On behalf of the athletes, coaches, and officials, we express our sincere condolences to Peter's family and friends.

"Skating was a part of Peter's life for over 65 years. As many figure skating athletes, Peter transitioned from competitions to ice shows, and then onto coaching. When Peter stopped coaching in 1990, he turned his attention to officiating. Over the past 32 years, Peter has been one of the most active officials in the BC/YK Section. He was always available to travel anywhere to judge or evaluate and most recently, easily transitioned into remote officiating. This year Peter decided to retire as a Canadian Synchronized Skating Judge. Thank you, Peter, for being such a dedicated official and for giving so much of your time to our sport." - Dawn Williams, BC/YK Judge Evaluator Chair

Synchronized Skating Initiatives

Synchronized Skating Nationals Program

Skate Canada hosted an Officials Development Program at the 2022 Skate Canada National Synchronized Skating Championships in Calgary. Seven officials were nominated by their section and participated in the program, facilitated by Sabrina Wong. The program provided candidates with exposure to live national level skating for the first time in two years. Eight guest speakers presented at the program, covering topics including Program Components, Elements, Round Table Discussions, Essential Skills and Leadership. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to this program.

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Synchronized Skating Virtual Learning

Skate Canada hosted a series of virtual development webinars for National and higher-level Synchro Officials. The webinars consisted of five educational sessions and included both judge and technical updates. Each session consisted of a shared presentation and incorporated examples and discussion. Sessions were also recorded and shared with those that could not attend and/or to continue learning at their leisure.

"The chance for the SYS Officials community to come together to learn, discuss and connect in absence of face-to-face competition made a huge difference for so many of us. An additional thank you to Andrew Bosco for his time and creativity in recording and organizing elements and programs for our groups to use. We look forward to more in person events as well as online opportunities for the next skating season" - Jennifer Betts, ISU Synchronized Skating Jude, and International Synchronized Skating Technical Controller & Referee

Challenge 2022

Challenge brings together officials from coast to coast, and after not being able to host Challenge in person in 2020, it was wonderful to bring the officiating community back together in Regina for an in-person Challenge competition. It also marked, the last Challenge competition before we move over to the new competition calendar in which Challenge will be split into two separate competitions, one hosted for junior and senior athletes, the other for novice and pre-novice athletes.

"Challenge 2022 in Regina brought a much-needed return to normalcy by simply being together in a rink again. After only seeing colleagues and skaters on screens for most of the past two years, there was tremendous energy from seeing live skating, attending pre-event meetings, and having judging panels assembled out at rink side. Even watching a Zamboni flood the ice brought a sense of peace (...that is a very Tech Rep type of comment). A standout memory for me were the conversations that shared a similar theme of 'we are so happy just to be here and that we get to do this again'. There was gratitude expressed for simple things that we once took for granted but also for the human connections we have in our skating community. It was good to be back!" - Brenda Hart, Lead Technical Representative Challenge 2022

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Canadians 2022

The 2022 Canadian Championships were very different this year, with no audience in attendance, and strict COVID-19 protocols in place. Despite this, the skating family came together to deliver a fantastic event and offer a much-needed competitive opportunity to our Senior and Junior skaters under extenuating circumstance.

"The 2022 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships marked a much-anticipated return to in-person skating competition on the national stage. After the 2021 Canadian Championships were cancelled due to COVID, this year's event was a welcome return for the skating family, made even more exciting by the on-site team announcement for the 2022 Winter Olympic Games!

While managing the ever-changing landscape of COVID related return to play protocols, and in the midst of a COVID resurgence in Ontario, Skate Canada went to great lengths to safely welcome skaters, coaches, officials, and volunteers from across the country to Ottawa in early January. With the absence of a live audience and significantly restricted access to the skating venue, it wasn't a typical event atmosphere, but the high quality of skating and professionalism of officials, volunteers and staff remained consistently world-class.

Thank you to Skate Canada and everyone who made this event a safe and memorable success! I was honoured to be a part of this historic event as the Technical Representative, and I am looking forward to welcoming back even more of our skating family, fans and supporters next year!" – Meredith Warner-Technical Representative 2022 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships



Synchronized Skating National Championships 2022

The synchronized skating community has been greatly affected and limited during the pandemic. The teams, coaches and support staff were extremely pleased to be able to offer and attend the 2022 Synchronized Skating Championships in person. Teams from across the country came to celebrate and showcase their phenomenal skills, after many had just returned to the ice, after rinks around the country had just re-opened. This Championship also marked the last in its current format. With a new structure in place, we look forward to integrating the synchronized skating discipline with our other disciplines, at two separate Canadian Championships next year.

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Canadians Novice Division 2022

With the Novice category being postponed from the Canadian Championships in January, this group showed their flexibility and adaptability by competing nearly two months later at a Canadian Championships for Novice in Calgary.

"It was great to see our Novice competitors compete in-person for their national titles. It was evident these competitors took full advantage of their training opportunities, impressing the judges with their technical skills and program development. Congratulations to all competitors, officials, and volunteers in achieving a very successful event."- Gregor MacLean, Canadian Singles and Dance Referee and Judge

Looking ahead...

In looking forward to the 2022-2023 season, the OAP has many exciting plans ahead. Below is a snapshot of some of these items:



ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships

Skate Canada is set to host the 2023 ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships in Calgary, Alberta. The competition will run from February 27th to March 5th 2023, at the WinSport Arena. Please stay tuned for more information on development opportunities that may be provided.



Canada Winter Games

The Canada Winter Games will be held in Charlottetown, PEI in February. Skate Canada looks forward to sending a team of officials to experience this wonderful multi-sport event.



Individual Feedback

As a result of numerous requests from officials, the OAP intends to summarize information submitted in referee and TC reports, as well as in evaluation surveys to individual officials. This will provide officials with individualized information to grow and develop their officiating skills.



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

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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

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, the OAP feels it is 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.

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In closing, although it has been another COVID-impacted season, the spirit of our skating family shone through in all roles at all levels across Canada. 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 2021-22 season

Chair: Nicole LeBlanc-Richard

Members: Jodi Abbott, Jennifer Betts, Janice Hunter, Andrea Derby, Karen Howard, Benoit Lavoie, Jayson Peace

Skate Canada Staff: Debra Armstrong, Laura Baker, Mike Slipchuk, Kennedy Laing, Miranda Williams

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