



Speed Skate Nova Scotia

Officials Development Plan 2014-2017



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Speed Skate Nova Scotia

Officials Development Plan 2014-2017

Background

With long track speed skating having been the stellar success that it was at the 2011 Canada Winter Games, and with the subsequent building of the permanent Emera Oval on the Halifax Common, Speed Skating Canada saw the potential to develop a high performance speed skating training centre on the East Coast. SSC and the Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic have collaborated to place a Long Track Coach and Regional Development Mentor in Halifax.

In addition to the potential for the development of high performance athletes, there is also an expectation that the Emera Oval will become a venue for national and international speed skating competitions once the permanent building on the Common is constructed, which is anticipated to occur in 2015. Officials certified at the required levels will be needed to run these competitions.

One of the intended legacies from the Canada Games is usually the development of sport officials, but for long track speed skating, it was understood that the oval on the Halifax Common would be temporary, and that there would not be further long track speed skating competitions in Nova Scotia after 2011. Major officials, with one exception, were brought in from other provinces. Minor officials were recruited from other sports in Nova Scotia, rather than being recruited from the very small speed skating community, which was already stretched to its limits in providing officials for the short track event at the Games.

In total, over 50 officials worked at the long track event at the Games, which is typical of the number required to host an event at this level. With a small number of exceptions, those minor officials trained for the long track event at the Games have returned to their usual sports and have declined invitations to continue to work as speed skating officials. As they have not worked at speed skating competitions since the Games, their certifications have expired.

In addition, prior to the preparation for the Games there had not been a short track speed skating competition in Nova Scotia for several years. The base of short track officials was very small. This was built up for the Games, but Speed Skate Nova Scotia still needs to bring senior officials in from other provinces to run sanctioned short track and long track competitions as local officials have not yet progressed to the level required to work as Chief Officials in the most of the different disciplines.

With the permanent facility expected in time for the 2015-2016 season, Speed Skate Nova Scotia needs to engage in an accelerated development program for its officials in order to have the capacity to regularly host sanctioned competitions on the oval. It is also essential to have regular short track competitions both for the training of athletes, and of organizers and officials.

This plan has been introduced to ensure that the sport of speed skating has a sufficient core of officials to be able to run regular competitions at all levels, meeting the expectations of Speed Skating Canada and helping to ensure the continuation of the high performance program that has been established here. One of the keys to this plan is the professionalization of the Officials Program for Speed Skate Nova Scotia.

Speed Skating Officials Certification Levels

Speed skating officials levels are defined by Speed Skating Canada and the International Skating Union.

The officials certification program consists of five levels for referees and starters, three levels for competitor steward, meet coordinators, timers, finish line judges, announcers, recorders, and all other officials. Each level has specific technical, practical and performance requirements. Certification requirements are defined in the SSC Officials Certification Program.

Level One

Certification at Level 1 is the responsibility of the Branch (provincial or territorial governing body).

Officials certified at this level can work at sanctioned events under the supervision of a qualified Chief Official.

Level Two

Certification at Level 2 is the responsibility of the Branch.

Officials certified at this level can work as Chief Officials at provincially sanctioned meets, and provide the supervision necessary for the certification of officials at Level One.

Level Three

Certification at Level 3 is the responsibility of Speed Skating Canada.

Certification at Level 3A is required for Chief Officials at National Age Class Championships/ Junior Trials. Certification at Level 3B is required for all Speed Skating Canada meets.

Certification at this level is also required in order to deliver officials training clinics, and to provide the supervision necessary for the certifications of officials at Level Two.

Levels Four and Five

Certification at Levels 4 and 5 is the responsibility of both Speed Skating Canada and the International Skating Union.

Certification at these levels is required for international competitions, including ISU sanctioned Can-Am competitions, Senior Trials, World Cups, world championships and Olympic Games. These officials are assigned by the ISU.

Professionalization of the SSNS Officials Program

There has not previously been a formal Officials Program within Speed Skate Nova Scotia. In 2008-2009, before the beginning of the preparations for the 2011 Canada Winter Games, Speed Skate Nova Scotia had only 66 members, including athletes, coaches and officials. Few competitions were held, and officials were recruited and trained on an ad-hoc basis. For the most part, athletes had to travel to New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island to attend competitions.

In discussions with existing officials about their experience working as an official for SSNS, it was determined that there is a perception that the role of the officials is not valued. Officials pointed to the lack of uniform clothing, which means that they are not recognizable as officials on the field of play, and

the absence of recognition for the work they do. There has been little incentive to undertake development work to increase their qualifications, and few opportunities to gain the experience needed to perform their roles at a high level.

Professionalization of the Officials Program will increase respect for the official's role, develop a community where best practices can be shared and implemented, provide incentives for officials to further their development, and ensure that competitions can be run with assurance that officials will be available and competent to ensure safe, fair, efficiently-run events.

Numbers of Officials Required to Host National Sanctioned Meets

The number of officials required to host a national meet sanctioned by Speed Skating Canada will vary with the discipline (short track or long track), the number of days the meet will last, whether the meet is held indoors or outdoors, and whether the meet includes weekdays when volunteers may have work commitments. More officials will be required for outdoor meets in particular, to allow for the rotation of officials during cold or inclement weather.

As an example of the number of officials required for a nationally sanctioned long track meet, these were the minimum numbers to be present on a daily basis for the Canada Winter Games in 2011:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Major Officials | 20 |
| Minor Officials | |
| Assistant Meet Coordinator | 1 |
| Assistant Announcer | 1 |
| Recorder | 2 |
| Assistant Clerk of the Course | 4 |
| Timer | 12 |
| Assistant, Electronic Timing | 3 |
| Lap Counter | 2 |
| Line Judge | 1 |
| Track Steward | 5 |
| Runner | <u>6</u> |
| Total | <u>57</u> |

Over the four days of competition, more officials were required to provide coverage for the full period.

In order to have a sufficient number of officials to regularly run competitions, and to cover off speciality areas that differ between short track and long track, Speed Skate Nova Scotia should have a complement of at least 100 certified officials, including Level II officials for all of the different disciplines, and Level III officials for key positions such as Referees, Starters, Meet Coordinators, Recorders and Electronic Timers. Currently there are about 50 active officials. Most of the officials who were certified at Level II have retired from the sport. Only two officials have Level III certification, one Track Steward, and one Meet Coordinator.

Officials Development Objectives

These are our current Officials development objectives:

- To professionalize the Speed Skate Nova Scotia Officials Program, creating a professional image for our officials, ensuring that they are fully trained and that their officiating experience is rewarding, and ensuring that a fully qualified complement of officials is available to support our Competitions Program;
- To have a enough officials certified at Level One to meet the requirements of both short track and long track provincially-sanctioned meets in 2014-2015;
- To have enough officials certified at Level Two to be able to complete the supervision requirements for the certification of Level One Officials without having to rely on out-of-province officials by the end of the 2015-2016 season;
- To have a enough officials certified at Level Two to be completely self-sufficient in hosting provincially-sanctioned meets by the end of the 2016-2017 season;
- To have enough officials certified at Level Three by the 2015-2016 season to be able to provide Level One training clinics as needed within Nova Scotia without having to bring in trainers from other provinces;
- To have enough officials certified at Level Three by the 2017-2018 season to be able to host Speed Skating Canada sanctioned meets without having to bring in officials from other provinces;
- To continually recruit new officials and to develop all officials in accordance with Speed Skating Canada standards and their personal development objectives, to ensure participants are able to fulfill their personal potential in the sport.

Officials Development Gaps

To achieve these objectives, the following needs must be addressed:

- Establishment of an Officials framework for Speed Skate Nova Scotia outlining processes for recruitment, selection, training and development, evaluation, and retention of officials, and standards and expectations regarding conduct and ethics;
- Detailed information about Officials development needs, to enable better planning on an ongoing basis;
- Lack of officials certified at the appropriate level for hosting high level sanctioned speed skating competitions, and for providing training to new officials;
- Increasing awareness of and commitment to Officials development at the club level;
- Increasing support for Officials development, particularly financial support;

- Both formal and informal learning and development opportunities for officials;
 - Formal: Speed Skating Canada officials clinics;
 - Informal: Seminars, conferences, mentoring, interactions with other officials, and competition experience.

Action Plan

| Action | Responsibility | Time Frame |
|--|--|------------------------|
| 1. Staff the Officials Committee described in the new Committee Structure document. | Board of Directors | September 2014 |
| 2. Put in place an Officials Framework for Speed Skate Nova Scotia, including standards and policies, reporting structures and approval processes, an Officials development program, Officials clothing program, an annual planning process for identifying and addressing Officials development needs, and formal and informal recognition, and communication and delivery plans. | Officials Committee | April 2014- March 2015 |
| 3. Promote awareness of and commitment to Officials recruitment and development at the club level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1. Discuss local Officials capacity and Officials development needs. 3.1.2. Encourage clubs to host mini-meets and to run Level One Officials Clinics in conjunction with those events. 3.1.3. Obtain input from officials concerning their individual development needs and interests. | Officials Committee | Ongoing |
| 4. Complete a more in-depth analysis of Officials development needs over the planning period and prepare plans to address those needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Contact the other Atlantic Region speed skating associations to identify opportunities to collaborate in addressing Officials development needs. 4.2. Prepare a specific proposal to address the identified needs. 4.3. Identify and obtain the resources required to meet the identified Officials development needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.1. Identify the estimated annual costs for implementing the Officials Development Program. 4.3.2. Meet with Sport Nova Scotia to identify the resources available to assist with Officials development. 4.3.3. Identify funding opportunities from other provincial sources, Speed Skating Canada, and other funding | Officials Committee in collaboration with Long Track Coach and Regional Development Mentor | January- December 2015 |
| | Officials Committee / | |

| Action | Responsibility | Time Frame |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| <p>agencies.</p> <p>4.3.4. Work with the Finance Committee to establish a budget for Officials Development, to be administered by the Officials Committee.</p> | Finance Committee | |
| <p>5. Provide specific training and development opportunities to officials</p> <p>5.1. Schedule Level One Officials clinics on an annual basis.</p> <p>5.2. Schedule Level Two clinics on an annual basis at a central location, preferably in conjunction with provincial competitions.</p> <p>5.3. Identify candidates for development to Level Three in each discipline where this is required.</p> <p>5.4. Provide training opportunities for officials at formal competitions as well as the Sunday Racing Series on the Emera Oval.</p> | Officials Committee / Clubs | On an annual basis |
| <p>6. Recruit new officials</p> <p>6.1. Continue recruitment of new officials from the ranks of skaters and their family members, as well as community volunteers and other sports.</p> | Officials Committee / Clubs | Ongoing |
| <p>7. Officials resources</p> <p>7.1. Continue to identify and add Officials resources to the Officials page of the Speed Skate Nova Scotia website.</p> | Officials Committee | Ongoing |

Outcomes

There are several anticipated outcomes from this plan:

- Officials retention

Providing officials with development opportunities and recognizable officials uniform clothing helps to increase their satisfaction with their Officials activities, and demonstrates that their efforts are valued. For officials who want to pursue higher level careers in Officials, it sustains their interest, and helps them to achieve those goals.

- More officials

This plan should ensure that new officials are recruited and developed to meet ongoing Officials requirements.

- Better officials

Ensuring that Officials development needs are met will increase their skills and commitment.

- Officials funding

As volunteers, officials give a lot to the sport. This plan should ensure their development is funded.

APPENDIX I - 2014-2015 Accelerated Development Plan

An accelerated development plan is needed to jump start the Officials Development Plan in 2014-2015.

Because this is a Canada Winter Games year, there will be additional competitions and development opportunities for training new officials.

Additional training clinics will be scheduled in conjunction with the additional competitions that will be scheduled on the oval, including a Level I Officials Clinic, a Level II Starters Clinic, and a Level II Referees Clinic. In addition, Level I officials will be scheduled to shadow experienced Chief Referees, Recorders, Meet Coordinators, and Starters for development purposes. Certified officials will be brought in from out-of-province to provide training and evaluate trainees.

An Officials Clothing Program will be introduced for certified SSNS officials.

Costs:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Travel costs for certified Level III officials to provide training clinics, and provide on-the-job evaluations of officials trainees | \$3,950 |
| Printing costs | 200 |
| Room rentals for clinics | 60 |
| Hospitality for clinics | 300 |
| “SSNS Official” toques for Certified Level I officials (50) | 470 |
| “SSNS Official” fleece jackets for Certified Level II officials (10) | <u>500</u> |
| Total | <u>\$5,480</u> |

APPENDIX II - Fit of the Officials Plan with the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan

The Officials Development Plan specifically addresses the following components of the Speed Skate Nova Scotia 2013-2015 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 1: Strengthening of core infrastructure

4. Officials

- 4.1. Update the current list of officials to identify those who wish to continue to work as officials in the sport.*
- 4.2. Identify gaps in the current availability of officials to work in different roles, and the future needs for officials at higher levels for hosting national and international events.*
- 4.3. Look at the example of the paddling community to determine whether rotational assignments of officials will result in the development of stronger and more versatile officials.*
- 4.4. Recruit additional officials and provide entry-level training clinics.*
- 4.5. Develop officials for higher level events.*

Strategy 2: Developing strong grassroots organizations and increasing overall participation in the sport

1. Club Development

- 1.2. Ensure that new clubs are oriented to the organization of the sport, that they have assistance in identifying and obtaining start up funding, and that their boards, coaches, officials and volunteers are given appropriate development opportunities.*

APPENDIX III - Core Principles

Our Mission

The mission of Speed Skate Nova Scotia is to promote, develop and govern the sport of speed skating in Nova Scotia.

Our Vision

Speed skating will become an accessible winter sport for all Nova Scotians, and a full and rewarding option for Nova Scotians with aspirations to an athletic career.

Our Values

Accessibility and inclusiveness

We believe that skating is an iconic Canadian experience that should be accessible to all Nova Scotia residents regardless of their personal circumstances.

Excellence

We will strive for excellence of athletic activity, coaching, officiating and administration in order to provide our members with the opportunity to fulfil their personal potential in the sport.

Respect

We will act with respect in all of our dealings, and will seek to instil in our membership respect for themselves, for others, for rules and regulations, for equipment and facilities, and for the privileges and opportunities they are offered.

Fairness and integrity

We will provide fair and equitable training and competitive experiences, and will act with integrity in all of our dealings.

Health and safety

Training and competition practices must protect skaters from injury, and be designed to ensure their long term health and well-being.

Fun

Participants in speed skating should experience the joy of sport.

Giving back

As we are supported by our communities, so will we also give back in ways that strengthen and support the well-being of those communities.