

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

Communication No. 1928

ISU Challenger Series in Figure Skating Season 2015/16

1. PREAMBLE

The ISU Challenger Series, introduced during the 2014/15 season as an ISU series of International Figure Skating Competitions (see ISU Communications 1858 and 1894) has proven to be successful and an excellent tool for many Skaters to get prepared for qualifying and competing in ISU Championships.

The ISU Council reiterates that being mindful that the ISU support towards the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating is restricted to a limited group of organizing ISU Members, to a limited number of Skaters and to a limited number of Officials, the ISU Council agreed to financially support a restricted group of identified ISU Members traditionally staging International Figure Skating Competitions being part of the ISU Event Calendar.

This ISU support has the objective to ensure the proper and consistent organization and conduct of up to ten (10) International Competitions linked together within the ISU Challenger Series giving adequate opportunities for many Skaters to compete at the international senior level and earn World Standing Points and to increase the opportunity for Officials to officiate at an international level.

With the experience gained during the first ISU Challenger Series season, some necessary modifications for the ISU Challenger Series season 2015/16 are summarized in this Communication (*changes and additions are highlighted in italics*).

2. COMPETITIONS INCLUDED

In recognition of the long standing tradition and merit of the following International Competitions, there will be a core group of four (4) ISU Challenger Series events, namely:

- *Nebelhorn-Trophy in Oberstdorf (GER)*
- *Finlandia Trophy (FIN)*
- *Ondrej Nepela Trophy in Bratislava (SVK)*
- *Golden Spin of Zagreb (CRO)*

In addition, in order to ensure one Challenger Series event in North America, there will be one ISU Challenger Series event in Canada or the United States to be announced after consultation with the respective ISU Members.

The above-mentioned core group of 4 ISU Challenger Series events plus the above-mentioned North American Challenger Series event remains nevertheless subject to receiving an application from the concerned Members and subject to ISU Council confirmation (see Paragraph 4 below for the details for the applications).

Up to a maximum of five (5) additional International Figure Skating Competitions may be added by the ISU Council based on the applications from organizing Members to be submitted to the ISU.

3. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICABLE COMPETITIONS

Each International Competition must be of “Senior” category (see ISU General Regulations 2014, Rule 108, *paragraph 3.a*) and must include at least 3 disciplines of the Figure Skating Branch (Men, Ladies, Pair Skating, Ice Dance).

The International Competition must be scheduled between August 1 and December 15. *The competitions, included in the “Challenger Series”, should not, if possible, clash with the dates of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating events.*

The International Competition must include **entries** in at least 3 disciplines from minimum *ten (10)* different ISU Members, all disciplines combined.

In addition, the minimum number of **entries** per discipline are as follows:

- Ladies/Men: minimum of *eight (8)* entries each, from at least *four (4)* ISU Members;
- Pair Skating: minimum of *five (5)* entries from at least *three (3)* ISU Members;
- Ice Dance: minimum of *six (6)* entries from at least *four (4)* ISU Members.

For the criteria relating to the awarding of special World Standing Points please refer to Paragraph 6 below.

Entries may be based on invitations extended to selected ISU Members or based open entries available to all ISU Members. *The entry deadline for each event should be set 21 days prior to the first official practice day. Late entries will need the approval of the ISU Vice President Figure Skating.*

Each competition must strictly comply with the 2014 ISU Constitution, General and Special Regulations and Technical Rules, in particular but not limited to the current Rules in the 2014 Regulations, namely Rules 102, 108, 352 and 353.

Following the principles of Rule 420, *paragraph 5.a*) of the 2014 Special Regulations Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance, the members of each individual Technical Panel (Technical Controller and the Technical Specialists) must not be from the same ISU Member. *The Technical Panel members must have the qualification of “ISU”, however one of the three members may have the qualification “International”.*

The Referee must have at least the qualification “International” and can be of the same ISU Member as one member of the Technical Panel (Technical Controller and Technical Specialists).

The Data Operator and the Replay Operator must have the qualification of at least “International”.

No exception can be granted with respect to the above-mentioned composition of the Technical Panels and the qualification of the Referees and Data & Replay Operators.

The panel of Judges must include at least 7 Judges, all from different ISU Members. *In exceptional cases the minimum of 6 Judges per panel may be authorized by the ISU Vice President Figure Skating.* The qualification of the Judges must be at least “International”.

The Technical Panel members, the Referee and the Data and Replay Operators of International Competitions included in the ISU Challenge Series must be proposed by the respective ISU organizing Member to the ISU Secretariat with copy to the ISU Sport Manager Figure Skating latest *45 days* prior to the first day of the competition. Based on the information received and further to internal ISU consultations, involving possible changes as necessary to comply with the above-mentioned minimum requirements, the ISU Vice President Figure Skating will decide upon the final appointments of the above-mentioned Officials. The respective organizing ISU Member will be informed through the ISU Secretariat and must inform the participating ISU Members accordingly.

Any subsequent changes due to the non-availability of previously appointed Technical Panel members, the Referees and the Data & Replay Operators must be announced by the organizing ISU Member to the ISU Vice President Figure Skating with copy to the ISU Secretariat and the respective ISU Technical Committee Chair(s). If such changes to be approved by the ISU Vice President Figure

Skating would not be in line with the above-mentioned minimum requirements, the concerned organizing ISU Members will be notified through the ISU Secretariat for possible adjustments. If ultimately the organizing Member is unable to apply the necessary adjustments and the final appointments of the above-mentioned Officials would not meet the above-mentioned minimum requirements and have an impact on the status of the concerned International Competition as an event of the ISU Challenger Series and consequently on the World Standing Points and/or the validity of the Minimum Total Technical Scores, then the concerned organizing ISU Member will be informed accordingly through the ISU Secretariat. The organizing ISU Member must immediately inform the participating ISU Members accordingly.

The competition format must include the Short Program and Free Skating in the Single and Pair Skating disciplines and the Short Dance and Free Dance in the Ice Dance discipline.

The competition results must be calculated according to the valid ISU Special Regulations Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance, currently Rules 352 and 353 of the 2014 Special Regulations Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance. *The official calculation program of the ISU must be used.*

Entry fees for participation may not exceed the value of CHF 70.00 per single Skater and CHF 100.00 per Pair Skating or Ice Dance couple.

The Draws for the starting order must follow the ISU Rule 512 and 513. *The starting order for the Free Skating/Free Dance may be in the reverse order of the result of the Short Program/Short Dance.*

Practice sessions must be offered to the participants with a priority to the category "Senior" allowing enough time for the Skaters/Couples to complete their program at least once in the main arena prior to the competition.

4. APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR THE ORGANIZING ISU MEMBERS OF THE EVENTS OF THE ISU CHALLENGER SERIES

ISU Members interested to have an International Competition regularly being organized in their country to become an event of the ISU Challenger Series, must apply to the ISU Secretariat for inclusion into the ISU Challenger Series of their planned International Competition **scheduled between August 1 and December 15**. *The competitions, included in the "Challenger Series", should not, if possible, clash with the dates of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating events.*

The Application Forms are available on the ISU website. The application must reach the ISU Secretariat (entries@isu.ch) by **February 28, 2015** and needs to include:

- Description of the venue
- Description of the hotel(s)
- Structure of the Organizing Committee
- History/tradition of the International Competition.

After evaluation of the applications received, the ISU Council will decide upon the 5 additional International Competitions (*in addition to those indicated in paragraph 2 above*) to be included in the ISU Challenger Series giving preference to International Competitions having a certain tradition and continuity. The selected International Competitions (events) included in the ISU Challenger Series will be published through an ISU Communication.

5. PARTICIPATION

Participation is open to all Skaters/Couples of ISU Members, who are eligible for International "Senior" Competitions by age (Rule 108) and by citizenship (109), and entered through the respective ISU Member. *There is a limitation for the Skaters/Couples to three (3) participations in the events of the ISU Challenger Series. The participation of Skaters from the organizing Member into the respective Challenger Series event is not limited.* Participation in any of an ISU Junior Grand Prix event or a (Senior) Grand Prix event does not limit the participation in events of the ISU Challenger Series. However Skaters having participated in the Junior and/or (Senior) ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating during the same season should not have priority to enter events of the Challengers Series.

Skaters/couples, who entered into an event of the Challenger Series and withdrew from that event after the entry deadline without a significant reason (injury/illness or bereavement in the family), may enter another event of the Challenger Series of the same season only after having sent explanations of their withdrawal to the Vice President Figure Skating who may decide upon the entry on a case by case basis.

6. WORLD STANDING POINTS

For the ISU Challenger Series higher World Standing Points than for “regular” International Competitions shall be awarded.

Each competition of the ISU Challenger Series will be awarded with the following scale of points (in brackets for comparison is indicated the number of points for “regular” International Competitions)

	<u>Men & Ladies</u>	<u>Pair Skating</u>	<u>Ice Dance</u>
1 st place	300 points (250)	300 points (250)	300 points (250)
2 nd place	270 points (225)	270 points (225)	270 points (225)
3 rd place	243 points (203)	243 points (203)	243 points (203)
4 th place	219 points (182)	219 points (182)	219 points (182)
5 th place	198 points (164)	198 points (164)	198 points (164)
6 th place	178 points	---	178 points
7 th place	160 points	---	---
8 th place	144 points	---	---

As per the valid conditions for the “ISU World Standings Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance” (ISU Communication 1629 or any update of this Communication) World Standing points are awarded provided that at the time of the first draw of the discipline of the concerned Challenger Series event includes *the same minimum number of entries per discipline as stated under paragraph 3 above.*

In addition, each winner of a competition/discipline in an event included in the ISU Challenger Series will be awarded with a position on the alternate list for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating of that season, provided the respective timing makes such inclusion still possible. Such Skaters/Couples will be listed in the order of their current World Standing ranking respectively the “Seasons Best Score”.

7. MINIMUM TOTAL ELEMENTS SCORE

Provided that all requirements of the composition of the Technical Panel as per point 3 above and of the panel of Judges are fulfilled, the event of the ISU Challenger Series will count for the required Minimum Total Element Score to be eligible for participation in ISU Figure Skating Championships (See 2014 Special Regulations Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance, Rule 378, paragraph 3).

8. ISU CHALLENGER SERIES RANKING

At the end of the ISU Challenger Series, after the last event of the season has been concluded, the two highest final scores in the up to three different ISU Challenger Series events of each competitor/couple will be added and taken into consideration to form an ISU Challenger Series Ranking which will be published on the ISU website.

9. PRIZE MONEY

The top three placed Skaters/Couples of the annual ISU Challenger Series Ranking will receive ISU Prize Money as follows which will be paid to the concerned Skaters by the ISU through their respective ISU Members:

Men and Ladies:

1 st place	CHF 4'000.00
2 nd place	CHF 3'000.00
3 rd place	CHF 2'000.00

Pair Skating and Ice Dance:

1 st place	CHF 5'000.00
2 nd place	CHF 4'000.00
3 rd place	CHF 3'000.00.

10. ANTI-DOPING TESTS

Anti-Doping Tests are not mandatory, but may be performed at the discretion of each local Organizing Committee in line with the ISU Anti-Doping Code and ISU Anti-Doping Procedures (ISU Communications No 1922 and 1923).

11. OFFICIALS REMUNERATION

The Judges, the Referees, the Technical Controllers, the Technical Specialists and the Data & Replay Operators officiating in the “senior” competitions of an ISU Challenger Series event will, at the expense of the organizing ISU Member, receive pocket money of CHF 200.00 or the equivalent in the local currency. *Any Official officiating besides in the “senior” category also in another category (for example junior), will at the expense of the organizing ISU Member receive an additional amount of CHF 100 (or equivalent in another currency) of pocket money per additional day of service.*

12. ISU CONTRIBUTION

Each ISU Member, organizing an event included in the ISU Challenger Series will receive an ISU contribution of CHF 20'000. This contribution will be paid when the event has been successfully completed in line with the requirements included in this Communication and the ISU Statutes. The contribution must be used to cover the costs of the Technical Panel in each event, and the honorarium of the Officials. Any remaining funds may cover ice costs or other organizational expenses.

13. TV/MEDIA RIGHTS – ADVERTISING RIGHTS

Organizing Members are encouraged to provide a TV production and allow TV coverage and/or live streaming of the events to be supported by social media coverage.

As per Rule 100, paragraph 3.b)/c) and Rule 105, paragraph 1.a) of the 2014 ISU General Regulations, the domestic TV rights *and the advertising rights* of the respective event of this ISU series remain with the organizing ISU Member while the international TV rights belong to the ISU.

If a TV production will be provided by the organizing Member of an event of the ISU Challenger Series, the ISU, thanks to its world-wide contacts, will endeavor to exploit these international TV/media rights and secure international TV/media exposure and TV/media right revenues. With the purpose to encourage organizing Members being part of the ISU Challenger Series to provide a TV production of international standard for their respective event of this ISU Series, the ISU is available to share the corresponding revenues emanating from the international TV/media rights to be agreed upon with the respective organizing Member on a case by case basis. *Organizing Members being able*

to provide a TV production and the ISU shall communicate with each other in order to explore and pursue any potential media interest Worldwide.

While the advertising rights remain with the organizing Members of the ISU Challenger Series events, upon an ISU request latest 30 days before the beginning of the respective ISU Challenger series event and subject to availability of remaining advertising space and availability of the respective advertising industry category, the organizing Members shall provide the ISU free of charge up to 12 rink board advertising spots (5 m x 0.90 m) out of which 6 spots shall be TV visible.

The ISU logo must be displayed in the “Kiss & Cry” area visible for the camera view and to the public. The ISU logo as well as the name “Challenger Series” need to be displayed on the backdrop of the interview/Press Conference backdrop as well as in any possible “Green Room”. It is expected that the ISU logo is also included in the rink board space.

Milano,

February 6, 2015

Lausanne,

Ottavio Cinquanta, President

Fredi Schmid, Director General