



Challenger Series
in
Figure Skating

2025 / 26

A N N O U N C E M E N T

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

1. GENERAL

The Challenger Series in Figure Skating, introduced during the 2014/15 season as a series of International Figure Skating Competitions 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 International Competitions linked together within the Challenger Series in Figure Skating 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.

The ten events of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating for the 2025/26 season are as follows (both events in the USA count for one event):
(only five events will host Pair Skating – in grey)

Date	Competition	Place
7-10 August 2025	2025 Cranberry Cup International (Men & Women)	Norwood, MA, USA
2-3 September 2025	2025 John Nicks Pairs Challenge International (Pairs only)	New York, NY, USA
5-7 September 2025	Kinoshita Group Cup	Osaka, JPN
11-14 September 2025	Lombardia Trophy 2025	Bergamo, ITA
25-27 September 2025	Nebelhorn Trophy 2025	Oberstdorf, GER
25-27 September 2025	33 rd Nepela Memorial 2025	Bratislava, SVK
1-4 October 2025	Denis Ten Memorial Challenge	Astana, KAZ
8-11 October 2025	Trialeti Trophy	Tbilisi, GEO
19-23 November 2025	PGE Warsaw Cup 2025	Warsaw, POL
24-30 November 2025	Tallinn Trophy 2025	Tallinn, EST
3-6 December 2025	Golden Spin of Zagreb 2025	Zagreb, CRO

2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Each International Competition as part of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating must consist of “Senior” categories and must include entries in at least three disciplines of the Figure Skating Branch (Men, Women, Pair Skating, Ice Dance) from a minimum of ten different ISU Members, in all disciplines combined.

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

- Men / Women: minimum of eight entries each, from at least four ISU Members;
- Pair Skating: minimum of five entries from at least three ISU Members;
- Ice Dance: minimum of six entries from at least four ISU Members.

For the criteria relating to the awarding of the special ISU World Standing Points for the Challenger Series in Figure Skating please refer to paragraph 9 below.

Each competition must strictly comply with the ISU Constitution, General and Special Regulations and Technical Rules 2024, in particular but not limited to the current Rules in the ISU Constitution and General Regulations 2024 and the Special Regulations and Technical Rules Singles & Pairs and Ice Dance 2024, namely Rules 102, 108, 352 and 353.

3. ENTRIES

3.1 Participation

Participation is open to all Skaters/Couples of ISU Members with a maximum of three entries per category (except for the Host Member), who are eligible for International "Senior" Competitions by age (Rule 108) and by citizenship (Rule 109), and entered through the respective ISU Member. The participation of Skaters from the Host Member into the respective Challenger Series in Figure Skating event is not limited.

There is a limitation for the Skaters/Couples to three participations in the events of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating. If a Skater/Couple does not complete an event after initially drawn for starting order of the Short Program/Rhythm Dance due to illness, injury or other circumstances, such an event will count as one participation in the Challenger Series.

Entries are open to all ISU Members.

The entry deadline for each event should be **not later than 30 days prior** to the first official practice day. The exact entry deadlines of the respective event within the Challenger Series in Figure Skating will be outlined in the individual event announcements. Late entries will need the approval of the ISU Vice President Figure Skating.

Participation in any of an ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating event or an ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event does not limit the participation in events of the Challenger Series. However Skaters/Couples participating in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating during the same season should not have priority to enter events of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating.

Skaters/couples, who entered into an event of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating and withdrew from that event, may enter another event of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating of the same season only after having sent explanations of their withdrawal to the Vice President Figure Skating and to the ISU Secretariat, who may decide upon the entry on a case by case basis.

3.2 Entry Fees

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

4. TECHNICAL DATA

MEN

Short Program	The required elements to be skated are those listed in ISU Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating 2024, Rule 611, paragraphs 1 and 2. Duration: 2 min., 40 sec. +/- 10 sec.
Free Skating	In accordance with ISU Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating 2024, Rule 612 and the respective ISU Communication. Special attention should be paid to the "well balanced program" and the element value. Duration: 4 min., +/- 10 sec.

WOMEN

Short Program	The required elements to be skated are those listed in ISU Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating 2024 Rule 611, paragraphs 1 and 2. Duration: 2 min., 40 sec. +/- 10 sec.
Free Skating	In accordance with ISU Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating 2024, Rule 612 and the respective ISU Communication. Special attention should be paid to the "well balanced program" and the element value. Duration: 4 min., +/- 10 sec.

PAIR SKATING	Short Program	The required elements to be skated are those listed in ISU Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating 2024, Rule 620, paragraphs 1 and 2 for 2025/26. Duration: 2 min., 40 sec. +/- 10 sec.
	Free Skating	In accordance with ISU Technical Rules Figure Skating & Pairs Skating 2024, Rule 621 and the respective ISU Communication. Special attention should be paid to the “well balanced program” and the element value. Duration: 4 min., +/- 10 sec.
ICE DANCE	Rhythm Dance	In accordance with ISU Technical Rules Ice Dance 2024, Rule 709. Rhythms, required elements and guidelines are those listed in ISU Communications 2704 and subsequent updates. Duration: 2 min., 50 sec., +/- 10 sec
	Free Dance	In accordance with ISU Technical Rules Ice Dance 2024, Rule 710. The required elements to be skated are those listed in ISU Communication 2704 and subsequent updates. Duration: 4 min., +/- 10 sec.

5. RESULTS

The scoring system as described in ISU Special Regulations Single & Pair Skating and Ice Dance 2024, Rule 352 and 353 will apply.

6. DRAWS

The draws for the starting order must follow the ISU Rule 512 and 513. The initial draw for the starting order of the Short Program/Rhythm Dance may only commence on the day prior to the first competition day of the respective Challenger Series in Figure Skating event. No electronic draws can be done in advance.

The starting order for the Free Skating/Free Dance should be in the reverse order of the result of the Short Program/Rhythm Dance.

7. PRACTICES

Practice sessions must be offered to the participants of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating categories allowing enough time for the Skaters/Couples to complete their program at least once in the main arena with their competition music prior to the competition. Priority for practice sessions needs to be given to the Challenger Series in Figure Skating categories (senior) in case there are other categories (i.e. junior) also taking part at the site of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating event.

8. EVENT OFFICIALS AND COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL OF JUDGES

8.1 Appointment of Event Officials as per ISU Regulations

Following the principles of Rule 420, paragraph 5 a) of the ISU Special Regulations and Technical Rules Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance 2024, 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 Technical Panel members, the Referee and the Data and Replay Operators of International Competitions included in the Challenger Series in Figure Skating must be proposed by the respective ISU organizing Member to the ISU Secretariat **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 Event 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. 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 Event 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 Challenger Series in Figure Skating and consequently on the ISU 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.

8.2 Panel of Judges

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 panel of Judges must be submitted to the ISU Secretariat latest **7 days before the first day of the competition** for reviewal and approval.

8.3 Officials Remuneration

The Judges, the Referees, the Technical Controllers, the Technical Specialists and the Data & Replay Operators officiating in the Challenger Series in Figure Skating categories (senior) of the event will, at the expense of the organizing ISU Member, receive pocket money of USD 250.00 or the equivalent in the local currency. Any Official officiating besides in the Challenger Series in Figure Skating categories (senior) also in another categories (for example junior), will at the expense of the organizing ISU Member receive an additional amount of USD 125 (or equivalent in local currency) of pocket money per additional day of service.

8.4 Expenses

The Organizing Committee will provide and cover the expenses for rooms and meals for all Referees, the Technical Controllers, the Technical Specialist, the Data and Replay Operators and Judges participating.

The Organizing Committee will cover the costs for travel expenses for all Referees, the Technical Controllers, the Technical Specialist, the Data and Replay Operators starting from dinner the day prior to the first practice day and ending with lunch the day after the Exhibition or the last Round Table Discussion, whichever is later.

9. ISU WORLD STANDING POINTS

For the Challenger Series in Figure Skating higher ISU World Standing Points than for "regular" International Competitions shall be awarded. Each competition of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating 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 & Women</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 2550 or any update of this Communication) ISU World Standing points are awarded provided that at the time of the first draw of the discipline of the concerned Challenger Series in Figure Skating event includes the same minimum number of entries per discipline as stated under paragraph 2 above and the composition of the Technical Panel and the Panel of Judges as per paragraph 8 above are followed.

In addition, each winner of a competition/discipline in an event included in the Challenger Series in Figure Skating 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 “ISU World Standing” ranking respectively the “Seasons Best Score”.

10. RECOGNIZION OF BEST SCORES AND MINIMUM TOTAL ELEMENTS SCORE

Provided that all requirements of the composition of the Technical Panel and the Panel of Judges as per paragraph 8 above are fulfilled, the scores achieved at an event of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating will be recognized as Skaters/Couples Personal Best Scores, Season Best Scores and also count for the required Minimum Total Element Score to be eligible for participation in ISU Figure Skating Championships.

11. CHALLENGER SERIES IN FIGURE SKATING RANKING & PRIZE MONEY

At the end of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating, after the last event of the season has been concluded, the two highest final scores in the up to three different Challenger Series in Figure Skating events of each competitor/couple will be added and taken into consideration to form a Challenger Series in Figure Skating Ranking which will be published on the ISU website taking the following calculation principles and tie breaking criterias into consideration:

- The 2 best Total Competition Scores out of the maximum 3 possible competitions will be added to the Skaters/Couples Total Challenger Series in Figure Skating Score which determines the Challenger Series in Figure Skating Ranking / Result;
- If the Total Challenger Series in Figure Skating Score is tied for two or more Skaters/Couples the following tie breaking criteria's will be in use:
 - the higher sum of the two Free Skating / Free Dance scores of the 2 competitions used for calculating the Challenger Series in Figure Skating Score will break the tie(s);
 - if they remain tied, the higher Free Skating / Free Dance score of the 2 competitions used for calculating the Challenger Series in Figure Skating will break the tie(s);
 - if they remain tied, the higher sum of the two Short Program / Short Dance scores of the 2 competitions used for calculating the Challenger Series in Figure Skating Score will break the tie(s);
 - if they remain tied, the higher Short Program / Short Dance score of the 2 competitions used for calculating the Challenger Series in Figure Skating Score will break the tie(s);
 - If these criteria fail to break the tie(s), the competitors in question will be considered as tied.

12. ANTI-DOPING TESTS

Anti-Doping Tests are not mandatory, but may be performed at the discretion of each organizing ISU Member in line with the current ISU Anti-Doping Rules and Procedures (ISU Communications No. 2344 and 2366 or any further updates of these Communications).

13. ISU CONTRIBUTION

Each ISU Member, organizing an event included in the Challenger Series in Figure Skating, will receive an ISU contribution of USD 22'500. This contribution will be paid when the event has been successfully completed in line with the requirements included in ISU Communication 2683, this general announcement of the Challenger Series in Figure Skating and all relevant ISU Rules and Regulations. The contribution must be used to cover the costs for the Officials Remuneration (see paragraph 8.3) and the Expenses for accommodation and travel (see paragraph 8.4). Any remaining funds may cover ice costs or other organizational expenses of the organizing ISU Member.

14. INFORMATION

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