

UNITED STATES SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION

ALPINE OFFICIALS' MANUAL

CHAPTER III

**RULES, THE JURY AND
THE TECHNICAL DELEGATE**

05-06

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OVERVIEW

In this Chapter, an attempt is made to give Alpine Official an understanding of the composition and function of a competition Jury as well as why we have rules for ski racing. Details concerning the role of the Technical Delegate are also discussed.

THE RULES OF SKI RACING

In the United States non-FIS, USSA sanctioned competitions are conducted according to the rules in the current USSA ACR. These regulations are published in the USSA Alpine Competition Guide, (Comp Guide), and are also available on the USSA web site at <http://www.ussa.org>. All Alpine Officials are urged to review current copies of these regulations at the beginning of each season. *“The FIS International Competition Regulations, (ICR), and adjuncts shall govern any and all issues not addressed therein.”* (USSA ACR)

Under certain conditions, USSA rules may be modified by region and/or division rules. These modifications may not be in conflict with the USSA ACR.

In order for a modification to become a USSA, regional or divisional rule, the Board of Directors, policy committees and/or technical committees must approve the recommendation for modification at the annual USSA Spring Congress. Members can also make motions for changes prior to the Congress, and if necessary, a rule can be interpreted between meetings by the Board of Directors upon Sport Committee request and/or recommendation.

USSA policy on such matters as the calendar of events, quotas, major projects, budget, etc., is set annually by the Board of Directors based on recommendation from subcommittees to the Alpine Sport Committee. Proposals for these items may be entered on the meeting agendas or they may be introduced at the Congress. USSA staff, in consultation with the Alpine Sport Committee, designs procedures and instructions for implementing policies. These are then subject to Working Group, subcommittee, Alpine Sport Committee and Board of Directors' approval.

FIS competitions are internationally scored and are conducted according to the International Competition Rules - better known as the ICR, or “Blue Book”, which is a set of rules that have been approved by at a FIS Congress. These rules are published every four years and are based on recommendations from committees and national federations as well as from motions made by Congress delegates. If necessary, rules are interpreted by the FIS Council between meetings of the Congress and are published as “Precisions”. *NOTE: Next ICR publication 2008-2009 season.*

Precisions may not apply to all events or at all levels of racing. “Precisioning” is done by FIS staff at the direction of major FIS committees and then is subject to the approval of the FIS Council. “Provisional” rules are adopted by major FIS committees, subject to FIS Council approval, and must be considered at the next Congress if they are to continue to have effect at ski competitions. All Alpine Officials are urged to review current copies of the ICR and its Precisions.

HOW RULES BECOME RULES

Alpine ski racing is different from most “American” sports for several reasons: The sport is international and the rules reflect this in translations from various languages (primarily German and French), the dimensions of the “arena” (race hill), the type of equipment (skis, clothing, slalom armor, etc.), the duration of the event and the number of “players”. All of these elements are constantly changing and evolving.

Depending on the level of the competition, the dimensions of a baseball field or football field are all the same regardless of where they are located - whether in New York, California or Japan. This is not true of race hills because no two are identical due to characteristics of the hill itself, the altitude, the weather, the snow coverage - manmade or natural - and various other natural elements.

Rule development is an evolutionary process that reacts to problems and situations as they occur. The rules are written in response to real life situations and are often influenced by commercial considerations.

In reference to translation of the FIS rules, no known language is precise; translation from the original language and interpretation as to what is actually meant are both required. For both FIS and USSA rules, judgment plays a key role, not only in the application of the existing rules, but also in dealing with situations not described in the rules. Rules need to be viewed with these thoughts in mind: “What does this rule mean? What does the rule mean to accomplish/control?” It is also necessary to consider the “spirit” of the rule as well as its fairness and appropriateness. Our primary goal as Alpine Officials is to give every competitor a fair and equal opportunity on a consistent and legal course that has an accurate timing system.

The competition Jury is a decision-making body with responsibility for the application of the rules and for the success of the competition beyond the rules while keeping fairness in mind. Being a member of this Jury is an important role for Team Captains (coaches), appointed by the Technical Delegate to serve on the Jury as Referee and Assistant Referee at speed events (Downhill and Super G) and as Referee at technical events (Giant Slalom and Slalom). This is no less of an important role for “Jury Advisors” (USSA term), who serve as Start Referee and Finish Referee. NOTE: An Assistant Referee may be appointed for technical events for training purposes only. They have neither voice nor vote in Jury meetings, they are not members of the Organizing Committee and their names do not appear on the official documentation.

At Olympic Winter Games and World Championships, the Start and Finish Referee are appointed by FIS and are voting members of the Jury.

SOURCES FOR RULES

There are several reasons why rules are necessary for ski racing. These include preventing local or regional advantages, providing competitors’ on-hill security/protection, specifying technical aspects in the definition of and execution of a race - often on matters once assumed to be “understood” by knowledgeable Alpine Officials and to adapt to technical developments in competitors' clothing and equipment. A skillful race official must know where to find the rules, how to interpret and understand them and how to apply the rules in a consistent manner.

There are several publications where the current rules pertaining to alpine ski racing can be found. It is important that ALL Alpine Officials be familiar with *current editions* of these publications.

1. United States Ski and Snowboard Association Alpine Competition Regulations (ACR).
2. International Competition Rules, (ICR), revised every four years. (Revised – November 2004)
3. Precisions to the ICR, published by FIS, usually in July for the Southern Hemisphere and in November for the Northern Hemisphere.
4. Rules of the FIS Points, published annually.

5. Rule books for World Cup and Continental Cup (Europa Cup and NorAm), published annually.
6. Momento for the Technical Delegate, provided by the FIS Bureau to Technical Delegates.

NOTE: The above are all available on the USSA or FIS web sites.

RULES - THE MOST COMMON PROBLEMS

As in any other sport, rule violations are a common problem. From a disciplinary point of view it is necessary to consider the conduct of both the competitors and the race officials.

Infractions could begin as competitors are inspecting the racecourse by carrying or not carrying their bibs and following or not following the prescribed method of inspection.

As races progress, other problems may include but not be limited to, competitors arriving late for their starts or committing false start(s), failure to have a proper helmet at competitions that require them, equipment and clothing that does not conform to current rules and attempts to manipulate Official Results and/or Penalties.

In addition, there can be problems concerning personnel needed to staff the competition. These problems can be found when persons serving as an Alpine Official do not know or understand current rules, fail to anticipate potential difficulties, are not available when needed, are overbearing in demeanor, fail to follow instructions, exhibit evidence of personal or local favoritism when making decisions or are indecisive.

In general and organizational areas common problems are lack of adequate preparation by the Chief of Race, Chief of Course, Chief of Timing & Calculations and Race Administrator (Race Secretary). Lack of preparation may lead to insufficient or unprepared Gate Judges; lack of communication equipment; insufficient or inadequate timing equipment and personnel; lack of meeting room facilities; lack of knowledge regarding duties and obligations of competitors, Team Captains and officials; errors in Data Management and/or Timing and Calculations which affect Second Run Start Lists and/or Official Results and Penalty; and inconsistencies in documentation procedures.

OFFICIATING AND THE RULES

Rules are created to define the physical environment of the competition, its dimensions and its condition. Rules also define or describe essential procedures, and they control the participants as well as those associated with the competition. Rules prevent actions that give an advantage to one or more of the participants and they define the rights and duties of the officials. In order to ensure that the rules are followed, officials are present to assist, assume control, arbitrate and then report on the competition.

Officials need to keep in mind that if all pertinent facts are not known, it is wise to reserve judgment until these facts are available. For example, normally a rerun is allowed only if a competitor has been “obstructed” by an object, person or act other than one initiated by the competitor. However, since not all these facts may be known, a “provisional” rerun should be allowed which will keep options open until such a time after the run or race that facts can be gathered and proper Jury deliberations can take place. “Provisional” runs are not valid until ratified by the Jury.

COMPETITION JURY

The competition Jury is in control of an alpine ski race and rules on ALL questions concerning the interpretation or applicability of the rules. Upon their appointment, members of the Jury become members of the Organizing Committee. However, the nature and function of the Jury is very different from those of the Organizing Committee and has developed in direct response to the needs of competition.

Unlike many other sports, the nature of the competitors and the location of the event change radically from race to race. Furthermore, rules themselves are often subject to different interpretations. Therefore, the Jury is the means of providing access to immediate rulings for all parties involved: the competitors and their Team Captains, the sponsoring organization and the sanctioning group.

COMPOSITION OF THE JURY

According to current rules, with the exception of World Championships and Olympic Winter Games, the Jury for USSA/FIS speed events is composed of:

Technical Delegate

- is appointed by and represents sanctioning association
- is from outside the host organization
- upon appointment, becomes member of Organizing Committee

Referee

- is appointed by Technical Delegate
- upon appointment, becomes member of Organizing Committee

Assistant Referee

- is appointed by Technical Delegate
- upon appointment, becomes member of Organizing Committee

Chief of Race

- is appointed by the host organization
- is a member of the Organizing Committee

For USSA technical events, an Assistant Referee may be appointed for training purposes only. They have neither voice nor vote in Jury meetings, are not members of the Organizing Committee and their names do not appear on the official documentation.

In addition to the Jury members mentioned above, there are two “Jury Advisors”: the Start Referee and the Finish Referee who are appointed by the host organization. These persons serve as “eyes of the Jury” at their respective positions during the course inspection, training and the race but are not members of the Jury. The term “Jury Advisor” is a USSA term used to recognize two officials who are an integral part of the competition.

For Olympic Winter Games and World Championship events, the Start Referee and Finish Referee are appointed by the FIS as voting members of the Jury. (At upper-level events, in addition to the Start and Finish Referee, 2 Team Captains are named to also serve in the capacity of “eyes of the Jury”.)

At some events (usually FIS speed events), the Committee for Alpine Skiing can appoint a **Technical Advisor**. The Technical Advisor supports the Jury and has the right to express opinions within the Jury; the Technical Advisor does not have a vote.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JURY AND JURY ADVISORS

The Race Jury and its Advisors see to it that the rules are adhered to throughout the competition as well as throughout the official training. They consider the on-hill security/protection of the competitors, officials and spectators as well as the propriety of local procedures at respective areas. Please refer to the current editions of the USSA ACR as well as the FIS ICR and its Precisions for more specific duties of each Jury member and Jury Advisor.

The primary responsibilities of the **Technical Delegate** are:

1. Serving as the official representative of USSA/FIS
2. Making sure that all rules and directions of USSA/FIS are adhered to before, during and after the event(s)
3. Assuring that the event runs as smoothly as possible
4. Advising the organizers within the definition of his duties.

With the exception of World Cup, World Championships and Olympic Winter Games, the Technical Delegate appoints the Referee and Assistant Referee. For the above events, the FIS Bureau appoints these officials. Regardless of how appointed these officials become members of the Organizing Committee and also serve as the competitors' representatives on the Jury.

The primary responsibilities of the **Referee** are:

1. Supervising the Drawing of start numbers, either by “Double Draw” or random computer Draw (See Chapter V - Secretariat, for information concerning “Double Draw”)
2. Inspecting the course after it is set, alone or accompanied by members of the Jury
3. Changing the course by taking out or adding gates
4. Receiving the reports of the Start and Finish Referees and other race officials concerning infractions of the rules and/or gate faults after each run/race and signing and posting the Report by the Referee with a list of competitors who did not start, did not finish or who are disqualified
5. In special cases, submitting a report to the FIS Bureau.

For speed events, the **Assistant Referee** is expected to assist the Referee in all of the above duties.

The primary responsibility of the **Chief of Race** is supervising the entire race operation. Although only a few words describe this position, the job itself is actually rather large. See Chapter IV - Race Organization for further information.

The primary responsibilities of the **Start Referee** are:

1. Making sure the regulations for the start are properly observed
2. Determining late and false starts
3. As directed by the Jury, determining violations against equipment rules.
4. Reporting to the Referee at the end of the race with the names of the competitors who did not start, have made false or late starts or who have committed other infringements.

Experienced Start Referees have “emergency supplies” handy such as: spare bibs, shovel, felt tip marker, extra paper, flagging or surveyor's tape, measuring tape, etc.

The primary responsibilities of the **Finish Referee** are:

1. Making sure that all rules for the organization of the finish and the in-run to the finish are observed

2. Marking the finish line with a “coloring substance”
3. Supervising the Finish Controller and the timing personnel in the immediate finish area
4. Supervising crowd control in the finish area
5. Maintaining communication with the start area at all times.
6. Reporting to the Referee at the end of the race with the names of the competitors who did not observe the rules for the finish or committed other infringements.

The **Chief of Course** is neither a Jury member nor a Jury Advisor and is responsible for supervising preparation and maintenance of the race hill, especially the track.

THE TECHNICAL DELEGATE

The role of the Technical Delegate is multifaceted. The Technical Delegate is the single race official with the greatest responsibility for the proper conduct of a competition. Through their knowledge and experience, Technical Delegates are a positive contributor to a race. They are a counselor to the race organizers, are charged with the supervision of the event and are expected to make decisions with regard to the application of the rules.

In addition, the objective of the Technical Delegate is to help the Organizers run the best possible competition even under the worst possible conditions. Achieving this goal calls for foresight, preparation, organization and anticipation.

In more detail the rights and duties of the Technical Delegate also include the following:

The Technical Delegate should communicate with the organizers and arrive at the race site in due time to prepare fully. This preparation includes, but is not limited to:

1. Reviewing the homologation file to verify that requirements have been met.
2. Verifying that the USSA Schedule Agreement (sanction agreement) has been signed and is valid.
3. Verifying that event liability insurance is in effect.
4. Inspecting the competition and training courses and checking on available competitor on-hill security/protection with the Organizer's representative, usually the Chief of Course.
5. Collaborating in the administrative and technical preparations.
6. Checking the official entry lists, including Seed Points, if applicable.
7. Checking on the availability of radios for the Jury.
8. Checking access to the start and verifying location of the lifts together with possible inconveniences and restrictions that may require alternate methods of transportation.
9. Locating available first aid service and medical care.
10. Checking all technical installations.
11. Taking part in Team Captains' meetings and Jury meetings.
12. Appointing the Referee and Assistant Referee, when applicable, and assisting in nomination of Course Setter(s) [For USSA-sanctioned non-FIS events, Jury members, Jury Advisors (Start & Finish Referee), Chief of Course, Course Setters, Competitors and Forerunners are required to be participant members of USSA as an Official, Coach or Competitor. “Participant members” are those who sign the “USSA Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability”. USSA Associate members are not “participant members”. Qualified members of foreign federations recognized by FIS must hold a valid USSA membership in order to take part in any capacity at a USSA-sanctioned non-FIS event. For a USSA-sanctioned FIS event, the above may be members of a foreign federation recognized by FIS.

13. Verifying that a sufficient number of forerunners are available.
14. Being present in race area during competition.
15. Acting as Chairman of the Jury.

The Technical Delegates represent the sanctioning organization and assist organizers with event preparation and conduct and in completing his work he might have to make decisions against the Organizers if it concerns carrying out the rules. The Technical Delegate should work with the Organizers in a helpful manner and take all points of view into consideration prior to making a decision. Therefore, the Technical Delegate is also responsible for:

1. Observing that the rules are followed and that race officials perform adequately in accomplishing their tasks.
2. Making decisions on situations not explicitly covered in the current rules when these situations have not already been addressed by the Jury and do not fall within the scope of other authorities.
3. Commenting on “local options”, ruling on their compatibility with the current rules, and reporting on any which are adopted for the event.
4. Checking to see that service personnel are properly identified and observing the rules as to their numbers, conduct and access to the competitors and the course.
5. Taking definite action on violations of the rules and having the courage to make unpopular decisions.
6. Avoiding influence on his decisions by any particular individual or group once fair discussion has been completed on an issue.

Technical Delegates report on the race based on their observations throughout the competition. Therefore, it is necessary that the Technical Delegate:

1. Observe the preparation of Official Results and confirm their accuracy by signing them.
2. Calculate/verify competitors’ Race Points.
3. Calculate/verify the Official Penalty and confirm the accuracy by signing it.
4. Work with the Race Administrator to see that all paperwork is correctly prepared and submitted.
5. File a final report to the sanctioning organization with copies to other concerned parties, approving the conduct of the race.

USSA Technical Delegates have liability insurance provided by USSA. Expenses, including room, board and transportation, are the responsibility of the Organizing Committee.

THE FIS TECHNICAL DELEGATE

The FIS initiated the issuance of FIS Technical Delegate designation in a major effort to achieve worldwide uniformity in all aspects of alpine ski racing.

Anyone having aspirations to become a FIS Technical Delegate should review the rules as found in the current ICR as well as the information found in the current edition of the USSA Alpine Competition Guide.

FIS Technical Delegates have event liability insurance coverage provided by FIS and by USSA. Per Diem and expenses, including room, board and transportation, are the responsibility of the Organizing Committee.

ASSIGNMENT OF TECHNICAL DELEGATES

The Technical Delegate acts as the representative of USSA and/or FIS. For USSA-sanctioned events, a USSA Technical Delegate Working Group representative in each region/division/state appoints the Technical Delegates. For FIS events, the Technical Delegate Working Group representative in the respective area appoints a FIS Technical Delegate. For Nor-Am events (Continental Cup) and National Championships, this appointment process is accomplished in cooperation with Canada. These nominations are then presented to the USA FIS Technical Delegate Commissioner.

Technical Delegates are not assigned by the host organization except under extraordinary circumstances with approval of the responsible Alpine Official Committee representative.

THE TECHNICAL DELEGATE AND LOCAL OPTIONS

Under their responsibility for upholding and interpreting the rules, the Technical Delegates will be called upon to comment upon proposed variations or local options and to rule on their compatibility with the applicable USSA or FIS regulations. Further, Technical Delegates must report to USSA and/or FIS on any variation and effect of such options.

In considering a proposed option, the Technical Delegate should weigh the option against the following guidelines:

1. Is additional on-hill competitor security/protection required, and if so, is it available?
2. Does it maintain the spirit and intent of the actual rules?
3. Does it avoid giving any undue advantage?
4. Does it maintain the relative value of racing performance and USSA/FIS Points?
5. Is it consistent with modern skiing standards?
6. Can it be realistically carried out and/or enforced?
7. Is it readily understandable to the concerned public so that good public relations can be maintained?
8. Is it advantageous or necessary (not merely convenient to the Organizers or a particular group)?
9. All things considered favorably, when summing up - is the Technical Delegate willing to go on record in the written report as having approved this deviation from the rules?

There are several particular "local options" which will appear frequently and are worthy of particular note:

1. Quotas - automatics, additional invitations, state quotas - information can be found in the current USSA Alpine Competition Guide.
2. Junior Championships entries - information can be found in the current USSA Alpine Competition Guide.
3. Junior Championships seeding.
4. Ski area requirements, such as lift privileges, etc.