2026-2027 JUDGING HANDBOOK

Updated: June 1st, 2026

Dear Judges,

Thank you for your commitment to the sport of Big Mountain Freeride.

Judges play a vital role in maintaining the fairness, consistency, and integrity of IFSA competitions. Through the application of IFSA judging methodology, clear communication, and professional conduct, judges help create a positive competitive experience for athletes across Region 2.

The IFSA is proud to support the world's largest competitive Freeride community, with more than 185 events across ten regions, four countries, and two continents. Consistent judging standards across this growing community are essential to athlete development and confidence in the competition system. The continued growth of our sport depends on dedicated officials who are committed to athlete development, operational excellence, and the values that make Freeride unique.

This handbook provides the standards, procedures, and judging methodology used throughout the IFSA competition system. Whether you are a new Judge, a Head Judge, a Regional Head Judge, or a member of the Judge Advisory Board, we hope it serves as a valuable resource throughout the season.

Thank you for your professionalism, dedication, and contribution to the growth of Freeride.

The IFSA Team

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EVENT PERSONNEL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

HEAD JUDGE

The role of IFSA Head Judge (HJ) carries a high degree of responsibility for the sport of Big Mountain Freeride. Working in conjunction with the Technical Director, the Head Judge is responsible for providing a safe environment for athletes to compete in. The Head Judge ensures that events are executed in accordance with IFSA rules and best practices. The Head Judge maintains the positive culture of Freeride through approachable and organized execution of judging protocol, accurate scorekeeping, and the enforcement of the IFSA code of conduct. The Head Judge is responsible for disseminating the judging criteria and any clarification regarding judging positions during athlete meetings. The Head Judge fosters and maintains positive relationships and clear lines of communication between judges, athletes, coaches, and families. Through all of these actions, Head Judges ensure consistency and quality of events and the longevity of the sport of Big Mountain Freeride across the Americas Region.

The coordination between the Head Judge and Technical Director is critical to the safety and consistency of each event. Venue choice, progressive venue options, feature closures, inspection protocol, split judging locations, boundaries, and pace of the event are decided upon between the Technical Director and Head Judge. When dealing with complex venues, snow conditions, and unstable weather forecasts, the Head Judge may need to be on site when the Technical Director arrives, which could be two to three days prior to competition. The Head Judge is expected to have expert knowledge of IFSA judging criteria through training, judging experience, and continual education. The Head Judge is required to have comprehensive knowledge of IFSA rules as documented in the current year IFSA Athlete Handbooks and should have the appropriate handbook (Junior or Qualifier series) on hand during the competition for reference in protest situations. Technical Directors and Judges' roles complement and support each other. IFSA rules allow for the Head Judge to act simultaneously as the Technical Director, unless dual panel judging is being used. Having an assistant Technical Director is recommended for larger fields and events with multiple venues. See Judging Methodology for the IFSA Judging options. On the morning of the event, the Head Judge performs an inspection with the support Judges. This ensures they understand all line choices, course boundaries, and closures, and that they are familiar with the primary and backup judging locations. During forerunner runs, the Head Judge leads the judging discussion to determine the Line Score and to coordinate execution scoring communication. After the

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last competitor finishes and scores have been digitally recorded, the Head Judge leads the Judges in reviewing and finalizing results. The Head Judge also provides input to the Technical Director regarding cut line decisions, when applicable, for two-run events. The Head Judge is expected to attend the awards ceremony and to spend time reviewing judging breakdowns with athletes and coaches following the awards ceremony. See Head Judge Guidelines General Outline. The Head Judge is stationary and on venue for the entire duration of the event and should therefore carry a backpack to the venue containing the recommended items in the Equipment List.

Typical candidates for judges include former athletes and coaches, team parents whose children no longer compete, Event Organizers (EO), Technical Directors (TD), Patrollers, snow sports instructors, and anyone with the technical acumen to recognize good skiing and riding and have knowledge and passion for the sport of Big Mountain Freeride. Judges are not permitted to judge at events where family members are participating. Active coaches of junior athletes are not permitted to judge at junior events. Active coaches of adult athletes are not permitted to judge at adult events.

SUPPORT JUDGES

The coordination and communication between the Head Judge and Support Judges is critical to the consistency and accuracy of the judging for each event. Support judges are expected to understand and be comfortable executing IFSA judging criteria outlined in Judging Methodology, through the IFSA Judging Workshop, from training videos, and/or through shadowing in the Judges pit. On the morning of the event, the Judges perform an inspection together under the direction of the Head Judge to make sure they understand all aspects and line choices, any course boundaries and closures, and to familiarize with the primary and backup judging location(s). The Support Judges communicate together and provide input to the Head Judge on Line Score and in formulating execution scores. The value of Support Judges is to diversify the observation of athlete's runs - removing bias - and in recall of previous runs when forming execution score - increasing accuracy and consistency. The Support Judges assist the Head Judge during scorekeeping review and finalization of results. The Support Judges are expected to attend the awards ceremony and spend time reviewing judging breakdowns with athletes and coaches following the awards ceremony. The Support Judge is stationary and on venue for the entire duration of the event and should therefore carry a backpack to the venue containing the recommended items in Equipment List.

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TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

The role of Technical Director (TD) carries a high degree of responsibility for the sport of Big Mountain Freeride. The Technical Director plays a key role in promoting a safe competition environment through venue management, competition oversight, enforcement of IFSA rules, and coordination with Patrol, Mountain Operations, and Event Organizers. By appropriately managing competition risks and following established procedures, the Technical Director supports athlete safety and the long-term sustainability of the sport. The Technical Director ensures that events are executed in accordance with IFSA rules and best practices. The Technical Director maintains the positive culture of Freeride through friendly and organized execution of athlete meetings, and enforcement of the International Freeskiers & Snowboarders Association's (IFSA) Code of Conduct. The Technical Director fosters and maintains the positive relationship between resorts and IFSA by providing a clear line of communication between Event Organizers, Patrol, mountain operations, event staff, Judges, and the athletes, coaches, and families. Through all of these actions our Technical Directors ensure consistency and quality of events and the longevity of the sport of Big Mountain Freeride across Region 2.

In coordination with the Event Organizer (EO), the Technical Director is responsible for the competition aspect of each event. Technical Directors are experienced and competent in event management, safety guidelines, and following IFSA rules and best operating practices.

The Technical Director serves as the primary authority for competition operations during the event. In consultation with the Head Judge where appropriate, the Technical Director is responsible for the interpretation and application of IFSA competition rules, venue protocols, and operational procedures. Competition-related disputes, questions of rule interpretation, and operational decisions arising during the event shall be referred to the Technical Director for determination.

Resort Patrol and Mountain Operations retain authority regarding mountain safety, emergency response, and operational risk management in accordance with resort policies and procedures.

The Technical Director will interact and coordinate with all other stakeholders of the event including but not limited to; Patrol, Event Organizer/Venue Staff, Marketing, Media, Operations, Administration and Judges.

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The Technical Director is required to have comprehensive knowledge of IFSA rules as documented in the current year IFSA Athlete Handbooks, and should have the appropriate handbook (Junior or Qualifier series) on hand during the competition for reference in protest situations. A summary of key daily Technical Director activities is provided in Attachment A. Eligible candidates that may consider becoming a Technical Director include but are not limited to; a Patroller, Judge, former athlete, coach or outside individual familiar with the above experience or training.

The Technical Director is expected to formally report any incidents/injuries as well as a Technical Director report for each day of competition to the IFSA and therefore must be fully aware and alert throughout the entire competition. The Technical Director or Assistant Technical Director, and Head Judge are expected to watch every athlete during the competition and respond accordingly should any instance warrant. When the Technical Director is required to attend to duties that take attention away from watching the athletes, the Technical Director is responsible for temporarily assigning the Assistant Technical Director or appropriate delegate until the Technical Director is able to return to performing this function.

An active coach or individual associated with a team (administrator or parent) that is participating in the event may not engage with their team in any way while acting as Technical Director. Any and all potential conflicts of interest must be avoided. The Technical Director may not wear any visible team logo'd attire or communicate with other coaches from their team either in person or by radio during the event. Sharing of scoring, scoring breakdowns, or any information that would give an advantage or threaten the integrity of the event is strictly forbidden. A Technical Director who is also an active coach or associated with a team must leave the exact cut at the discretion of the Head Judge in order to avoid any conflict in the case that the "last to make it in" is from the team the Technical Director has affiliation with.

If the Technical Director has a child participating in the event, an alternative parent or guardian must be onsite in case the child has an injury or emergency. For this reason it should be highly discouraged to have a Technical Director with a child participating in an event, and instead consider using this person as an assistant Technical Director so it is less disruptive to leave his/her post due to an injury or other emergency.

An athlete entered into an event may not participate in the execution of the event including training with or shadowing of Technical Directors or Judges, venue set up, acting as a ninja, scorecard running or any other task that may give them a perceived or real advantage.

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ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

The primary responsibility of the Assistant Technical Director is to support the Technical Director directly. The Assistant Technical Director has roles in assisting with decisions about venue, division order, and boundaries/closures. The Assistant Technical Director can be a liaison for the Technical Director with Patrol, Mountain Operations, and the EO during the event. Many times the Technical Director must interact with other entities during the event and therefore the Assistant Technical Director may assume the role of being a secondary point of contact during an event. Other responsibilities may include but are not limited to; setting up the next day venue(s), coordinating inspection, assessing venue conditions mid-competition, replacing closures, conducting official meetings, etc.

JUDGE/TECHNICAL DIRECTOR FEES & COMPENSATION

A Technical Director who is not an employee of the host resort should negotiate a contract with the EO to document compensation, insurance coverage, accommodations, and confirmation that the Technical Director will follow the rules as documented in the IFSA Athlete Handbooks. The Event Organizer agrees to remit payment within 2 weeks of event completion. If the Event Organizer requires additional time to remit payment, this will be established with the designated Technical Director prior to signing the contract. Exact day rates shall be established with the Technical Director; the table below clarifies the minimum day rate for employing a Technical Director.

JUDGES AND TECHNICAL DIRECTOR DAY RATES

2026 **USD** Rates to be paid directly to TD and Judges	
RATES- daily 1* & 2*	RATES- daily 3* & 4*
Head Judge/TD $230	Head Judge/TD $300
Support Judge/Assistant TD $150	Support Judge/Assistant TD $200
Per Diem $50	Per Diem $50
Travel Day (HJ/TD if coming day before) $125	Travel Day (HJ/TD if coming day before) $125
Mileage (over 50 miles) - government standard	Mileage (over 50 miles) - government standard

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2026 **CAD** Rates to be paid directly to TD and Judges	
RATES- daily 1* &2*	RATES- daily 3* & 4*
Head Judge/TD $280	Head Judge/TD $370
Support Judge/Assistant TD $185	Support Judge/Assistant TD $245
Per Diem $60	Per Diem $60
Travel Day (HJ/TD if coming day before) $150	Travel Day (HJ/TD if coming day before) $150
Mileage (over 80km) - government standard	Mileage (over 80km) - government standard

Currency and PPP Conversion

Canadian pay scales are determined using the official IFSA U.S. dollar (USD) rates, converted to Canadian dollars (CAD) using Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). PPP is an economic measure that compares the relative cost of living and purchasing strength between countries, ensuring equitable compensation across regions rather than relying solely on exchange rates.

While exact scales for South American events are still being developed, Event Organizers are expected to apply the same PPP-based logic to determine fair and regionally adjusted compensation.

PATROL

The Technical Director is tasked with coordinating with Patrol both before and during the event. Generally the event host will assign a Patrol liaison for the event who then directs the Patrol staff. Pre-event the two parties, sometimes including the Head Judge, must review possible venues, boundaries, feature closures, inspection closures, communication and response plan and possible locations for sleds and/or anchors if necessary. This meeting should be within a time frame where possible environmental factors (snowpack and weather) are known within reason, not to exceed 10 days prior. Electronic communication, including pictures and relevant event information, is encouraged beyond 10 days prior to the event.

During the event, the Technical Director communicates with Patrol to ensure

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that the appropriate number of Patrollers are always at the top of the venue and ready to respond if necessary in conjunction with the mountain's response protocols. A minimum of two Patrollers are required to be at or near the top of the venue at a location determined to produce the quickest response and one at or near the finish corral to assess all athletes that may have crashed and crossed the finish line under their own power, but each mountain's Patrol response plan may differ and necessitate increased numbers and locations. For example, if the venue does not require a second Patroller to "tail gun" a sled down, two Patrollers are recommended to be stationed at the top of the venue. In the instance where a "tail gunner" is required for sled transport, three Patrollers are recommended to be stationed at the top. (1 for initial assessment and two to respond with a sled if necessary.) Patrol must have a full trauma sled staged at the top of the venue and another on the ready should one be used. In the event of a response, the event can not proceed until Patrollers have cycled replacements to the top of the venue, including personnel and sled(s). Therefore, more than two Patrollers are recommended to be assigned to an event or be available in a timely manner. In many instances, multiple sled locations are recommended. Any time a significant fall occurs Patrol should be requested to check out the athlete in the finish corral prior to leaving the finish area. Patrol response can be initiated by the Technical Director, Head Judge, Starter (via Technical Director) or a Ninja who has responded to an athlete. Direct radio communication between the Technical Director and Patrol is required. Either Patrol supplies a radio to the Technical Director or vice versa if channels are not compatible. Some events have the ability to have a Medivac (Helicopter) on scene but this is not required. If Medivac can not be on scene it is recommended that Patrol inform the nearest response center of the event, date and times.

EVENT ORGANIZER (EO) & VENUE STAFF

In addition to the Technical Director, Judges and Assistant Technical Director, the Event Organizer is responsible to hire or obtain (volunteers) the venue staff. Venue staff generally includes Starters, ninjas, scorekeeper (off venue), scorecard runners, and setup and teardown personnel. Some of these roles can be combined so long as they don't interfere with primary duties. For example, it is acceptable for setup and teardown to be combined with either being a Starter or ninja. Venue staff must be competent skiers or riders and be capable of navigating the venue.

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In addition to the safety of the event the Technical Director will coordinate with the Event Organizer to ensure that the production value of the event is on par with its ranking value and competition field. This includes directing venue staff on finish corral configuration and layout, banner and flag placements, PA location, etc (see Marketing Department). The Technical Director is responsible for setting up all venue boundaries and closures. When venue staff are available to assist in these duties, the venue staff may only place venue boundaries and feature closure markings under the direct supervision of the Technical Director. Some resorts require that Patrol place all boundaries and closures. Where this is the case the Technical Director is responsible for coordinating with Patrol to determine all venue boundaries and closures, and is required to supervise or inspect venue boundaries and closures prior to the competition inspection day.

Prior to opening registration for the event, there should be communication with the Event Organizer regarding a realistic competition field size. While this decision is the responsibility of the Event Organizer, it is important that the Technical Director, Head Judge, and Regional Series Director have input to the decision. Consideration should be placed on maximum division size for reasonable judging, venue length, caliber of the competition field, whether or not early loads are possible, weather day scheduled or not, inspection time, lift cycle and time in the season the event is scheduled (daylight and weather potential impacts) and factor in any possible delays. The larger the field the more demand is placed on all involved. The Technical Director and Event Organizer must consider at what point possibly there would be too many competitors.

The Event Organizer is responsible for providing the judging panel with start lists and judging materials that do not contain athlete names. All materials distributed within the judging pit must utilize bib numbers only, with athlete names removed or redacted prior to distribution. In dual panel judging formats, the Pit Manager may retain access to an unredacted start list as necessary for event operations.

PIT MANAGER

The Pit Manager is an optional role assigned to the individual in the judges' pit responsible for coordinating communication and maintaining the flow of operations. Their duties may include communicating with the starter when the judges are ready, relaying athlete bib numbers when necessary, and overseeing communication within the judges' pit. This role is especially valuable, and highly recommended, during dual-panel events.

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NINJAS

Ski retrieval staff (ninjas) must also be competent and comfortable going anywhere on the venue and are recommended to be skiers as they are at times expected to side step uphill. The Event Organizer is responsible for supplying gear retrieval personnel (ninjas). Four to five Ninjas are generally required and must continually rotate back to the start area or wherever directed by the Technical Director. The Technical Director in conjunction with the Starter will ensure that one ninja is always in their skis ready to respond. Ideally, ninjas have event radios so that they have direct contact with the Technical Director. Ninjas can respond from multiple locations so long as their staging spot does not interfere with athletes.

Ninjas are signaled to respond onto the venue to retrieve an athlete's gear by the Technical Director, Head Judge or Starter. Ninjas may also be asked to help smooth out any areas adversely affected by a Patrol response or their own response or to reset a boundary or closure.

Ninjas, upon interacting with an athlete, may call for Patrol to respond but may NOT offer any medical treatment unless directed to help by Patrol.

STARTER

The Event Organizer is responsible for supplying a Starter. It is recommended that two people share this role so that they can rotate each other out for warmth and hospitality considerations. The Starter's primary role is to line up the athletes in the most efficient manner to facilitate an organized start order, communicate the next athlete bib number, and to send the athlete onto the course at the Head Judge's command. The assistant Starter can assist in managing the start list/ athlete run order to ensure the next five athletes are ready for their start.

The Technical Director will ensure that the Starter announces each rider consistently over the radio to the Judges. Standard protocol following a Judges ready is, "bib #1... bib #1... dropping in 3,2,1... bib #1 on course." Athlete names are not to be announced over the event radio to ensure impartiality. (It is allowed for the event announcer to announce the athletes name as part of the production of the event.) The Technical Director will direct the Starter to manage the start area, ensuring that the Judges clearly know where the athletes are dropping from. This may require athletes to stage a certain distance from the start flag or gate. The Starter must make sure that the next five athletes are always ready to drop. The Starter also assists with deploying ninjas or Patrol at the request of the Technical Director or Head Judge.

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The Technical Director must ensure that the announcer does not broadcast official event communications over the PA. For example, communications during a Patrol response. However, the Technical Director may ask the announcer to broadcast important announcements regarding schedule changes, etc.

The Starter is required to ensure that each athlete is wearing a helmet and back protector. The Technical Director instructs the Starter to do a back protector check on each athlete prior to entering the start gate. The Starter should not physically touch the athletes but instead should ask the athlete to give a self-tap or unzip their jacket enough to show the back protector. If an athlete is not wearing a back protector, they will not be allowed to compete, and the Starter will announce to the Technical Director/Head Judge that the athlete receives a DNS due to lack of required safety gear.

The Starter is required to communicate if any athlete is a DNS (Did Not Start) to the Head Judge and Technical Director, so they can mark it on their scoresheets next to the athlete's bib number. The Starter ensures that only authorized personnel are allowed on the venue, and the Starter organizes inspection to ensure the venue is not overloaded with athletes and coaches at any one time and to ensure that all athletes get adequate time to inspect.

SCOREKEEPER

The Scorekeeper plays a critical role in ensuring accurate input of the judges' scores, as well as accurate computation and distribution of results. The Scorekeeper is required to complete training in the use of the Liveheats system and must ensure that each event database is set up properly for the specific event requirements. Some considerations include the number of competition days, age and gender divisions, number of athletes in each division, number of required judges, and defining single panel, dual panel, and split judging. The Scorekeeper and Assistant Scorekeeper should check each other's data entries against the judges' scoresheets, flag all unclear or illegible handwritten entries, ensure that all judges have the same Line Score for each athlete run, and flag all inconsistent execution scores greater than 0.5 points between judges for the same athlete. After the judges complete their review, the Scorekeeper must promptly make any resulting changes in Liveheats, prepare podium lists for the awards ceremony, and prepare full result lists for public viewing following the awards ceremony. The Scorekeeper must remain on site following awards in the event a timely scoring protest results in the need for a scoring entry change.

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SCORESHEET RUNNER

The Scoresheet Runner is required to carry paper scoresheets from the judges pit to the Scorekeeper. Normally there are several Scoresheet Runners to ensure that scoresheets are delivered as soon as they are filled. In this way, the Scorekeeper is able to enter results as the event is proceeding and should be able to complete the results entry by the time the judges arrive to review the results following the last athlete. Eligible Scoresheet Runners must be able to ski or ride the route to access the judges pit and from the judges pit to the Scorekeeper location. Competitors and Coaches who are participating in the event may not act as Scoresheet Runners.

MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS

This relationship is one of the most critical in ensuring not only a successful event but future events, as well. Considering that Mountain Management and Operations has the highest authority in whether or not an event takes place, the interactions with the Technical Director and Head Judge are expected to remain on the most professional levels possible. Direct communications should occur with Mountain Operations on any grooming that needs to be done for the finish area and or judges tent area. This may be included as part of the afternoon mountain operations meetings in prior days to the competition to get it on the grooming schedule. Also, these mountain operations meetings usually have every mountain head involved from the Mountain Manager, Head of Patrol, Head of Marketing, Head of Events, Head of Grooming, Head of Services, etc., so it is a great place to get the whole Mountain Operations on the same page with the needs of the competition and to discuss any concerns or issues from all sides. Daily meetings, many times both before each competition day and after, are expected to discuss the ongoing execution of the event. Many times, Patrol is also part of this process.

MARKETING DEPARTMENT

The most common interactions between the Technical Director and Marketing is placement of media personnel on and/or around the venue. The Technical Director must approve and coordinate any non-event staff on the venue and any movement about it. Non-event staff is to remain as motionless as possible and generally are staged near trees or rocks so that interference with an athlete's run does not occur. It is recommended that non-event personnel have event radios. Non-event staff should never interact with an athlete for any reason including medical response unless directly asked to by an event staff member or Patrol.

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The Technical Director will coordinate with venue staff placement of banners and flags supplied by Marketing during the set up of the venue, finish and start areas. The Technical Director has the final decision regarding placement of marketing materials on the venue which includes the finish and start areas. Banners and flags should never be placed where there is potential for interference or distraction to an athlete or the Judges.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

During an incident it is critical to provide the proper communication and information regarding health and safety to individuals who need it as well as any media, including social platforms. Having guidelines to follow during an incident goes a long way towards comforting those in distress and providing viable information while also being sensitive to liability concerns. An incident may include a medical response or may be a technical situation, like canceling a competition or any other matter that may require a high level of care and sensitivity (avalanche, chairlift malfunction, etc.). The Technical Director, with assistance from the Head Judge, is responsible for designating and mitigating personnel and information during incident management. It is essential for the Technical Director to immediately communicate with the Head Judge, Event Organizer and Patrol to debrief on the incident and quickly coordinate a communication plan. The Technical Director decides what information will be released, and not released, and who is going to do the speaking. The IFSA Support Team is available for supporting communication plans for incidents and should be at minimum copied on communications to provide consistent information to members of our community. It is essential to keep in mind that the Head Judge and Technical Director is under contract to the Event Organizer and IFSA event official, and, therefore, the Head Judge and Technical Director are representing and speaking for those entities. Any personal commentary must be carefully considered and represented as such.

During an incident it is a good idea to have someone designated to route parents and coaches and families to greater support and care as well as someone designated to handle media and outside sources ensuring that they do not impede or hamper the process of containing and securing the incident. An Assistant Technical Director is a great person for appointing these duties to while the Technical Director is able to discuss with Mountain Operations, Patrol, medical personnel and anyone else involved with securing the incident and/or athlete. The Technical Director essentially carries the responsibility of not just the competition but also all facets of the event including any incidents that may happen within the scope of the competition.

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Situations can become very stressful during an incident and the Head Judge and Technical Director must remain calm and focused in supporting the event team and the competition community. When talking with parents, coaches, or other staff, the Head Judge and Technical Director should try to instill calmness through their energy and actions, as providing strong leadership goes a long way towards containing further complications.

During public relations, the Head Judge and Technical Director must stick to 100% facts and general descriptions and contain comments within the scope of the Head Judge responsibilities. General statements should be provided, as in the following example: “There was an athlete injured due to loss of control during their competition run. The skier lost control and struck an object and needed assistance from Patrol off of the venue. The skier has been taken to Abracadabra Hospital in Magicville, and we are awaiting further status reports from the doctors.“ The Head Judge should not speculate on injury diagnosis and, if asked for further details, refer to the Event Organizer, Patrol, or the medical emergency response team. For questions on the framework and interior functions of the IFSA, refer to the IFSA Series Managers and Executive Board.

In the case of an injury situation, the Head Judge should give careful consideration to liability concerns if asked to address venue suitability, weather and snow conditions, effectiveness of boundaries and closures, athlete ability vs. venue complexity, Patrol response time, and other topics that address decision making and execution of responsibilities of the Technical Director, Head Judge, Patrol, athlete, or coaches.

Wherever possible give all media equal access to information when appropriate to conduct briefings and interviews. Do not speculate about the incident and do not permit any unauthorized access to sensitive information. It is essential that we do not mislead anyone and we only give the facts without admitting, giving or placing blame and responsibility on any individuals or parties.

MANDATORY MEETINGS

MANDATORY ATHLETE MEETING

Mandatory athlete meetings are critical to the success and safety of an event. It is the Technical Director’s responsibility to conduct the athlete meetings, and the Head Judge should also speak during the meeting. If the Head Judge cannot attend the athlete meeting and approves it, a supporting Judge may take their place. Meetings should take place the evening prior to the competition or the day of the event after the Technical

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Director and Head Judge have had the ability to assess the conditions of the venue(s). If the meeting takes place the evening before, a supplemental meeting may need to take place to confirm or change any information once the venue has been assessed. A supplemental meeting can also take place following inspection if conditions dictate.

The primary athlete meeting should take place indoors and in person with access to audio/visual equipment so that the athlete meeting template can be utilized. It is optimal to have all physical closures, boundaries, starts and finishes clearly marked on venue with venue maps prepared for pre-competition day inspection, resort/EO permitting. Official venue maps must be ready no later than the athlete meeting.This ensures clear communication and consistency. Athlete meetings are mandatory for all competitors but it is at the discretion of the Technical Director for any exceptions. It can be difficult to monitor attendance at these meetings, especially for online meetings. Missing the athlete meeting can not be used as an excuse for misunderstanding the rules or event specific instructions provided during the athlete meeting. Technical Directors may wish to record the meeting for athletes and coaches who are unable to attend (with a suitable excuse), rather than repeating the meeting.

It is important for the Technical Director and Head Judge to set appropriate expectations regarding the condition and quality of the venue that is available for competition on the given day. Due to weather and snow conditions or other factors that are out of the control of the event staff, the athletes may be required to compete on a less desirable venue than the one they planned to compete on. The Technical Director and Head Judge should set the tone by explaining why the venue was selected. Most of the time, athletes would rather compete on a lesser venue and earn points toward their ranking, rather than rescheduling or canceling the event.

The Head Judge should speak at the athlete meeting to set the tone for safety and decision making, to review judging criteria, explain normal or split judging configuration, and identify location of judges in a split judging scenario.

OFFICIALS MEETING

Officials meetings take place prior to each competition day with the Event Organizer, Technical Director, Head Judge, Starter(s), and Ninjas and may include Patrol or other resort personnel and Scorecard Runners. These meetings are to ensure clear communication protocol among the Technical Director, Head Judge, Patrol, Starter, Ninjas, and other officials during the competition period. This is also another opportunity

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for the Event Organizer to interface with officials about their roles during the competition period.

JUDGES MEETING

Prior to inspection on each competition day, the Head Judge will run a meeting with all judges to review the schedule for the day, judging criteria, venue details, and communication protocol. The Head Judge hands out scoresheets and other materials required for judging. Before the start of competition, the Head Judge shall verify that all judging materials and start lists used within the judging pit comply with IFSA impartiality standards regarding athlete identification, and any materials containing athlete names will be removed.

VENUE SELECTION & SET UP

It is the Technical Director's responsibility with input from the Head Judge to select and set up each venue. Recommendations from Patrol, Assistant Technical Director, and Event Organizer are also considered. For resorts that have Freeride teams, the Technical Director may get valuable input from coaches regarding features that the athletes use during training and how they use them, as well as age appropriate closures.

- Venues are selected based on star level of the event and after considering weather and conditions, competition level and field size, and whether or not there are qualifier and finals runs.
- Progressive venues where the venue can change either within itself or entirely to a new venue for multiple run events are encouraged.
- Differences within a venue from age group to age group are necessary and at the discretion of the Technical Director.
    - For example, U12 athletes should have substantially easier features/terrain compared to 12-14 and 15-18 year old athletes to account for physical ability as well as decision making capability.
    - Feature Closures: The same venue may be used across multiple age divisions, with specific feature closures implemented to create age-appropriate competition terrain. Features that are closed for U15 divisions may be opened for U19 divisions.
- Venues must have clear start and finish areas as well as boundaries and closed

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areas.

- Feature closures must also be clearly marked with bamboo, ribbon and rope if necessary.
- Feature closures for one age division must be removed prior to the other age divisions running and must be clearly communicated during the athlete meetings.
- Venue differences are only allowed from one age division to another.
- Physical closures and boundaries take precedence over venue maps. However, at 4* and Challenger events, the Technical Director may designate certain boundaries, closures, or competition zones on the official venue map without corresponding physical markings on the venue. Any such map-designated closures or boundaries must be clearly communicated during athlete meetings and shown on the official venue map.
- In conjunction with the Head Judge, the Technical Director decides where Judges will be placed for Plan A full venue if weather is good, considering line of sight, weather exposure, comfort (flat vs side hill, etc.), and proximity to (separation from) spectators.
- Suitably mark the Judges position, for example with a bamboo “X”, on the mountain and also on the venue maps.
- Also mark the Plan B split judging locations (see split judging section) in case visibility is poor and Judges need to mobilize on slope for split judging. Split Judge locations and possible venue boundary changes should be communicated during the athlete meetings.
- It is recommended that all closures and split Judges positions be marked on the venue maps and be available for review at the start gate on pre competition day inspection but marked “subject to change” before day of competition inspection.
- Inspection closures should also be considered when competition field size, ability levels and conditions dictate that an area should be closed during inspection but open during competition.
- Special consideration for inspection closures should be for anticipated high traffic areas where degradation during inspection would have an adverse effect on the safety and quality of the venue. Inspection closures should not impede an

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athlete's ability to visually inspect required trajectory off of or around features.

- Inspection closures must also be clearly communicated during athlete meetings and in place prior to inspection. All markings for inspection closures and split Judge locations and boundaries need to be removed prior to the competition starting.
- Inspection closures must be removed prior to competition.

The responsibility for evaluating suitability of terrain for Big Mountain Freeride competition falls upon the Technical Director's shoulders. Guidelines for reviewing new venues at resorts that have not previously (or recently) hosted an IFSA sanctioned Big Mountain Freeride competition, or proposed new venues at current host resorts, are provided in the Technical Director Handbook.

VENUE INSPECTION

All competitors in Region 2 are required to complete an on-venue inspection in order to be eligible to compete. The Technical Director instructs the Starter to place a checkmark next to each athlete on the start list as they pass through the start gate to begin inspection. Any athletes who do not perform an inspection will not be allowed to compete and will receive a DNS. The Technical Director should announce this during the athlete meeting. The Starter should be instructed not to allow coaches on the venue unless they have an armband, bib, or other credential as provided to certified coaches by the Event Organizer. The Starter should not let anyone on the venue if they are not wearing a helmet.

The inspection protocol and terrain enhancement policy (see Athlete Handbooks) must be clearly communicated during the mandatory athlete meeting prior to inspection opening each day. The amount of inspection runs and duration of inspection is at the discretion of the Technical Director. Every competitor must inspect the day of their competition. Competitors are not allowed to inspect the venue(s) if they are not competing that day unless the Technical Director deems it necessary due to conditions. For example, more traffic may help break up a crust layer that, by doing so, only improves the venue. Venue inspection may occur on pre competition day for Challenger level events.

The Technical Director and Head Judge have the authority to disqualify an athlete for not following inspection protocol and/or the terrain enhancement policy. This includes any reckless skiing or riding, practicing their line, hitting features, modifying or

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stomping in take-offs, boundary infractions, or Code of Conduct violations. All disqualifications will be documented in the daily Technical Director Report and subject to review by the IFSA Board of Directors for any egregious or repetitive negative behavior and may result in the athlete's or coach's membership being revoked until an appropriate response is received.

The Technical Director communicates with Starter and announcer to ensure that age group inspections are managed closely to ensure that adequate time is allowed for coaches and athletes to complete inspection and be cleared from the venue to avoid delays of the competition schedule. During the athlete meeting the Technical Director should instruct coaches to ensure that athletes keep moving down the venue and avoid spending excessive time on individual features causing backups and delays for subsequent groups.

VENUE SELECTION AND PREPARATION

IFSA Technical Directors, Regional Head Judges, and Head Judges are in tune with athlete skill sets from Junior 2* to the IFSA Challenger Series events. Venue selection and preparation is a skill learned over time through experience. Awareness of athletic skill set and Freeride culture forms the foundation for venue selection and preparation. IFSA event officials recognize the developmental stages of junior athletes on route to adulthood. As advocates and mentors for healthy development of lifelong athletes, physical boundaries and progressive venues are applied, and age, experience, and skill set are factored into the venue setting process. Setting appropriate boundaries and progressive venues supports the development of lifelong Freeride athletes and the healthy progression of the sport, and it promotes safety and responsibility to keep Freeride insurable.

IFSA venues are intended to be the same for male and female athletes in the same age division and discipline. As an example, U15 skier boys should use the same competition venue as U15 skier girls. However, this isn't always possible, so the Technical Director has the flexibility to use different venues when necessary. An example would be when weather or snow conditions require the U15 ski boys to be run on a different day than U15 girls, and on a different or modified venue (feature closures, etc.) Venues for the skier discipline may be different from the snowboarder discipline. As an example, U19 skiers may use a different venue than U19 snowboarders.

When selecting venues, it is important to consider slope incline and size of terrain features to support the decision-making process. Venues suitable for Freeride

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competition must have either Plan A or Plan B judging options, a functional start gate and finish corral, and be logistically accessible.

EVENT LEVEL, FORMAT, AND LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are two main competition formats: one run and two runs (see Competition Execution section for details)

When selecting venues, run progression and logistical considerations must be applied.

- One-day, one run, Junior 2*, or Adult Qualifier event - one venue
- Two-day, two run, Junior 2*, Junior 3* or Adult Qualifier event - possibly two separate venues
- Three-day, two run, Junior 2*, Junior 3* or Adult Qualifier event - up to three separate venues
- Three-day, two Run, Championship event - possibly three separate venues
- One-run 3* events are acceptable when forced by inclement weather

JUNIOR 2* EVENTS – Terrain and features that challenge the highest 2* level athletes while also catering to low-end athletes, including first time Freeriders.

JUNIOR 3* EVENTS – Terrain and features that cater to the highest 3* level athletes while also providing easy exits and options for varying ability levels.

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS – Terrain and features that cater to the highest Junior Championship Level athletes while also providing easy exits and options for varying ability levels.

QUALIFIER SERIES EVENTS

QUALIFIER 1*, 2*, 3*, 4* & CHALLENGER EVENTS – Terrain and features that cater to the highest Qualifier Level star ranking athletes while also providing easy exits and options for varying ability levels.

Before securing venues and commencing venue setup, ensure Patrol, the EO, and the event management team is logistically prepared to staff, access, mobilize and supply the necessary resources to each venue.

- Rope line for external venue closure to the public.

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- Fencing (finish corral)
- Announcer tent, sound system and generator.
- Judging tent and chairs
- Start gate flags

DUAL PANEL

A dual panel system may be used at larger events where competition field size, media requirements, weather considerations, or schedule constraints make increased competition efficiency desirable. The system is designed to maximize athlete opportunities, improve competition flow, and increase the likelihood of completing all scheduled competition runs within the available weather and operational window.

In a dual panel format, two independent judging panels (Panel A and Panel B) operate simultaneously from their own judging pit. Each division is assigned to a specific judging panel for the duration of the competition. Start orders are designed so that athletes from Panel A divisions and Panel B divisions alternate throughout the competition. Only one athlete is on course at a time; however, as one panel finalizes scoring and discussion for the previous athlete, the next athlete may begin their run and be evaluated by the alternate panel.

This format allows athletes to drop with minimal delay between runs, significantly reducing downtime throughout the competition. By overlapping judging, scoring, and competition management activities, the dual panel system improves competition flow and increases overall event capacity without compromising judging quality.

When utilizing a dual panel system, the Technical Director and Head Judge must ensure panel assignments are clearly communicated during athlete meetings and communications, and start procedures are coordinated to maintain safe and efficient athlete flow.

Dual panel is strongly recommended for Championship-level events and may also be utilized at other events where competition size or operational considerations warrant its use.

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VENUE PLAN OPTIONS

PLAN A VENUES

These venues provide a direct line of sight from the full judges pit to the start gate and finish corral, and they provide a functional view of the entire venue with regular sight or via binoculars.

START GATE

The start gate can be considered a staging area that holds an entire field of athletes in close proximity to the start gate without obstructing the public. If you do not have the space at the start gate to hold a large number of athletes without obstructing the public consider the following.

- The start gate needs to be able to comfortably hold a minimum of 3-5 athletes and a Starter.
- A staging area needs to be easily accessible to the start gate and needs to hold a minimum of 15 athletes including an Assistant Starter. One radio for the starter and assistant starter is imperative.

FINISH CORRAL

- The finish corral needs to be fully visible from the Plan A judges position and easily accessible to the athletes from all aspects of the venue.
- Mark the lowest possible point on the venue where you can clearly see the Plan A judges position and mark the lowest possible exit of the corral with an “X”.
- Using multiple bamboo or alternative markers, create a chicane to bring all athletes to a complete stop before exiting the corral.
- Starting from the Chicane (exit point), mark each side of the finish corral to connect it to the external boundary rope lines, and fencing can be easily applied to the finish corral.

JUDGING LINE

At the discretion of the Head Judge and Technical Director a judging line may be used when there is a long, featureless apron at the bottom of the venue, or when the last portion of the venue above the finish corral is out of sight of the judges. When a

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judging line is used, the judges stop scoring the athletes when they cross the judging line. If a loss of control begins prior to crossing the judging line and continues past it, the control issue will be scored through its entirety. The Technical Director, Assistant Technical Director or spotter (credentialed Technical Director or Judge) will watch the athlete for DQ's, DNF's, and code of conduct violations until the athlete exits through the chicane.

INSPECTION CLOSURES

There are circumstances where a feature or section of the venue may be closed during inspection to preserve the snow in that area at the discretion of the Technical Director and Head Judge. Inspection closures should be utilized when snow conditions on a feature or terrain will not tolerate a full field of inspection plus the full competition but will tolerate a full field of competition. Inspection closures must allow athletes and coaches to sufficiently view and evaluate the feature or terrain (i.e. approach, takeoff, landing, and runout) from an aspect that provides similar surface conditions. Inspection closures must be removed prior to competition.

SECONDARY HAZARDS

Secondary hazards occur when a fall or loss of control on one feature could result in exposure to an additional hazard, such as rocks, trees, cliffs, terrain traps, or other significant consequences below. Management of secondary hazards is at the discretion of the Technical Director and Head Judge and should consider weather and snow conditions, event star level, athlete age division, and overall venue characteristics. In these situations, the Technical Director and Head Judge may choose to close the upper feature or modify the venue to reduce exposure to the secondary hazard. Progressive venues and feature closures may be used to mitigate these risks when appropriate.

VENUE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

- Venues should have a variety of options riders left, right, and down the center from the start gate.
- Every rider should have options to make it easily into the finish corral from multiple areas of the venue.
- Every venue should have multiple line options that are manageable for all ability levels.

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- If a feature or terrain will not sustain a full field of athletes for the intended division(s), the feature or terrain should be closed for competition. If during the competition a feature or terrain is determined to be degrading and unlikely to remain suitable to complete the competition, that feature or terrain should be closed at the end of the division. If the feature or terrain becomes unsuitable for competition after a division has started, the feature or terrain should be immediately closed, and the division should be restarted. If a feature is closed during the competition day, and it was not highlighted as a possibility during the athlete meeting, the Technical Director may be required to allow an additional inspection for the remaining divisions prior to restarting the competition.

EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES

External venue boundaries require clear negotiation with Patrol and the Patrol lead. External venue boundaries create clear closure to public access from all aspects of the venue. It is best practice to set external boundaries at least 5 meters distance from internal boundary features. External boundaries should consist of rope lines that create open and closed access to the start gate. External boundaries should run from the start gate down the entire venue on both riders right and left connecting with the finish corral fencing. Often the terrain is too steep to run ropelines, in which case bamboo is commonly used to create clear boundaries. External boundaries create clear closure and keep the public off venue.

INTERNAL BOUNDARIES AND PROGRESSIVE VENUES

When setting internal boundaries, it is essential for the Technical Director to be in tune with the star level of the event and the event format.

Athletes on the venue generate a significant amount of speed and velocity. Internal rope lines can be viewed as a safety hazard. Avoid using rope lines to create internal boundaries on the venue. If markers such as bamboo are not sufficient to create clear closures, use fencing. If fencing can’t be utilized to mitigate the hazard the venue should be deemed unfit for competition.

Common closure and progressive venue setting methods are as follows: Use bamboo or alternative material to act as physical markers while tying the appropriate color flagging to the marker. Start with the youngest categories first as they will be the first to run and the first set of markers to be pulled out.

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JUNIORS

- U12 - orange flagging
- U15- yellow flagging
- U19 - blue flagging
- Split Judge venues - Green flagging

ADULTS

- Blank bamboo
- Split Judge venues - Green flagging
- When closing an air it is best practice to make an X on the feature or use multiple X's so it is clear that the feature is closed for competition.
- When closing a minor feature it is best practice to insert bamboo flagged with the appropriate color on the far left, right and in the center of the feature being closed for competition. This is known as making a hat.
- When closing a major feature it is common practice to insert more than 3 flagged bamboo so the closure is obvious.

PLAN B - SPLIT JUDGE VENUES AND SPLIT JUDGING

Inclement weather may obstruct judges' ability to clearly view the primary venue from the judges' pit. In this case, it requires the use of Plan B split judge venues, which are encouraged at all event levels except for Challenger & Championship level events. In some cases, a resort may only have split judge venues available due to terrain or visibility limitations. During split judge events, each judge must be equipped with an individual radio. Clear and consistent communication between judges is essential to ensure accurate scoring and efficient event operations.

SPLIT JUDGING

In the case of poor visibility due to weather Judges must wait until the athlete is visible for the whole run. The Technical Director or Head Judge may cancel a division or day due to weather and/or visibility. The announcement of cancellation should be performed at the completion of an entire division or before the start of a division. If the

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circumstance arises that it is necessary to cancel the remaining athletes in a division part way through the field, the Technical Director will be allowed to resume competition the following day in the same order as the previous day by running the entire division.

In the case of large blind spots or poor visibility, split judging should be considered. When split judging is used, Judges must use one consistent format for the entirety of a category. The accepted methods of split judging are detailed below.

- If Judges are separated throughout the venue, each Judge will score all categories, including line in their respective zone.
- Zones and blind spots should be clearly defined amongst the Judge panel so there will be no overlap to keep consistency.
- Judges must be able to see the entirety of the venue or their individual section making sure not to overlap sections. If they cannot, Spotters may be put in place to cover blind spots. If spotters cannot cover the blind spots the venue must be condensed by setting additional venue boundaries to ensure each Judge can see their entire section.
    - Spotters must be approved by the Head Judge to make sure they are equipped with the appropriate judging knowledge for the event, as they are positioned on the venue to cover all blind spots.

Communication between the judging teams and the Starter is essential when utilizing split judging. Each judging team must have one radio per section to clearly communicate where one team's section begins and the other ends. This ensures that athletes are not being scored in multiple sections. Any DNF's, DQ's or infractions must be clearly communicated over the radio to inform each judging team, as well as the Starter. The bottom Judge must announce over the radio when the last section is clear, so the top Judge can announce all Judges are ready for the next athlete. When doing pre planned split judging such as 2 + 2, there should be an Assistant Technical Director stationed on the venue section that the Technical Director cannot see, so the entire venue has Technical Director coverage. In the case of weather-related split judging (2 + 1), and in the absence of an assistant Technical Director, one of the Judges should be designated to provide Technical Director coverage for the section of the venue that is not visible to the Technical Director.

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BUILDING SPLIT JUDGE VENUES

When building Plan B split judge venues, the terrain will dictate how many split judging stations will be set. There are three possible options noted below. When building split judge venues, it is critical for each judge to see their entire section from start to finish. For example, 1+1+1 split judge means each judge needs to have a clear understanding of where their section begins and ends, so athletes are not being scored twice by both judges. This can be mitigated by radio communication between each judge. For example, if both judges have determined where one section ends and the other section begins but an athlete falls between the two sections, the judges must use radio communication to determine which judge will score the fall. This communication ensures the athlete is not being scored for the fall by both judges in both sections. In this instance 1+1+1 split judging can be seen as 3 separate events. The athletes score from each event (section) is totalled and divided by 3 to arrive at the athletes final score.

1+1+1 Split Judging

The venue is divided into three sections with roughly equal terrain and each venue/judge is weighted equally. Mark each judge's position on the venue and also on the venue maps. Each judge judges their own section, and their scores are added and averaged.

2+1 Split Judging

The venue is divided into two sections (sometimes terrain dictates that this is the best option). Mark each judges section on the venue and on the venue map. The scores are weighted equally (either by averaging for the section that has two judges or by only using two judges and the third is used as a spotter - meaning positioned to have eyes on a blind spot and communicate with the other judges by radio).

2+2 Split Judging

Some venues may have undulating terrain where the entire venue cannot be judged from a single pit location. This should be limited to a maximum of two pitches with two judging pits. In this case, scoring will be just like two separate runs using 2 judges for each run. There will be a Head Judge and Support Judge in each pit. The Technical Director will sit in or near the bottom pit or finish corral, and an Assistant Technical Director will sit in the top pit.

As for scoring, all judges should inspect both pitches of the venue together, and the two Head Judges should come to agreement on baseline score values of each pitch. During

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forerunner judging, the two Head Judges should compare and calibrate Line Scores. The Scorekeepers will be instructed to check that the two Line Scores from the upper section are the same for each athlete and that the two Line Scores from the lower section are the same for each athlete. The four scores will be averaged to determine the final point value of each athlete's run.

Note that a control issue on either the upper or lower pitch will only affect the scores for that section of the course.

COMPETITION EXECUTION

Once the venue is cleared of inspectors, the Technical Director will verify that all officials and Judges are in place and ready. The Technical Director will verify that Patrol is in place and ready for the competition to begin according to their communicated response plan. In the event of a patrol response, the Technical Director will ensure that Patrol has replaced their resources prior to the competition resuming. As instructed by the Technical Director, the Starter will do a back protector check on each athlete prior to entering the start gate.

Several forerunners are often used to facilitate getting the judging team in sync and to give the Head Judge or Technical Director the opportunity to practice communications with the Starter. The Head Judge or Technical Director should instruct the forerunners that the purpose of their run is to get a baseline of conditions and average time to ski/ride the venue. There should be no large airs or difficult tricks, as falls or injuries cause delays and can place the competition in jeopardy. Forerunners must do a venue inspection prior to their run and should participate in the first wave of inspection to ensure timely return to the start gate. Forerunners should be known individuals who can manage the competition terrain and who understand the rules and safety protocol. Coaches and athletes participating in the event on the same day cannot be used as forerunners, as this would provide an unfair advantage. Athletes cannot forerun on the same venue that they will be competing on in subsequent days of the event. Forerunners can also be helpful in relaying venue conditions to the athletes when soft inspection protocols are in place.

In conjunction with the Technical Director, it is the Head Judge's responsibility to keep a realistic pace to the event and balance the schedule demands with quality production value, including judges' scoring. It is important to ensure that judges work at a reasonable pace and remain diligent about time management in order to get through the day's start list. The actual time needs to be continually checked against the schedule, and

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the status should be communicated with the Technical Director and Patrol leads. Quick breaks between divisions may be needed to allow Judges to make any scoring adjustments, take bathroom breaks, eat and drink, add or remove layers, etc.

The Technical Director and/or Head Judge may be required to place a course hold on the event due to weather conditions and visibility issues. It is advisable to gather coaches (or competitors in adult events) to review the situation and determine path forward. In the event that a division is not completed, the entire division must restart the following day. If there is no following day, the division is either limited to scoring the first run, or cancellation if a single run was not completed. The Technical Director has the discretion to alter the run order for the following day in order to ensure all divisions complete at least one run, and should prioritize completing at least one run for every division before allowing a second run for any division.

The Technical Director also has the discretion to cancel a division during the competition day due to unsafe conditions or time. For example, the U12 division was scheduled to run first but firm conditions with anticipated softening required the Technical Director to either move that division to the end of the day or the following day. These anticipated scenarios are expected to be communicated at the athlete meetings by the Technical Director with the decision communicated at any supplemental athlete meeting that follows inspection.

The Technical Director instructs the Starter to do a back protector check on each athlete prior to entering the start gate. The Starter should not physically touch the athletes but instead should ask the athlete to give a self-tap or unzip their jacket enough to show the back protector. If an athlete is not wearing a back protector, they will not be allowed to compete, and the Starter will announce to the Technical Director/Head Judge that the athlete receives a DNS due to lack of required safety gear.

Immediately following the competition, the Head Judge leads the Judges' scoring review. The Technical Director is expected to attend the judges scoring review meeting to review scores and determine the cut line for multi-day events. The Technical Director assists the Head Judge in settling any scoring issues or discrepancies. The Technical Director plays a key role in determining the run two cut line in consideration of safety and schedule considerations to include, but not limited to, next day venue length, terrain complexity, snow conditions, forecast weather conditions, athlete day one skill level and performance (control issues, crashes, etc.). An approximate 50% cut is often the target, but a deeper or shallower cut may be applied based on these considerations at the discretion of the Technical Director and Head Judge. The Technical Director is

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also expected to interface with the Event Organizer and Patrol to review plans for the following day and fill out the daily Technical Director report.

TWO RUN COMPETITIONS

There are two main competition formats: one run and two runs. In two run events, the final score is a cumulative result of both runs.

When both runs can not be completed (due to weather, snow conditions, extenuating circumstances, etc.), a single run will count as the final score. It should be made clear in the athlete meeting that this scenario is a possibility if a second competition run appears unlikely.

In a two run event, with a qualification run and a final run, riders not making the cut for the final run will be added at the end of the result list based on their first run performance. They will earn points according to the event's result list after the final run.

For a two run competition held over multiple days, it is possible that a division starts competing, but does not finish. In this instance, the entire division must restart, and the Technical Director should prioritize completing at least one run for every division before allowing a second run for any division.

TWO DAY EVENT CUTS

An approximate 50% cut is often the target, but a deeper or shallower cut may be applied based on these considerations at the discretion of the Technical Director and Head Judge. The Technical Director is also expected to interface with the Event Organizer and Patrol to review plans for the following day and fill out the daily Technical Director report.

SCOREKEEPING CODES

The Technical Director and Head Judge are responsible for determining when a DNS, DNF, and DQ are warranted when on venue. The Technical Director, Head Judge, and EO are responsible for determining when athletes should receive a DQ for off-venue code of conduct violations.

DNS: DID NOT START

- A rider who does not show up at the start gate, or who showed up at the start gate but was missing any **MANDATORY** equipment (i.e. helmet or back protector), will earn a DNS (Did Not Start). They will not earn any points.

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- In the case of an event with two days of competition, the rider will not receive any points if the DNS occurred on the qualifying day. If a rider qualified for day two, but for any reason was absent at the start of the second day of competition, they will earn a DNS and no points on day two; however, they will still be awarded a place and ranking points according to their first run results.

DNF: DID NOT FINISH

- If a rider loses their ski or board or requires assistance from a Ninja or a member of Patrol during their run, a DNF score will be awarded.
- If an athlete unclips from one or two skis they receive a DNF.
- If an athlete comes out of one or both snowboard bindings they receive a DNF.
    - Athletes can unclip from one snowboard binding and continue to compete only if this is intentional to traverse an area of the venue as communicated by the Technical Director in the athlete meeting.
- Athletes are not allowed to receive assistance during their run. This includes receiving dropped ski poles, go pros, etc. If an athlete receives gear before they come to a complete stop in the finish corral they receive a DNF.
- In the event that DNF criteria is met, an uninjured athlete must ride to the bottom via the most direct route in a safe, expedient manner without performing any tricks or drops; they may not exit the venue boundary and must complete their run through the finish corral in order to earn DNF points.
- If a DNF rider leaves the venue boundary or fails to exit the venue through the designated finish area, they will instead earn a DQ and zero points instead of a DNF and last place points.
- All athletes leaving the venue in a patrol toboggan will receive a DNF.
- Tied for Last Place Rule: Riders who earn DNF scores shall all be tied and awarded points for last place. (Example: In an event's final day with 20 riders in which 4 riders crashed and did not complete their runs, the 4 riders all tie in 17th place and all will earn the points of 17th place.)

DQ: DISQUALIFICATION

A rider receiving a DQ (Disqualification) will be ranked last, after all DNF riders, and a DQ does not receive a judging score.

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A rider could receive a DQ for any of the following actions:

- Inverting when prohibited by the Event Organizer. Horizontal spins or flat spins are still accepted as long as the feet do not raise higher than the rider's head. In Region 2, inverts are only permitted at the discretion of each Event Organizer. Inverts are NOT permitted in any IFSA Junior Competition.
    - Horizontal spins or flat spins are still accepted as long as the feet do not raise higher than the rider's head. Entering the finish area in a manner that compromises personal safety of other athletes, spectators or crew.
- Entering the finish area in a manner that compromises personal safety of other athletes, spectators or crew.
- Entering a closed area or violating any clearly marked venue boundaries.
- Infraction of venue inspection protocol during inspection such as: violating terrain enhancement rules, riding fast or recklessly, sessioning a line, or hitting/dropping any features.
- The Technical Director and Head Judge have the authority to DQ a competitor for breaking any IFSA rules, resort, organizer, or venue rules, and for poor sportsmanship or violations of the IFSA Code of Conduct.
- If the organizer decides to close the venue prior to the event and a rider accesses the venue, the Technical Director, Head Judges, or Event Organizer has the authority to DQ the rider.
- If the rider's helmet comes off during their run - unless the helmet fails while protecting the athlete from the impact of a fall.
- If the rider exits the venue boundary or fails to exit the venue by way of the designated finish corral after a significant crash, equipment loss, or injury.
- If a rider should continue their planned run after a DNF event, they are subject to disqualification (DQ) from the current event and suspension from future events at the discretion of the IFSA Board of Directors.

NS: NO SCORE

This is a scorekeeping code utilized in Region 1 and it is not employed by the IFSA judges in Region 2.

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INVERT RULE

QUALIFIERS

Inverts (front flip or backflip) will be permitted at the discretion of the Event Organizer in Region 2. This rule will vary between organizers and it is the athlete's responsibility to attend the MANDATORY athlete meeting to gain information on the rules. When inverts are not permitted by the Event Organizer, horizontal spins or flat spins are still accepted as long as the feet do not raise higher than the rider's head. Riders executing spins with feet higher than their head when specifically prohibited by the Event Organizer will earn a DQ score and will not be awarded points.

JUNIORS

The focus for IFSA Juniors is to learn sound decision making and promote safety. As such, inverts (front flip or back flip) will not be permitted in any IFSA-sanctioned junior competition. This rule applies to all IFSA juniors regardless of gender, division, or age category. Horizontal spins or flat spins are still accepted as long as the feet do not raise higher than the rider's head. Riders executing a spin with feet higher than the head will be awarded a DQ, earning zero points.

JUDGING PIT SETUP

Several factors must be considered when locating and setting up the judging pit. When a single pit is used, the location should be chosen for the best possible view of the entire venue when viewed from a sitting position. While sitting in their chairs, the Judges must be able to see the athlete come to a complete stop in the finish corral. No matter the effort, many venues will have blind spots for the Judges that cannot be eliminated. These zones should be noted when setting up the pit, documented with a photo, and shared with athletes to have them fully informed when planning and executing their line. If the resources are available, a qualified Spotter with a radio should be positioned on the venue to cover each blind spot and communicate any pertinent information to the judges. Spotters must be approved by the Head Judge to make sure they are equipped with the appropriate judging knowledge for the event, as they are positioned on the venue to cover all blind spots.

If possible, the judging pit location should be selected to minimize exposure to wind, or a wind break should be constructed using snow blocks or construction materials.

A flat and level area should be shoveled out to allow space for a minimum of four chairs for the 3 judges and Technical Director, a table, and space to lay down gear and

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backpacks. Typically a flat area 12 feet wide by 8 feet long is sufficient. The flat area should be raked smooth and packed using skis, and doing this the day before the event allows the snow to set up overnight. Skis can also be used to check if the pit surface is level.

Once the judging pit is established, a boundary fence or tape should be set up to maintain a minimum of 15-20 feet of separation between the judges and the spectators, coaches, and athletes. When the judges pit is located below the finish corral, make sure that finish corral fencing and sponsor banners do not obstruct the view from the judging pit. Controls should be put in place to ensure that people cannot stand or walk across uphill from the judges, obstructing their view.

The judges table and chairs should be placed on a carpet or foam pad for insulation from the snow and covered by a canopy to protect from precipitation and sun. Adding three walls to the canopy improves wind protection. Propane or electric heaters further improve comfort if available.

The announcer's PA speaker should not be located near or facing toward the judges to minimize distractions caused by announcer commentary.

JUDGE CREDENTIAL LEVELS AND SIGN-OFF CHECKLISTS

The role of the IFSA Judge is critical to having safe and well-run Big Mountain Freeride events, where all athletes are treated fairly and required to follow the rules as defined in the IFSA Athlete Handbooks. The IFSA has five levels of judges, and each region also has at least one Regional Head Judge (RHJ) who works with resort partners and regional delegates on scheduling and credentialing. Below are the definitions of each judge credential level.

The IFSA has digitized the sign off process for J1-J4. The Judge Trainer may now fill out the Judge Candidate Sign Off Form for signing off new judges, and certifying Judges that are moving up levels.

During the event, the Regional Head Judge Trainer acts as Head Judge, and the training judge acts as assistant judge or shadow judge and is required to participate in all judge responsibilities. During this time, the Regional Head Judge Trainer will be evaluating the judge-in-training. After the event, the Regional Head Judge will complete the checklist below and review results with the trainee. Following the review, the Regional Head Judge Trainer and judge trainee are required to sign the completed checklist, and the Regional Head Judge Trainer submits the document to the IFSA Judge Chair.

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JUDGE 1

The J1 is considered an entry level judge. The J1 can act as a support judge up to IFSA 2* level events when signed off by a Regional Head Judge.

J1 Certification

- The online Judge Certification Training has been completed and passed.
- Demonstrates the ability to progress on the Judging path after shadowing a judges pit at an event.

JUDGE 2

The J2 can act as a support judge up to the IFSA 3* events when signed off by an Regional Head Judge.

J2 Certification

Scored an IFSA 2* and/or 3* event with a degree of competency to the IFSA Judging System and demonstrates competency at the 3* event level.

- Possesses the willingness to be on time and work with the team.
- Shows the ability to listen and learn.
- Demonstrates understanding of key factors pertaining to judging methodology.
- Displays the ability to scale venues and Line Score.
- Demonstrates the ability to accurately apply the Rider Level and the Control Issue Guide.
- Displays ability to discern control issues and score appropriately.
- Maintains the ability to be non-bias.
- Shows ability to put it all together and provide accurate results.

JUDGE 3

The J3 is an experienced judge capable of supporting all event levels. J3's can act as Head Judge for up to IFSA 2* level events when signed off by an Regional Head Judge.

J3 Certification

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Demonstrated a significant degree of competency to the IFSA Judging System at the 4* event level, as well as knowledge of the IFSA Handbook.

- Demonstrates the ability to express necessary information and answer questions at coach and athlete meetings, which is required of the Head Judge.
- Displays effective communication and organization with Technical Director, EO, Patrol, fellow judges, starters, mountain operations, and all event volunteers and staff.
- Shows ability to lead a judging pit and facilitate balanced discussion and healthy working environment.
- Remains consistent in judging throughout an event.
- Displays full comprehension of judging methodology, including the Rider Level and the Control Issue Guide.
- Maintains a non-bias judging pit.
- Demonstrates the ability to produce accurate results and overall positive events.
- Demonstrates the ability to handle post-event questions and provide developmental feedback to athletes and coaches.

JUDGE 4

The J4 can support all IFSA event levels and can act as Head Judge for 4* events when signed off by an Regional Head Judge. J4s are highly experienced judges capable of supporting IFSA Championship events including the Junior Freeride Championships, Qualifier 4*, and Challenger Series events.

J4 Certification

Demonstrated full competency with the IFSA Judging System at the 4* event level, as well as complete knowledge of the IFSA Handbook.

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and experience to effectively handle all responsibilities required of judges at every level of competition.
- Possesses required knowledge to properly train new judges with the IFSA Judging System.

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- Shows the ability to facilitate balanced discussion and a healthy working environment.
- Maintains a non-bias judging pit
- Displays full comprehension of judging methodology, including the Rider Level and the Control Issue Guide, to accurately score all control issues and produce accurate scoring throughout all judging categories.
- Demonstrates complete competency in handling post-event questions and provides developmental feedback to athletes and coaches.

JUDGE 5

J5 represents the highest level of IFSA judging certification. The J5 has been signed off by the Judging Advisory Board and is qualified to Head Judge all IFSA events, including the Junior Freeride Championships (JFCs) and Adult Challenger Series events. Level 5 Regional Head Judges are highly knowledgeable members of the IFSA Judging community and the most experienced judges in The Americas Region. J5s are responsible for overseeing and maintaining the consistency and quality of judging and for evolving the judging process.

J5 Certification

- Demonstrates full competency with the IFSA Judging System at the 4* Head Judge event level.
- Possesses complete understanding of the IFSA Handbook.
- Has been signed off by the Regional Head Judge Advisory Board.
- Demonstrates ability to train the IFSA Judging System.
- Demonstrates a high degree of organizational and exemplary leadership skills.
- Demonstrates ability to facilitate balanced discussions and healthy working environments and support the development of professional working relationships.

REGIONAL HEAD JUDGE

The Regional Head Judge is responsible for coordinating the judging, judge training, and event assignments within their respective region in conjunction with Regional Series Directors. The Regional Head Judge is the primary point of contact for Event Organizers when assembling judging staff for their events. Event Organizers can get in contact with

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their Regional Head Judge through their Regional Series Director. Regional Head Judges are acting members of the IFSA Judging Advisory Board. The Regional Head Judge is responsible for providing feedback to the Advisory Board from their respective region and briefing their regional judging staff on IFSA Judging Advisory Board meetings. Although the role is often held by a J5 or highly experienced judge, it is an appointed leadership position focused on regional coordination and communication, rather than a judging certification level.

JUDGE CHAIR

The Judge Chair is the leader of the Judge Advisory Board and oversees the judging in all regions. The Judge Chair is responsible for providing guidance to Regional Head Judges and the judging community, managing content in the Judging Handbook, facilitating inter-regional judging exchanges to increase consistency, and scheduling judges at championship events. The Judge Chair and the Judge Advisory Board collaborate to progress Freeride judging and are responsible for the development and evolution of the Region 2 methodology.

IFSA JUDGING METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

Typically, there are a minimum of three judges in a single judging pit, including the Head Judge and two Support Judges. All Judges must watch the athletes' entire run from start to finish. All judges will judge all five categories for each competitor immediately following the competitor's run. All categories, except Line, have a possible point range of .1 to 10. The Line Score is judged on a scale of 3 to 7. Overall score will be determined as an average of all judges' scores. The maximum possible score is 47 points.

The Judges shall inspect the competition venue during athlete inspection to discuss possible lines and conditions and accurately determine Line Score(s). Judges should also scale the venue from the judging location to set high and low lines as well as identifying any Line Score zonal points. During forerunners, judges will discuss the runs to ensure they are in agreement on Line Score determination and to practice communication protocol in the pit and scoring of the execution categories (Control, Technique, Fluidity Style).

In the interest of maintaining impartial judging and eliminating actual or perceived bias, judges shall not have access to athlete names while actively judging. Any start lists, run orders, or judging reference materials used within the judging pit must exclude or redact

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athlete names and display bib numbers only. In dual panel formats, the Pit Manager may retain an unredacted start list for operational and communication purposes.

During each competitor's run, the judges should discuss their observations during the entire run to make sure they are all seeing the same things. When there is disagreement, they will discuss and resolve rather than having vastly different scores. The Head Judge should verify that all judges' scores are within plus or minus 0.5 points in each execution category.

The judges' competitor scoresheets will be relayed to a scorekeeper throughout the competition for score tabulation to enable the tabulation to be complete by the time the judges arrive at the scorekeeper's table at the end of the day to review results.

JUDGING CATEGORIES

- **Line**: Each competitor chooses their line or route down the course. Scores increase in correlation with the difficulty of the chosen route. Difficulty is determined by steepness, exposure, air, and course conditions.
- **Control**: Competitors are rewarded for staying in control. Each loss of control will result in a score deduction based on the severity of the control issue.
- **Technique**: Competitors are judged on turn quality relating to big mountain Freeriding and the display of skills required in varying terrain and in freestyle.
- **Fluidity**: This includes continuity, pace, and smooth transitions between sections of the venue, along with the energy displayed while descending the line. Competitors should maintain constant direction towards a goal. Hesitating, slowing, stopping, or falling will have a negative impact in this category.
- **Style**: This encompasses the execution of freestyle maneuvers and creativity in the air, on snow, and in technical terrain.

LINE SCORE

Line Score gets scored first and is established by the Head Judge and concurred by the rest of the judging panel. Line choice is not relative to how it is ridden. The Line Score represents the difficulty of the terrain, and all other scores are directly related to it. Line Score shall be awarded a value between a low of 3 and a high of 7. Baseline score is the minimum line score that is based on the easiest route on the venue and typically starts at 4, although a baseline score of 3 can be used if a greater range of points is required. The execution scores can exceed the established Line Score by a maximum of +3 points and be as low as 0.1 points. In determining the Line Score, all three judges will call out the values of the features incorporated into the run as the athlete descends the venue, and

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the Head Judge will make the final call on the number of points awarded. By the time the athlete reaches the finish corral, the Line Score should be solidified. It is the most objective judging category, and all judges are required to record the same Line Score.

RIDER LEVEL AND RIDER POTENTIAL

After the athlete's Line Score is established, the four execution categories are utilized to determine the degree of Control, Technique, Fluidity, and Style the athlete displayed while riding their Line, keeping in mind the rider cannot score more than 3 points higher than the Line Score in each execution category.

Using the overall impression of the four execution categories, the athlete's **Rider Level (RL)** is determined. When establishing the athlete's Rider Level, consider control but be careful not to deduct for control issues. The deductions will be assessed after the athlete's **Rider Potential** is determined**.**

- Rider Level is evaluated throughout the run, but the final point value is determined at the end of the athlete's run.
- Add the Rider Level to the Line Score to determine the Rider Potential.
- The Rider Potential is the baseline for scoring all execution categories.
- Deduct control issues from the Rider Potential.

In other words, the Rider Level is the number of points above the Line Score an athlete will be awarded, while the Rider Potential is the totality of points after adding Line and RL.

- Rider Level + Line Score = Rider Potential
- (RL + LS = RP)
- Rider Potential - Control Deduction = Control Score
- (RP - CD = CS)

RIDER LEVEL

RIDER LEVEL		
Level	**Description**	**Execution Points Above Line Score**
RL 1	Baseline Riding	Level with Line Score to 1

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RIDER LEVEL		
		Above Line
RL 2	Average Riding	1.1 to 1.5 Above Line Score
RL 3	Good Riding	1.6 to 2 Above Line Score
RL 4	Great Riding	2.1 to 2.5 Above Line Score
RL 5	Excellent to Perfect Riding	2.6 to 3 Above Line Score

JUDGING CONTROL

Control is the second category judged and often dictates how the rest of the execution categories are scored.

When determining your Control Score, consider what type of terrain the rider is navigating. It is easier to be in control on easier terrain than it is to maintain control at higher speeds in more challenging terrain.

It is easy to judge great riding but quite challenging to judge and stay consistent when judging control issues. To do so, use the following scale and rules to determine the level of deduction for different stages of control issues.

Control Issues are defined as follows :

Stage 1 – Minor Control Issues – Break in the athlete's form. This can include a loss of balance, quick hand down (for balance), minor backseat landing, ski/board up, or "rolling down the windows" while in the air.

Stage 2 – Moderate Control Issues – Extended minor control issue This can include a quick butt-check, hip tap, extended time off-balance, hands down with weight/pressure, or major backseat landing/wheelie.

Stage 3 – Major Control Issues – Major loss of control. This can include a backslap, full butt-check, full hip-check, near fall, spinout on skis. Generally, riders retain all or some momentum with these issues.

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Stage 4 – Soft Fall – A loss of control where the body touches down with no rollover, and the athlete regains immediate control and does not come to a complete stop. *Fast falls can be determined when the athlete's body connects with the snow significantly but the athlete does not tomahawk, roll over, or rotate 360 degrees and is quick to get to their feet.*

Stage 5 – Fall – The body is fully down, and the athlete rolls over and does not immediately regain control. *A major fall can be determined when the athlete's body connects with the snow significantly while in a tomahawk (or punch front) or 360-degree rotation either vertically or horizontally.*

Stage 6 – Multiple Falls – Multiple falls and control issues are scored with a minimum of 4.6 deduction – 0.1 as the lowest possible score

The lowest possible score that can be used in the execution categories is 0.1

To score the remaining execution categories when dealing with control issues, use the following guide. Based on the stage of the control issue, these rules provide point scales for the other execution categories. The other categories are then judged within the respective new scale in alignment with Rider Level while considering how the control issue may have impacted each of the remaining categories. A deduction must be made from the Rider Potential within the given range below.

Stage 1 (Minor Control Issue) .1 – .5 deduction (per occurrence)

- Score off Line Score in alignment with Rider Level as normal, while considering how the control issue may have impacted each of the other categories.

Stage 2 (Moderate Control Issue) .6 – 1.5 deduction (per occurrence)

- Score off Line Score in alignment with Rider Level as normal, while considering how the control issue may have impacted each of the other categories.

Stage 3 (Major Control Issue) 1.6 – 2.5 deduction (per occurrence)

- Do not score more than **1.5 points** higher than the Control Score in any of the other execution categories.

- Consider keeping Technique within 1.0 point of Control to maintain consistency.

Stage 4 (Soft Fall) 2.6 – 3.5 deduction (per occurrence)

- Do not score more than **1 point** higher than the Control Score in any of the other execution categories.

Stage 5 (Fall) 3.6 – 4.5 deduction (per occurrence)

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- Do not score more than **0.5 points** higher than the Control Score in any of the other execution categories.

Stage 6 (Multiple Falls) 4.6 or more deduction (0.1 as the lowest possible score)

- Do not score more than the Control Score (**0 points**) in any of the other execution categories.

CONTROL DEDUCTIONS TABLE

Level	Description	Control Deduction (Per Occurrence)	Above Control Score Limit
Stage 1 - Minor	Break in form, loss of balance, quick hand down (for balance), minor backseat landing, ski up/board up, rolling down windows	0.1 - 0.5	*
Stage 2 - Minor/Major	Extended minor control issues, quick butt-check, hip tap, extended time off-balance, hands down with weight/pressure, major backseat landing/wheelie	0.6 - 1.5	*
Stage 3 - Major	Major loss of control, backslap, full butt-check, full hip-check, near fall, retains all or some momentum	1.6 - 2.5	1.5
Stage 4 - Soft Fall	Body touches down & athlete regains control, no roll over or full rotation, athlete does not come to a full stop	2.6 - 3.5	1
Stage 5 - Full Fall	Body touches down & athlete does not regain immediate control, full stop or roll over, tomahawk/360 degree rotation vertically or horizontal	3.6 - 4.5	0.5
Stage 6 - Multiple Falls	Minimum 4.6 deduction, 0.1 is the lowest possible control score	4.6 +	0
* Score off Line Score in alignment with Rider Level as normal, while considering how the Control issue may have impacted each of the other execution categories			
Athletes cannot score more than 3 points above their line score in any execution category			

SUMMARY OF CONTROL SCALE

Minor Control Issue (Stage 1) .1 – .5 deduction from Rider Potential (per occurrence)

Moderate Control Issue (Stage 2) .6 – 1.5 deduction from Rider Potential (per occurrence)

Major Control Issue (Stage 3) 1.6 – 2.5 deduction from Rider Potential (per occurrence)

Soft Fall (Stage 4) 2.6 – 3.5 deduction from Rider Potential (per occurrence)

Fall (Stage 5) 3.6 – 4.5 deduction from Rider Potential (per occurrence)

Multiple Falls and Control Issues (Stage 6) 4.6 or more deduction from Rider Potential, not to exceed a minimum Control score of 0.1

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Reminder : The lowest possible score that can be used in the execution categories is 0.1

When using this scale, deduct from the **Rider Potential (RP),** which is calculated by adding the Line Score to the Rider Level and represents the score the athlete would have gotten without the control issue.

Example of scoring a Minor Control Issue: A rider earns a Line Score of 5.0, and the Rider Level is scored at 2.0 (RL3 - Good Riding), although a minor issue occurs (Stage 1 or commonly called S1). Start by determining the Rider Potential (RP), which is the sum of the Line Score (Line) and Rider Level (RL):

5.0 (Line) + 2.0 (RL3) = 7.0 (RP)

From the RP, deduct for the S1 control issue, which would be between .1-.5 points. In this example, the Head Judge calls it a deduction of .3:

7.0 (RP) - .3 (S1) = 6.7

The rider ends up with a 6.7 in Control.

Example of a Fall: A rider has a full fall (Stage 5 or S5) on a Line Score (LS) of 6.0 while showing Excellent Riding (RL4 = 2.5 above the Line Score). Calculate the Rider Potential:

6.0 (Line) + 2.5 (RL4) = 8.5 (RP)

The Rider Potential of 8.5 is the general number that the athlete would have scored without any issues. Next, determine the score for Control. A Stage 5 Fall will be assessed between 3.6 – 4.5 points. The Head Judge determines that the fall will be assessed 4.5 points, so deduct 4.5 points off the Rider Potential:

8.5 (RP) - 4.5 (S5) = 4.0

The Control Score for the rider will be 4.0.

NOTE-TAKING

Along with scoring the five judging categories, judges are required to write down comprehensive notes documenting what occurred in each athlete's run in the Notes box on the score sheet. This is a key part of the process that may be needed for adding up the Line Score, specifying execution category details, comparing runs, ensuring appropriate scores, determining rankings, breaking ties, and discussing scores with athletes and coaches after the competition.

Shorthand, abbreviations, and symbols should be used for efficiency. The following are suggestions for notetaking:

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- Use a simple symbol to represent a distinct feature = △ , ⬭ , ▱ , ⁄ , ◺ , □ , Ω ,◇
- Write the Line Score point value awarded to each feature = .1, .2, .3, etc.
- Direction feature was taken = ←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, ⬀, ⬊
- Tricks
    - L360 = Left 360 (ski)
    - R360 = Right 360 (ski)
    - C720 = Cork 720
    - B360 = Back 360 (snowboard)
    - F360 = Front 360 (snowboard)
    - HCAB = Half Cab
    - grb = Grab
    - BF = backflip
    - FF = front flip
    - SFT = shifty
- Types of control/technique/fluidity issues
    - BS = back slap
    - BST = back seat riding
    - wdg = Wedge
    - hez = hesitation
    - trv = traverse
    - h✔ = hand check
    - hp = hip check
    - b✔ = butt check

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- ✖ = full fall

Example of how notes might look on a judge's score sheet:

Start	Bib	Notes			
1	001	.1 top↘ R360	.4 BF BS - S3	.2 L360 Grb	.2 hez SFT

METHODOLOGY SCALE AND OTHER JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS

When judging control issues, it is important to also deduct in all execution categories, as appropriate. These guidelines are designed to encourage competitors to ride within their ability and maintain control. This is particularly important with junior athletes. The difficulty of the terrain and maneuvers is taken into consideration when judging Control and the other execution categories.

Control and Technique often work together. Although not always the case, poor control often occurs from poor technique, and poor technique often results in a loss of control.

Tricks and freestyle maneuvers should be rewarded primarily in the Style, Control, and Technique categories. Poor execution of tricks and maneuvers may have a negative impact in all execution categories.

Falling and unsuccessfully landing jumps, cliff drops or airs of any kind will have a significant negative impact on all other execution categories. Major crashes and falls should be penalized in every category.

Judging continues into the finish area. Competitors must know where the start(s) and finish(es) are located for each competitive division. All start(s) and finish(es) should be clearly marked on the venue map and discussed at the athlete meeting. Competitors must come to a controlled stop in the finish area. Falling or entering the finish area out of control will be scored as a loss of control and will negatively affect all other scoring categories other than Line. Competitors will not enter the finish area in a manner that affects spectators, crew, or their personal safety.

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SCOREKEEPING AND RESULTS REVIEW

All decisions made by the judges are final. Scores are reviewed at the end of the day before they are made public. This is primarily to identify any clerical errors in transcribing results from the judges' handwritten score sheets into the Liveheats system and to break any ties in the top 5 in each division. During the scorekeeping review, the judges should review the podiums to make sure they consider the order to be correct. In a large field, the criteria may drift over the duration of the division. If the judges feel that the finish order is incorrect, especially for the podium or top 10 athletes, they should review scores against their notes and memories of the performances and decide if minor adjustments need to be made to specific categories to be as accurate as possible.

FINALS CUT-LINE DETERMINATION

For multi-run events the Technical Director with input from the Head Judge will make competitor cuts after each run. Determination of the cut-line is based on several factors, including total number of competitors, next day venue length and difficulty, and weather conditions. The Technical Director and Head Judge need to ensure that all competitors above the cut-line are capable of riding the next day venue, that there is time to complete all athlete divisions, and that weather delays will not become a factor in completing divisions. After taking these factors into consideration, the cut-line is typically made at a location in the results where there is a gap in score value. As an example, if the cut should be made at approximately 20 athletes, and the scores are tight up to 18th place and followed by a gap in scores between 18th and 19th place, then the cut may be made after 18th place. Athletes with a DNF, DNS, or DQ must not make the cut for an additional run.

TIE BREAKING PROTOCOL

In the event of a tie in the top five of the final results, judges must determine placement by reviewing each athlete's overall run and identifying which athlete demonstrated the stronger performance. After thorough analysis of all aspects of the runs in question, a majority decision among the judges is required to break the tie. Judges will consider all execution categories to identify the most appropriate scoring distinction between the athletes and will adjust the most logical scoring category to reflect the ranking decision, while ensuring that no other athlete placements are affected. The Head Judge is responsible for facilitating the discussion and confirming the final scoring adjustment. If a majority decision cannot be reached after reasonable discussion, the Head Judge shall determine the most appropriate scoring adjustment to resolve the tie.

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AWARDS AND BREAKDOWN REVIEW

Scoring Breakdowns

The purpose of reviewing the breakdowns of the judges' scores with athletes and coaches is to provide developmental feedback for each individual athlete. Breakdowns will be printed and released to the judges and credentialed coaches present at each event only after the official results have been released. The judges will remain accountable on site after each event day to answer questions or concerns. Judges are expected to engage in score breakdown discussions after the award ceremony. Judges may provide feedback to athletes who request it for up to five minutes per athlete, though judges may extend this time at their discretion.

Video Review

If approached respectfully after results are released and with the understanding that scores are final, judges may review video at their discretion.

Keep in mind that judging decisions are made in real time in the conditions of the day and from the singular vantage point of the judging pit. Videos made by parents or coaches are often taken from a different vantage point than that of the judges and are not comparable.

HEAD JUDGE GENERAL GUIDELINES

ONE OR TWO DAYS PRIOR TO COMPETITION (VENUE DEPENDENT)

Depending on the event format, complexity, and logistics of the venue, the Head Judge may need to work with the Technical Director on the following responsibilities either two days prior to competition, one day prior, or on the morning of competition.

- Determine A/B venues, boundaries, closures, and progressive venues for age groups as necessary with Patrol and the Technical Director.
- In conjunction with the Technical Director, decide where judges will be located for Plan A and Plan B venues and mark the judges position(s) with a bamboo "X" on the mountain and on the venue maps, including split judging positions.
- The Head Judge supports the Technical Director to make sure the EO has appropriate resources committed (fencing, signage, radios, scorekeeping laptop, printer, paper, bibs, proper equipment for Announcers/Staff/Judges, etc.)

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- One or two days prior to competition, the Head Judge should do an inspection with the Technical Director to verify venue maps, closures, and boundaries and test out the judging location(s).

EVENT MORNING

- The Head Judge will support the Technical Director in making sure the boundaries, closures, and crowd control features have been installed as planned and venue snow conditions are safe. Last minute changes or concerns need to be communicated prior to inspection.
- Prior to inspection, disseminate the judging criteria and any specifics relating to split judging and venue boundaries at the Athlete and Officials Meetings.
- Do an inspection with the judges to review line choices, boundaries, and judging location(s).
- Support the Technical Director with venue inspection to make sure rules and safety procedures are followed.
- Scale the venue with the judging team from the Plan A and Plan B judges positions prior to the start of competition.

DURING EVENT

- Establish and maintain clear lines of communication with the Technical Director.
- Practice judging forerunners to ensure the judging team is set. Practice communication protocol with judges and clear lines of communication between the Head Judge, Technical Director, and the Starter.
- Ensure that judges work at a reasonable pace and remain diligent about time management.
- Arrange quick breaks between divisions for judge scoring adjustments, nature breaks, snacks, etc.
- Communicate with the Technical Director and Starter, especially regarding DNSs due to missed starts or missing safety gear, etc. and verification of all DNSs for scorekeeping accuracy.

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- Support the Technical Director and judging team on deciding on DQs, DNFs, weather-related delays, and any safety decisions.
- Be accessible to listen to and decide on any possible protests, etc.
- Before starting a new category, consider inclement weather and be prepared to move into split judging positions.

POST EVENT

- In conjunction with the Technical Director, review recorded results for errors and review findings with involved judge(s).
- In coordination with the Technical Director, decide on a cut line after a qualifying day in all divisions.
- Be available for questions and feedback from competitors, coaches, and event staff.
- Follow the Judging Handbook guidelines for public communications and media interface following significant events, such as major injury, cancellation, resort lift failure, avalanche, etc.

JUDGE EQUIPMENT LIST

The Judges are stationary and on venue for the entire duration of the event and should therefore carry a backpack to the venue containing the recommended items listed below. Some of these items, such as the folding chair, spare radio, lunch, and hot beverage, should be provided by the EO. The experienced judge knows to load some of the larger, bulkier items on a snowcat or snowmobile trailer rather than carrying everything to the venue. Each judge should prioritize their personal safety when deciding how to carry items, in particular a heavy backpack, to the base of a venue. In the event of slide-for-life conditions or for judges with backpacks heavy enough to put them at risk of injury, different accommodations must be made. Required and recommended items:

- Scoresheets, writing instruments, and weatherproof clipboard
- Copy of the IFSA Athlete Handbook and Judging Handbook (electronic copy ok)
- Clothing layers
- Sleeping bag or blanket

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- Rain gear
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Extra gloves or mittens
- Warm hat
- Hand and toe warmers
- Folding chair
- Insulating foot pad
- Shovel
- Avy beacon
- Binoculars
- Spare radio
- Cellphone
- Portable charger powerpack and cables
- Lunch, snacks, water
- Hot beverage

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