

Here are selected passages that metric skaters and their parents should know. More complete information is available at [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org).

**INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION SPECIAL REGULATIONS & TECHNICAL RULES, SPEED SKATING and SHORT TRACK SPEED SKATING 2008, as accepted by the 52nd Ordinary Congress June 2008**

**II. Technical Rules for Speed Skating**

**E. Racing Rules**

**Rule 253**

**Counter-clockwise skating**

1. Races are run counter-clockwise, which means that the inner side of the track is on the left hand side of the Skater.
2. All international races must be conducted on a standard track, in pairs and against time, with exceptions as stated in Rule 200, paragraphs 2 and 3, in Rule 253, paragraph 4 and in Rule 261 (team competitions).

**Changing lanes**

3. a) The competitor who skates on the inner lane shall change to the outer lane each time he arrives at the crossing straight and vice versa for the competitor who skates in the outer lane (for exception see paragraph b) below). A breach of this Rule constitutes a foul, and the penalty shall be a disqualification (see Rule 275);  
b) In the first straight of the 1000 meters and the 1500 meters when racing on a 400 meters standard track there is no changing of lanes. Similar exceptions may have to be made on tracks of other sizes for these or other distances.

**Rule 254**

**Call to the start**

1. Previous to each start the names of those about to compete are to be clearly called at the starting point itself and in the dressing rooms.
2. Failure to appear promptly at the start is equivalent to withdrawal from the distance.

**Rule 255**

**Starting procedure**

1. The Skaters starting in the inner and outer lanes shall be identified by white and red armbands, respectively. In the case of 100m or shorter distances being arranged in heats of 3 Skaters, the Skater in the middle lane shall wear a yellow armband. The Skater themselves are responsible for having the correct armband and to report in the correct starting lane. A breach of this rule will lead to a disqualification.
2. a) When the Starter orders "Go to the start" the Skaters shall place themselves between the pre-start line and the starting line. The distance between these two lines shall be two (2) meters. The Skaters have to take a stable position before the Starter calls "Ready", whereupon they are to take their starting position and keep this position absolutely until the shot is fired. Skaters may not touch the starting line or be in contact with the ice beyond the starting line with any parts of their body or equipment. Skaters must keep all of their skates entirely behind the starting line.  
b) There shall be a distinct interval between the moment when the Skaters have taken their starting position and the firing of the shot. This distinct interval

should be between 1 and 1.5 seconds.

### **False start**

3. In the following situations the Starter shall declare a false start:

- a) When one or both (all) Skaters intentionally are slow in taking their starting position, the offending Skater(s) shall be given a false start;
- b) When one of the Skaters breaks from his mark, thereby causing the other Skater to follow; only this Skater shall be given a false start;
- c) When a Skater leaves the starting position after the word "Ready", but before the shot is fired (see also Rule 217, paragraph 3).

4. In the case of a false start, the Skaters shall be recalled by a second shot or a whistle from the Starter. On the order of the Starter the Skaters will also receive a stop signal, at a distance of 50-60 meters from the starting line. The stop signal may be given by an assistant to the Starter with a red flag in front of the Skaters, or it may be in the form of a red light clearly visible for the Skaters. However, in competitions over 100m (or shorter) with up to 3 Skaters per heat, the Starter may not recall the Skaters in the case of the second false start. The disqualification will then be announced to the Skater(s) after the completion of the race.

5. The Starter shall warn the Skater committing the first false start. If both Skaters are responsible for a false start, they shall both be warned so by the Starter. When the Starter calls the Skaters of the pair/heat for a new start after a false start has been declared, then a Skater committing a next false start of this pair/heat shall be disqualified from the race concerned.

## **Rule 256**

### **Cutting the lines**

1. When entering the curve, in the curve and going off the curve, the Skater is forbidden to cross the inner line of the curve, as defined by movable blocks or snow. This offence may result in the Skater being disqualified.

### **Leaving inner curve**

2. If a Skater, due to high speed, a fall or other incidents, cannot keep inside the inner lane of the curve or the first part of the finishing straight, and interferes with the Skater in the outer lane, this will result in a disqualification. However, if the Skater does not immediately return to the inner lane from the curve leading on to the finishing straight, this will result in a disqualification even if there is no interference with the Skater in the outer lane.

3. A Skater, who for some reason crosses the line between the inner lane and the outer lane on the finishing straight and interferes with the Skater in the other lane, will be disqualified.

## **Rule 257**

### **Responsibility in cases of collision**

1. When leaving the curve at the beginning of the crossing straight (where the snow line or line of movable blocks is discontinued), the Skater who is changing from the inner to the outer lane shall not hinder the Skater changing from the outer to the inner lane. This applies even if this is a Skater from another pair in a quartet. The Skater leaving the inner lane is also responsible for collisions, unless the other Skater acts in an obstructive way.

### **Responsibility when overtaking**

2. Overtaking in the same lane: In situations when a Skater is about to overtake another Skater in the same lane (e.g. when the distance between two Skaters in the same pair has increased to one lap, or in quartet starts when a Skater in one of the pairs has caught up with the Skater who started in the same lane in the other pair of the quartet), both Skaters have a responsibility that the overtaking can take place in a smooth way and that collisions are avoided.

a) When a situation of overtaking is approaching, the Skater in front (i.e. the Skater who is about to be overtaken) must keep his line (the relative position) in the lane. If the Skater has moved to the outer part of the lane in order to facilitate the overtaking, the Skater must stay in this part of the lane until the overtaking Skater has passed on the inner side;

b) The overtaking Skater has the better view of the situation and is responsible that a collision is avoided as long as the Skater in front maintains his relative position in the lane.

### **Disqualifications**

3. If the Referee confirms a breach of this Rule (see paragraphs 1 and 2 above), the offending Skater shall be disqualified.

### **Rule 258**

#### **Distance between Skaters after overtaking**

1. On a double-laned track where the leading Skater has overtaken his opponent and passed him, the latter Skater must remain at least 10 meters behind. But he is permitted to overtake the leading Skater if he finds this is possible without impeding the leading Skater, but he must not act as a pacemaker to the Skater who is leading.

2. If the Skater being passed or the Skater having passed acts in an improper manner, he shall be disqualified.

### **Rule 259**

#### **Pace-making**

To precede or accompany a Skater (pace-making) is not allowed, and a Skater making such an offence will be disqualified (see also Rule 258). However, for Team Pursuit races (see Rule 261) this rule does not apply for Skaters belonging to the same team, unless a Skater has been overtaken (lapped) by his team-mates.

### **Rule 260**

#### **Finishing line**

1. A Skater has completed a distance when the front tip of the blade of the first arriving skate has touched or reached the finishing line after the prescribed number of laps. However, adjusted definitions may be applied in accordance with Rule 251, paragraph 2 a).

2. If a Skater falls just short of the finish, so that the first skate will arrive outside the competition lanes, the time shall be taken at the moment the front tip of the blade of this skate reaches the extension of the finishing line.

3. If the automatic timekeeping system(s) in use is stopped at the finish by other means than the skate, the official time of the Skater shall be recorded as the slower time of the times determined by the manual timekeeping procedure (according to Rule 250, paragraph 7) and the time from the automatic timekeeping system.