



ALPINE OFFICIALS' MANUAL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW SEASON 2026

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Alpine Officials' resource materials are prepared to be accurate and in compliance with current rules and procedures while maintaining a nationwide outlook. The content of the material is reviewed by senior Alpine Officials prior to being submitted for acceptance by appropriate U.S. Ski & Snowboard authorities. If an item included in the resource materials appears to be in conflict with current rules and procedures, please contact U.S. Ski & Snowboard Competition Services for clarification and/or interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

A worthwhile competition must be legal, fair, and consistent with prescribed standards and rules to define eligibility as well as the conduct and execution of a competition. Standards and rules are not designed to be obstacles. Standards and rules have been developed for the protection and security of the competitors, their coaches, officials, spectators, and the good of the sport.

As they organize and produce events (ski races), Alpine Officials are trained and are ready to work as members of a team for the benefit of the competitors and their coaches. Whether the competitors are Olympic-bound or are seeking the satisfaction of competition as a form of recreational skiing, Alpine Officials appreciate the opportunity to make a useful contribution.

One of our senior officials once said events should be held in the springtime because "we're all experts by then." In other words, with the accumulated experience of a winter's officiating behind us, we could - on very short notice - gather a group of officials and "put on" an excellent event with minimal issues. In September, after vacations, involvement in other sports, and involvement in our personal lives, even the most conscientious officials need to refresh their knowledge by updating their knowledge and understanding of the rules and procedures and refreshing their skills.

It is important that the reader realize that although the information contained in this Manual can be used to organize and officiate at any level, it is primarily intended as a guide for those who are organizing and officiating at events that are sanctioned by U.S. Ski & Snowboard and/or the International Ski & Snowboard Federation (FIS). This Manual should be used in conjunction with the current editions of the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Alpine Competition Regulations (ACR), the International Ski Competition Rules (ICR), their current Precisions, and other pertinent rulebooks published by U.S. Ski & Snowboard and/or the FIS Office. This Manual contains U.S. Ski & Snowboard mandates but is not intended to supersede the current editions of any U.S. Ski & Snowboard and/or FIS official publications.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS MANUAL

The objectives of this Manual are to serve as a guide to those intending to organize and administer a U.S. Ski & Snowboard sanctioned alpine event. This Manual, if used properly, will encourage uniformity in the interpretation and implementation of rules and procedures involved in organizing and officiating at such an event. It helps to not only train "novices" but also to assist "experts" with review.

STANDARDS AND UNIFORMITY

An event's Organizing Committee (OC) and officials may not always have the resources to follow an "ideal" procedure. However, if they are knowledgeable about what should be done, they can improvise and produce an outcome that is proper, legal, accurate, timely, etc., whether at entry-level (YSL – Youth Ski League) or Continental Cup (NAC – Nor-Am Cup) and World Cup (WC) events.

In attempting to achieve uniformity in our events, we must recognize that any true sport does not boast local variations. It demands standards and uniformity for the competitors, the coaches, and the benefit of the spectators. To this end, this Manual offers suggestions and guidelines based upon the experiences of many Alpine Officials. These elements may be modified according to the human and material resources available to the sponsoring organization.

Any club, event site, or region/division can add supplementary notes and details for local operations. However, the goal of U.S. Ski & Snowboard and the FIS Office is to minimize provincial differences

relative to policies and to eliminate such differences in the application of rules. Procedural specifications should be viewed in the light of what is ultimately required as "output" rather than an insistence upon how that result is achieved.

Lack of knowledge, failure to anticipate a situation, and failure to follow rules or instructions can create difficulties, problems, and unpleasant situations. It is important to know the differences between and keep in mind the following:

ESSENTIAL VERSUS DESIRABLE
CORRECT VERSUS INCORRECT
PREFERRED VERSUS ACCEPTABLE

The sport of ski racing was not “invented.” It developed and has been refined over a period of more than a hundred years. Its rules and procedures have come from experience and judgment, reaction to technical developments in equipment, and consideration of external influences such as extended start intervals required by alternate seeding systems or media productions.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard and FIS, in attempting to evaluate the hundreds of competitions each year, require every sanctioned event be properly reported and two items be observed: the technical aspects of the event must conform to current rules, and the documentation of the event must be consistent.

Rules and standards continue to evolve to reflect internal resolve and external influences. We should recognize the rationale for change and appreciate the process by which large legislative bodies such as U.S. Ski & Snowboard and FIS consider means of improving the sport. We should commit ourselves not only to keeping our knowledge and understanding of these rules and standards current but also to abiding by them.

Uniformity in procedures and in the implementation of the rules eases the burden of anxiety on competitors, Team Captains, and visiting officials. Standard procedures also minimize the risk of mistakes and facilitate the operations of an event.

By “uniformity” we do not mean that all timekeeping crews and Race Administrators must operate in exactly the same manner. We do mean there should be uniformity in the interpretation and application of the rules as presented in the current U.S. Ski & Snowboard ACR and the FIS ICR, as well as their current Precisions. There should also be uniformity in procedures seen by the competitors and their Team Captains as well as uniformity in preparing required documentation and reporting of the event.

Certain aspects are well defined. These include composition of the Jury and its rights and duties, minimums and maximums for course dimensions, definition of correct gate passage, eligibility of competitors, and rules for sanction. Areas where rules are few or are not specific include Race Administration, the sanction that should be applied for a specific offense, and the use of snow hardening agents in the preparation of the course.

- The **Draw**, whether "double draw" or computer-generated draw, must be conducted according to approved procedures.
- According to current rules, the draw must be conducted (or confirmed) at a Team Captains' Meeting. A Team Captains' Meeting, attended in person or online by Team Captains, Jury, and “key” officials is an inseparable and mandatory part of the competition and is important for communication of Jury instructions, support of the Organizing Committee, as well as

conveying Organizing Committee's requests and information. *It is also a critical element for risk management and liability-related matters.*

With the approval of the Jury and at a time and place announced to all Team Captains, and where a computer-assisted Draw has been approved or is not required (e.g., non-scored and scored single or multi-day events, where alternate seeding systems are used to determine the start order), a Team Captains' Meeting is still required for informational purposes. However, it may be held either early in the morning prior to an event or immediately after the completion of an event for the next day's event.

- All athletes entered in an event must be represented at the Team Captains' Meetings for all U.S. sanctioned events - both scored and non-scored - regardless of where and when they occur. An Attendance List must be available and recording everyone who is attending the meeting. Copies of the Event Medical Plan and race day program/schedule must be available for distribution and review. Minutes of the Team Captains' Meeting must be generated and must be included in the submitted event document packet.
- The Jury may authorize a computer-generated draw for U.S. non-FIS events. Submittal of an official/signed FIS entry serves as acceptance of a computer-generated draw for FIS events. *(It is important to remember that computer-generated draws are governed by a random identifier, and unless this identifier is changed prior to each draw, results of a draw involving the same competitors may only have minimal changes. Only the software writer has the access required to change the random identifier.)*
- Electronic seed/draw boards should have the capability to simultaneously and legibly display the entire competition field. Simultaneous display of all competitors allows all Team Captains and officials to verify the overall accuracy as well as any additions and deletions to the starting order in "real time." *Using the race result software to only display portions of the competition field is not acceptable.*
- Start and Finish procedures must be according to current rules.
- Surface of the course should be as well prepared for the last competitor as it is for the first.
- Race arena should be race ready on the first day of training or competition. This includes but is not limited to availability of all required officials - including Start Referee, Finish Referee, medical personnel, Gate Judges, and manual/hand timekeepers, etc.
- Inspection of the course by the Jury and Jury Advisors with an invitation to attend course inspection extended to Team Captains.
- Inspection of the course, by the competitors and Team Captains, must be consistently legal and proper.
- The procedure for the handling of Protests must be uniform.
- Rules do not specify which system – acoustic, visual, or online – is preferred, but Team Captains must be given advance notice by the Jury if acoustic or online posting of DSQ information will replace actual posting of Report by Referee.
- Although results are unofficial until reviewed and accepted by the Technical Delegate, competitors' times must be posted and made available for review.
- Official Results must be correct as published and reported according to current standards.

There has been a concerted effort to achieve greater uniformity in the rules and documentation pertaining to alpine ski racing as imposed by U.S. Ski & Snowboard and the FIS Office. A major

focus of this effort has been to place greater emphasis on the role of the Jury as the official representatives of U.S. Ski & Snowboard and/or FIS. Also, the use of computers and electronic documentation have stimulated standards for documentation and reduced the required volume of paper copies.

MAJOR TOPICS AND COMMENTS

Whether you are an organizer or a visiting official, it seems natural to begin with an understanding of organized ski racing as a reminder of where your event belongs in the national and international structure.

The objective has been to produce a Manual that serves as a beginning for meeting the needs of our Alpine Officials. Suggestions and comments regarding this Manual should be sent to the Chair of the Alpine Officials' Working Group. (aoewgchair@gmail.com)

It is through the contributions of many interested and involved officials that this Alpine Officials' Manual exists. It is through the efforts of all of us that it will remain a current and valid resource.

ALPINE OFFICIALS' RESOURCE MATERIALS

Alpine Officials' resource materials expire at a date published by the Alpine Officials' Education Working Group. At the end of each competition season, the resource materials are reviewed and updated as required for electronic distribution to designated Alpine Officials' Clinic Organizers. The Clinic Organizers then distribute the updated resource materials to those persons actually conducting the clinics. The resource materials contain a yearly "Update & Review" for continuing education that is used to refresh the knowledge of Alpine Officials, certification specific Study Guides, Study Problems (if applicable), Jury Problems (if applicable), a variety of Power Point presentations, and where required, an appropriate examination and examination key. *With the exception of specialty-area examinations and examination keys, Alpine Officials' resource materials are also posted on the U.S. Ski & Snowboard website.*

Additional resource materials that are provided include an aid for the preparation of Minutes – both for Jury meetings and Team Captains' Meetings, the use of U.S. Ski & Snowboard-approved race result software programs, a guide for the use of the FIS Timing Report software, installation of on-hill competitor security measures, etc.

A Timing Operations Workshop has been developed to assist in the instruction of installation and operation of timing equipment and software; this workshop, however, is not intended to replace the Basic Timing & Calculations (Level 1) or Advanced Timing & Calculations (Level 3) Clinics.

As an aid for individuals interested in alpine officiating, all approved resource materials are posted in the "Officials'" section of the U.S. Ski & Snowboard website. With the exception of the online "Introduction to Ski Racing" that provides Competition Official (CO) certification, downloading, printing, and reading Study Guides must not be substituted for actual attendance at a U.S. Ski & Snowboard-approved clinic or used as a replacement for actual instruction at any approved clinic.

A NOTE ABOUT THE MANUAL

The use of a gender specific pronoun in any Chapter of this Manual is inadvertent or is used to refer to a specific event; e.g., Men's Slalom or Women's Slalom. It is not meant to imply disrespect for any Alpine Official.