

THE INTERNATIONAL SCOOTER ASSOCIATION

OFFICIAL JUDGING GUIDE



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1. INTRODUCTION

At the ISA we recognise that judging can be an extremely difficult job and we are committed to doing everything we can to help our judges with their role, and to improve the overall quality of judging.

This guide has been created in order to help all of our judges with their scoring, to create consistency in all our competitions, and to build our confidence in the scoring, so that if we do have issues after a competition we are able to defend our judges with confidence.

2. CATEGORIES

Judges determine scores by factoring in 4 categories; difficulty, diversity, style and consistency. Here is a breakdown of each category:

Difficulty

Landing difficult or high risk tricks consistently throughout the run that stand out from the rest of the riders.

Diversity

The diversity score looks at the variety of tricks the rider performs as well as how they use the skatepark. Using the skatepark to its full potential with varied and original lines will score highly, as well as combining the park and street obstacles in the run, and showing an all-round riding ability with a mix of different tricks.

Style:

The judges are looking for a clean run, smooth landings, good height, and effortless looking tricks, all the while maintaining speed and flow. Style is not 'street' or 'park' or how a rider is dressed. If two riders throw the same trick, the rider that takes it higher, better, and smoother will score higher.

Consistency:

Points are deducted for crashes, foot slips, sketchy landings.

2. CURRENT SYSTEM

In the current ISA system judges are asked to allocate 25 points to four different categories; difficulty, diversity, consistency and style. However, in practice we've found this unnecessarily complicated, and we now believe that it is better to simply use well trained judges, and trust in their ability to consider all these factors by themselves when scoring each rider.

If a judge decides they would prefer to score each category out of 25, then that is acceptable, but it is no longer a requirement, and in a live scoring scenario they may need to calculate the final score themselves.

3. JUDGING TECHNIQUES

The following sections will describe judging techniques we recommend our judges to use and what we require them to look out for.

3.1. MARGINS

One of the most critical aspects of judging, which has often been overlooked, is the importance of setting wide margins between similar riders.

Although many of our competitions are very close, and riders are at a similar level, it is still essential that judges give themselves wide enough margins in order to score fairly. If you believe a run is below average then it is vital that you be harsh and score it accordingly.

For an example of small margins being an issue we can look at the 2013 ISA final, where between 16th and 40th place there was only an eight point margin. Meaning the judges only had an 8pt window¹ in which to sort 24 different riders by rank. Small margins like in this example make the judges job extremely difficult, and inevitably lead to errors.

For example, if Rider A was poor and you scored them a 59, and Rider B was average, scoring a 65. Then you have only given yourself a 6 point window in which to rank every other rider in the competition. With some competitions having close to 50 riders this can lead to some serious issues.

3.2. THE SLIDER SYSTEM

In order to help our judges with their scoring margins we have created a simple set of categories to place each run under:



¹ Currently we do not allow our judges to use half marks or other decimals, as it only encourages smaller margins.

During the run the judges should be constantly trying to place the rider within one of these categories. Moving them between categories as the riders run improves, or if worsens (this is where the slider element comes in).

At the end of the run you should know which category the rider is placed, and then you can simply decide whereabouts to place them in that smaller scoring window. If you are still unsure what score to give a rider, even after placing them within a category it can be useful to use another rider in the same category as a benchmark for comparison.

This system may seem simplistic, but we have found it to be very useful for our judges. It takes some of the pressure away from deciding upon a final score, allowing them to focus much more on the run itself. We believe this will help to improve the overall judging at our competition, so we now require a version of this chart to be visible by every judge.

A printable version of this chart is provided in our competition pack. If printing is not available then categories will need to be handwritten.

3.3. SUMMARY OF THE SLIDER SYSTEM

- During the run you should be deciding which category the run falls under.
- Decide on a score in that window at the end of the run
- Use other riders in the same category if you are still struggling to give the rider a score

3.4. THE DOT-LINE TECHNIQUE

Any crashes, foot slips or sketches should be noted down during the run. These notes are then tabulated and used at the end of the run to help with calculating subtractions.

We recommend using the dot-line technique:

- If at any point in the run the rider slips a foot or does something sketchy, it should be noted with a dot. This is worth 1pt.
- If the rider crashes badly at any point it should be noted with a vertical line. This is worth 3pts.
- If you have a sketch or crash somewhere in between, say if you believe 1pt would be too lenient, and 3pts too harsh, then you can note 2 dots down for 2pts.

So at the end of a particularly sketchy run your note sheet may look something like this:

. | . | . .

At the end of the run each judge should then tally up their scores, so in this case it would be 10pts. This should then be subtracted off the score you were considering giving the rider.

In high level competitions this scoring should be more brutal, as the top riders in the world should be held to a higher standard. As such, judges should consider subtracting points for minor infractions, such as stopping at the top of a quarter pipe for too long.

It becomes a useful guide to help with scoring at the end of a run, or when comparing the riders previous run, as if they are doing a similar run then you have a quick reference point to whether there were more or less crashes or sketches and can score accordingly.

4. ON THE DAY

On the day of the competition it is very important to brief all of the judges before starting. This will help to refresh their memory of the techniques discussed in this document and will remind them of the things they need to look out for.

4.1. KEY POINTS

Keeping wide margins between riders

Judges will sometimes need to be brutal and decisive in order to prevent riders getting bunched up.

Place riders in one of the categories during the run

Be constantly thinking where to place the run, is it above average? Exceptional?

Note down foot slips, sketches and crashes

Use dots and lines to note any point deductions

4.2. WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Here are some other factors which judges should be considering during a run:

- Does their run flow? Are they stopping at the top of ramps or waiting too long?
- Are they landing cleanly and keeping their speed? Or is there a lot of pushing?
- Are they landing consistently impressive tricks, or have they only really had one banger?
- Have they used a variety of elements of the skatepark? Or have they shown a variety of tricks?
- Are you letting biased sway your judgement? Are you scoring higher because you know the trick is difficult for that particular rider?

4.3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The scoring of the first rider's run is very important, it can set the benchmark for all other riders, so if they are placed in the wrong category it can have a knock on effect, and sometimes result in the margins being too small.

As such, it is important that the judges should be given extra time to score this run². And, although we do not actively encourage significant discussion between judges during the competition, at this stage it is appropriate for judges to talk about which category they feel a rider may fall under.

² It is usually a good idea to inform the MC about this before the competition starts.