

# Program Component Guidelines

Skaters need to develop creative ways to effectively express themselves in a natural and artistic way that reflects their unique technical strengths and weaknesses.

Is it possible for skaters to consistently express their artistry in every element they perform as part of a naturally appearing performance that embodies their total skating ability?

It is difficult for a choreographer to develop a natural context that represents a skater's technical proficiency and reflects their personality. Frequently the choreographer's personality and artistic abilities dominate the program components and do not reflect the true artistic abilities of the skater.

## Music

Skaters need to learn to understand music as if it is another language that needs to be translated (expressed) in another language – body movement. Skaters use edges, steps, turns, and various jump and spin elements as a means to perform an interpretation that conveys their personal understanding of the music's composer.

The current IJS Program Components implies that the motivation for body movement flows from the motivation of the musical score. The music can be a major source of inspiration/motivation behind a skater's physical movement, but should the music be the only inspiration?

Can other artistic works that convey emotions – such as literature, poetry, theatre, national customs, history or political activities legitimately become in-

corporated into a skater's artistic performance?

Besides the musical score, the theme of a performance can be expressed through costumes and makeup and even lighting in a carnival or show situation. A truly great artistic effort not only translates the music; it transcends it.

## Originality

Originality of movement does not derive its charm and beauty because it is novel or unusual. The movement of the body should be judged in terms of its elements- the body of the theme, the use of space, the emotional force, and the ability to suspend time.

Excellent technique must be combined with originality for a truly outstanding artistic performance. Technique without originality is bland and uninspiring while originality without technique is fails to communicate a decipherable message.

## Variety

Figure skating generally scorned repetition; however, when not done excessively, repetition can make a non-verbal communication decipherable. Repetition can clarify the choreographic intent by contrasting an original statement against new material.

Skaters who do not understand how to effectively use repetition resort to using recognizable, stereotypical body movements, and miming.

Many skaters choose music that has no highs and lows that can be expressed. Such musical scores lack a understandable theme with variations, transitions, and development that ends in a climax

and/or resolution. Contrast and repetition are compositional tools that provide a vehicle for a skater to display both their technical and artistic proficiency for evaluation in the Program Component scores.

It is important to show variety of artistic skills. However, not all musical scores are suitable for skaters to demonstrate a wide range of body movements. Variety should not be judged as a separate element, but as something a skater does just like they add difficulty, intricacy, speed, and quality to their program.

***Artistic qualities should be part of every technical skill, not as separate skills in themselves. The extent of the variety can be used by a skater depends on the theme of the program.***

The selection and arrangement (editing) of the musical score needs to consider what highlights a skater's technical skill will bring to the performance. The goal is to produce entertaining and pleasing composition whose ultimate goal is to gain the most marks possible in the pur-

suit of placing in a competition or passing a test.

Regardless of choices in music and body movement, every performance should incorporate rhythm, style, speed, and physical skills. An evaluation should reflect the proficiency of the skater, not the proficiency of the choreographer.

The choreographer's primary goal must be to help skater express himself or herself. The challenge is to find a way to create unique programs that reflect the individual personality of the skater.

### **Objective Comparison**

When attempting to compare performances the qualitative aspects described as "emotional intent", "motivation", "sincerity", and "intellectual understanding" are very difficult to measure. These qualities are important and point out the need to develop objective and accurate benchmarks to use as a standard for judges to use in determining marks that reflect the skater's artistic competence.