



## Technical Memorandum

DATE: December 11, 2007

TO: Officials, Coaches, Clubs, and Members

FROM: Ontario Speed Skating Association, Technical Committee

SUBJECT: Mandatory Safety Equipment

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The Technical Committee would like to take this opportunity to state its interpretation of ISU rule #291 and SSC regulation N4-103 with regards to the need to wear a neck protector<sup>1</sup> irrelevant of the athlete's wearing a cut-resistant suit<sup>2</sup> for short track competitions.

The Technical Committee has interpreted that a neck protector, as described in SSC regulation N4-103, must be worn by all short track competitors. SSC regulation N4-103 describes the neck protector as "a bib type design covering the neck and all the soft parts of the upper chest area. It must be made with ballistic nylon (*or Kevlar*<sup>3</sup>) as the main material. The neck protector must be securely fastened and tucked into the skin suit".

This means that all short track competitors will be required to wear a neck protector, regardless of whether or not the competitor also wears a cut-resistant suit. This will apply to all short track competitions until further notice. Officials will enforce ISU rule #291 and SSC regulation N4-103 as required.

By enforcing ISU rule #291 and SSC regulation N4-103, irrelevant of whether a short track competitor is wearing a cut-resistant suit, the Technical Committee is exercising proper due diligence, as it relates to the safety of the athlete. In the absence of a rule and/or regulation clearly stating that a cut-resistant suit renders the neck protector an optional piece of equipment and that it need not be worn the Technical Committee recognizes the neck protector as a mandatory piece of equipment.

In addition to the neck protector, the Technical Committee is exploring the potential benefits of mandating additional safety equipment, such as calf protectors and safety glasses for the 2008-2009 competitive short track season. Membership feedback is welcomed and would be much appreciated. Feedback and comments may be sent in to [tlandon@speedskatingontario.org](mailto:tlandon@speedskatingontario.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Neck protector is also often referred to as a neck guard.

<sup>2</sup> Specifics of the cut-resistant suit are described in ISU communication #1265.

<sup>3</sup> Ballistic nylon has been succeeded by Kevlar and other, more effective, cut-resistant fabrics.

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## ISU Rule 291

### Equipment of Skaters

1. All Skaters must be equipped with:
  - a) Safety type headgear that is in compliance with the current ASTM standard for Short Track Speed Skating. The helmets must have a regular shape and may not have protrusions;
  - b) Gloves or mitts;
  - c) Shin protection;
  - d) Long sleeved and long legged clothing;
  - e) Padded or padded hard shell knee protection;
  - f) All speed skates must have the tubes closed and the blade ends must be rounded off, with a minimum radius of 10 mm. Blades must be fixed to the boot at a minimum of two points with no moveable parts;
  - g) Neck protection.
2. Each Skater is solely responsible that his personal equipment meets the highest safety criteria in order to obtain the utmost safety of the Skaters.
3. Further specification concerning the equipment described in paragraph 1), which may include enforcement of a world-wide accepted industry standard, may be issued by the ISU and shall then be announced in an ISU Communication or ISU Circular Letter.

This applies only to ISU Events and the Olympic Winter Games. Use of equipment according to these specifications is recommended for International Competitions
4. The Assistant Competitors Steward in the heat box shall determine whether a Skater has respected the safety conditions, so that they can start a race. Skaters whose equipment is not in compliance with these rules shall be excluded from participation.
5. A Skater who removes his equipment before the end of the race shall be disqualified.

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## Speed Skating Canada Regulation N4-103

### N4-103

- a) Safety-type headgear which has a seal of certification meeting the actual ASTM F 1849 standards and which must be securely fastened under the chin, cut-resistant and water-resistant gloves or mitts, shin guards, knee pads and long-sleeved clothing must be worn by all competitors.
- b) All skaters must wear a neck protector during short track competitions. The neck protector must be of a bib type design covering the neck and all the soft parts of the upper chest area. It must be made with ballistic nylon as the main material. The neck protector must be securely fastened and tucked into the skin suit.
- c) The rear and front tips of all skates shall be rounded to a minimum radius of 1cm. This may be achieved by grinding the metal of the blade and/or by adding a hard smooth cap firmly attached to the skate blades.