

« CHANGE BEFORE YOU GET CHANGED »

Didier Gailhaguet

ISU Presidential Candidate

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Why I am Standing?

I believe I am not alone in thinking that today's ISU should embrace the well-known maxim **"change before you get changed"**.

Before I considered running for the position of ISU President, I gave the matter a great deal of thought and asked myself if I had the relevant skills and the appetite to fight for positive change for our sport and our International Federation. I realised that my passion for sport and skating in particular, in all its forms, remains undiminished.

I have already spent several months meeting leading figures from every country, testing the vision for the ISU for 2016-2022 against the realities that our Member Federations face.

This is a particularly enriching experience for me, as the opportunity to listen to the people that make up the ISU – the Presidents of its Member Federations – has helped me to develop a Manifesto to bring the ISU into the modern age with a realistic and much-needed programme of actions and reforms.

Having consulted many in the ice sports family and willing to continue to do so, my desire to modernise the ISU and unite our diverse members is fundamental to my vision. And for me success must be collective or we will have failed. It is this approach that underpins my Manifesto.

About Me



I have attracted plenty of superlatives, both the best and the worst. But how is it possible to be so surprising and ready with innovative ideas on the one hand, and so manipulative on the other? The truth is that like any self-respecting human being, what I have experienced in life has made me who I am and has made me, I hope, a better man – a man who has learnt from the past by recognising his mistakes and a man who has had what it takes to bounce back and enjoy success at times, but also a man who is able to look you square in the eyes and assure you that he has no problem looking steadfastly to the future.

With a fighter's approach that rarely leaves people indifferent, I modestly believe that I can say nobody would be able to question the real sincerity of my passion for all skating sports and skaters and my capacity for hard work. My federation's recent sporting, economic and political achievements have encouraged me, and I am thus inclined to believe that I could, with the right people working as a team around me, serve as leader.

I have devoted a great deal of my life to this consuming fervour and I can honestly say that I do not regret it at all. The son of an international rugby player and a piano-playing mother, I discovered late and by chance the magic of ice skating.

I dedicated the best part of myself to enabling the French Federation, which my predecessors left mired in 10 million euros of debt, to recover, and I reshaped it into a nationally credible federation that has earned the respect of the Ministry of Sports and the Olympic Committee, where I am a member of the Administrative Council, I forged very strong ties with the presidents of five of the international winter sports federations – the FIBT (bobsleigh and skeleton), the WCF (curling), the FIL (luge) and, for a long time, the IIFH (ice hockey) as well as the ISU, of course, and all its members.

I have a reputation as an ideas man with some interpersonal skills and, most notably, the ability to see things through when I start them. I can safely say that my role in planning the creation of the Grand Prix both for senior skaters and subsequently for junior skaters, as well as the idea of the Challenger Series and the 'Top Jump' competition, was not insignificant. During the same period, I created the first high-altitude national centre for speed skating in Font-Romeu (Pyrenees) and, in a country where short track had become all but non-existent, three years ago we started collecting a number of medals, including in long track events.

Time has had its effect on me, and experience has taught me that any human activity has value only if it is shared evenly and fairly. These lessons changed me,

and while I am as impatient as ever when I see decisions that have been taken being delayed when they are ready to be implemented, I am nevertheless uncompromising when it comes to how rigorously preparations are made and how much time is devoted to ensuring that they are of the best possible quality. As a sportsman, I see this role solely in terms of concrete results and I want to succeed – the rest is meaningless...

I am still an openly and entirely self-confessed ambitious man who enjoys power, but only in the sense of being able to get things done, and, where possible – humans can always make mistakes – being able to do beautiful things. The most important thing for each of us now is surely that we use our past experiences, positive or otherwise, to one end and one end only – that of enabling us to come together to look serenely to the future, basing what we do on a firm plan.

Being elected to the position of president of the ISU is a responsibility. It is a mandate, a contract that ties the president to the people who elected him or her; more than anything, this means being duty-bound to follow the manifesto that the team of the president whom you elect will have presented in order to raise the ISU to a higher level. That is the only thing at stake in this election and anything else is ultimately of little importance. I want to create unity solely on the basis of concrete plans, not on promises of positions or roles.

To achieve this, I am ready to commit my unrelenting drive, my deepest convictions and experiences and all my time to support this venerable and engaging organisation.

Lastly, in the interests of transparency and given the very short (two-year) term involved, I unreservedly commit to a plan that would bring us to 2022 together and with this in mind, I am not simultaneously seeking any other elected position, as I am passionate about and motivated by only one – being your president. Conseil D'administration. J'ai cultivé au plan international d'excellentes relations avec les Présidents de 5 fédérations internationales des sports d'hiver à savoir la FIBT (bobsleigh, tobogganing), la WCF (curling), la FIL (Luge) et pendant longtemps l'IIHF (hockey sur glace) comme bien évidemment l'ISU et l'ensemble de ses membres.

My Vision for the ISU

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I wanted to write a Manifesto with an accompanying programme of clear actions.

This programme is designed as a humble assessment of the current situation we face but also provides policies to drive global growth in all ISU sports and disciplines into the future.

The vision that I am keen to establish for our illustrious federation is based on five key themes that are underpinned by a raft of concrete proposals for the ISU to implement.

I hope to meet every ISU Member Federation over the coming weeks and months and look forward to the opportunity of improving my ideas by listening to your views and thoughts.

I want to unify people's aspirations and combine people's talents to reform our glorious organisation and to bring it into the modern age by 2022. This is my vision that, with your support, I would be honoured to help deliver.

THEME 1

How can we all work together efficiently

THEME 2

Focusing our efforts on athletes and skaters

THEME 3

Fighting the threats that the ISU family faces

THEME 4

Modernising ISU event presentation

THEME 5

Optimising commercial growth of the ISU and its members

Over-Arching Vision for the ISU

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Introduction

Whatever form it takes, skating is magical. People who have not, at some point in life, experienced the unique sensation of gliding across ice, the feeling of having mastered speed, an angled blade edge, a jump on a surface incorrectly deemed 'treacherous', do not know what they are missing. Our sports' purity is a wonderful asset that we need to start communicating more clearly.

In June 2016, the Congress of the International Skating Union will elect a successor to President Ottavio Cinquanta. It will be a historic moment given the outstanding contributions made by successive past ISU Presidents, especially M.Olaf Poulsen and, of course, M.Ottavio Cinquanta – in particular for the recent purchase of ISU headquarters in Lausanne as this provides concrete proof of the organisation's stability.

In an ever-changing environment, however, we cannot simply assume that what we have built up will last forever. We must acknowledge that the ISU's traditions and values on their own will not stand up to the issues affecting modern sport and the challenges of the future.

Unity is also a major challenge for us. It is alluded to in our organisation's name – the International Skating UNION – but not always apparent in the facts. The Member Federations including the small ones need to be placed at the heart of our organisation.

A united body will be the ISU's strength, not its weakness. I believe that in an effort to ensure balance it is vitally important, given thirty-six consecutive years of leadership by people whose background lies in speed skating that the ISU will benefit from a President with a proven history at every level and position in figure skating. In any case, our organisation will be successful when it works as a collective, or it won't be successful at all.

Honesty and transparency is at the heart of my Manifesto and I propose a wide range of measures to ensure the ISU establishes and adheres to the best and most robust governance procedures. This will include embracing important changes to the constitution at the 2018 Congress to give the ISU the structure of a company with a governing board and a supervisory board with specific roles.

Olympic Agenda 2020

It is vital that the ISU addresses the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020 as a matter of urgency with one specific priority – to increase the universal appeal of skating. One of the major issues that we face is to attract more countries to our

competitions and championships, and to develop new competition formats that are more appealing to the public. We need to combine universal appeal and elite performance in what we do, and I believe that both are achievable. We will need to be creative as we take action to ensure that skating retains its status as the defining sport of the Olympic Winter Games.

Currently, across all sports, only around 20% of the ISU's seventy-one member countries are in a position to qualify for the final stages of the World Championships. This does not suggest we have universal appeal. While some countries have made significant progress, there is still much to be done. There is now the opportunity to ensure that medium-sized, geographically isolated and new federations are given – or returned to – a central position in ISU discussions and activities.

Attracting the Next Generation

Most importantly, we will need to foster a change in attitude, retaining a steadfast commitment to attracting newcomers and young skaters to our sports and into our ice rinks – temporary and permanent alike – while structuring what we do around our greatest champions, who are role models for young people.

These are not empty words. Coming from the country that saw Baron Pierre de Coubertin establish the modern Olympic Games, I know what 'participation' means. In order for young people to participate in what we do, the most important thing is that we understand what motivates their generation, what distances them from us and how we should change to reach them. The ISU has to change the playing field, seek out young skaters and people from more impoverished areas and focus on urban ice skating events by making use of the hundreds of mobile ice rinks set up throughout the world in winter months.

Enhanced Credibility

The loss of credibility that figure skating disciplines have undergone, linked to the increasingly outdated nature of our events and poorly understood judging systems is something we need to address. I am, for example, determined to abolish anonymous judging in figure skating. Alongside this need for credibility and the need to change in order to remain current, I support the increased semi professionalisation of judges and referees across all our sports.

We are a business with an annual budget of more than US\$45 million, and US\$230 million in the bank, and will need to find the resources to move forward in the interests of skaters and our members. In this respect, negotiating future ISU commercial contracts should be a matter that everyone takes an interest in.

A Tailored Approach

I hope that the changes I am proposing will be widely supported – we will need to build on the strategies and programmes that President Cinquanta and his Vice Presidents, Dijkema and Dore, have put into place. However, while globalisation currently encourages a centralised, all-encompassing approach, the various geographic markets that skating covers – from television to marketing rights – are quite diverse. The facts are straightforward – the Asian market has developed

quickly, the North American market has stagnated, Europe has diminished significantly and both Oceania and Africa clearly have a great deal of room for growth.

My proposals are based on an individualised approach in which the best professionals from each area are selected, and I will help every member to enter the television market by focusing on continental and national contracts.

Member Federation Development

The IOC gives us a significant (and, contrary to what some people have claimed, not decreasing) sum of money. I propose that half of this revenue – US\$10 million, rather than the current US\$5.5m – is allocated to a highly ambitious development project to support Member Federations. This doubling of the money for the development plan will cover a biennial assessment of each federation's needs (athletes, judges, coaches, events, facilities and memberships) with the objective of making clear progress over a six-year period – which will be reflected in a funding contract with every Federation.

Prize Money

I also propose that all prize money awarded to skaters at ISU Championships (World, World Junior, Four Continents and European) is the same across all five ISU sports.

ISU International Academy

I will create an International Academy of Ice Skating, a permanent site that brings skaters together and trains both coaches and judges, as well as hosting regular training sessions and seminars as part of the development plan – all overseen by a group of experts. The aim is to create a central hub that the ISU owns and is accessible to all.

Maximum Age Limit

We should not be scared of the future and it is vital that we believe in change while respecting our history and the people that have shaped it. With this in mind, we should establish a uniform maximum age for all those serving in ISU functions. I believe that a uniform maximum age of seventy-five could be appropriate but I am extremely open to a debate about this limit.

Integrity and Transparency

Honesty and transparency is the fundamental basis of this Manifesto, and it links to three key areas:

Development Plan

If you elect me, this will incorporate assessment procedures that are based on specific evaluation criteria that analyse each member's progress.

Awarding Major Championships

Everyone should be informed of which member countries submit bids and the reasons why a particular host city is chosen, as well as the shortcomings of cities that are unsuccessful.

ISU Accounts and Budget

These should be published on the isu.org website every year. In addition, the decision-making process behind contracts with significant financial potential (those worth more than US\$100,000) should be a transparent process that everyone is aware of.

Key Themes and Detailed Proposals

5 THEMES WITH 55 PROPOSALS FOR THE ISU

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THEME 1: WORKING TOGETHER EFFICIENTLY

Adapted ISU constitution in 2018

There should be an important change to the constitution at the 2018 Congress to give the ISU the structure of a company with an Executive board and a Supervisory board with specific roles. This will further strengthen the ISU's ability to implement the following reforms in full.

Decentralisation

Large-scale centralisation is no longer an effective management method for an extremely wide-ranging and geographically diverse organisation. Decentralisation is a key feature of this Manifesto, giving the ISU's Member Federations more responsibility.

Double the amount allocated to the development plan up to US\$10 million

A key priority for the new team will be to meet every Member Federation at its own headquarters to assess its resources before agreeing a formalised ice skating development plan contract that covers the next six years and every aspect of their work. There will be a basic framework for all Members that will also be tailored to specific Federation requirements but also geographical zones because the major philosophical principle of this Manifesto is that we cannot grow without the others. Three branches will be clearly identified:

First branch: Talents

A first opportunity to obtain finances will be linked to the development of young talent and on progress achieved for each athlete identified for the ISU development plan over a period of several years and not just one. This amount of money will be given to the member and not directly to the athlete. More important for me and according to the study of the big nations producing yearly new talented skaters, would be to help the member to create a system of

detecting and educating the young talents in relation with its own resources and capacities.

Second branch: Pure Member Development

The second opportunity in particular will focus on supporting smaller Federations and the younger ISU members to boost memberships, better train judges and coaches, look at adults programs and provide eventually an ice equipment and better support in areas such as legal advice.

The ISU will make available both human and significant financial resources from the IOC – US\$10 million annually, as opposed to the current US\$ 5.5m – to ensure that this plan delivers clear progress. This special relationship with each Federation will be subject to a detailed biennial assessment

Third branch : Geographical and Cultural zones development

Seminars: With the help of the commission of Presidents we will identify which will be the most adequate sites to run ISU seminars who will gather at the same time the whole skating community: athletes, coaches, judges, officials. The implication of the Technical committees, the sport directors, the coaches and the athlete's representatives will be fundamental. This site will be considerate as one site of the Olympic Skating Academy (OSA).

Better internal communication

It will be important to establish advisory and management groups that could be phased into each continent simultaneously, with a view to improving internal communications and shared learning.

Coordinating the work of the Council and the 5 Technical Committees and commissions

Coordinating everyone's work and, most importantly, supporting the policies implemented by the Technical Committees and the different Commissions, will be a priority. A new way of organising ISU work, particularly in terms of how members interact with elected management bodies, is needed. I propose five annual ISU Council meetings, each planned by a continental coordination group in the relevant continent, with a sixth held at the ISU's headquarters in Lausanne, a total of one every two months, an increase of one third.

Meeting more regularly

As globalisation sees the sports world constantly evolving, it is imperative that our organisation meet every year to ensure we are doing our utmost to reach new fans and develop new athletes. As a result, I propose that between the Olympic Winter Games – initially, the year after the Games are held – the Member Federations meet at a three-day Forum in which they are able to discuss growth, development plans, strategies, policies and not the angle of a knee... This Forum would be followed by a Congress the next (second) year, with another Forum held in the third year and which will prepare the elective Congress held in the fourth year.

To enable newly established, small and medium-sized countries to take part in the Forums and Congress meetings, I propose that the ISU covers the cost of economy-class travel for one representative of each Member Federation to attend.

Personal commitment

If elected, my commitment to spend a minimum of three days per week at the ISU's Lausanne Headquarters will be immediately effective.

Recognising the Presidents of Member Federations

It is vital that we take a new approach in relation to the Presidents of Member Federations, fully respecting their different roles. I propose that we recognise their work by creating a Commission of 10 Member Federation Presidents that will assign specific rights to each President. The special Commission is to be formed by the Council as an Advisory body to the Council in the respective aspects of Sport Development, Organizing Events, structure and directions of further ISU development policies. It can provide a great assistance to the Council using different expertise from diverse sizes and from several continents in preparing the Council decisions, sharing experiences, working out and better explaining the ISU policy in each continental zones.

Semi-professionalisation of judges

I want to ensure greater semi-professionalization of our judges. This process should be tailored to fit our financial resources and would start with those officiating at the highest level (4 ISU championships), based on a specified gold classification. This would make the title 'ISU Judge' more credible, with Judges hired by an independent commission working from criteria that are agreed in advance to identify the best candidates available.

Introducing a uniform maximum age for all officials

Differences in the maximum age for the various officials working for the ISU should be eliminated by using a single maximum age. These differences make no sense and border on discrimination. I propose that a uniform maximum age of seventy-five could be appropriate. I am very open to a debate about the age, but whatever limit is agreed should be the same for all categories and officials.

Enabling coaches to share their knowledge and expertise

Coaches underpin the development of our sport at all levels. I want to establish a body of professional coaches that works under the ISU's auspices. Each country would be able to propose the election of one coach for each discipline. They, in turn, would work with their appropriate ISU committee and offer suggestions for technical considerations and professional training. One representative would be chosen from the five elected coaches and invited to the ISU Council meetings to discuss issues related to new coaching techniques.

Creating new and efficient Commissions

The ISU Commissions do a sterling job. From the Legal and Assessment Commissions to the Medical Commission, their work is widely appreciated. However, the ISU's areas of operation have advanced so far that we need to ensure they are truly comprehensive.

With this in mind, and as a way of recognising the good work that has been carried out over a number of years, I will ensure that a World Cup (Short Track and Speed Skating) and a Grand Prix Management Commission is officially created and that it will manage every level (Senior, Junior and Challenger) as well as looking into a circuit-based approach for younger categories.

Finally, I propose an Independent Commission for Awarding Major Contracts (those worth more than 100,000 dollars) and Using Development-Plan Funds (10 million dollars) is created, working solely and strictly in the ISU's best interests.

THEME 2: SUPPORTING OUR ATHLETES AND SKATERS

Ensuring that prize money is distributed evenly across all ISU sports

Believing one medal to be worth more than another is unfair and shows a lack of respect for some disciplines and for some athletes. In this context I believe in ensuring that prize money is distributed evenly between figure, ice dance, short track, speed and synchronised skating. This measure would apply to the four main ISU Championships.

Ensuring absolute fairness in the number of medals awarded in the two main branches of speed skating and figure skating

To make the previous proposal credible, a similar number of medals should be awarded in the two main branches of speed and figure. The Technical Committees will be responsible for determining that medals are distributed evenly.

Creating the world wide concept of an Olympic Academy of Skating

There is a real need for multiple training sessions for all together judges, coaches, officials and managers as well as athlete training courses, with a special focus on seeking new talent in younger generations. The creation of a concept of several Olympic Skating Academies worldwide based on different regions of the world would include a panel of experts from all disciplines based in a single location, harmonising the ISU member's own development plan, and the role of sport coordinator for each discipline, more consistent.

Regulating athlete transfers between countries

I will follow the example of the big team sports and ensure that high-level athlete transfers (releases) between member countries are regulated. Specifically, I will

introduce a legal requirement to pay the federation from where the athlete is leaving pro rata and reasonable compensation based on the standard the athlete has reached and how long he/she has been at that level. Compensation will be assessed once the athlete has participated in the Grand Prix events and finals, World Cup series and finals and the four ISU Championships.

Having athletes elected to the five Technical Committees

Rather than nominating athletes for the five Technical Committees, I support having five athletes democratically elected (like coaches), with Member Federations proposing athletes for a specially appointed position determined in accordance with the applicable ISU regulations on nationalities. These five elected athletes will then choose among them a representative who will be invited to discuss issues related to athletes at the six annual ISU Council meetings.

Protecting our athletes' health through research

Protecting athletes should be a priority for the ISU. In this context, research grants will be voted on with a view to improving protection of athletes' health in top-tier performance and training with a special care for prevention of injury, surveillance of rehabilitation and safe return to our sports. A department for Health research and prevention, linked to the Medical Commission and the Coaches Commission, will be created, with a special focus on biomechanics, facilities and equipment. The department's findings will be shared with all countries, including the smallest members and developing nations.

Introducing partnerships with other international federations

It is already a fact that number of members have partnerships with other sport national federations such as roller skating, gymnastics, cycling etc...and sometimes in between some countries. In the best interest of the skaters, it would be wise to link the ISU with several others international federations to ease these national partnerships.

Looking into what motivates the youth of tomorrow

I have repeatedly referred to the fact that the ISU should focus on young people. If you elect me as President, I will introduce a commercial partner specialising in social networking to research younger generations' lack of connection with our sports.

ISU opening up to newly emerging disciplines and extreme sports

The ISU is frequently accused of not embracing change. The growing international appeal of so-called 'extreme' sports, separate from the standard line-up of the ISU's traditional sports, warrants our full consideration. A wide range of exciting

events have built up around our traditional disciplines, linked to both speed skating (such as ice derby, downhill and 'Crashed Ice' events) and figure skating (ice ballet and ice theatre, showcase, improvisation events). We should not reject them but quite the opposite – we should seek out the connections that unite us. We should not be afraid of looking into creating events outside of our traditional disciplines with the expertise of the professional companies already involved. If successful, it will also enable us to provide equal prize money across the various disciplines by attracting new sponsors and broadcasters to the ISU while broadening the event calendar.

THEME 3: FIGHTING THE THREATS TO SKATING

Transparent and ethical management

Respecting sport's moral code is a key prerequisite for ensuring that the organisation's members have faith in the people who manage it. I am proposing a real evolution in our practices across five major areas based on my experiences negative or successful:

The first involves the decision-making process behind contracts with significant financial potential (those worth more than US\$100,000) – this should be a transparent process that everyone is aware of.

The second will be to ensure that ISU accounts and budgets are made available for everyone to see on its website.

The third will be the development plan, which will be subject to an independent monitoring process to oversee the allocation of funds to ensure they meet agreed development goals.

The fourth will deal with which bidding cities are chosen to host the ISU Championships. It is important that members are given the list of candidate cities and the reasons why one is successful and others not. This moment should become an ISU feast at each World Championships at the banquet.

The fifth will include rigorous monitoring of important and complex issues such as change of nationality, suspect betting and possible deception with regard to athletes' ages.

Protecting clean athletes

This is a constant fight and I must say that the work that has been carried out by the current ISU managing body unquestionably needs to continue, in accordance

with the measures set out by WADA. This is an area in which the budget will be protected with a zero-tolerance approach for anyone discovered cheating.

Simplifying regulations

We have a duty to help preserve the simplicity of our sports and realise that regulatory decisions have negative effects on the sale of skates, clothing and equipment for example. Continually changing our regulations has an impact on coaches, families, communities and on the commercial success of ice rinks. I believe that our technical rules should not be changed for a minimum of two years and made much simpler so that as many people as possible can understand them, and coaches can then put in place proper long term planning for their athletes.

Managing ice hockey's dominance of ice rinks

Successfully managing the challenges that come with sharing rinks with ice hockey is important if our sport is to grow and prosper. It is important that ice rink standards work for both sports and both federations need to cooperate in a friendly and collaborative atmosphere to ensure we both gain from sharing the same facilities.

Introducing partnerships with other International Federations

A number of ISU Member Federations already have partnerships in place with other sport national federations such as roller skating, gymnastics and cycling, and these relationships can sometimes extend between countries. In the interests of our athletes, I believe that it would be beneficial to link the ISU with several others International Federations to help facilitate appropriate national partnerships.

Making sustainable development central to the ISU

Creating a Working Commission for Sustainable Development would enable the ISU to officially recognise eco-responsibility. Ice rinks, arenas and tracks should be designed and events held in accordance with environmental requirements, and the ISU will need to be able to reward those who do best in this area. This commission composed of experts would have a special task to study and propose new concepts for ice rinks including economies of energy for a better management of these areas.

Establishing an ISU Health Coach diploma

Sport for adults is one important feature of our project, and it is why I want to introduce a special status ISU 'health coach' with a view to promoting ice skating as a way for people of all ages to keep mentally and physically fit. This education and certification will be given through the concept of Olympic Academy of Skating.

Remembering that ISU sports play a role in establishing peace between groups of people

We are living in precarious times that severely test our beliefs. I was born in a country that, like many others, has been a significant target of fanaticism and extremism. I suggest that the ISU take part in the work of the world organisation “Peace and Sport”, establishing a close partnership with it.

THEME 4: MODERNISING PRESENTATION OF ISU EVENTS

A) General Proposals

Revamping events

Events are one of the ISU’s main areas of activity and cover a vast range of contests and performances globally. These events bring the ISU significant revenues and are a ‘product’ that we need to continue to exploit commercially. While negotiating ISU event contracts, we also need to revamp our existing events and consider different formats to ensure our sport moves with the times and embraces change where appropriate. I believe that many of our consumers want to see our sport evolve in a way that makes it more exciting and engaging for the fans. We also have to make sure that we host our competitions in appropriate sized arenas so that our athletes perform in front of packed crowds full of atmosphere.

Updating the calendar

In addition, we need to start thinking about a calendar that better suits contracts and the expectations that television brings with it. For example, I would support extending the calendar and abolishing the World Championships immediately after the Olympic Winter Games. Essentially, the idea of return contests that previously proved so prominent has lost momentum, giving way to an undervalued contest that sees Olympic medal winners reluctant to risk their titles or medals. I therefore want to see an ISU World Team Championships every four years in accordance with our Japanese friends who invented the concept. Crucially, the public needs to know when the season starts and when it ends.

Supporting member countries seeking broadcast contacts on national television

Small and medium-sized countries often lack connections to broadcast television. This can be an impediment to the ISU Council granting them international competitions. Support from the ISU’s marketing department to obtain a television presence during the decision-making phase including one national championship or one international competition, is a vital necessity for worldwide exposure and to motivate potential sponsors to support the member activities.

Bringing together multiple festival-style events

I support the idea of studying how to bring together multiple disciplines into a single, Olympic Games style ISU event that also works for broadcasters. This would be an opportunity for our sports to work alongside one another and create multi-disciplinary bonds. This coming together could combine figure, ice dance and either short track or synchronised skating at the same venue over one week as part of a major international festival-style event. One thing is for sure, skaters will love being together.

A forum focused on “Sporting traditions and TV needs”

I Television and digital broadcasting opportunities are crucial to our future as it brings with it resources offered by sponsors and the ability to reach new fans. Either we adapt or we face a slow but inevitable decline. Nevertheless, there are a number of long-standing traditions in every one of our disciplines which must be honoured. How then are we to reconcile our history with the need to change and evolve? This will be the sole focus of a Forum on this exclusive topic that will bring together our sporting family with broadcast and digital media representatives.

Opening an “Event Hot line” to help members conducting international competitions

Considering the high number of weekly events worldwide from September until April I will launch an “event hot line” under the supervision of the sports directors to solve unpredictable problems that some organizers of international competitions may face, especially at weekends.

B) Specific Proposals

Abolishing anonymous judging in figure skating disciplines

A logical consequence of this increasingly professional approach is abolishing anonymous judging in figure skating disciplines – athletes, coaches and managers alike take responsibility for what they do, and judges need to be seen to do the same. I would also support abolishing the ‘corridor’ method, which is one of the reasons why judging decisions are so unclear, especially in the second figure skating scoring mark.

Changing the components score in figure skating disciplines

I believe the component marks should be re-examined. It is complex and should be made easier to understand for the media, spectators and television viewers.

Athletes' Safety is priceless

I propose that all Short Track ISU World Cups, and ISU Championships must be conducted on 30m x 60m rinks with a moveable padding system, whole rink moveable OR a hybrid moveable padding system with certain non-crucial areas fixed but with moveable padding in the 2 recognized "Crash Zones" that offers the same protection as the Short Track races at the Olympic Games. The time has come to move away from a full rink fixed board system with applied padding for such high level ISU events. The safety of our athletes in relation with the increase of their speed must always be a priority. This moveable pad systems mandate clearly is in line with my slogan «Change before we get changed “. Is it going to take a death at an ISU Short Track event with a fixed board system to force this change? Imagine the resulting lawsuits when it is common knowledge that fixed board systems are much less safe that moveable pad systems when racing at 50km per hour. This is of course a very strong decision that includes a cost but is not the safety of our athletes priceless?

Ensuring that finalists appear in 'reverse order' in all artistic disciplines

I will ensure that skaters appear in 'reverse order' at finals across all disciplines, based on their results at previous events. This change is a very important feature for television and event production, especially in all artistic disciplines.

Introducing Special Events

The introduction of team events represented a significant step forward the developing different formats, but more needs to be done to give free reign to our creativity, revitalising events, reaching new audiences and partners and modernising our sports. Experiments have to be carried out on different formats such as Top jump, Top spin, 100 meters Long track race, Improvisation skating, multiple pairs skating, Ice Derby, Ballet on ice, shadow ice dance events to establish a special link with crashed ice and extreme sports events to assess the interest of all spectators and TV watchers.

Proposing a special entertaining event in short track : the "Miss and Out"

In agreement with the ISU Short Track Technical Committee, I will propose the "Miss and Out" event in this sport. A basic example would be 9 skaters starting a 18 lap race (2000m). Starting at lap 3 then laps 6, 9, 12, 15, the last skater is eliminated thus that skater has "Missed" and is "Out". This leaves only 4 skaters left for the last 3 laps and the finish of those skaters at the completion of those last three laps will determine the first, second, third and fourth place finish.

The last skater eliminated is identified by traditional transponder lap split times and the finish order after 18 laps is determined by traditional photo finish.

Reducing team size for synchronised skating

To ensure that we are not inactive after failing to get synchronised skating included in the Olympic Games, and after carefully listening to the two reasons for this very disappointing failure – namely that the teams were too big and a lack of TV exposure – I will propose reducing the size of each team to ten – twelve athletes. The organisers of the 6 ISU Grand Prix series and the ISU Grand Prix final will thus need to receive the relevant funds to host, transport and facilitate television coverage of five teams, possibly leading to synchronised skating being included soon as a new discipline of the IOC.

Creating World Records in the figure skating branch

As with all speed and short track events, I will guarantee that the best score obtained at a certain level of competitions in the world by a figure skater, a pair or a team is recognised as a World Record, and not simply a personal best score. The choice of the relevant level of competition will be made according to the quality of judging. This will help to create more media, fan, spectator and TV viewer interest in our sport globally.

Multiplying mixed short track and team-sprint relays events

Provided the relevant Technical Committees agree, I will propose the idea of mixed short track and team-sprint relays at the World Junior Championships and subsequently the senior World Championships, before considering this as part of the Olympic Winter Games, if the results are positive. The idea has already proved successful when trialled at the Youth Olympic Games and at the ISU Trophy in Short track speed skating & Synchronised skating.

Return of the ISU 'stars and legends' tour

Many people would like to see a post-World Championships multi-disciplinary exhibition tour brought back under the supervision of the ISU. I propose that every two years including, most importantly, the same year as the Olympic Winter Games, that the ISU 'Stars Tour' takes place on a different continent (switching between Europe, Asia and America). This prestigious event could be accompanied by a simultaneous 'legends of ice skating' tour.

Ensuring that the adult skating calendar is open to everyone

Sport for adults is one of the most important features of our project, both in terms of actively standardising the calendar and, as part of the federation-ISU contract for development, introducing a special ISU 'health coach' with a view to promoting ice skating as a way for people of all ages to keep mentally and physically fit. The Adult competition calendar should be revised and made open to everyone in the direction of "Fun Skate" or "Show Case" events.

THEME 5: OPTIMISING COMMERCIALS GROWTH OF THE ISU AND MEMBER FEDERATIONS

A tailored broadcast strategy

Because the marketing and television market has changed and shifted, particularly in Asia, I propose a more area-specific strategy that I believe we are duty-bound to adopt. Experts suggest using a less general strategy, while we also need to establish a more effective internal coordinating body to support the Director General's administrative efforts – which everyone agrees are of the highest quality – in this area.

Creating an internal marketing department

I propose the creation of an ISU marketing department to work with relevant agencies, key television networks and other key stakeholders to create a more tailored approach to ISU broadcast strategy.

Linking the ISU communications and marketing departments

With an elected Council member specifically tasked with overseeing the process, I will establish a close link between the communication and marketing departments to ensure that these strategies are as effective as possible, with a view to maximising our commercial profits. However, exploiting these international-rights strategies is only a part of a completely transparent negotiation process and in full cooperation with the member countries that host international events.

Securing two new sponsors per year

The very last short track and speed skating sponsors (Samsung and Essent) have now withdrawn their support from the sport with some negative impact on the future ISU budgets. This is very worrying for both sports. However, I do believe that with a well-defined strategy of promotion, including some changes in the content of the events to make them more broadcast friendly, short track skating and speed skating will attract new sponsors and grow their appeal and global profile.

Providing every new Member Federation or small countries with a mobile ice rink

As part of the development plan outlined in Theme 1, one of the measure that the ISU will enact for each member that joins and small members in necessity will be to offer the use of a mobile ice rink, free of charge, for two consecutive seasons.

Establishing links with international arena, permanent and temporary ice-rink groups

It seems odd that we have only consumers' links with the venues in which our major events take place. Given the number and frequency of such events, we would benefit enormously from establishing commercial links with the venues in order to reduce costs for Member Federations. Similarly, we should consider building links with the operators of temporary ice rinks, which attract increasing numbers of people every year and are particularly popular among young people by attracting brand new events.

Offering every member country formal ISU approval of new ice rinks

As part of the Development Plan agreement, I propose to award new ice rinks that meet ISU specifications with an international seal of approval in an effort to help each member country increase facility standards.

Fostering solidarity between established ice countries and emerging nations

As part of a push for solidarity, I will ask the most powerful and established forces in international ice skating to contribute to the ice skating development plan for small and newly established countries for a limited period.

Enabling ISU members to receive better funding by changing the terminology associated with figure skating disciplines in ISU Championships

I propose enabling the National Olympic Committees and/or Sports Ministries of ISU member countries, especially the smallest countries, to see their athletes qualifying for the ISU Championships by renaming the short program and the short dance, the 'semi-final', and the free program, the 'final'. Importantly, these small or newly established countries that may struggle for recognition may thus be eligible for funding that current terminology is unable to secure.

Offering member countries free expert legal advice

Many ISU member countries frequently encounter legal problems. Offering every member country expert advice from the ISU's lawyers free of charge is a way of providing further support for members, particularly the least wealthy.

Contact

Mail : contact@didier2016.org

Tel : +33 6 07 23 41 09

Site : <https://www.didier2016.org>

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