

## **Important Short Track Rule Changes for 2010**

By Susan Ellis

**Note:** The information in some tips may have changed since these articles were written as rules have changed over the years. Some have been updated and some have not. Please consult the ISU rules manual for the most current rules.

There have been significant changes by the ISU to the short track racing rules. These rule changes will drastically change the way skaters conduct themselves in racing. I had an opportunity to see the new rules in action at a recent American Cup competition, and I have to say I like the new rules. At first it was thought they would make the sport more dangerous but the reverse seems to be happening and skaters seem to be adjusting and skating safer. I found it also made the rules clearer as to what would and would not be called. Of course, as in any sport where there is referee's discretion, there will always be some disagreement, but there seemed to be less ambiguity with the new rules.

Here is a synopsis of the changes and some videos to show the how the new rules are implemented.

### **PENALTY**

The term 'disqualified' is no longer being used but is replaced by the term 'penalty'. Both mean the same thing, but for instance, if you get 2 false starts in a race the starter will tell you that you have a penalty and you must leave the ice, same as before. If you are called for impeding in a race, you receive a 'penalty' as opposed to a disqualification.

### **PASSING**

In the old rules, the onus was on the passing skater to get by cleanly and any contact by the passing skater was deemed impeding. This is no longer the case. For example, if a skater is passing inside on the straightaway and draws even with the other skater then both skaters are considered equal in the race at that point and must continue on a path that avoids collision with the other skater. If the outside skater, the one being passed, comes in on the passing skater and makes contact, it is the outside skater who is assessed the penalty.

In the videos below the skater in red is attempting to pass the skater in blue on the inside. Contact is made going in to the corner. Under the old rules it is clear that the skater in red would be disqualified.

[Video 1](#)      [Video 2](#)      [Video 3](#)      [Video 4](#)

Under the new rules, the onus would be on the skater being passed (blue) to avoid the collision as it is clear that the skater in red had drawn even with him before the corner. So the skater being passed would allow some room for the inside skater but should continue hard through the corner and hope to come out ahead on the exit.

In the race below, the skater in blue passes the skater in red. Blue makes contact going in to the corner. Although this was a very controversial call to disqualify blue, the call

would not likely be made under the new rules as blue had drawn even and red came in on blue going in to the corner.

[Video 5](#)      [Video 6](#)

So, what this means is that you must continue to race hard through the corner on the outside of the skater who is trying to pass to avoid collision and to maintain your position. You may be tempted to just let the skater in, but if you do this the skater will know you will back off and they will continue to make close passes.

In this video it is actually the passing skater, who had in fact drawn even and did have the right to continue the pass, who backed off. This would have been the correct move under the old rules as it is likely he would have caused a collision if the outside skater moved in on him and the passer would have been disqualified. Under the new rules the outside skater is the one who must avoid collision by not coming in on the passing skater.

[Video 7](#)

## **CROSSTRACKING**

The old term 'crosstracking' was done away with before this year already and replaced by 'impeding' but I will use the old term here to describe the following scenarios.

Crosstracking, ie: impeding, will only be called if contact is made. So if a skater comes across the track to block and does not make contact with another skater, it is perfectly legal, even if the other skater has to stand up to avoid a collision. Impeding will only be called if contact is made. So in other words blocking is legal.

Here are three examples of legal blocking. These would be considered no contact moves and would be legal.

[Video 8](#)      [Video 9](#)      [Video 10](#)

In this video below the skater in second blocks cleanly by riding the skater attempting to pass right out to the boards on the exit and then rides him deep in to the corner on the entry. Under the old rules both moves could have been considered crosstracking but not under the new rules.

[Video 11](#)

In this controversial call the passing skater in blue was disqualified. Many people thought the skater being passed (red) should have been disqualified for crosstracking. Under the new rules, however, it is very clear the passing skater has clearly drawn ahead of the other skater. The skater being passed comes in from the outside to collide with the inside skater and this would be a very clear case of crosstracking and an 'impeding' call would be made.

[Video 12](#)

This video shows a clear case of crosstracking from the inside of the track to the outside making contact with the passing skater.

[Video 13](#)

The new rules could have significant impact at the finish of races where the old rule was that skaters had to maintain a straight line to the finish line. It is now legal to come across to the inside or to the outside to block as long as there is no contact.

## **STARTS**

The old rule was that if skater in position 3 did not show up for the start or had two false starts the other skater would still line up on the line behind the number they drew for the start. Ie: the number 3 spot would be left open. The new rule states that if 3 is not there then 4 moves over to 3 and 5 moves over to 4 so there are no gaps on the starting line. If there are more than the allotted number of skaters in a race, ie: two skaters are advanced in the 1500 final putting 8 in the race, the skater who drew number 7 must line up behind skater number 5 and the skater who drew 8 must line up behind number 6.

## **YELLOW AND RED CARDS**

**YELLOW CARD:** If an infringement of the Racing Rules is deemed by the Referee to be an unsafe, harmful or hazardous offense, a yellow card will be shown to the infringing Skater. The Skater/Relay Team will be disqualified in the relevant race in which the infringement occurred and excluded from participating in the next round of the distance concerned. The Skater/Relay Team will forfeit prior points/results accrued in all races over the distance concerned.

Any Skater who is shown the yellow card twice in the same competition will be sanctioned by a red card, will be excluded from the competition immediately and will not be ranked in the final classification.

### **iii) RED CARD:**

1) In the case of an infringement which is deemed by the Referee to be intentionally dangerous or grossly negligent, the Skater will be shown a red card.

2) In the case a Skater is shown two yellow cards in the same competition, the Skater will be shown a red card.

3) For any action, either on or off ice, not in compliance with Rule 125, a red card may also be shown to the Skater.

The Skater who is shown a red card will be excluded immediately from the competition and will not be ranked in the final classification. In the case a Skater is shown a red card in a Relay race, his Relay Team will be excluded immediately from the Relay competition and will not be ranked in the final Relay classification. Individual sanctions for the Skater(s) concerned will also apply.