

Short Evaluation Test Run by Rick Schipper, Test Run Manager

The Test Run was on Sunday 9th February

The following is an overview of the Test Run from my perspective.

It was a big rush to get this organized. Many thanks to team Icederby and Thialf to make this into a successful Test Run. Although we have to wait for the feedback of the ISU I was satisfied with the races, which felt real, competitive and worthy like I wanted them to be. The atmosphere from skaters till volunteers was great and with calm and respect. All the helping parties have done their job above my expectations. Please, I would like to further outline how I saw the day:

Volunteers:

Many thanks to all the volunteers. From the entrance desk until the handtime keeping; every needed volunteer position was executed professionally and with good cheer. Everybody was on position, well dressed in a white Ice1 hoody, doing their job well. I expected a lot of questions, but there were just a few.

Skaters:

For me, recruiting the skaters was real challenge considering the need for well leveled skaters for this Test Run. However, in the end we had a nice group of 33 skaters.

- 12 Fixed blades Skaters.
- 21 Clap skate Skaters
- 6 Women
- 27 Men

Material:

The material to actually skate on Icederby 220m Track has made a big advancement since last September. The Sjinkie Transfer Blocks were a gamechanger in this. In total 10 skaters utilized the Sjinkie Transfer Blocks for the Test Run as part of their boot/skate combination. Because of this, Long trackers and also Shorttrackers have changed from their Fixed blades to a Clap skate by putting on a Shorttrack boots or inline boots above the Clap mechanism with the Sjinkie Transfer Block in between.

Besides, the collaboration with the nearby material experts was working well. At least 20 people have used their expertise and material to help in this. Icederby paid for these adjustments for the skaters. Also special thanks to Viking, that they are also testing for a special Icederby clap mechanism.

Catering:

Because of the late-night practice sessions and midday Test Run the food and beverages we provided were appreciated and well received. Everybody felt welcome and pleased to stay and have lunch and afterwards dinner. The atmosphere was cheerful regarding a job well done.

Referees:

From the Technical meeting in the morning until the last restoring of the pads the referee provided a perfect job. Thanks for them. Although we had a big document of Harmonized

ISU Rules they all had read it before and they were aware of this quite new combination of Ice skate racing.

Of course we would like to further address practical improvements, but already the combination of races we have tested so far made me satisfied.

For sure we will ask the skaters and the referees for their feedback on this conduct of races.

Timekeeping:

Etiming did an outstanding job. It was surprising to see how much ETiming already had prepared to make this race format well working. The flylaps were displayed awesome to see the actual ranking of the passed skaters. This qualifying race felt already as a race with enormous potential to take serious in the future. Moreover they provided good results of the Mass Start races.

The Mass Start Races:

Especially the 5 lap races were wonderful to see in my opinion. The sprinters against the long-distance skaters, and the start with a neutral lap. It was a fair but intense race with a lot of skaters battling for the win.

The 3 Lap Mass Start race was out of Shorttrack Start. In my opinion, we have to make start boxes to bring this more into order. Once on speed from the first corner it was a dragrace to the line. Really cool to see everybody chasing and with great effort through the corners and the straights

The 7 Lap Mass Start race was more about tactics and benefiting from the draft. The differences were made by a break-away or with an attack in the last two laps. This distance was with one less race than originally planned (3 instead of 4) because they were more sprint orientated skaters and tired of the races before that opted out.

The public:

The public was based on family members of the skaters or Thialf orientated people who were aware of the practices, preparations and or planning of Thialf. There was a lot of cheering when the races came into a climax with exiting battles in the last laps.

Medical Team

The medical team was represented with 6 people. Two teams of two on the outside on the end of the corners and one team on the infield. They have had an easy day, with fortunately no cases for them.

Some skaters crashed during the high top speed in the corners in combination with their lack of experience and material adjustment. One or two were crashed because of scratch in the ice which was then repaired with supervision of the Icemaster. One Shorttracker crashed on the straight because he was not used to being touched on the back, this occurrence was inside the borders of the Mass Start rules. No skaters crashed because of another crash or because of a collision of skating with fixed blades and clap skates or overtaking actions.

The boarding set-up:

It took a while to get the boarding ready, but ones it was. It was solid, safe and also well looking. Big thanks to the "Boardingboyz" for their effort.

Kind regards,



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