

Age-based Skate Restrictions for Victorian Speed Competition

Summary:

Skate (Wheel diameter & Frame size) restrictions for Skate Victoria registered skaters taking part in Victorian Speed Competition in 2009 and beyond. Restrictions as specified in the enclosed table will be announced and made effective for all Skate Victoria sanctioned Speed Competition following the schedule enclosed.

2008 CIC Rule Changes to Wheel Size

From January 1, 2008, the approved CIC rule-change permitting the use of 110mm wheels took effect and from February 1 affected all Australian competition. At events conducted pursuant to the CIC Sporting Regulations (termed the 'International Rules'), 110mm will be the maximum allowed wheel size. These events include the Oceania, European & World Speed Skating Championships – and apply to all athletes.

Forecast: Future Changes to Wheel Size

As of 2008, 110mm is the largest wheel size being commercially produced by recognized speed wheel manufacturers. Recent trends in wheel manufacture have seen the largest wheel size move from 84mm in 2002/03 to 110mm in 2008 – somewhat in parallel to the advancement of the World Inline Cup (the premier World Marathon series where large groups of the World's best marathoners race at high speeds on some of the fastest marathon courses). It is realistic to predict that within 2 years, 125mm wheels will emerge in World-class speed skating just as 110mm did in 2007.

Implications: What this means

A marathon completed in 1 hour. Average speeds of 42km/h. Top speeds of around 60km/h. All attainable today (and in fact, for some years) by large fields of top-class marathon skaters on just 100mm wheels – but such speeds and times are not relevant to smaller groups of developing young skaters. 100mm wheels, 110mm wheels, and the larger wheels of the foreseeable future are designed to elevate the top speeds able to be reached by skaters who race at average speeds higher than the top speed a developing child is able to attain.

These wheels are: heavier (affecting stroke rate, stroke pattern and fatigue), taller (requiring more specifically-developed ankle strength), and require longer frames (harder to turn and maneuver at lower speeds). Skates that are inappropriately long, tall and/or heavy adversely affect skater development, skill acquisition, achievement and enjoyment – the very things that will facilitate our children being the top-class skaters of the future.

Correctly fitted, sized and set-up skates will improve children's skating – not switching to ever-larger skates because 'the advanced skaters are doing it'.

What the Skate Restrictions documented here will achieve, is to ensure that athletes are better skaters, best-equipped to get the most out of their performances through a well-developed arsenal of physical and technical attributes.

Table 1. Skate Restrictions

X-X	<i>Pre Nationals Age</i>

Skater Age as at 1st January each year.	Maximum Wheel Size (Diameter of wheel)	Maximum Frame Length (Measured centre of front axle to centre of rear axle)		Recommended Configurations
	mm	in	cm	
Up to 7 years	84mm	10.25-in	26.04-cm	4x84 4x80
8-9 years	90mm	10.25-in	26.04-cm	3x90 4x84 or below
10-11 years	100mm	11.25-in	28.58-cm	3x100 4x90 or below
12-13 years	100mm	12.50-in	31.80-cm	4x100 4x90 or below
14 years and over	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

Note:

- Skaters aged 14+ may use any wheel size (subject to CIC limits), and any frame length (subject to CIC limits) they wish.
- All Restrictions remain subject to the existing, CIC 50cm skate length limit.

Table 2. Implementation Schedule

Skater Age as at 1st January each year	Announcement	Effective (enforced-from date)
Up to 7 years	11 May 2008	01 January 2009
8-9 years	11 May 2008	01 January 2009
10-11 years	11 May 2008	01 January 2009
12-13 years	11 May 2008	01 January 2009