



U.S. Figure Skating  
Headquarters  
20 First Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Dear Club Presidents -

Commencing September 1, 2018, the Program Development Committee is phasing out the Test Track program and launching the new Excel Program. In an effort to ensure all board members of U.S. Figure Skating are aware of these changes and informed about the new Excel Program, we have put together the fact sheet below.

### **What is the Excel Program?**

#### **Mission Statement**

The primary mission of the Excel program is to inspire more of our young athletes to continue testing and competing in figure skating by providing them with competitive events leveled such that they are inspired to set challenging goals from one season to the next while showcasing their current strengths in competition.

The program has been thoughtfully designed to provide this opportunity for both skaters currently well-served by Test Track and the increasing number of our skaters who fall between Test Track and Well Balanced.

#### **Goals**

- Increase retention among those skaters who have become disenchanted or lost interest in the sport due to the ever-increasing technical demands of the well-balanced track and lack of inspiring, good-fit competitive opportunities.
- Increase the number of skaters pass their Intermediate through Senior free skate tests.
- Establish a successful and exciting series of competitions and final festival experience to create excitement among grass-roots skaters and increase awareness of additional competitive opportunities beyond Well Balanced.
- Provide an ease-of-entry competition environment for skaters and coaches new to IJS judging through use of choreographic step vs levelled step and limitations to levels of spins through the Excel levels.

#### **Components of the Excel Program**

**Excel Free Skate Events:** are competitive events that are levelled and provide an alternative to well-balanced events at non-qualifying competitions, and may be offered as optional non-qualifying events in conjunction with Regional Championships. Clubs have the option of using either the 6.0 or IJS system for Excel events at their competitions. Note: Clubs should specify in their competition announcement which judging system is being used.

- Two options for skaters at the Preliminary, Pre-Juvenile and Juvenile levels
  - The standard 'Excel' events at these levels closely mirrors the technical requirements of the current test track.
  - 'Excel Plus' events for those skaters whose technical proficiency exceeds minimum test requirements.
- At the Intermediate level and above, Excel technical requirements exceed test requirements for the level, but remain lower than the technical level needed to be successful in the Well Balanced Track.



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**Excel Series:** A series of competitive events where skaters can earn points toward recognition and/or invitation to the Series Final. The pilot season for the Series will include competitions from January 2019 through mid-May 2019 concluding with the series final in June. The Program Development committee is currently seeking clubs who would like to be included in the series and appreciate your input. Clubs may apply to be included in the series by submitting [an application](#). The skater and coach handbook for the Series will be posted on the U.S. Figure Skating website this summer.

*All Clubs with existing competitions scheduled between January and early May, or those clubs that would like to create a new competitive option for skaters in their area are encouraged to apply!*

**Excel Series Final:** Skaters who compete in the standard Excel Beginner through Excel Juvenile levels will receive an automatic invitation to the Series Final; skaters at these levels are competing for recognition based on their points earned within the series. Skaters competing in any of the Excel 'Plus' level events and Intermediate through Senior will compete to earn an invitation to the Series Final; in addition to competing at the Final, these skaters will participate in a one-day components and skating skills camp.

**National Festival** will be held in June 2019. The National Festival is the umbrella event for Compete USA National Festival and Excel Series Final. Skaters at all levels, from Compete USA Basic 1 up to Excel Senior, will have the opportunity to compete in a large-scale event, as well as participate in off-ice team building exercises and programming. The National Festival provides the opportunity to introduce skaters, parents, and coaches to an attainable pathway for non-elite athletes to compete in singles competitions at a challenging level, while creating motivation for skaters to remain in the sport through high school.

**Useful Links:**

- [Excel Program Informational Webinar](#)
- [Excel Free Skate Program Requirements Chart](#)
- [Excel Free Skate Technical Information](#)
- [New Competitive Progression Singles Chart](#)
- [Application for clubs to host an Excel Series event](#)

**For more information, contact:**

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Best,

*Elise Preston*

**Elise Preston**  
**Chair, Program Development Committee**



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