



Guidelines for juries at IOF Events

Version November 2023

Issued by: IOF Rules Commission

These guidelines must be read in conjunction with the Jury section of the IOF Rules (FootO, MTBO, SkiO and TrailO Section 29).

1. General principles

- 1.1. The jury is an **independent appeal** body whose only task is to consider and rule on protests.
- 1.2. A protest can only be made against the organiser's decision about a complaint. A protest cannot be made without first making a complaint and only the complainant can make a protest.
- 1.3. Decisions of the jury are final. Appeals may only be made against a jury decision if there has been a serious procedural error in reaching the decision or if the competition rules have clearly been incorrectly applied or interpreted. Appeals are considered by the IOF Disciplinary Panel after the event.
- 1.4. Sporting fairness must be the guiding principle in the interpretation of rules by competitors, organisers and the jury.

2. Jury membership

- 2.1. The jury should be appointed in advance of the event if possible.
- 2.2. The size (and in some cases the composition) of the jury is defined in the IOF Rules.
- 2.3. The IOF Event Adviser leads the jury but has no vote.
- 2.4. A representative of the organizer may participate in jury meetings but may be asked to leave before the jury comes to its decision. A representative of the organiser has no vote.
- 2.5. The jury members should, if possible, be licensed IOF Event Advisers and at major IOF events, Senior Event Advisers.
- 2.6. The jury members should be as diverse as possible. Ideally, the jury will contain both men and women, members from different federations and different continents.
- 2.7. Normally, all jury members should be physically present at the competition site. If it is not possible to find suitable jury members who are physically present, a maximum of one remote jury member may be used.
- 2.8. It is prudent to nominate, in advance, one or more reserve jury members who can be used as substitutes if necessary.

3. Conflict of interest

- 3.1. Examples of a conflict of interest which **must** prevent a jury member from serving:
 - The jury member is a close relative of the athlete who is the subject of the protest
 - The jury member is the team manager or coach of the athlete who is the subject of the protest
 - The jury member is a team manager or coach of an athlete who would win/lose a medal if the athlete who is the subject of the protest is disqualified/reinstated.

3.2. Examples of a conflict of interest which **might** prevent a jury member from serving: In these cases the Event Adviser must discuss with the jury member whether they can be sufficiently independent. The IOF Event Adviser makes the final decision regarding any potential conflict-of-interest.

- The jury member is a member of the same club as the athlete who is the subject of the protest
- The jury member is a member of the same federation as the athlete who is the subject of the protest (this will usually always be the case at a WRE)
- The jury member is a team manager or coach of an athlete who would move up a place in the top six if the athlete who is the subject of the protest is disqualified.

4. Preparation

- 4.1. The names of the jury members must be published in the final bulletin if possible.
- 4.2. The jury must be given all materials distributed to competitors and team managers. The jury members should attend any Team Leaders meetings. Those jury members who are not involved with any team must be accredited to access all areas of the event.
- 4.3. The IOF Event Adviser must ensure that the jury members can be summoned quickly. Their mobile phone numbers must be gathered in advance and a check made as to whether there is mobile phone coverage at the arena. The jury members must be given the mobile phone number of the IOF Event Adviser.
- 4.4. The Organiser must print copies of the IOF Complaint/Protest form and have them available at the Enquiries/Information desk in the arena.
- 4.5. The IOF Event Adviser must inform the jury members when they need to arrive at the event, where they must report, and when they may leave.

5. On the day

- 5.1. The jury may be asked to observe key areas of the event e.g. start, finish. They must not interfere or take over the job of the officials. However, in urgent circumstances, they may provide advice in order to avoid or solve a problem.
- 5.2. The voting jury members must not be involved or consulted in the consideration of complaints. Complaints must be decided by the organiser with advice, if necessary, from the IOF Event Adviser. However, the jury members may be informed of the content of any complaints and the organiser's decision, especially if the organiser feels that a protest may follow.
- 5.3. The voting jury members must **not** act as judges or marshals at the event.
- 5.4. Any protest must be made on the official complaint/protest form which must show the original complaint and the organiser's decision about the complaint. Any protest must be made in writing no later than 15 minutes after the organiser has announced the decision about the complaint

6. The jury meeting

- 6.1. The jury should meet in a quiet place where they will not be disturbed.

- 6.2. The Event Adviser must ensure that the IOF Rules and the final bulletin are available.
- 6.3. All members of the jury should be present. In urgent cases preliminary decisions may be taken if a majority of the jury members agree on the decision.
- 6.4. If a jury member declares him- or herself prejudiced or if a jury member is unable to fulfil his or her task, the IOF Event Adviser must nominate a substitute.
- 6.5. After considering the original complaint, the reason for rejecting the complaint and the protest, the jury may gather extra evidence as it sees fit: For example:
- by viewing maps or documentation
 - by interviewing competitors or officials (if necessary with an interpreter)
 - by visiting a location in the terrain
 - by viewing photographs, videos or TV footage
 - by obtaining readouts from GPS tracking, electronic or computer equipment
- 6.6. A jury may use external assistance, such as assistance with rules from a member of the Rules Commission, if required. A person providing external assistance is not required to be on-site at the event.
- 6.7. The jury's decision (including reasons) must be written on, or appended to, the complaint/protest form. If the jury was not unanimous, the voting figures can be included if the Event Adviser feels it is appropriate. If a jury member did not participate for any reason, or was replaced by a substitute, this must be recorded on the form.
- 6.8. The exact details of how each jury member voted must not be revealed.
- 6.9. If details of the jury decision are requested, it is very important that a uniform message is conveyed. The Event Adviser should act as the spokesperson for the jury or, if necessary, delegate the task to a jury member. The individual opinions of jury members must not be revealed. Other jury members must avoid subsequently discussing the protest with competitors, officials, spectators or the media.
- 6.10. The person who submitted the protest and any other affected parties must be informed of the jury decision as soon as possible. If appropriate, the decision should be announced by the speaker and/or published.

7. Guidance on decision making.

7.1 When considering a protest, juries should consider:

- How convincing is the evidence? (noting that having enough time to investigate the incident and gather evidence is important but may be limited by other factors)
- Had the organiser any responsibility for the transgression (e.g. failing to tape a forbidden route)?
- Did the athlete/s gain any advantage by the transgression?
- Was the standing of the sport damaged by the transgression (e.g. environmental damage or infringement of private land)?
- Fairness – what is the impact on athletes who have behaved correctly?
- Any other issues they consider relevant.

8. The jury's powers

8.1. As the outcome of its decision on a protest the jury can take any action it sees fit within the Rules, guided by sporting fairness. These actions may include:

- Disqualifying an athlete or team for a breach of the rules
- Reinstating a team or athlete
- Imposing or amending a time penalty for jumping the start in a mass start format race
- Referring an athlete to the IOF Disciplinary Panel
- Voiding or confirming the results in a class.

8.2. The organiser must implement any decision of the jury.

9. After the event

9.1. The IOF Event Adviser must report details of any protests and the jury decisions in the final report to be submitted no later than four weeks after the event. Electronic versions of the completed complaint/protest forms should be appended to the report.

Related documents available to download from the IOF Website

- Complaint Protest Form
- Cancelling a competition

Changes November 2017

- Appeals may only be made against a jury decision if there has been a serious procedural error in the operation of the jury
- A representative of the organizer may participate in jury meetings but may be asked to leave before the jury comes to its decision. A representative of the organiser has no vote.
- The IOF Event Adviser shall make the final decision regarding any potential conflict-of-interest.
- Conflict of interest examples

Changes January 2019

- Paragraphs numbered
- Jury members who are team officials must not be given access to all areas of the event
- The jury decision **shall** be written on the form

Changes November 2023

- Small changes and “shall/should” changed to “must” in many cases.
- Only the complainant can make a protest
- A maximum of one remote jury member may be used if necessary
- Clarification of grounds for an appeal against a jury decision
- Appeals are considered by the IOF Disciplinary Panel after the event.
- If a jury member is a member of the same club as the athlete who is the subject of the protest, it might (not must) prevent a jury member from serving
- The jury can consider TV footage or GPS tracking

- If a jury member did not participate for any reason, or was replaced by a substitute, this must be recorded on the form.
- Affected parties must be informed of the decision
- New section: Guidance on decision making
- New Section: The jury's powers

