

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Decision of the ISU Council

The Council of the International Skating Union, meeting in Torino, Italy on December 16-17, 2007, sustained the Appeal of the Netherlands Skating Association (the KNSB) protesting a change made to the “official times” of the Men’s 1000 meter A race in the Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating event held on November 18, 2007 in Calgary, Canada.

The Council determined that Rule 247, paragraph 4 clearly states “*The times are considered official when the Referee has signed the timekeeping protocol. The official times may not be questioned.*” For the pair Kuipers-Davis, the Referee had signed the protocol and thereafter, contrary to Rule 247, paragraph 4 undertook to change the “official times” protocol he previously signed, and to substitute another. The Council found that the Referee’s action in this regard was made in good faith, but is not permitted by Rule 247.

The Council determined that Rule 251, paragraph 2, establishes both “photo cells” and “photo finish” as “Automatic Timekeeping” equipment authorized for speed skating use, and in Calgary, for the pair Kuipers–Davis, with both procedures in use, the “official times” protocol signed by the Referee was based on the “photo finish” depiction of the finish of the race showing Kuipers as the first across the finish line.

The Council also took note of Rule 260, paragraph 1 which provides “*A skater has completed a distance when the tip of a skate has touched or reached the finish line after the prescribed number of laps*”, and determined that the words “*touched or reached*” have significance with respect to the authorized automatic timing systems, and that the “photo cells” placed at a low elevation on the ice are not suitable to determine when a skate at an elevation above the “beam” of the photo cell *reaches* the finish line. In such a case the skate is obviously not touching the ice at the finish line. The Council found, however, that the “photo finish” automatic timing system used by the Timekeepers in determining the “official times” of the Kuipers-Davis pair is suitable for such determination and correctly shows Kuipers as the winner of the pair.

For the avoidance of doubt in future Races, the Council decided to immediately modify the rule in question, namely rule 251, paragraph.2. According to this modification the official times from the photo finish equipment will be decisive in case that there is a discrepancy with the times from the photo cells system.

For further information see www.isu.org.

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