

“Understanding AFP Judging”

AFP judging was created by freeskiing’s own athletes, and AFP certified judges have been in the booth at almost every major freeskiing event in the past decade. The core of the AFP’s judging criteria is centered around the notion of Overall Impression. Unlike traditional point-based systems used in freestyle skiing, Overall Impression is a more holistic judging approach that allows the sport to progress with fewer mandates and restrictions.

This philosophy, which was born out of the X Games, has been continuously refined to offer more consistent judging event to event. Inherently, the Overall Impression judging format will be privy to subjectivity; however, it affords the athletes the opportunity to dictate the direction of the sport – not the organizers.

The end goal is simple: create a ranking.

Freeskiing is an ever-evolving sport and cannot be restricted by a standardization of numbers and points. Therefore the Overall Impression ranking philosophy is the only system the AFP uses. The point-value associated with each run is merely representative of where a given run falls within an overall ranking. The question becomes, “which run was better?” NOT, “was that a 97 point run or a 92 point run?” For this reason, the Overall Impression Criteria will be the most important information you can take away from this document.

What does P.A.V.E.D. actually mean?

The Overall Impression Criteria is comprised of a five-part structure that can be effectively used to gauge the caliber of a given run. It can be broken down into the following categories:

- **Progression** - An amorphous term that can pertain to many different aspects of skiing. It is not limited to added flips or degrees of rotation.
- **Amplitude** - Can accentuate a well-executed trick and leave a greater impression. Maintaining amplitude throughout a run – specifically in the halfpipe venue – is indicative of strong and effective skiing. The AFP does NOT encourage or reward athletes for overshooting jumps.
- **Variety** - A run that demonstrates good variety will have tricks thrown on different axes; switch and regular takeoffs and landings; various grabs; and tricks spun in both directions of rotation.
- **Execution** – Encompasses many aspects of a run or trick: Style, Control, Takeoffs and landings. It is technically specific critiques of Freeskiing fundamentals and intended performance.
- **Difficulty** - Aspects like line choice, grab combinations, increased degrees of rotation, and combinations as well as prior PAVED criteria will affect a rider’s perceived level of difficulty.

Judging Booth Process

- **Steno** - A process in which judges catalog and critique the entirety of runs in real-time. Thorough stenography allows for well-rounded discussions between judges in order to form the Overall Impression. In addition, this information establishes a clear post judging review, which can help create an environment of clear communication between judging panels and athletes/coaches.
- **Establishing a Range** - Each competition has a unique field of athletes. It is up to AFP judges to explore and determine a practical range prior to each competition using training days. "Anchor scores" are a type of scoring benchmark, in which exceptional runs, average runs, and crashes will all help solidify a field's range. *For example:* A crash at the end of an exceptional run might reach a maximum of 30pts while an average completed run will earn 65 pts. In all AFP sanctioned events, scores are used for the sole purpose of creating a ranking.
- **Discussion** - The AFP does not prohibit discussion in the booth; in fact, it’s encouraged. It establishes consistency. It is up to the head judge to direct the discussion in such a fashion that is pertinent and controlled.
- **Ranking** - A skier's score, based on overall impression, purely represents their standing in that day's event. A run that fetched 90 pts in one day's competition, might only receive 80 pts the

following day because of stronger skiing by other athletes or other factors.

- **Tiebreaker (2 similar runs)** - In a situation where it is difficult to distinguish which of two similar runs was superior, the judging panel will re-consider the 5 pieces of PAVED criteria. Often times, the 5 scoring judges will break the tie by a hand vote. Ultimately, the athlete deemed more dominant in 3/5 categories will be awarded the higher placement.

How/When Can Athletes Ask Judges Question

It is a judge's duty as an ambassador of freeskiing to be present and approachable during events. Feel free to ask questions and review runs with members of a judging panel in a calm and professional manner. The head judge, however, must handle any formal disputes. There is no disputing a score after the fact. The only dispute is if it's the correct bib # or correct athlete's run.

Ensuring Professionalism & Accountability

Standardized Minimum Pay Rate for AFP judges - This is designed to accomplish the following:

- Create a consistent and fair payment schedule among AFP sanctioned events
- Provide transparency to the judging community
- Promote professionalism and dedication within judging

Head Judge Reports – At each event, regardless of sanctioning level, Head Judge Reports are completed by an event's head judge and submitted to the AFP. From here, any positive or negative comments regarding individual scoring judges are reviewed and attached to the appropriate judge's profile. These comments/reports are available for event organizers to review.

Event Organizer Reports – Event organizers are also required to complete a report, which includes the quality of judging. This is a check on the head judge's ability to organize and manage the judging booth.

Be prepared at every event - Attend the Riders Meetings!

Attending these meetings provides the following critical information for athletes

- How will judges weigh the different elements of P.A.V.E.D. given the factors below:
 - Course Type/Quality
 - Weather Conditions
 - Level of Competition
 - Ex. On a windy day and/or with smaller jumps - judges might communicate that they will focus on execution/variety more so than amplitude or progression.
- Competition Format / Schedule changes
- Open platform for questions and to "speak your mind"

- Subscribe as an Affiliate Member to Access Judging Education Materials

- Please Direct Any Additional Questions to Andrew@AFPWorldTour.com