



# ROCKY QUALIFIER SERIES FREESTYLE/FREESKI HANDBOOK (RQS)

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## RQS SERIES

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## ABOUT

Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski is a committee of the Rocky Mountain Division of USSA. Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski may also be referred to as Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski Association or The Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski Competition Committee.

The Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski Competition Committee is operated by a volunteer Competition Board under the authority of the Rocky Mountain Division of USSA. The Board is comprised of an Executive Board including the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. In addition to the Executive Board, there is a Rules & Officials representative, a Judges representative, two Members-at-Large and three Athlete Representatives. All of these positions serve three year terms and are elected on a rotational basis so that no more than 1/3 of the board turns over in any given year. The following clubs have permanent voting positions on the board: Aspen Valley Ski Club, Durango Freestyle Team, Ski and Snowboard Club Vail, Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, Team Summit, Telluride Ski and Snowboard Club and Winter Park Competition Center (Freestyle). New clubs wishing to join the committee must petition the committee for acceptance.

The purpose of the Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski Competition Committee is to oversee, administer, program, sanction, staff, fund and manage Freestyle/Freeski Competitions in the Rocky Mountain Division providing a pathway to the USSA's Freestyle/Freeski Points System. In addition, the committee is responsible for the administration and determination of the Colorado Ski Country USA's All Star program.

As a division of USSA, Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski is guided by the principles, directives, and rules of USSA. Any deviations from USSA rules shall be carefully considered and shall not stray from the guiding principles of fair competition and good sportsmanship and they should not favor Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski athletes over USSA members from other divisions. Rocky Mountain Freestyle values the health, safety, and well-being of all athletes. Rocky Mountain Freestyle operates in a fiscally responsible manner and makes decisions that are morally and ethically defensible.

## CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED

### WHY ROCKY QUALIFIER SERIES (RQS)

The Rocky Mountain Qualifier Series (RQS) Freestyle program was created to give athletes an opportunity for a realistic competition experience in an age-appropriate scenario. The purpose of RQS is to allow athletes to continue developing their skills from the Rocky Mountain Development (DEVO) Series and prepare themselves for the more competitive nature of the Competitive (COMP) Series. Since RQS is the middle program between the DEVO and COMP Series, it will help athletes prepare for the next level with the implementation of a 2-jump, timed competition. Previously, athletes moved from 1-jump, non-timed Devo competitions to 2-jump, timed Competitive competitions as they got older. Now, RQS will be the stepping-stone between the two series, allowing for the ultimate, most realistic competition experience. Finally, RQS will allow these athletes to continue working on teamwork and sportsmanship attitudes, and meet other athletes who enjoy freestyle and freeskiing.

## WHO, WHEN, WHERE

The RQS program is for skiers aged 11 and older (as of December 31 of the competition season) that are not competing in the Rocky Mountain Competitive Series program or the Development Series program. The RQS program features four (4) to five (5) mogul competitions and may include additional events in dual moguls, aerials, slopestyle or halfpipe. Competitions are hosted on weekends at participating resorts around Colorado. A schedule of events and fact sheets can be found at [www.rockymountainfreestyle.com](http://www.rockymountainfreestyle.com).

Skiers aged 9 and 10 who compete in the DEVO series program are allowed one (1) free RQS move-up event per year. The event is preferred to be at their home mountain but if they are unable to attend that specific event or their home mountain is not hosting an RQS event, they may choose a different mountain to do their move-up event. One weekend is considered to be one move-up, so an event with two days of competition (i.e. Single Moguls on Saturday, Dual Moguls on Sunday) is considered one move-up event.

### AGE Classes

Age groups are determined by the athlete's age as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current competition season. RQS age groups are bolded below:

6 and under – U7

7 and 8 – U9

9 and 10 – U11

**11 and 12 – U13**

**13 and 14 – U15**

**15 and 16 – U17**

17 and 18 – U19

19 and 20 - Senior

21 and older - Veteran

## MEMBERSHIP AND LICENSES

All competitors must hold both a valid USSA Freestyle Age-Appropriate Competitor membership and a Rocky Mountain Division membership. Both of these memberships are obtained together through the USSA on a single application. Membership information (forms and payment options) are available online at [www.ussa.org](http://www.ussa.org). A Rookie membership is available for first time competitors age 13 and up. Please see the USSA website for details.

Competitors who have not renewed their current memberships before their first competition will be required to complete a new application and pay the membership fees on-line before being allowed to register on-site. USSA membership cards should be carried by competitors at all competitions to verify membership.

USSA now offers a daily membership license for athletes U11 and under (age 10 & younger) for \$15/day and for U13 and older (age 11 & older) for \$25/day. Please note that these daily memberships are “per day.” A weekend constituting two days of competitions (i.e. Single Mogul and Dual Mogul) would require a two-day membership license.

## EVENT FEES AND REGISTRATION

To register for an RQS event, go to [www.rockymountainfreestyle.com](http://www.rockymountainfreestyle.com) and select the RQS Series Information section on the page. Here, you will see a list of events. Simply click on the event and it will take you to a page that shows how many spots are left. Please complete the form here. The cost is \$40/day. Some events are two-day events, and others are one-day events. Be sure to register for both days if you want to participate in both days. You will also need to print a liability release for each ski area and bring that with you to registration. You will not be able to get your bib without it.

You must register by **5:00pm on the Tuesday prior to the competition**. However, events often fill up before then, so register as early as possible to guarantee your entry. There will be no late registration at the event, unless the cap (90 total competitors) has not been met.

If the event is filled, openings will be filled in the following order:

1. If a skier drops out from one team, that spot may be filled by another skier from that team, provided they joined the waitlist by the Tuesday deadline. This will ensure that each team has representation at each event, and events are not always dominated by the host club.
2. If a skier drops out and their spot is not filled by a member of the same team, then priority goes to the host club. These will be filled according to skiers on the wait list by the deadline from the host club.
3. If there are additional spots that need to be filled and the host club does not have any other skiers, then skiers from other clubs on the wait list by the deadline will be contacted.

## **COMP Series “RQS Move-Ups”**

All RQS skiers are permitted to compete in one (1) Rocky Mountain Competitive (COMP) Series event without losing their RQS status and requiring an additional license. An RQS athlete may only move up to events that are classified as “Open” or “Junior” events; NO “Champ” or “Senior” move-ups are permitted. One weekend is considered to be one move-up, so an event with two days of Open Moguls is still just considered one move-up event. Occasionally, events will be classified as “Unrestricted Move-Up Events”, which means RQS athletes can compete in these events without the event counting as an official move-up.

When registering for a Competitive Series event as an RQS athlete, one must follow all the same registration procedures as a regular Competitive Series athlete. In addition, they should note “RQS Move-Up” on the entry. Please see the RMD website for details on regular registration procedures.

RQS athletes may compete in an unlimited number of Slopestyle, Halfpipe and Aerial events at the COMP Series level. They will not receive any points on the national points list for these events unless they hold a full competitors license.

## **ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

All competitors are obligated to understand and follow the Code of Conduct as outlined in the USSA Freestyle/Freeski Competition guide as published each season. Cases of athlete conduct brought before the Competition Committee will be addressed on the merits of a case by case basis.

## **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

All parents are obligated to understand and follow the Parent Code of Conduct as outlined in the USSA Freestyle/Freeski Competition guide as published each season. Cases of parent conduct brought before the Competition Committee will be addressed on the merits of a case by case basis.

## **HELMET REQUIREMENT**

All competitors must wear a helmet during competition and official training at all Rocky Mountain events.

## **CONCUSSION POLICY**

Rocky Mountain Freestyle abides by the USSA concussion policy, as well as the Jake Snakenberg Youth Concussion Act as required by Colorado Law. All coaches and Technical Delegates (TD’S) must complete an annual Concussion Recognition Educational course. Athletes will be pulled from competition if a concussion is suspected.

## CHAPTER 2: EVENT DESCRIPTION AND RULES

### OVERVIEW

For all RQS events, the start order will be the same for both runs. We will begin with random order girls, followed by random order boys (i.e. all girl age groups will be in random order and once complete, then all boy age groups will be in random order).

All athletes must properly display their bib on the top layer of their clothing during any training or competition.

Awards will be issued for the top three athletes in both male and female categories for all age groups. In addition, the highest scoring top ten male and female athletes will receive overall awards. It is expected that any athlete anticipating an award should stay to receive that award. Awards will be held approximately 30 minutes after the last competition run, generally in the same location as registration. The fact sheet from the host mountain will provide these details.

### THE COMPETITION COMMITTEE

All RQS events are organized by the host mountain and should emulate USSA Rules as outlined in the USSA Freestyle/Freeski Competition Guide. RQS Competitions are overseen by a Competition Committee comprising the Head Judge, an RQS Representative and the Head Coach from Host Mountain.

### SINGLE MOGULS (MO)

Single mogul competition should consist of a minimum of two lanes on a heavily moguled ski run, stressing technical turns, aerial maneuvers and speed. The single moguls site must be uniformly covered in moguls, with a reasonably constant pitch and fall line, free of obstacles, with satisfactory snow cover. The single moguls site must be completely prepared for training at least one day before the competition date.

Each competitor skis solo in the lane of his or her choice within the competition venue. It is the responsibility of the athlete to inspect the course, including all jumps, before attempting any aerial maneuvers. Each competitor is evaluated on his or her performance with respect to "turns," "aerial maneuvers" and "speed" as further explained in Chapter 3.

All RQS mogul events are two-jump courses. Every competitor must perform two different jumps in any given competition run in order to receive maximum points. A competitor who performs only one jump can only receive a maximum of 50% of the total possible aerial score. Jumps in excess of the recommended amount will be disregarded in order of lowest to highest scoring.

**Inverted and off-axis jumps are not permitted at the RQS level.**

The RQS athlete will be guaranteed two competition runs at each competition. In the incidence of severe or unsafe weather conditions, the Competition Committee has the right to call off an event, therefore only giving each athlete one competition run. The committee will make every effort to give all athletes two runs in unforeseen weather conditions.



## DUAL MOGULS (DM)

Dual moguls require two athletes to ski down the course at the same time in a head-to-head format determined by a bracket system. Technical turns, speed and aerial maneuvers are used to evaluate the skiers with the winner of each round advancing to the next round.

The athletes will be assigned the left hand or right hand side of the course (termed red course and blue course) for each run. The left side (looking up the hill) will always be the blue course and the right side will be the red course. Every effort will be made by the host area to make the lanes and jumps equal.

**Inverted and off-axis jumps are not permitted at the RQS level.**

## AERIALS (AE)

An aerials competition focuses simply on the jumping portion of freestyle, and not the moguls. Aerial competition stresses takeoff, height and distance (referred to as “air”), proper style, execution and precision of movement (referred to as “form”) and “landing.”

The aerial site will consist of at least three jumps, with the smallest known as Jump 1, the next largest as Jump 2, and the largest as Jump 3. Athletes will select their jump based on their skill level and conferences with his or her coach. **RQS athletes are not permitted to attempt any off-axis or inverted maneuvers at any time during competition or formal training before an event.** Any number of rotations is permitted in an aerials event.

The RQS athlete will be guaranteed two competition runs at each competition. In the incidence of severe or unsafe weather conditions, the Competition Committee has the right to call off an event, therefore only giving each athlete one competition run. The committee will make every effort to give all athletes two runs in unforeseen weather conditions.

## SLOPESTYLE (SS)

Slopestyle events will occur in a terrain park with age-appropriate features, including jumps, boxes, and rails. **Again, no off-axis or inverted maneuvers are permitted at the RQS level.** Rotations of any degree may be performed. The skiers will be judged on variety, amplitude, difficulty and execution. At the RQS level, it will be a best of two run format. Each judge is an overall judge in the slopestyle format.

## HALFPIPE (HP)

The halfpipe is a channel constructed in the snow. Skiers perform their run in the halfpipe. If an RQS halfpipe event should occur, it may or may not take place at a small venue. The skiers will be judged on variety, amplitude, difficulty and execution. At the RQS level, it will be a best of two run format. Each judge is an overall judge in the slopestyle format.

## RQS CHAMPIONSHIPS

RQS Championships are the culminating event of the season. Athlete's must have competed in a minimum of two RQS weekend events (2 separate weekends), which will be closely monitored by the Rocky Mountain Freestyle/Freeski Competition Committee (RMFFCC).

COMP Series move-ups also count towards the towards the Championship minimum event qualification.

RQS Championships will include one day of single moguls and one day of dual moguls.

Awards for the event will occur at the end of each day. RQS Championships are organized by the host mountain.

**The RMFFCC does not award an overall RQS Division Award.**

## CHAPTER 3: JUDGING

### SINGLE MOGULS (MO)

The athlete will be judged for his or her turns, aerial maneuvers and speed. **The overall breakout of scoring of an RQS event is as follows:** Turns: 50% — Air: 25% — Speed: 25% — the USSA competitive format of 60% turns, 20% air and 20% speed.

#### Turns

The athlete will be judged on turns with regard to his or her balance, including the timing of pole plants, use of the fall line, including an ability to stay within a chosen lane, and absorption and extension with the legs.

An athlete will be given a numerical score that reflects his or her ability to turn according to the factors listed above. He or she can receive a maximum of ~~5.0~~ 20 points from each of the ~~three~~ two judges. An athlete's score may be reduced if he or she strays from the fall line, stumbles, or fails to perform some of the required actions. An athlete's score may be deducted from if he or she falls during the course of the run. In addition, if an athlete leaves the venue by skiing under the rope, that athlete will receive a Run Not Scored (RNS). The score sheet in ~~Appendix A~~ breaks the point system down into categories of Excellent, Very Good, Average, Below Average, and Poor.

#### Aerial Maneuvers

The athlete will also be judged on two (2) aerial maneuvers, which should be performed off the designated jumps within his or her chosen lane. These jumps will be judged on execution, altitude, take-off, and landing. If an athlete performs the same trick off both jumps, only one (1) of the tricks will be scored. The judges will use the score of the higher scored jump. If the athlete misses one jump and only performs one trick, they will only receive a score for their one trick.

Two of the three judges will judge the aerial maneuvers within a run. ~~The judges each have a maximum of 2.5 points to award an athlete;~~ A maximum of 10 points per jump can be earned from the air judge, which are then multiplied by a degree of difficulty corresponding with the type of maneuver. It is possible for an athlete with a lower degree of difficulty to score higher on a well-executed trick than an athlete that does a harder trick poorly. **RQS athletes are not permitted to do any inverted or off-axis maneuvers.** Rotations are limited to 720 degrees in RQS mogul competitions.

#### Speed

Speed is simply the amount of time taken to complete the run. Within the RQS program, speed is a factor, and time will be calculated into the score. Time shall be taken from the moment the competitor leaves the starting gate until they cross the finish line. Each event will have a pace time set based on a calculation the length and steepness of a course.

## DUAL MOGULS (DM)

The athletes will be judged using the same criteria as single moguls, but the athlete that crosses the finish line first will be awarded more speed points. However, it is possible to win a dual and lose the speed points. The athlete awarded the most points by the judges will advance to the next round.

With a three judge format, each judge is an overall judge with 5 points to give (roughly three for turns, one for speed and one for air). If five judges are used, two will score turns, one will score air, one will score speed and one will score overall. Each judge has five points to distribute between the two athletes, based upon their execution of the judging criteria. The athlete with the highest points advances. If an athlete leaves the venue or crosses the centerline, they will receive an RNS (Run Not Scored). If both skiers cross the centerline, it is the skier who crossed first that is disqualified.

DEVO dual moguls will be based off of bracket, divided by age, if there are enough participants.

The Head Judge and the Host Mountain will determine the judging panel, with a reduced emphasis on speed. The athlete that scores highest in their dual advances to the next round. There is no "losers bracket" until there are only 8 athletes left per gender. At that time, all 8 dual for final placement. If an athlete leaves the venue or crosses the centerline, it is the skier who crossed first that is disqualified. The dual bracket may be random or may be seeded off of a previous event.

## AERIALS (AE)

During aerials, RQS athletes will be judged on their take-off, execution, amplitude, and landing of the trick. Take-offs should be timed with the lip off the jump, and the approach should not have any turns or wedges. Proper execution of a trick is outlined in the glossary. The landing should occur at a reasonable spot on the landing hill, with control exhibited after impact. The athlete must announce their intended trick to the starter, who will then relay that information to the judges. In RQS, an athlete may repeat the same trick for both jumps. Winners will be determined in a best of two format, instead of the traditional fashion where both jump scores are added together.

There are three judges for aerials. One judge focuses simply on the landing, and will deduct points for falls or uncontrolled exits. The other two note the take-off, the amplitude, and the execution of the maneuver. An athlete using Jump 1 cannot score the maximum points for amplitude, but an athlete using Jump 3 could receive a very small amount of points if they hit the knoll. In addition, if an athlete does not do the maneuver that they stated, they will receive an RNS. The degree of difficulty is calculated within the scoring system.

## SLOPESTYLE AND HALFPIPE (SS/HP)

For both slopestyle and halfpipe events, the skiers will be judged on variety, amplitude, difficulty and execution, and again, it will be a best of two-run format. In RQS, all three judges give an overall score taking into account the above standards. Points are deducted for falls.

## CHAPTER 4: EVENT VOLUNTEERS

Rocky Mountain Freestyle and RQS requires numerous volunteers to help put on freestyle and freeskiing competitions for our athletes. Host clubs are expected to enlist the help of parents, siblings and friends to fill volunteer positions. Without our volunteers, it's difficult to run a smooth and successful competition. Please contact the host mountain coach or Competition Committee to volunteer. THANK YOU!

### GLOSSARY

**Spread Eagle**—After take-off the outstretched arms and legs are extended out to the sides away from the body. The legs should be spread to a minimal angle of 90 degrees when viewed from the front. The skis should be parallel to each other (tips and tails equally spread) and 90 degrees to the body. The upper body should remain straight and upright without any noticeable forward bend at the waist.

**Twister**—The skis are twisted a minimum of 90 degrees to the fall line. The skis should remain parallel to each other, together, and 90 degrees to the body. The hands and arms may move to counter the twisting of the skis.

**Kosak**—A kosak is a combination of a spread eagle and a zudnik. Arms can be held in different ways: in front, between the skis, at the side, or a competitor may grab the ski tips. Legs are simultaneously raised and spread in front and to the side of the body. Legs should approach the horizontal level and upper body is brought forward to counter inertial forces of legs being raised. Skis should achieve vertical position and be symmetrical.

**Daffy**—After take-off, one leg should be brought up and forward while the other leg is being lifted up and back. This results in a 180 degree split position where the front ski is parallel to the back ski, pointing up and down.

**Iron Cross**—This is the combination of the back scratcher and the tip cross. The skis are crossed at a 90-degree angle while pointed to the ground at a 90-degree angle. The maneuver is held with the upper body in a neutral position until the skis are extended to the landing hill.

**Back Scratcher**—The ski tails are brought back and up to a minimum of 90 degrees to the horizontal when viewed from the side, knees bent, hips forward and a slight backward counter motion of the shoulders and arms. Legs must be together and skis parallel.

**Mule Kick**—The mule kick is a back scratcher with a 45-degree twist of the hips to the side.

**Zudnik**—A Nordic type jump in which the upper body is bent roughly 90 degrees at the waist by bringing the upper body forward and down and the lower body forward and up. The toes rise upwards and in the vicinity of the skier's chin. The skis should remain close together and parallel and the head should remain upright.

**Grab**—When a skier grabs any ski with any hand. Two-handed grabs count as one grab in RQS. Ideally, the skier grips the ski and may even tug on the ski to show the ski is in their grasp.

**180**—After take-off, the skier rotates 180 degrees, body upright and legs straight. There is a minimum of arm movement.

**360**—After take-off, the skier rotates 360 degrees, body upright and legs straight. There is a minimum of arm movement.

**540**—After take-off, the skier rotates 540 degrees, body upright and legs straight. There is a minimum of arm movement.

**720**—After take-off, the skier rotates 720 degrees, body upright and legs straight. There is a minimum of arm movement.

**Switch**—When an athlete takes off or lands backwards.

**RNS/DNF**—Run Not Scored/Did Not Finish