

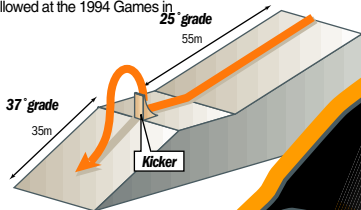
OLYMPIC PRIMER

Freestyle skiing

THE HISTORY: Freestyle skiing began in the 1960s as an event that incorporated elements of ballet-like spins and twirls with mogul skiing and an aerial movement. Eventually these were separated into individual events. The first organized competition was in Attitash, N. H. in 1966. Freestyle aeriels and moguls were demonstration events at the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary. Moguls were added to the 1992 Games in Albertville, France. Aeriels followed at the 1994 Games in Lillehammer, Norway.

Aeriels

The skier is propelled off a specially designed ramp called a "kicker" to heights of up to 50 feet. While in the air, skiers execute back flips, kicks and other acrobatics. They are judged on difficulty of their stunts.



Clothing

No rules govern ski suits. Aside from helmets, competitors choose their own design.

The competition

Athletes make two elimination jumps and two jumps in the finals. The order of competition is determined by World Cup rank.

Number of competitors:

12 men, 12 women

Number of judges: 7

Scoring breakdown: 30% landings, 20% air, 50% form

Maximum points: 30.0

Skis

The short, lightweight skis are more maneuverable in the air. Ski lengths are usually shorter than the skier's height.

Boots

Boots are almost at a 90° angle to the body. This enhances form during aeriels and is the best angle for performing backward somersaults.

Moguls

The mogul course is steep, with hard-packed snow mounds and depressions. The skier absorbs the shock of the bumps by bending at the knees and hips. Shoulders remain parallel to the finish line. Skis should not leave the surface of the snow.

Poles

Used to aid in accelerating, turning and balance.

Knee pads

Contrasting knee pads are worn to emphasize control of the knee area.

Skis

Shorter skis (minimum of 190 cm for men and 180 cm or women) are chosen for their maneuverability.

The competition

Athletes make one elimination run and one finals run down a moguled course with two jumps.

Number of competitors:

16 men, 16 women

Number of judges: 5

Scoring breakdown: 50% turns, 25% air, 25% speed

Maximum points: 30.0

Mogul maneuvers

Competitors must execute two jumps during their run.

