



WFDF Official Rules of Flying Disc Sports

Article VII - Freestyle

Copyright (c) 1994, WFDF

Last Change: 20 Jul 1994

Comment: Freestyle is a game whereby a player or a team of two or three players perform a routine, which consists of a series of throws, catches and moves, done to music using one or more discs. The routine is compared to the routines of the other competitors through scoring done by judges, who evaluate the routine on the basis of **difficulty**, **execution** and **presentation**. The player or team with the best score is declared the winner.

Freestyle! Such grandiose terms to describe sport. The words "free" and "style" both transcend their task of labeling physical action. They encompass a lifestyle, a philosophy.

If one were to search for a definition of our sport, the failure of that search would prove to be its answer. An attempt to shackle freestyle to any one definition or mode of play would be to deny its very essence. In its purest form freestyle is creative movement with a moving disc. The players define the game for themselves as they play. Self-expression is the only common thread stringing together many divergent jewels of creativity.

Yet, within a galaxy of possible applications for freestyle, a sizeable number of players have reached a tacit agreement concerning one particular application. Acknowledging the freedom of thought and expression all players are entitled to when they freestyle, players of this lofty pursuit have in effect agreed that they should bring their talents and ideas together at a fixed time and place and share them. But, as is the nature of our species, the sharing is for a price. Players agreed to share their self-expression in return for the chance to be recognized when the sharing was over, as the one who shared the most by presenting their individuality best.

These agreements to meet at fixed times and places have become known as freestyle tournaments. Sharing is now called competition, and displaying one's individuality best, so as to leave with the honor of having shared the most, has been labeled winning. And more and more players want to get in on this agreement.

Because of this development, and only because of it, an artificial means of conceptualizing and comparing individual creativity had to be developed. What resulted are the known and accepted procedures for evaluating the individual creativity of many different, but equally important human beings.

The result we seek by this evaluation is not solely to recognize and label superior talent. We are not our own creators and cannot begin to understand the necessary elements for choosing those superior among us. Our attempts to evaluate will be imperfect at best because we are trying to select the most perfect fruit out of a basket containing nothing but different delicious choices.

And we are not so self-defeating as to limit our freedom by proclaiming these evaluation procedures the definition of freestyle. No, the only purpose we can realistically ascribe to our meager attempts at evaluating freedom is that of paying homage to a given moment in time--simply who, at that moment, was sharing the most.

Outline of Contents

- 701. [Playing Area](#)
 - 701.01. [General](#)
 - 701.02. [Spectator Control](#)
- 702. [Equipment](#)
 - 702.01. [Disc](#)
 - A. [Disc Alteration](#)
 - (1) [Application of Lubricant](#)
 - 702.02. [Uniforms](#)
 - 702.03. [Audio Equipment](#)
 - 702.04. [Aids and Props](#)
 - A. [Nail Hardener/Fake Fingernails](#)
- 703. [Competition](#)
 - 703.01. [Play](#)
 - A. [Length of Routine](#)
 - B. [Music](#)
 - C. [Judging Systems](#)
 - 703.02. [Scored Factor System](#)
 - 703.03. [Ranked Order System](#)
 - A. [Mode of Scoring](#)
 - B. [Presentation Factor](#)
 - C. [Difficulty Factor](#)
 - D. [Execution Factor](#)
 - E. [Tie-Breaking Procedure](#)
- 704. [Tournament Procedures](#)
 - 704.01. [Suggested Competitive Formats](#)
 - A. [Initial Round](#)
 - (1) [25 or More Teams](#)
 - (2) [24 or Fewer Teams](#)
 - (3) [Order of Play](#)
 - (4) [Seeding](#)
 - (5) [Judging](#)
 - (6) [Advancement](#)
 - B. [Final Round](#)
 - (1) [Judging](#)
- 705. [Glossary](#)

701. Playing Area

701.01

The playing area may be of any surface, although well-trimmed grass is suggested, which is essentially flat,

free of obstructions and holes, and affords reasonable player safety. The area should be approximately 35 m in size for each pool. Indoor areas are also acceptable if they have overhead clearance of at least 6 m.

701.02. Spectator Control:

The entire playing area shall be separated from the spectators by lines or rope to insure spectator safety and prevent unnecessary interference of play.

702. Equipment

702.01. Disc:

A player or team may use one or more discs which shall be WFDF approved as set forth in [Article I](#) of these rules. If more than one disc is used, the discs need not be similar or identical.

A. Disc Alteration:

The structure of the disc cannot be altered or changed in any way by a player, subject to the following exception:

(1) Application of Lubricant:

A player may apply silicone or some other substance to the disc which acts as a lubricant to enhance the performance through the reduction of friction and promotion of the continued movement momentum of the disc.

702.02. Uniforms:

The players of a team are not required to wear a uniform or other clothing, but uniforms are recommended to enhance appearance for the presentation score.

702.03. Audio Equipment:

Audio equipment, with the ability to replay taped or recorded music at a sufficient decibel range to enable the players, judges and spectators to comfortably hear said music, shall be provided.

702.04. Aids and Props:

Players may include various aids or props in their routines, only if said aids or props do not pose any possibility of danger or harm to any players, judges or spectators; are not considered to be more than an insubstantial part of the routine, and are approved by the tournament director, who shall have absolute discretion to deny inclusion.

A. Nail Hardener/Fake Fingernails:

A player may apply nail hardener to his fingernails or toenails or wear fake fingernails for reducing friction and promoting the continued movement of the disc. Fake fingernails may not exceed "normal" fingernail length. Thimbles, guitar picks, or other foreign objects that may tend to reduce friction are prohibited.

703. Competition

703.01. Play:

Play shall consist of a team of players acting in concert, exhibiting a routine; said routine being judged for score on the basis of presentation, difficulty and execution. The routine shall be done to music, and shall consist of a series of combinations among the participants.

A. Length of the Routine:

In the Open, Mixed Pairs and Women's Divisions, the routines shall last 3 minutes in the preliminary round and 4 minutes in the semi-final and final rounds. Co-op routines (three players) shall last 4 minutes in the preliminary round and 5 minutes in the semi-final and final rounds.

B. Music:

In the initial round, music shall be supplied by the tournament director and used by both pools simultaneously. In the final round, music shall be provided by the competitors.

C. Judging Systems:

Two different systems of judging are approved for use. The scored factor system produces more specific numerical values for each of three evaluation factors. Experienced and well-trained judges are required for correct application of this system. The ranked order system also uses the same three

evaluation factors but judges are required only to rank the routines after they have evaluated them. Either system can produce acceptable results for all levels of play, however, the ranked order system can be used by players of any experience level without special preparation.

703.02 Scored Factor System:

The scored factor system of judging is being revised over the 1994 season. Event directors interested in using scored factor judging should contact the W.F.D.F. freestyle committee chair or F.P.A. for up-to-date information.

703.03 Ranked Order System:

The quality of the routine shall be evaluated by three factors: presentation, difficulty and execution. The routines shall be evaluated by three judging panels, each of which is assigned to one of the three factors. The panels must be of equal size and have at least three judges each but may be as large as is justified by the number of available judges.

A. Mode of Scoring:

Each individual judge shall produce a ranked order of the routines based on the evaluation of each routine's relative quality with respect to the factor of evaluation to which the judge has been assigned. Overall scoring is a composite of all ranking. For example, if six routines are being ranked, a first-place rank is worth one point, second-place is worth two, continuing down to last place which is worth six points. The total points for each routine are then added together to produce a routine's overall score, with lowest score winning.

B. Presentation Factor:

Presentation includes sub-factors:

(1) Artistic Expression:

considers choreography, use of co-ops, use of music and the judge's overall subjective impression of the routine.

(2) Variety:

Considers the range of possibilities of skills and combinations demonstrated by the players in each part of the combination; the take-in, move, catch and throw.

(3) Use of Elements:

considers use of space, time, environment and music.

(4) Originality:

considers creativity and new ideas.

C. Difficulty Factor:

Estimations of difficulty should primarily consider the relative risk of the moves attempted. That is, to what degree has the routine included techniques of play which other players in the contest would have difficulty completing without incurring execution deductions? Additionally, credit must be given for the difficulty of combining moves. The relative risk of a combination is greater than the total risk of all the component moves. Also to be considered is the difficulty of partners working together and combining moves such as co-ops.

D. Execution Factor:

Estimates of execution quality involve the amount of deviation from flawless technique. Serious errors such as drops, wild throws, stumbling or other major, unplanned breaks in play obviously detract from high quality execution. More minor errors such as hesitation, awkward movement, regripping or loss of balance should also be considered.

E. Tie-Breaking Procedure:

If teams score the identical number of vote points, the tie may be broken by determining the team which received the largest number of first place votes. If the tie remains, move down through the places until the tie is resolved. If all places voted are identical, the disc flipping method ([104.03](#)) shall be used.

704. Tournament Procedures

704.01. Suggested Competitive Formats:

A. Initial Round:

(1) 25 or More Teams:

Competitors shall be divided into two sites and two pools.

(2) 24 or Fewer Teams:

Competition shall be at one site with three pools at each site.

(3) Order of Play:

Order of play shall be by random draw.

(4) Seeding:

Competitors shall be placed into pools according to their estimated ability or ranking. The top-seeded teams shall be spread across the pools and interspersed with non-seeded teams.

(5) Judging:

Judging for the initial rounds shall be done by the non-players in the non-performing pool at the same site as the performing group.

(6) Advancement:

The number of teams that advance is determined by the total number of teams. Usually eight open pairs will advance to the finals, with only six co-op teams, four women's teams, and four mixed teams.

B. Final Round:

The final round shall consist only of the teams that advance from the preliminary round. Order of play in the final round shall be determined by random draw.

(1) Judging:

As many qualified judges as possible shall be used, with no less than three judges per component. In all cases, an equal number of judges shall be assigned to each component of evaluation.

705. Glossary

Catch: A controlled termination of the movement momentum of the disc without the disc touching the ground.

Combination: One complete sequence by a player or one co-op sequence by players of the same team. Elements may include throw, take-in, move, and catch.

Competitors: Includes a player or group of players teaming together.

Co-op: One interactive combination by two or more players on a team. A second combination or throw within the team constitutes a separate co-op for judging purposes.

Delay: The spinning of the disc without corresponding flight movement, usually by contact with the finger nails of the player, although toes, elbows or other objects are also used.

Move: The coordinated or complementary movement of the disc and the player's body, after the take-in is made and prior to a throw or catch. The most varied element of a combination.

Movement Momentum: The continued flight, spin, roll or other independent movement of the disc.

Take-In: The address by the receiving player to a thrown disc, other than a catch or throw. The take-in may include tips, delays, fakes or any other technique performed by the player which establishes that player's control of the disc, without stopping the disc's continued movement momentum.

Throw: Transfer of the disc from one player to another through a tossing motion.
