Apnea Ice Swimming Society (AISS)

Proposal to create a competitive ice freediving discipline as a demonstration sport at the 2030 Winter Olympics in France: '**Apnea Ice Swiming (AIS) / Nage en Apnée Sous Glace**

Why an ice freediving competition at the Winter Olympics?

Of all the freediving disciplines, ice freediving has the best chance of being included in the Olympic Games:

1 - Ice freediving possesses all the qualities of an Olympic discipline: a natural environment, pushing personal limits, popular appeal, aesthetics, photogenic qualities, and a discipline in which everyone can find themselves reflected.

2 - All Olympic venues have lakes, including the venues for the 2030 Winter Olympics in France, notably La Clusaz where there is already an under ice freediving activity

3 - Freediving has the potential to achieve a level of representation from nations at the Winter Olympics that it currently lacks at the Summer Olympics, proportionally speaking, compared to other disciplines.

4 - Few sports can realistically aspire to the Winter Olympics.

5 - There is less and less snow, and fewer and fewer opportunities to create new disciplines centered around mountains and snow. Just as ski resorts are diversifying, the Winter Olympics will also diversify.

6 - Cold water immersion is booming, whether for therapeutic, wellness, or athletic purposes. It enjoys widespread popularity, particularly with the development of freestyle swimming and cold water swimming competitions, the championships of which have been taken over by the Swimming Federation, a sign of its growing popularity and potential olympic appeal.

Currently, ice freediving events are in a "record" format, the organization and success of which are limited by the lake's length (minimum 120 m), its depth (minimum 6 m), and its altitude (the lowest possible to avoid O2 drop and risk of hypoxia)

With the beauty of mountain lakes, the public's fascination with ice, the power of the freediving discipline, and the palpable proximity of the Winter Olympics in France, an ice freediving competition designed for the Olympic Games would undoubtedly be a success with both the public and freedivers. There are four years left to create a discipline, establish regulations, organize competitions, and popularize it in France and around the world in order to make it a featured sport at the Winter Olympics.

Rules of Apnea Ice Swimming

1 - Competition Venue
- The regulations are based on the standard pool freediving regulations for a 50m pool.
- Frozen lake, basin or swimming pool allowing for a 50m underwater swim
- Location near a road or evacuation route
- Minimum depth of 1.5m with no obstructions to this depth
- Sufficient ice thickness to support the weight of everyone present: athletes, coach, safety divers, medical staff, judges
- A heated room or tent for the athletes and medical team

2 - Setup

- 5 oval holes, each 12.5m apart, with a width proportional to the distance, each 1m long and 2m wide. An oval hole with a closed angle allows easier extraction of an injured person from the water.
- A ladder/dock ladder at the first and last holes, fixed to the ice, ideally resting on the lake/basin bottom.
- A static rope stretched between the stiles of the two ladders at a depth of 1 meter, which will serve as the lifeline and guide line for the athlete, to which they will be tethered at the base (as in freediving).
- A solid oval plate of 1 square meter fixed to each ladder just above the rope attachment point, allowing the athlete to propel themselves at the start and turn.
- The safety diver can be secured with another lifeline stretched between the two free stiles of the ladders or under the ice surface.

3 - Safety in Competition

Medical Safety:
- The POSS (Preventive Safety and Security Plan) must be such that an injured person can be treated by a medical team on site and in an emergency department in less than one hour.
- The medical staff in competition consists of medical doctor specialized in emergency rescue, a nurse and a first-aider monitoring the athletes' warming tent
- A tent or emergency vehicle, heated located on the lake shore within 200 meters of the setup must allow for the provision of first aid in a sheltered and secure environment (or a dedicated space within the athletes' warming tent).
- Equipment: stretcher/sled, oxygen, defibrillator, survival blanket or warming equipment, medical resuscitation equipment, communication equipment for contacting emergency services.

Organization Safety
All members of the organization, staff, and athletes must be equipped with warm clothing (drysuits for athletes) and footwear, including cleats, allowing easy and safe movement to transfer an injured person.

Athlete Safety
- The athlete must provide a medical certificate stating no contraindications to the practice of competitive ice freediving without wetsuit, mentionning the discipline (static, Distance, Speed)
- The athlete must be accompanied by a "Guardian Angel" upon arrival at the lake and must remain under their supervision for one hour after their dive. The Guardian Angel will be responsible for accompanying the athlete to the starting hole and may... The rescuer will assist the athlete in preparing, collecting their clothing and equipment, helping them get dressed after the dive, and escorting them to a warming-up area. They will also be responsible for notifying medical services if any problems arise after the dive.
- The role of the Guardian Angel can be assigned to the organization, with a rescuer collecting the athlete's clothing after their dive, accompanying them to the warming tent where another rescuer will monitor them for one hour.

Performance Safety:
- The presence of safety divers trained in ice diving, wetsuits, and fast fins is required: 1 to 3 safety divers in the water and one safety diver on land in wetsuit and footwears with cleats
- For distances under 25m: one safety diver.
- For distances over 50m: 2 safety divers. Safety
- For distances greater than 50m: 3 safety divers: the first safety diver will cover the first 12.50m, the second will cover from 12.50m to 37.50m, and the third will cover from 37.50m to 50m or 62,50 m. The rotation of safety divers will ensure that each safety diver can only cover a maximum distance of 25m underwater under ice to accompany the athlete.

- The number of safety divers is given as a guideline and depends on the distance over which each diver is capable to ensure the athlete's safety.

Anti-doping
Anti-doping controls in accordance with Olympic sports regulations

4 - "Apnea Ice Swimming" Competition

Categories:
- Senior women / men (over 18 years old)
- Masters women / men (over 50 years old). Masters swimmers may choose to compete in the senior category.

Equipment:
- No fins, wetsuits, or weights, so that the discipline aligns with the principles of Olympic disciplines (physical, aesthetic, visual, with minimal technical aids). The absence of technical aids will result in shorter distances and durations, thus limiting the risk of hypothermia.
- Classic swimsuit / boxer shorts / two-piece made of fabric (no neoprene). A silicone swim cap, mask or swimming goggles.

Variations of the discipline:
- **Static**: maximum time held statically at the edge of the ladder or ice.
- **Distance**: the longest distance swum underwater in apnea. The athlete announces the distance they intend to cover so that the safety divers and judges are ready at the time of the surface.
- **Speed**: Minimum time recorded for the 50m ice freediving distance (manual or electronic stopwatch)

A / Static
- Athletes prepare in a designated room or sheltered tent by the lake, or they may choose their own preparation location. An intermediate preparation tent may be available depending on the lake/basin layout and the event organizers.
- Athletes must arrive near the starting hole 5 minutes prior to the start. They must enter the water no later than 2 minutes before the start, with a standard 3-minute countdown until the starting signal.
- The athlete will be positioned near the ladder or the edge of the ice and will be supervised by a safety diver. The event can be completed whether the athlete is on foot or not; the organizers will take the necessary safety precautions.
- The athlete exits the water by placing both arms on the ice or on a designated mat on the ice.
- Exit protocol: remove goggles/mask, sign "OK" and "I'm OK" to the judge, and look directly at the judge while awaiting their decision (20 seconds).

B / Distance and Speed
Propulsion Techniques / Swimming
- **Breaststroke**: Alternating breaststroke arm and leg movements. Undulations prohibited. Valid for Distance and Speed events.
- **Undulations**. Valid for the Speed event.

Event Procedure:
- Athlete preparation takes place in a designated room or sheltered tent by the lake, or athletes are free to choose their own preparation location. An intermediate preparation tent may be available depending on the lake/basin layout and the event organization.
- Athletes must arrive near the starting hole 5 minutes prior to the start time. They must enter the water no later than 2 minutes before the start time, with a standard 3-minute countdown until the starting signal.
- The athlete must start at the starting signal. There is no countdown after the starting signal to ensure the safety diver starts at the same time. (If the start is delayed, the athlete will be disqualified.)
- The start is from the ladder, followed by a push off the oval plate.
- For **Distance** race A 50-meter turn is completed by pushing off the oval plate.
- Finish: Athletes exit through their chosen hole (the 50m hole for **Speed** event), placing both arms on the ice or on a designated mat on the ice.
- Exit protocol: Athletes remove their goggles/mask, signal "OK" and "I'm OK" to the judge, and maintain eye contact with the judge while awaiting their decision (20 seconds).

Competition selection and registration:

- **Static**: To announce a dive time, the athlete must justify having already achieved the shorter time in a previous competition, in increments of 1 minute up to 4 minutes
- **Distance**: To claim a distance, the athlete must provide proof of having already completed the next shorter distance in a previous competition, in increments of 12.5m up to 50m
- **Speed**: To register for a speed event, the athlete must provide proof of having already completed a distance of 50m

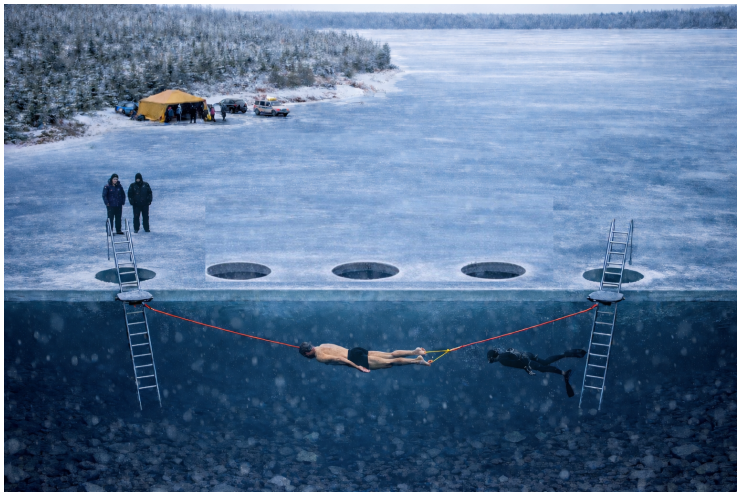
Television broadcast / judges' cameras (at the organizer's discretion)

- one fixed camera at the entry hole and one at the exit hole
- one Insta360-type camera attached to a ball sliding in front of the athlete's lanyard carabiner
- and/or: one Insta360-type camera passed between the safety divers who take turns
- and/or: one underwater camera / horizontal dive-eye drone following the athlete laterally
- optional: mobile cameras and a drone filming the lake

5 - Roadbook

- **Late March/Early April 2026**: Presentation of the discipline to the relevant authorities and federations; location to be determined between Chamonix, Tignes, Val d'Isère, La Clusaz, and Avoriaz.
- **Summer 2026**: Finalization of the regulations and validation by the relevant authorities and federations.
- **December/January 2026**: First exhibition ice freediving competition, limited to freedivers with prior ice freediving experience without a wetsuit.
- **February/March 2027**: First official international ice freediving competition.
- **Winter 2030**: Ice freediving competition as a demonstration sport at the Winter Olympics in France.

6 - Plan lake and pool



7 - Project leaders and contributors:

Vincent Pouyet: physiotherapist for the 2017-2021 Freediving World Championships and sparing partner of Arthur Guerin-Boëri during his 2021 and 2022 Ice Freediving World Records. President of BADD, Arcachon freediving club (South West, France).
After a serious road accident in 2023, he has since practiced cold water immersion as a pain reliever and swimming as a form of rehabilitation. His participation in the French Ice Water Swimming Championships and his under-ice freediving training in La Clusaz and Chamonix, the site of the 2030 Winter Olympics inspired the Under-Ice Freediving Olympic Project

Arthur Guérin-Boëri: a multi-medalist world freediver, world record holder in ice freediving, and popularizer of freediving through the various documentaries he has directed, notably Sunny Boy and The Salty Odyssey, both about ice freediving.
A pioneer and expert in freediving in general and ice freediving in particular, he will be both an athlete and a de facto ambassador for the under ice competition

Dan Arbogast: freediver and manager of Fifty Shade Of Blue, an ice freediving center with a concession for this activity at Lac des Confins, in La Clusaz.
Drawing on his experience in ice freediving and freediving regulations in general, he is responsible for the competition setup.

Maxime Souverain: photographer and videographer for the French and World Freediving Championships. He brings his vision to the project and its essential visual representation to popularize the sport.

Romain Guenneugues: emergency medical doctor and hyperbaric specialist, medical doctor of the French Freediving Team and the Freediving World Championships. He contributes his expertise in ensuring the medical safety of the sport.

« Freediving under ice: a hot path to the Olympics »