

MUSIC CD'S
For
ICE SKATING TESTS AND COMPETITIONS

Have you ever been left 'hanging' at a Test or Competition when your music won't play?
Have you wondered what went wrong?
Have you thought, 'It's not my CD, it must be the system?'

Let's explain some of the ins and outs of music CD's and players.

CD's are a plastic 'media' with special properties that allow the music information to be embedded under the surface to be 'read' by a LASER.

There are several types of CD media in use in the industry for audio recording, the cheapest, most common type being the cheap data discs available anywhere and the slightly dearer audio quality discs generally only available at 'better' stores or specialty hi fi or computer stores.

The recording process takes the music and by way of a high intensity LASER, burns the digital information into the dye layer under the surface. There are many different colours of CD's available and many arguments rage as to which is the best type to use.

There seems to be little difference as to the best type to use, only that they be good quality. The secret is in the recording process. The music is played in 'real time' and any errors slow down the playback process. This can lead to the music stopping altogether as the player can't get enough error free data to use.

There are various types of players in use, some being better than others. Some of the cheaper types have difficulty in reading the data, particularly if the CD is scratched or damaged.

Tips for recording CD's for tests and competitions:

- Always use a good quality disc, preferably an audio CD rather than a straight data disc such as a TDK CD-R80 "XG Audio" or equivalent.
- Record at the slowest speed possible, up to 4X, to allow the deepest burn. A tip is to look at the recording surface (the shiny one) and see if the music data track (it starts from the centre and works out) is well defined. Look at a hit 'single track CD' against the light and you will see the data section '.
- Check the CD in various players and listen for 'dropouts' as an indicator of potential trouble.
- Don't leave your CD without a cover on the rink barrier, in your skating bag or lunch box. CD's and jam sandwiches don't mix.
- Always have a spare CD.
- Always bring a copy of your music on an audio cassette tape to a test or competition as an alternative in case the CD player has a problem with your particular CD. Just because it works fine in one unit doesn't mean it will work in all machines.
- If you suspect your CD may be troublesome in the rink's player, try it out before the test or competition starts, rather than when you are standing in position waiting for the music to play.

Good luck and happy skating.

Andrew Deans
Senior Technical Officer
Broadcast Australia
(Tel: 02 6256 8078)