



In the Loop

A Publication of the San Diego Figure Skating Club

Table of Contents

The True Cost of Skating	page 1
Comments from your Editor's	page 2
How to Prevent Sports injuries	page 3
Figure Skating and Going to School	page 4
My Experiences Home Schooling	page 5
Kimberly Baer – Novice lady	page 6
Will Chitwood	page 7
Practicing Figures	page 9
Volunteers Needed	page 10
Skater Aspirations	page 11
Recreational Figure Skating	page 12
Certification of Skating Instructors	page 13
Strength Training Tips/Techniques	page 15
Club Jacket Order Form	page 16
Acquiring Basic Dancing Skills	page 18
Adult Sectionals and Nationals	page 21

The True Cost Of Skating

by Ruth Sweet

The cost of skating needs to be considered as separate phases. The first is acquiring the basic skills of performing the edges and turns as 2 and 3 lobe figures. The fundamental body positions and control are essential to perform Moves In The Field (MITF), free skating jumps and spins, and connecting dance steps.

Skaters normally learn the early skating skills in group lessons. Ice Skating Institute and USFSA Basic Skating Skills learn to skate programs offer badges and competitions to provide a positive environment that nurtures developing skaters. Gradually parents recognize the need to acquire better skates and hire a coach to choreograph a program so their son or daughter can compete locally.

At this point the skater is generally practicing 1.5 to 2 hours per session 4 to 5 afternoons, continue to take group classes, and take 15 to 30 minutes of private lessons a week. An investment in one or more costumes and DVD has been made in preparation to pass badges to qualify to enter competitions hosted locally by the San Diego FSC, La Jolla FSC, and Escondido FSC.

Before long a skater starts working on their axel jump. As they prepare to take the appropriate ISI or

Basic Skills free skating badge, the coach will suggest taking the USFSA Pre-Preliminary MITF test.

An excellent time to undertake this transition is during the summer when the skater has extra time to advance their training to a higher level. At this point parents need to consider joining the San Diego FSC so they can participate in the Summer Workshops the club hosts at the San Diego Ice Arena (SDIA) and the Kroc Center. Forms are available at <http://www.sds skate.org>

Parents need to factor into this cost the round trip distance to the rink and the cost of traveling to competitions, including hotels, meals, and competition entry fees when arriving at the total cost on an annual basis.

Joining the USFSA opens up amazing opportunities to take tests and eventually compete in competitions that qualify skaters to enter our Junior and Senior National Championships.

The training costs of every skater increase as the level of testing introduce more difficult elements. Passing the MITF tests must occur prior to a skater passing other test to compete in single, pair, dance, synchro, or showcase events.

The skater must then take the appropriate free skating, pair, or dance tests to qualify to enter the respective events. Synchro skaters must have passed the tests and compete for a position on a team.

The minimum costs of costumes, skates, practice time, lessons, off-ice training, etc. are approximately equal for every skating level for all events.

There is a big difference in the time, energy, and financial expenses of an elite track skater who has reasonable expectations to enter the Regional Championships and qualify to skate in the Pacific Coast Sectional Championships.

For years the cut off age of 12 for the juvenile skaters excluded older skaters. The "Open Juvenile" event was created to provide an opportunity for them to compete.

Continued on page 2

The True Cost of Skating from page 1

The USFSA has expanded this concept for skaters who elect at the start of each competitive season to skate against other skaters whose skills and goals are inline with other "Test Track" skaters.

There is a considerable difference in yearly expenses if the skater is training away from home for the summer or on a year round basis. Pair, dance, and synchro events start at the Sectional Championships. Skaters in these events don't have the expense of single skaters who must qualify at our regional competitions to get to the Sectional Championships.

To be continued in the next issue

Comments from your Editor

An extraordinary amount of time and energy was required to plan and produce the December "Christmas In California" show and the Skate La Grandé Championships. The audience, skaters, and parents are generally unaware of the time and effort of the volunteers who were required for these projects to run smoothly. Thank you for your efforts!

To continue to function as a viable organization, each year new volunteers must be recruited and trained to take over critical positions that occur when volunteers become unable to continue in the midst of an event.

From year to year there is a natural attrition related to skaters quitting or going away to college causing parents to lose interest in volunteering or adults losing their jobs, moving away, becoming ill or injured due to accidents, or due to "stress related burnout".

We need the help of all club members, but especially adults and junior members over 16. Without your assistance, the club will not be able grow and serve the needs of our membership. Please complete the Volunteer Information Form –

<http://members.cox.net/e-news/VolunteerInfoForm.pdf>

In The Loop publishes articles of interest to all forms of figure skating –

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| ✓ Moves In The Field (MITF) | ✓ Free Skating |
| ✓ Compulsory Dancing | ✓ Pairs |
| ✓ Synchronized Team Skating | ✓ Free dance |
| | ✓ Theater on Ice |
| | ✓ Showcase |

After each issue of **In The Loop**, individual files of the current articles are posted with that month's issue

at <http://members.cox.net/e-news/MainIndex.html> and the articles will be archived with other articles of a similar topic at <http://members.cox.net/e-news/SkaterParentManual.html>.

Every effort is being made to provide articles on a wide range of topics that will interest adult skaters, parents, and junior skaters of all skill levels. The articles are generally written for high school and college level readers. Parents may wish to read and discuss the content of specific articles with younger skaters.

Some articles may involve technical concepts suitable for skaters with advanced skills and coaches who are interested in a more technical analysis of the topic.

The Manual and Reference for Skaters and Parents is being developed as an electronic distance education tool to communicate information. This is an ongoing effort to assist skaters and parents in making choices that are associated with participating in all facets in the sport of figure skating.

Electronic Discussion Forum

I belong to several special interest electronic forms on the web. It is possible to limit memberships so spam is not a problem. People can join and receive daily emails of discussions or review the daily digests via the Internet.

Please let me know if there is an interest in establishing an electronic forum that would provide SDFSC members an opportunity to ask questions about the world of USFSA testing and competing. Send a note if you would participate or have no interest in such a project.

The goal of the SDFSC publications is to promote a positive and supportive environment that allows each skater to maximize their potential by focusing on their technical abilities, presentation skills, and enhancing their self-confidence.

The desire of an individual to succeed combined with their raw, natural talent affects performance outcomes on tests and in competitions. It also doesn't hurt to be lucky and skate the best performance of one's life in the competition rather than leave it on the practice ice.

Claude Sweet, Editor



Your Guide to Sports Medicine

<http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa101801a.htm>

From Elizabeth Quinn

Free Newsletter -

<http://sportsmedicine.about.com/gi/pages/mmail.htm>

Tips you can use to stay safe whatever sport you play

Following are some general rules for injury prevention no matter what sport you play. While it is impossible to prevent every injury, research suggests that injury rates could be reduced by 25% if athletes took appropriate preventative action, including:

1. Be in proper physical condition to play a sport.

Keep in mind the weekend warrior has a high rate of injury. If you play any sports, you should adequately train for that sport. It is a mistake to expect the sport itself to get you into shape.

Following a regular conditioning program of exercises designed specifically for your sport can prevent many injuries. (See: Proper conditioning <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/?once=true&>)

2. Know and abide by the rules of the sport.

The rules are designed, in part, to keep things safe. This is extremely important for anyone who participates in a contact sport. Rules of conduct, including illegal blocks and tackles are enforced to keep athletes healthy. Know them. Follow them.

3. Wear appropriate protective gear and equipment.

Protective pads, mouth guards, helmets, gloves and other equipment is not for sissies. Protective equipment that fits you well can save your knees, hands, teeth, eyes, and head. Never play without your safety gear.

4. Rest.

Athletes with high consecutive days of training, have more injuries. While many athletes think the more they train, the better they'll play, this is a misconception. Rest is a critical component of proper training. Rest can make you stronger and prevent injuries of overuse, fatigue

and poor judgment. (See: Overtraining <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/?once=true&>)

5. Always warm up before playing.

Warm muscles are less susceptible to injuries. The proper warm up is essential for injury prevention. Make sure your warm up suits your sport. You may simply start your sport slowly, or practice specific stretching or mental rehearsal depending upon your activity. (See: The warm up <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa071003a.htm>)

6. Avoid playing when very tired or in pain.

This is a set-up for a careless injury. Pain indicates a problem. You need to pay attention to warning signs your body provides. (See: Six Sports Injury Warning Signs <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa101801a.htm>)

Research provides us with helpful clues about the cause of sports injury. There are two factors that outweigh the rest when it comes to predicting a sports injury. They are:

- Having a history of injury. Previous injuries to a muscle, or joint tend to develop into chronic problem areas for many athletes. It is extremely important to warm up, and stretch previously injured parts.
- A high number of consecutive days of training. Recovery days reduce injury rates by giving muscles and connective tissues an opportunity to repair between training sessions.

Reference

American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons Public Information

<http://www.aaos.org/wordhtml/home2.htm>

It is important that every member put June 14th on your calendar. This is when the San Diego SFC convenes its annual meeting and lunch.

Show your support for the club and attend the meeting and the free On-Ice Seminar that follows will be discussing new rule changes in the MITF.



Figure Skating & Going To School

by Claude Sweet

An important issue for parents is the quality of education their child will receive. This is especially true of parents those whose children are also involved in an sport like figure skating that requires a very intense training program. The demand for ice time has forced figure skaters to train earlier in the morning in an attempt to schedule increased practice time necessary to acquire the advanced jumps, spins, and performance skills necessary to advance from regional to sectionals, and eventually the National Championships.

Figure skating is not a team or individual sport supported by the schools. Thus skaters find it very difficult to attend school as a regular student and arrange a class schedule that allows them to achieve their skating goals too. More skaters are deciding to participate in home schooling, distance education, or an Internet based virtual education programs to achieve both their educational and skating goals.

There are both advantages and disadvantages for a figure skater that decides to not attend a regular public/private school. A series of articles are posted on our web site to provide the experiences of skaters and parents who have participated in various forms of home schooling.

School districts in some areas have made adaptations for figure skaters and their training schedules, beginning with allowing a skater's practice schedule to substitute for physical education classes.

The development of high speed Internet connections have increased the educational opportunities available from schools offering distance learning. More families are considering home-schooling today; education providers have moved to supply the demand.

Some local school districts are even providing a hybrid version of home schooling that involves the student attending a weekly session to meet with an instructor to take tests, turn in homework, and pick up their assignments for the following week.

Balancing Social and Intellectual Development

Keeping the proper balance in a skater's life is necessary; however, what this means varies according to the age of the skater and the skating

goals. Parents of serious figure skaters must consider realistically the cost involved is real dollars and that their decision will affect the family dynamics, especially when the skater has siblings.

Parents must ask themselves honestly if their child is self-directed or needs constant supervision to learn. Many children do not thrive in an environment that is self-directed. A student who needs a structured learning environment requires someone who has the knowledge and experience to perform that function. The emotional involvement of a parent can cause conflict, even if the parent has been trained as an educator

Parents of a skater, who spends most of their daily life in contact with other skaters, needs to have assurance that this is going to have positive examples of individuals who have established goals and are making choices that will help them succeed. The lack of positive role models should be red flag to parents.

The Ideal Training Facility

When a figure skater trades a basic traditional education for a life emerged in figure skating, what steps must be taken by parents to insure their child becomes a well-rounded individual and be unable to function in life outside of skating?

- **Social and non-skating activities** need to be planned for skaters who home school. Does your skating club have a junior board that plans and sponsors social activities and is involved in activities such as working with Special Olympiads?
- **A study room for skaters to use when breaks occur between on ice practices?** Does your training facility have Internet access with a high-speed connection, Ethernet connection, printer, scanner, etc available for skaters? Ideally someone should be available to supervise this area and blocking software installed to prevent access to "X" rated sites.
- **Is off-ice training at the training facility to supplement the on ice-training program?** If not, is there a community college near by that the skater can enroll in to take the off-ice classes to provide a back ground in weight lifting stretching, dance –modern, ballet, ballroom, etc. plus extra special educational units?

Skaters and parents must consider possible careers after active competitive skating ceases.



My Experiences Home Schooling

by Charlotte Chadwick

Home schooling is a great option for skaters who are serious about their sport. It allows skaters to skate the later, less crowded sessions while still enabling them to excel in their schoolwork. Although home schooling can have its ups and downs, such as the always present distractions at home, like the phone ringing or the dog barking, it is great for those who are diligent, hardworking, and just need some extra time to dedicate toward their passions.

I started home schooling in 9th grade mostly in order to skate more and at later times, but also because I just wasn't interested in the high schools I had to choose from. Now I am in 11th grade and am very happy about my decision to home school, although I do miss the friends I left behind.

Within the three years I have been home schooling I have had mostly good experiences, but some not so great ones as well. In my first year of home schooling I learned home school could be as hard as, if not harder than, public schools. This is because I want to leave all my options open for what college I am going to attend, so I have decided to follow the more challenging UC bound curriculum.

I am given four weeks worth of work at a time and I am responsible for pacing myself and completing the work on time. Even though I commit a lot of my time to my schoolwork, my home schooling allows some flexibility for my coaches when scheduling me and their other students. Through home schooling I have even been able to add a weekly private ballet lesson to my schedule, which has helped improve my artistry in my skating.

Although I home schooled through another charter school for my first year and a half, I am now at The Learning Choice Academy. It was actually Brett Ryan and his mother Wendy, who directed me to this home school.

The school is great and there is an office right near the rink, so it is a lot easier to meet with my Educational Partner (EP: a credential teacher who oversees all my work), as well as stay connected to what is happening at the school. I have a wonderful EP who is very laid back and supportive.

This year I decided to take physics class that is held once a week at the office near the rink in order to get to know other high school students. Even though I have some friends at my school, I mostly rely on skating as my main social life because I don't see the friends I have at school very often.

Since I only have one more year of high school I am planning to continue home schooling next year. After that I am planning to go to Point Loma Nazarene, if I get accepted, and major in nursing. Although this is my plan, I have not really had enough experience in the medical field to know if nursing is the right career for me. However, I do feel home school is helping me to prepare for college because I am accountable for getting my work done on my own. Also I am responsible for dividing up my schoolwork and staying on top of all my assignments, just like I will be in college.

Overall, home schooling has been a wonderful way for me to be able to balance my skating and my schoolwork. I am able to take advantage of the later freestyles and I don't have to worry about missing school on the day of a competition or test.

I am receiving a great education and am continuing to get good grades. I believe that home schooling has helped me to balance my skating and school work and in doing so I have the time and energy to excel in both.



Charlotte Chadwick



Kimberly Baer – Novice Lady



by Kimberly Baer

Hi! My name is Kimberly Baer. I am 15 years old. I began skating when I was 4 years old. I didn't start competing until I was seven year old however. My parents thought it would be fun for Kristie, my sister, and I to try ice skating; however, they never thought we would love it so much that we would continue skating as long as we have.

I have now been skating for 11 years taking time off now and then for injuries. I started skating by taking group lessons at the La Jolla skating rink. I passed my Basic I through FS 5 badges.

My first private lesson was with Shannon Peck and I became an ISI member. I soon became a USFSA skater. My first USFSA competition was at the La Jolla Open in 2001. Shannon remained my coach until I reach the Intermediate level. I jumped from a Pre-juvenile to Juvenile to Intermediate level skater within one year. And now, I am a novice skater.

2007 was my first year as a novice competitor competing at Southwest; I competed with a broken arm. I did not have a cast and it was one

of the hardest competitions I have ever done, but I pushed through my program assisted by Shannon's encouragement and the support of my family that kept me going. This fall will be my second year at the novice level.

Shannon taught me all my moves from Pre-Preliminary through Intermediate. Then, I started taking from Wanda Guntert, Michelle Ford, and Bob Pellaton. They helped me pass my novice and junior moves. Michelle Ford taught me my senior moves but Chea Hutton, my main Coach (she is awesome!), helped me pass my senior moves.

Completing my Moves in the Field is a tremendous accomplishment for me. I could not be happier that I have achieved one of my goals in figure skating. Moves have improved my skating so much. They have helped me gain speed while doing edge work. They have also boosted my confidence because some of the moves were quite scary for me.

I have incorporated my moves into my competitive programs and I believe that they make my programs look stronger and more powerful.

My future plan is to continue skating with integrity and passion. I hope to go to Pacific Coast Sectionals this year. I have only skated as a single skater but I have done many shows that involve group numbers.

I hope one day to possibly become a pair skater. After high school, I would like to go to college and become a psychoanalyst. I love working with kids and teaching them how to skate and I would like to be a part-time coach.

Thank you to all my coaches (pass and present) that stuck with me through some tough times and helped me pass all my tests and achieve all my skating goals so far and continue to support me.

Editor's Note; Kimberly passed her Senior MITF at the Kroc test session on February 26, 2008.



Will Chitwood



Will Chitwood coaches singles, pairs, and dance and he also partners dance tests at the Kroc Center and San Diego Ice Arena.

Will moved to San Diego in May 2007 from the Broadmoor Skating Club at Colorado Springs, Colorado. While skating the Broadmoor Skating Club, Will achieved quadruple gold medal status, having passed his gold/senior tests in Moves in the Field, free skating, pairs, and dance.

He apprenticed in coaching pairs with Dalilah Sappenfield, who coaches the 2008 national novice, junior, and senior pair champions. Will also apprenticed coaching singles with Tom Zakrajsek and in dance with Sandy Hess, coaches who have had numerous national champions.

A former ski racer, Will started his skating career in Vail, Colorado, where he competed in singles and in pairs with his sister, Christina. While living in Colorado Springs, Will competed primarily in pairs, although he also competed in dance with Christina for three years.

Will and Christina earned two Junior National pair medals before Christina decided to focus solely on dance. Christina is now the 2008 British Senior Dance Bronze Medalist with her Scottish dance partner, Mark Hanretty.

Will went on to compete in pairs with Aaryn Smith, becoming a national and international

pairs medalist. Dalilah Sappenfield was Aaryn and Will's primary coach with Tom Zakrajsek their secondary coach. In 2004, Aaryn and Will won the bronze medal at the North American Challenge Skate in Waterloo, Canada.



During the 2004-05 Junior Grand Prix season, Aaryn and Will won two international silver medals, one in Long Beach and one in Belgrade, Serbia. Aaryn and Will qualified for the Junior Grand Prix Final in Helsinki, Finland, finishing fifth.

During the 2005-06 Junior Grand Prix season, Aaryn and Will won two international gold medals, one in Tallinn, Estonia and one in Gdansk, Poland. They again qualified for the Junior Grand Prix Final in Ostrava, Czech Republic, finishing seventh. Will has the distinction of being shown on the International Skating Union instructional video for having the world's best male position on the forward inside death spiral.



Aaryn retired from skating after the 2005-06 season, and Will went on to skate pairs with Laura Stern from Los Angeles. However, Laura soon decided to retire from competition as well. At that point, Will pursued college full time at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Will also runs a mobile DJ company, Dancing DJ Productions, and is completing his BA degree through a distance education program at Prescott College, Prescott, AZ. He is majoring in communications with public relations emphasis and minoring in music industry studies. In addition to coaching, Will uses his knowledge of music and computers to edit music for his students and for other coaches.

Will Chitwood is a full member of the Professional Skaters Association as well as professional member of Ice Skating Institute. Will also holds his ISI We Skate Certification, PSA Basic Accreditation, and standard first aid and CPR/AED-Adult certification.

He has attended PSA international conferences in Stamford, Connecticut; San Diego; Denver, Colorado; Charleston, South Carolina; and Los Angeles.

Will can be reached at 619-980-8338 or will.chitwood@yahoo.com.

My Lucky Penny

by Ruth and Claude Sweet

The SDFSC started giving the pennies to the skaters as part of the first Summer Workshops four years ago when there were over 20 pre-preliminary MITF skaters testing to qualify for the Del Sol Synchronized Skating Team.

We were concerned that the skaters might become nervous so we meet with the skaters prior to the test and give them a bright new shiny penny as a token of good luck.

In the intervening years, many skaters have indicated that they still had their "Lucky Penny" and some even showed their luck penny to us at competitions.

Practicing Figures

by Claude Sweet

Patch Practice Sessions:

When I was competitively skating in the 1960's, a patch session was usually forty-five minutes to an hour long. Figure skaters may not have been able to practice all the figures they need practice, for tests or to compete, during that time, so watching the clock was important during a patch session.

With up to eight different figures on a test and the average skater needed to practice each figure for ten minutes (include time to layout the figure), the skater would need more than sixty minutes of patch practice. For that reason, most high level competitive figure skaters needed two to four patch practice sessions each day – two before school and will returned to the rink in the afternoon for more patch practice sessions.

Practicing figures took more time for competitive singles skaters than time spent practicing their free skating elements and running through their program to music. Most skaters practice their free skating on two or three forty-five minute to an hour-long free skating sessions each day.

About Figure Tests:

There were eight figure tests originally. The Preliminary Figure Test was added, before the First Figure Test, increasing the number of figure tests to nine. The higher the test, the more difficult the figures were to acquire the skills to pass the test and place in competitions.

It sometimes took one to two years to pass certain figure tests. To compete at the Senior level (the level that is seen at Olympic and World figure skating competitions), the skater has to pass the Eighth Figure Test. Some skaters give up because the higher figure tests are so difficult and never pass the Eighth Figure Test.

What an Individual Patch Looked Like:

As the patch practice session continues, the skaters continue to move to the right (or left) and layout each figure one by one. Eventually, their clean patch is filled up with circle eight designs, turns, and scribed circles (which are used to see if circle sizes remain correct).



When a skater did a "layout" of a figure, they tried to trace the circles so that only one line appeared on the ice. A "layout" means that the first circles are traced two additional times. No marks on the ice were allowed to help ice skaters find their centers, check their side lineup, or turn placements.

After the patch the ice looks like clear sheet of glass filled with circle eight designs with all the circles that have been laid out during the previous practice session.

Serpentines:

Three circle (lobe) figures, called serpentines, also move toward the center of a strip of ice. If two skaters share a strip, the third serpentine circle overlaps into the patches. As a courtesy, before "overlapping", skaters ask each other for permission to "overlap". Overlapping uses precious clean ice space and it is an art form to maintain a nicely laid out patch because of the overlap marks of the opposite patch's skater.

Three circle (lobe) figures, called serpentines, also move toward the center of a strip of ice. If two skaters share a strip, the third serpentine circle overlaps into the patches. As a courtesy, before "overlapping", skaters ask each other for permission to "overlap". Overlapping uses precious clean ice space and it is an art form to maintain a nicely laid out patch because of the overlap marks of the opposite patch's skater.

Loops:

Near the last ten to fifteen minutes of a patch session, skaters will practice loops. Loops are done on smaller circles and their long axis will sometimes be drawn horizontally across the patch. Loops make heavier marks on the ice and can be done over slightly marked up ice. Sometimes some skaters stayed on the session that follows a patch session (a freestyle session with skaters jumping and spinning) for five to ten extra minutes to get in last minute loop practice. Loops look like little oblong circles inside larger round circles.

Coaching:

Some coaches wear skates while teaching patch lessons. Others wear heavy boots that can walk on the ice so that their blades don't mark up skaters' patches with unnecessary marks.

End of a Patch Session:

At the conclusion of a patch session the ice rink would suddenly become filled with the sound of voices and music. A few skaters might leave the patch session five minutes early to get ready a lesson on the free skating session; everyone else would practice to the end of the session or hear from their parent about "wasting their money".

Figure boots must be taken off and blades must be dried or the blades will rust. The free skating boots and blades must be put on quickly. Skaters rush to get back on the ice so they can free skate.

Suddenly, music begins playing, and kids begin to laugh and begin to chatter. Skaters take to the ice and begin to obliterate the beautiful tracings on the patches that were laid out during the previous hour. Soon, Jumping, spinning, noise, and smiles would fill the rink.

Volunteers Needed

The San Diego Figure Skating Club is a non-profit organization. We depend on our club volunteers to organize and staff club activities. Without them, it would be impossible to hold test sessions, host competitions, exhibitions, shows, and sponsor the Summer Workshops.

Please take the time to fill out the Volunteer information Form. Your time and energy make it possible for our club to support your skater.

It is your support that makes the difference in how we can provide the positive environment necessary for your skater to achieve their full potential.

Thanks for taking a few minutes to complete our Volunteer information Form.

Please complete the volunteer information form located at

<http://members.cox.net/sdfsc/Volunteers.html>



Skater Aspirations

by Claude Sweet

Parents must decide if their skater wants to be –

- a serious competitive skater, who tests and enters qualifying regional, sectional, and perhaps national competitions
- a semi-serious recreational skater, who tests and enters local open non-qualifying competitions
- or recreational skater who skates just for fun? A coach that fits in with what goals you chose can be found, but may take time – yes, it is possible to make “a perfect match!”

Few parents start out with the idea they will be developing an elite competitive skater so they don't anticipate what is involved. One out of a hundred skaters may have the desire and talent to embark upon the journey to become a national competitor. The competition is the greatest in the ladies events because 90% more girls are involved in the sport than boys. Conversely boys dominate hockey.

At juvenile ladies events at the Regional Championships in Southern California, there may be 3 or 4 groups consisting of 16+ skaters per group. The top 4 from each group advance to a final round skate off. The top 4 in final round event advance to the Pacific Sectional Championships. The top 4 skaters sectional events at each level advance to the Junior or Senior National Championships.

Far fewer boys are involved in figure skating so their groups are usually consist of less than 16 skaters from regional through national competitions.

Dance and pair teams also have far few teams entered. As a result their first competition is at the Pacific Sectional Level with 4 teams advancing to the Junior or Senior National Championships.

Synchronized Teams have fewer teams skating and their first competition would be the Pacific Sectional Synchronized Championships. SDFSC has consistent sent teams to Synchro Nationals.

Serious Competitive Skaters

Competitive skaters must make the decision to establish a year long routine that involves hours of practice on and off the ice, parents must

commit to several private lessons each week, and as a family give up “a normal life” to achieve your stated skating goals?

Champions, at any level, require more than raw talent to achieve one of the top three places on the podium. There must be a commitment of time and money over a period 4+ years to become a national juvenile level competitor. Obviously a senior level competitor at the national levels requires even more of an investment of effort, money, time, and energy, plus involving a personal sacrifice on the part of the skater, siblings, and parents.

Other family plans and activities are generally put on hold or foregone. Vacations and social lives are affected. Funds put aside for college may be consumed by the pursuit of skating goals. Most parents at this competitive level find at least one parent must work to just pay the skating bills.

If that is the path you choose to travel, plan on one parent rising early and being at the rink at 5:00 am each weekday morning, then dashing off to take the skater to school after minimum of two practice sessions. Most sessions run 45 to 60 minutes long. These are intense sessions on which the skater daily practices their MITF and free skating elements, plus running through their program several times to the music.

It is not necessary to have a private lesson on every session that your child skates, but it is not unusual for competitive skaters to have a 15 to 30 minute private lesson each day. However, lesson time can be wasted if the skater is unable to practice what they have been taught on four (4) additional sessions per week for each lesson they take.

If your child shows promise, ask yourself the following questions.

- Are you willing to take the time to make sure your child is on the ice five to six days a week for at least two to three hours a day?
- Are you willing to commit to at least three to four private lessons per week?
- Are you willing to trust a skating coach to make decisions regarding your child's skating activities?
- Do you have the financial resources to make such a commitment?



Recreational Figure Skating

by Ruth Sweet

Some champions have expressed a desire to compete at Nationals, Worlds, or Olympics since childhood.

A more realistic scenario is that parents start their child out in-group classes as a fun activity, not because they envisioned a future skating champion. It is not necessary that a parent commit their child to becoming a serious competitive skater when they sign up for group classes.

Your child may want to skate just for fun, but you may want them to master certain skills. There is nothing wrong with continuing with group lessons until they have complete ISI Freestyle 4.

If you begin to supplement group lessons with private lessons on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, your child will acquire a wonderful array of skating skills and be able to participate in recreational figure skating competitions and perform in shows.

If this process is fun, you may consider joining a local USFSA club, take skating tests, and compete in non-qualifying competitions.

A serious recreational skater will skate four or five public skating sessions and eventually take a private lesson each week. Eventually the coach will recommend skating morning sessions a week and begin practicing Moves In The Field (MITF), jumps, spins, and a program to music.

The schedule of a serious recreational skater allows for steady progress and recreational fun. However, the progress will not be as rapid as a competitive skater, but as long as the skater is satisfied, this route is also much easier on the family budget!

The transition from a recreational skater to a more serious competitive skater occurs gradually over a period of a season or two and the skater becomes more focused and serious about their progress.

Parents need to discuss the goals of their skater with the coach. This is an important decision to make and there are financial considerations between being a serious recreational or serious competitive skater.

Many parents decide on a path of recreational "just for fun" as the best choice for their skater. Many parents want to expose their children to other sports and activities such as ballet, band, chorus, etc. and not expect them to excel in any one area.

If you are considering switching your child from group lessons to private lessons, be sure to select a coach that seems to inspire your child and make skating fun.

Private lessons must be supplemented with practice sessions between lessons. I would suggest 3 to 4 practice sessions per each weekly lesson.

As your child begins to enjoy his or her lessons, they will want to skate more often. As the skater advances, your coach will suggest taking part in ISI competitions, skating school exhibitions, or shows.

You may discover yourself as a parent of a skater who is serious about their skating.

Assuming that family finances allow, this is the time to increase the number of practice sessions and add a private lesson each week.

Parents, skater, and coach need to jointly agree on a weekly schedule for lessons and practicing both on and off the ice. Stick to the schedule you've set. Don't cancel lessons or skip practice time unless there is a really good reason.

Be realistic about the child's skating abilities. Winning is great, but sometimes it is more important to be proud of the journey and the person your child has become.



Certification of Skating Instructors

http://www.sk8stuff.com/f_basic_ref/certification_of_skating_instructors.htm

In the US, there is no "certification" required for skating instructors. Within reasonable limits, anyone who decides they want to teach, and who can find other skaters willing to take lessons from them can call themselves a "skating pro". The Professional Skater's Association (PSA), in cooperation with the USFSA and the ISI has established a voluntary "ratings" system, which provides certification for skating professionals.

Most serious skating instructors are members of the PSA and many participate in the ratings program. All skaters looking for qualified instructors should consider PSA rating of their candidate instructors as a part of their evaluation process.

What Ratings are Available?

At the time of this writing, PSA ratings are offered in the following categories. The available rating levels for each category are indicated in italic print following the category name. The "lowest" rating is first in each list:

Freestyle:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master
Moves in the Field:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master
Figures:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master
Dance:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master, Master Dance & Free Dance
Pairs:	Certified, Senior, Master
Group:	Certified, Senior, Master, Master Program Director
Choreography:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master
Precision:	Registered, Certified, Senior, Master

What does it take to obtain a Rating?

Contact the PSA to get the complete and up-to-date requirements for each rating.

Just to give an idea of what is involved, this section indicates the highlights of the requirements for the Freestyle Ratings, as they were at the time of this writing. Once again, be aware that the requirements as listed above are simplified from the actual PSA documentation, and may not be current at the time you read this. They are presented as background only. If you are a pro, contact the PSA directly to get current requirements.

What is a Rating?

A rating is a certification that a professional is qualified to teach at a certain level in a specified discipline. Just like skaters "test" to different levels to prove their skating abilities, pros can "test" to demonstrate their teaching abilities at various levels.

The testing program for instructors is administered by the PSA. Candidate instructors must be members of the PSA.

To obtain a Rating, all candidates must pass a one-time written exam, in combination with a 45-minute oral exam for each separate level or rating desired. Additional requirements include documented teaching experience for certain periods of time for each level, and the documented passing of appropriate level/discipline skating tests by students they have taught.

Continuing Education

Rated instructors are required to pursue an aggressive program of "continuing education" in order to maintain their ratings. Credit is received from participation in workshops, training programs, seminars, training camps, etc, which are approved or run by the PSA.

All training events are assigned "credit values" based on content and duration. Rated instructors must continuously maintain 24 credits through the duration of a 3-year rolling window. Failure to do so causes an inactivation of the Rating.



PSA Rating Requirements for Free Skating

Registered FS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at PSA seminar, conference, etc or completion of PSA Apprentice program at "Registered" level within 1 year of application • Must have passed written exam • Must have passed Juvenile skating test (or ISI 5, or international equivalent) or have coached a pupil through this level. • Minimum one (1) year teaching experience • Must pass oral examination for "Registered" rating
Certified FS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at PSA seminar, conference, etc or completion of PSA Apprentice program at "Certified" level within 1 year of application • Must hold valid "Registered" rating • Must have passed Novice skating test (or ISI 7, or international equivalent) or have coached a pupil through this level. • Minimum two (2) years teaching experience • Must pass oral examination for "Certified" rating
Senior FS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at PSA seminar, conference, etc or completion of PSA Apprentice program at "Senior" level within 1 year of application • Must hold valid "Certified" rating • Must have passed Junior skating test (or ISI 8, or international equivalent) or have coached a pupil through this level. • Minimum three (3) years teaching experience • Must pass oral examination for "Senior" rating
Master FS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at PSA seminar, conference, etc or completion of PSA Apprentice program at "Master" level within 1 year of application • Must hold valid "Senior" rating • Must have passed Senior skating test (or ISI 10, or international equivalent) or have coached a pupil through this level. • Minimum five (5) years teaching experience (must have taught for minimum 15 hrs/week at least 48 weeks per year during this period) • Must pass oral examination for "Master" rating

This requirement helps instructors to remain "current", and provides skaters with an assurance that their instructors are up-to-date with the latest techniques and requirements.

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To Learn More

Professionals interested in becoming PSA members or earning PSA ratings should contact the PSA directly for specific and up-to-date information on requirements.

The PSA offers study guides for each rating. It also offers a "Coaches Manual" for member instructors. Additionally, it offers an excellent training video for Moves in the Field (this is available to the public).

As of Sept. 1, 2008, all PSA coaches must pass a n approved background test and carry liability insurance. Coaches need to plan ahead or they will not be allowed to put their skaters on the ice at qualifying competitions this fall.

From the **Feb. 2008 issue of Skating** – Attention coaches! Coaches' registration process for background checks begins July 1, 2008.



Strength Training Tips/Techniques

<http://sdfdwellness.com/images/Strength%20Training%20Recruits%20for%20Web%20Site.pdf>

There are two common approaches to strength training: split training and circuit training. A split workout is where different muscles are exercised on alternating days. Circuit training is a continuous full body workout with minimal rest.

Both methods incorporate traditional and functional exercises; both approaches are useful in developing strength for firefighting. You may choose either approach, or a combination of the two. The most important component is to progress the exercise routine and program to continue building strength and endurance.

Two examples of 'split' programs are:

Upper body/Lower body split

Monday, Wednesday, Friday:

- all upper body exercises

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday:

- all lower body exercises and abdominals

Push/Pull split

Monday, Wednesday, Friday:

all pushing exercises and legs

- (standing military press, bench press, push-ups, dips, lunges, step-ups)

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday:

- all pulling exercises and abdominals
- (pull-ups, lat. pull downs, bent-over rows, high/low pulls, Swiss ball abs, crunches, core abs)

Following are examples of two circuit training exercise programs.

Circuit Training Super-Set: (Do the two exercises one after the other until 3 sets of each of the two exercises have been completed, then move on to the next set of two exercises.)

1. Lunges and Abdominal Crunches
2. Bench Press and Seated Row Press
3. Single Leg Squat and Wrist Roller
4. Split Squats and Swimmers

5. Chin-ups and Standing Dumbbell Military

6. Dips and Lat. Pull Downs

7. Bent-Over Row and Push-Up

Circuit Training: Complete one set of each exercise, then move on to the next exercise, resting no more than 30 seconds between sets. Continue until you have gone through the list of exercises 3 times.)

1. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 min
2. Bench Press
3. Seated Row
4. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 minutes
5. Push-ups
6. Bent-Over Rows
7. Abdominal Crunches
8. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 minutes
9. Chin-Ups
10. Standing Dumbbell Military Press
11. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 min
12. Lunges or Split Squats
13. Wrist Roller
14. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 min
15. Dips
16. Single Leg Press or Step-ups
17. Treadmill or Stairclimber for 5 min

3 sets of 8-10 repetitions of each exercise is the common method for strength training. The final repetitions of each set should be difficult. Once you are able to easily perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions it is time to increase the resistance. If you are a beginning exerciser, start with one set of exercises.

If circuit training, begin with only one circuit through the exercises. Continue doing only one set or one circuit of exercises until you find that you are no longer sore 48 hours after exercising. Then begin doing two sets, or two circuits. Progress to 3 sets or circuits the same way.





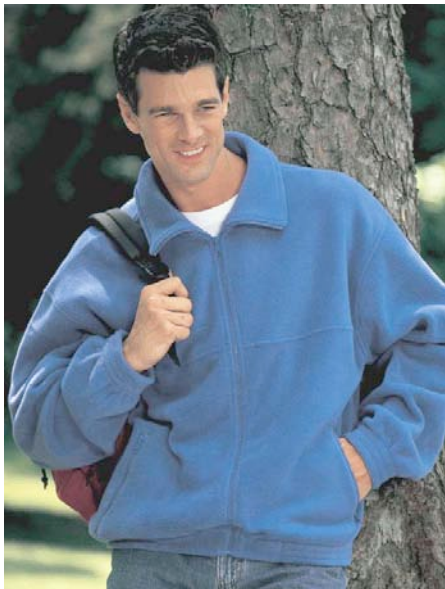
San Diego FSC Club Jackets

#7120 Competitive Style A

Ladies' 8.4 oz. medium-weight 100% spun polyester **Anti-Pilling MICRO FLEECE**. Features flatlock stitching, two pockets and contoured panels for a tailored fit. Perfect for those mild winter days.

Ladies' Sizes: XS (2-4), S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), XL (18-20), 2XL (22-24), 3XL (26-28),

XSM	\$55
SM	\$55
MED	\$55
LG	\$55
XLG	\$55
2XL	\$57
3XL	\$59



#7600 Competitive Style B

The Tundra features a shell constructed of 10.5 oz. heavyweight 100% spun polyester **Anti-Pilling PANDA FLEECE**. Also features two front pockets with zippers, full zipper front, and elastic waistband and cuffs.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL, 5XL, 6XL, LT, XLT, 2XLT, 3XLT,

XSM	\$58
SM	\$58
MED	\$58
LG	\$58
XLG	\$58
2XL	\$60
3XL	\$62





#7220 Competitive Style C

The perfect companion to take along on a chilly evening or a morning jog. Women's 5.2 oz. lightweight 100% polyester **Anti-Pilling MICRO FLEECE** jacket. This jogger features a unique, sporty look created by the flatlock stitching and contrast piping, zippers and nylon-bound cuffs. Stand-up collar, open bottom and contour panels create a fashion-forward piece.

Ladies' Sizes: XS (2-4), S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), XL (18-20), 2XL (22-24), 3XL (26-28),

XSM	\$60
SM	\$60
MED	\$60
LG	\$60
XLG	\$60
2XL	\$62
3XL	\$64



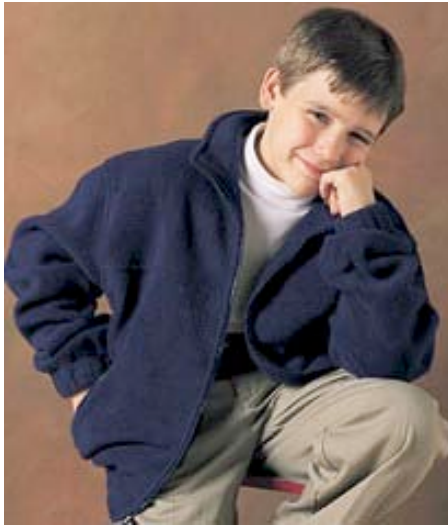
#7250 Competitive Style D

An ideal solution for that morning jog or those nippy evenings. Men's 5.2 oz. lightweight 100% polyester **Anti-Pilling MICRO FLEECE** jacket. This jogger features a unique, sporty look created by the flatlock stitching and contrast piping, zippers and nylon-bound cuffs. Stand-up collar, open bottom and tailored fit create a fashion-forward piece.

Men's Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

XSM	\$60
SM	\$60
MED	\$60
LG	\$60
XLG	\$60
2XL	\$62
3XL	\$64





#7650 Tundra Youth

The Tundra Youth jacket is constructed of 10.5oz. heavyweight 100% spun polyester **Anti-Pilling PANDA FLEECE**. Featuring two front pockets with zippers, full zipper front and elastic waistband and cuffs.

Youth Sizes: S(6-8), M(10-12), L(14-18).

SM	\$50
MED	\$50
LG	\$50

Navy is the color of the team jacket.

Note: We need an order of 3 or more before we are able to place a group order. Navy is the color of the team jacket.

Add \$7.00 if less than three jackets are in the order or if it's a rush order!

Club Jacket Order Form

Please Print Clearly

Name on front of jacket _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

(Circle only one style and size)

Style A #7120	Style B #7600	Style C #7220	Style D #7250
Adult Size	XSM SM MED LG	XLG 2XL 3XL	

Style Youth #7650

Junior Size SM MED LG

Attach separate form for each jacket!

Make out check to **Creative Ideas** and indicate check number here _____

Send to -

Wendy Ryan
 C/O The Box Shop
 8697-C La Mesa Blvd. PMB 221
 La Mesa, California 91941-5104



Acquiring Basic Dancing Skills

by Claude Sweet

Dancers of any age must begin by learning to skate edges and perform turns with flow, good body control, and posture.

There are no shortcuts to learning to dance. The following are my suggestions of how to become a good dancer:

- ❖ Learn how to skate prior to attempting to dance.
- ❖ Take group classes if they are offered at your rink. Ice Skating Institute (ISI) or Basic Skating Skills (USFS) class programs provide a good introduction into the sport of figure skating.
- ❖ **Master the basic figure skating skills associated with figures and MITF prior to starting to dance**
- ❖ Every dancer should be able to perform all of the basic edges on figure eights prior to attempting to perform half circles (lobes) at full power.
- ❖ Take a series of ice dance classes if your ice rink or club offers a beginning dance program.
- ❖ Group classes are a good way to acquire a feel for what ice dancing is all about without the expense of private introduction. Be sure to purchase a USFS Rulebook to learn the patterns of the dances. You should not need private lessons to accomplish this.
- ❖ Dancing on ice requires each person to have the reasonably strong solo skating abilities so they are not a hazard to their partner.
- ❖ Concentrate on learning the three dances in the Preliminary Dance Test, before moving on to more advanced dances. Become familiar with dance terms such as: swing rolls, progressives, and chasses. The USFS Rulebook provides has a section that defines these terms.
- ❖ Learn how to do the steps of the dance alone at first. Your instructor will demonstrate how the dance will be performed with a partner. It is important that you learn the various partner positions that are required to perform ice dances.
- ❖ Work on mastering basic Three and Mohawks, turns, in clockwise and counterclockwise and in both forward and backward directions.
- ❖ It is important to learn how to stroke like an ice dancer. Start out right by learning to skate with your head up. Dancers bend their knees

when they stroke each edge. Their core body is always over their skating foot. This quality will make you a better free skater when the erect posture is transferred into singles, pairs, and synchronized skating events.

- ❖ Practice stroking to different musical tempos and rhythms. Skaters must acquire the ability to express the character of different types of dances such as waltzes, marches, tangos, foxtrots etc.

When I competed in dance in the early 1960's, I trained at the Valley Forge FSC, the Broadmoor FSC, and the Los Angeles FSC. There was one or more dance sessions every night of the week somewhere in the Los Angeles area.

Dance judges actively skated on these 90-minute dance sessions along with National competitors in Junior and Senior dance events. Dancers ranged from their mid 20's to some who were well into their mid 30's to early 40's. It was common to see 10 to 12 national dance champions skating on a Wednesday evening dance session at the Pickwick Ice Arena in Burbank, CA.

My wife and I are dance judges and we frequently lament that skaters today, who are just starting to learn to dance, are handicapped by the lack of structured dance sessions. This is where beginning through novice dancers could see excellent examples compulsory dances skated with flow, unison, depth of edge, and the ability to express the different dance tempos.

Today, Southern California clubs rarely hold dance sessions. At the San Diego FSC, dancers come in for early practice sessions that start before 5:00 a.m. and they continue to skate until single skaters make it too hazardous to practice either solo or pair dance patterns.

While coaches can request dance music and other skaters take care to give them the right of way on the ice, it is not the same as unobstructed ice on a dance session. In addition, the skaters don't have an opportunity to see and attempt to strive to achieve a level of dance edges and steps demonstrated by more accomplished dancers.

The ISU has produced an excellent video of the Pre-Silver through the International dances. Unfortunately, the Preliminary through Bronze dances are not included in the ISU dance structure. Until recently there has not been a video or DVD that allows skaters new to dancing to see excellent examples of the lower dances performed by higher-level skaters.



In surfing the net I discovered a web site that features an instructional ice dance DVD produced by Sharper Edge Productions. It features national dance medalists Mike Ricigliano and Terri Levine. They demonstrate the Preliminary and Pre-Bronze Dances. It was a joy to watch them skate the dances and skate with grace, style, edges, flow, and dance expression. I found it a joy to watch them perform the dances.

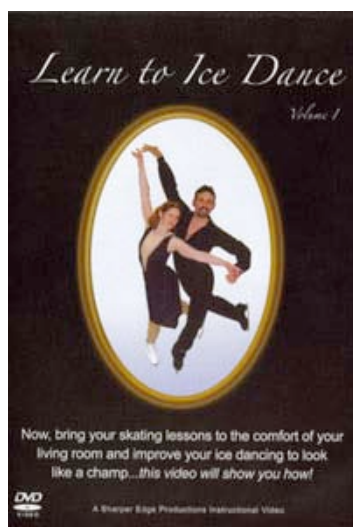
After reviewing the DVD, I am recommending that our Preliminary through Pre-Bronze dancers order a copy. I feel it will help beginning dancers to aspire to higher levels of performance than if they practiced in a rink without the benefit of experienced dance teams.

The DVD can also help skaters understand important areas stressed in the **Professional Skating Association Dance Manual** that outlines specific features judges focus on as they evaluate performance of skaters in tests.

The skating demonstrations are designed to compliment private dance instruction. The only thing that might be better would be the opportunity to skate on sessions with dance couples of a similar performance abilities.

The [Learn to Ice Dance DVD](http://www.icedancers.com/learn-to-ice-dance-dvd.html) is now available. It gives skaters interested in ice dancing a chance to see what it takes to perform the Preliminary and Pre-Bronze dances at a very high level that was expected when I was dancing in Los Angeles in the 1960 and 1970's.

The DVD provides a comprehensive demonstration on how to correctly do the steps of each dance, along with comments on timing, and the basic ice dance partner positions.



Learn to Ice Dance

<http://www.icedancers.com/>

Email address: Info@IceDancers.com

Sharper Edge Productions
9 Loren Drive
Queensbury, NY12804

Demonstration instructional video clips from the DVD can be accessed at

<http://www.icedancers.com/learn-to-ice-dance-dvd.html>



Simple, yet elegant introductory strokes



Swing Roll





2nd step of a progressive sequence



Mike and Terri demonstrate a Slide Chasse skated in reverse Kilian Position



Kilian dance position. Man on left side of lady

Mike Ricigliano and Terri Levine have completed the standard gold dance test.

Mike has won the Championship Gold Dance event six times at the U.S. Adult Figure Skating Championships. Terri was the silver medalist in Pre-Gold dance at the 2007 U.S. Adult Figure Skating Championships.

Reflections

Recently we received positive feedback on our “Lucky Penny” award to skaters taking the Pre-Preliminary MITF test. Debbie Thompson reports that her daughter wrote a paper for school and mentioned how receiving the lucky penny has made her feel comfortable skating in front of judges because she had a friend who was a judge.

That really made our day. C & R Sweet



Adult Pacific Championships

Ladies Master Junior Free Skate

2nd April Chiang, San Diego FSC

Masters Senior Ladies

Hayley Skousen, San Diego FSC Her event did not have a qualifying event She will skate at Adult Nationals in Lake Placid in April.

Championship Adult Gold Ladies Free Skate

8th Patricia Graves, San Diego FSC

11th Carolee Kness-Purdie, San Diego FSC

Ladies Gold Free Skate IV & V Final Standings

1st Carolee Kness Purdie, San Diego FS

Ladies Masters Interpretive IV - Light Entertainment Final Standings

1st Carolee Kness Purdie, San Diego FSC

Ladies Masters Junior Free Skate Final Standing

1st April Chiang, San Diego FSC

Ladies Silver Free Skate II & III

Debbie Martin, San Diego FSC withdrew due to illness. We hope she will feel better and after a rest start training for next year's competition.

Young Adults Free Skate Final Standings

1st Jessica Scieszinski, San Diego FSC

USFSA Adult National Results at Lake Placid

Masters Junior and Senior Ladies Class I and II Free Skate

7th Hayley Skousen, San Diego FSC

Light Entertainment/Comedy – Class IV Group A Interpretive Free Skate

12th – Kathleen Powers San Diego FSC

Masters Ladies Artistic/Dramatic Class I Interpretive Free Skate

1st Hayley Skousen, San Diego FSC

SDFSC skaters competed in Adult Pacific Sectional Championships



Photos by Debra Curtis

Debra Curtis (All Year FSC), Carolee Kness-Purdie (San Diego FSC), Courtney Elliott (All Year FSC), Lori Fussell (Jackson Hole FSC), Marla Huott (San Diego FSC), and Jessica Scieszinski (San Diego FSC) have lunch after they finished competing for the day.





Jessica Scieszinski and coach Tony Paul Kudrna



Carolee Kness-Purdie and Maria Huott chatted prior to Carolee competing in her artistic event.



Gilbert Chiang, our SDFSC test chairperson, attended the championships with his wife April who placed 2nd in the Ladies Master Junior Free Skating event.

April and Gilbert skate on morning sessions at the Ray and Joan Kroc Ice Center.



Jessica Sciezinski and Carolee Kness-Purdie

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the Adult Championships. You have our respect and admiration.

