

SYNCHRONIZED SKATING ETHICS

Statement/Guidelines

Issue-recruitment vs. solicitation – When you advertise for open spots on a team, you are *RECRUITING*. Targeting a skater already established on a team and suggesting they change to another team is *SOLICITATION*.

The best way to show the difference is to give some examples:

- **(*Recruiting*)** If a Synchronized Skating coach is asked for information from a parent or skater, the coach may give them information including the team manager's contact information. The coach may give out this information even if the skater is currently on a team or taking private lessons.
- **(*Solicitation*)** A coach or team manager should not approach (target) a skater who is a member of another team or taking private lessons.
- **(*Recruiting*)** A coach can approach other coaches (singles, dance, pairs, etc.) to ask if they have students who would be interested in your Synchronized Skating team.
- **(*Solicitation*)** Sending recruiting material directly to a skater on another team is 'targeting' a skater.
- **(*Recruitment*)** A coach may directly approach a skater as long as the skater is not currently on a team or taking private lessons (such as a retired skater or a group lesson skater). This must be checked out before you talk with the skater!
- **(*Recruitment*)** A coach or team manager may contact a parent/skater if the coach of the other team invites such action.

- **(Recruitment)** Distribution of recruiting brochures is OK but MUST be in compliance with the Board of Directors of the club and/or rink management policies.
- Some more ‘allowable’ recruitment ideas:
 1. Post flyers.
 2. Host a “skate with us - open house”
 3. Write articles about the team in the club newsletter.
 4. Set up info booths at local competitions and shows. (need permission from club and/or rink/management)
 5. Advertise in newspapers; show programs, competition programs and web sites.

Issue-obligations at beginning of season

Here are some of the most common scenarios that arise.

- When a skater from another club is accepted on a team, the new coach is responsible to make sure that the new organization receives a letter stating that the skater is in good standing with the former team - basically, that they have fulfilled their financial obligation. *A sample financial release form can be downloaded from the U.S. FIGURE SKATING website.* The U.S. Figure Skating has a rule, #3254, stating a skater must pay their team bill prior to joining another team.
- The new coach must not allow the skater to start training on the new team before a letter is received stating the skater is in good standing with their previous team. **(Please note: this is a professional courtesy, not a legal position. The courts will not uphold a financial discrepancy unless taken to a small claims court.)**

- During tryout season, SOME SKATERS SHOP AROUND. When a coach accepts a skater on the team, even if they pay a non-refundable deposit to hold their spot, the skater may join another team and give up their deposit if they choose to do so.
- A skater is considered to be a member of a team once training commences. If the skater quits the team after training starts, the skater is responsible for any fees incurred as defined by the teams' agreement.

Miscellaneous

- When you take on a new skater-never criticize the former coach's technique or teaching methods
- Don't resent the new coach if your skater decides to join another team.
- For documents which address professional responsibilities, go into the Professional Skaters Association website (www.skatepsa.com) click Professional Standards, look at: PSA Code of Ethics, Ethics, Tenants of professionalism
- Synchronized Skating coaches need to create a good relationship with singles, pairs and dance coaches. These coaches should not feel 'threatened' by the sport of Synchronized Skating. Synchronized Skating coaches emphasize and encourage their team members to continue training in singles, moves and dance. If there is a Synchronized Skating organization in their club, it should help their business!

"This document does not cover all possible ethical issues. The Guidelines are meant to be just that... guidelines."