

# A Figure Skating Training Center

by Claude Sweet

A figure skating training center is like an ordinary ice skating rink on steroids. The physical and emotional/physiological needs of the serious skater are addressed at a training center.

Relative few figure skating training centers existed in the 1960's. Most have since expanded to include additional sheets of ice.

New training facilities are now being built with two and sometimes three sheets of ice to attract elite coaches and their figure skating clientel.

On and off-ice training activities are included in comprehensive on and off-ice programs geared towards creating figure skating champions in singles, pairs, dance, showcase, and Synchronized Skating.

These on and off ice programs are designed to meet the needs of all skating skills from the first time figure skater as well as the intermediate/advanced, and elite national, world, and Olympic class competitors.

A full service training facility includes weight training, fitness rooms, and ballet and dance studios. Skaters can experience comprehensive training in one place. Most facilities will offer housing options that include meals and supervised

**In most cases the local figure skating club will conduct tests, sanction show/exhibitions and host competitions throughout the summer at figure skating training centers.**

Most figure skating training centers schedule group classes and public skat-

ing sessions for the beginning and recreational ice skaters during the summer.

A few training centers may have their primary focus on experienced figure skaters, but the most few they can not ignore the developing figure skater (ISI or Basic Skating Skills) as they need to encourage and develop the future of figure skating to maintain a viable business plan.

The schedule for a training center include free skating, ice dancing, pairs, synchro, and showcase practice sessions divided by figure skating test levels. Coaches would be able to use jump harnesses, video and/or videography.

Power skating classes and off-ice conditioning classes would also be offered. Some training centers would offer specialty ice skating classes, programs, seminars, or figure skating workshops, dance weekends, etc.

Some of the more famous figure skating training centers in the world include the Colorado Springs World Arena Ice Hall, University of Delaware's Ice Skating Science Development Center, the International Skating Center of Connecticut, and the Lake Placid International Training Center in Lake Placid, NY.

Figure skating training centers are not inexpensive, especially when adding transportation, plus room and board on top of the ice and coaching fees. In addition, some of the practice sessions at a training center can be crowded and intimidating to a skater who lacks self-confidence and tends to more passive than assertive.

Ice time and private lessons have to be reserved and set up in advance. Still you may not be able to schedule the lessons you want with a coach since they give preference to their winter customers.

The highly intense and competitive atmosphere is generally not suitable for young children without a parent. Even older recreational skaters and adults may find the intense level of skating to be more than they can handle.