

Adult Skate News

Edition 8 - June, 2005

Welcome all, to yet another edition of Adult Skate News! Middle of the year already - scary stuff! I don't have a lot to report this month, however, we have a run down of the adult skating world in the USA, along with a movie review from someone who has seen "Ice Princess"! Thanks to Amy for her contributions!!!

Competition Results

NSW:

BCAFSC Artistic; Saturday 4th June.

Adult Division:

1st: Tara Haydon (HI SC)

2nd: Alyssa Montgomery (BCAFSC)

Open Division:

Tara Haydon placed 4th in a field of predominately young teen skaters. Well done Tara for having the courage to compete in a level with kids!!!

VIC:

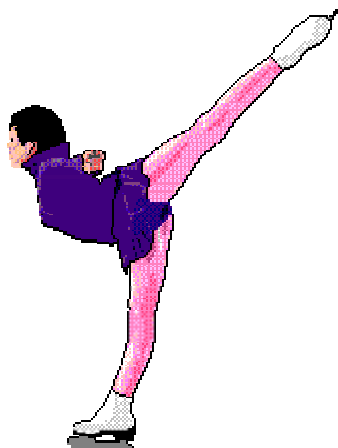
Skate Bendigo; Saturday 4th June.

Adult 1:

1st: Julie Champion (OFDC)

Tests:

Frances McMahon (CI SC) Edges 1



Future Competitions

VIC

June 11th: Fun Skate.

Olympic Ice Skating Centre, Oakleigh South. Has two adult divisions.

Although technically not a national competition, interstate entries will be accepted. Please contact Wendy Meik at meik@bigpond.com for more information. *Entries have now closed.*

If you would like to come along as a spectator, the excitement starts at 4.30pm! Come along and support the adult skaters!

June 13th: 2005 Masters Cup Figure Skating Competition and Adult Interpretive Trophy.

This NATIONAL competition has five levels in the Masters Cup, and four different divisions in the Interpretive Trophy - including pairs, duos and teams. This is only open to skaters over the age of 20yrs. Contact Erika Rauschenbach at ezandchris@aol.com for further info. *Entries have closed.*

Competition starts at 12noon. Come along to support us!!!

July 1st - 3rd: Dragon City-Sun Loong Artistic. Bendigo Ice Skating Stadium.

This is a national competition and has been going for quite a few years. The artistic section of this competition only started last year, and offers 2 adult divisions. I don't have any other information on this even just yet, but I promise you as soon as I do, I will pass it on!!!

I have yet to hear of any other comps coming up. Please, if you know of any, send the info my way so I can pass it all on!!

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Please support the comps with adult divisions - we need to build the adult skating community here in Oz. If you can't go in it because you don't have a program - use an old one! Just get in there and do it! We need to show them that the interest is out there so that we can hopefully end up with something like The Masters Cup in more than one state! Imagine if each state had a Masters Cup... Look at the big picture here - that could be considered as the Adult State Championships. Then, we could work our way up to have an Adult National Championships. This can only happen though, if the interest is out there and stays there. Don't let people think that adult skating is just a flash in the pan!

We understand that some people have too many other commitments that stop them from skating/competing for a little while - that's just all part & parcel of being an adult skater. But, if there are more adult skaters, it takes the pressure of those already out there competing, trying to keep the numbers up!

So please. I beg of you. Get out there and support these competitions, because the only way the comp convenors will keep the adult divisions in the competitions is if they have the entries.

Movie Review

As promised - here is a review done by Amy Hodman, who was recently in USA:

I got the chance to see "Ice Princess" while I was back in the States last month, and from a skater's perspective, it was a very interesting experience.

Here's a brief review of the movie's storyline from the Internet Movie

Database's "Ice Princess" website: "17-year-old physics whiz Casey Carlyle (Trachtenberg) is urged by her physics teacher to work on a physics project over the summer for presentation to Harvard. As a skater, Casey decides on a project that shows the elements of physics applied in competitive figure skating. To start, she visits a skating club run by former professional skater Tina Harwood (Cattrall). Casey eventually finds that in order to better understand the principles she's using, she will have to become her own test subject, and joins the skating school. The more she gets involved, the more she falls in love with figure skating... and must ultimately make a choice; Will it be Harvard - which her mother (Cusack) and Casey have both dreamed of, or will it be her new dream - as a competitive figure skater?"

The dynamic between mother and daughter in the movie was one of the highlights -- Joan Cusack is great as Casey's mom, and you can really feel her inner struggle to accept that skating may be what Casey is truly passionate about. The unlikely friendship that develops between Casey and another skater at the rink is also nice to see, as it reflects the camaraderie and friendship that often develops between competitors in the sport. Several scenes featuring the little "jumping bean" skater at Casey's rink are also a lot of fun, especially towards the end of the movie. Other skating "inside" stories and issues, such as Casey's experience after skating in new boots, will make you laugh, cry and cringe along with the characters. And of course, it's always fun to see real-life skaters on the big screen, and Brian Boitano and Michelle Kwan do a great job as commentators.

The downside? There were several inaccuracies regarding skating

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throughout the movie that will leave skaters going "what?!?" To be fair, certain things would need to be changed slightly or sped up to accommodate the time constraints of the movie, but a few too many things ended up getting chucked straight out of the reality window. Not to give too much away, but in one part of the movie, Casey takes Snowplough Sam (Learn to Skate) lessons with a group of small kids, aged approximately 6 to 9. They perform in a show a few months later, dressed up in costumes and skating a typical beginners' exhibition number.

Afterwards, the audience sees that there has been a panel of 3 judges on the ice during the show, judging the skaters. Some of the small kids find out they have passed very high level tests, just from skating in the show! I can understand that most moviegoers would not want to watch Casey taking 7 Moves in the Field and 7 Freeskating tests to be eligible to compete at the Junior level in qualifying competitions, but this solution was a bit silly, and also has the potential to disappoint new skaters that might come into the sport because of the movie when they find out it takes a lot more work (and time) to reach that level in skating.

For accuracy, "Ice Princess" gets a 2.2, but for entertainment value it gets a 5.7 - sorry, I have no idea where it would end up under the new Code of Points :). The verdict? It's definitely worth a viewing -- you'll laugh (sometimes unintentionally), you'll cry, and you'll be correcting your non-skating friends about the sport for weeks to come. :)

Thankyou so much Amy. Don't forget, "Ice Princess" is released in Australia on the 7th July. Why not organise a group of skating pals to go see it?! I know of someone in Melb who is organising a special screening as part of a fundraising event. Why not do the

same? If you want more details, let me know & I'll put you onto the right person!

US Adult Skating Year in Review 2004-2005

Amy has also provided us with a run down on the adult skating world in the USA. Try not to get too jealous reading all that they do for adults over there! I'm sure they started with just a few competitions, just like us.

Following a few years of flux after the Adult Moves in the Field requirements were instituted, adult skating levels seem to be returning to a more level playing field than in past years, when there was a much wider variety of ability levels due to the rush for many adults to test before the fall 2002 moves deadline. Because of the moves in the field requirements, US adults skaters' overall speed, jump and spin quality, artistic interpretation, and edging and footwork seem to be at a much higher level overall than pre-fall 2002. Adult skating at the US Adult Champs continues to get better and better with each passing year, inspiring adults all over the country to work even harder to improve their skating skills.

The difficulty and quality of moves performed in competition at each level also continues to increase. Here's a very rough guide to what the top skaters at each level in the US are doing in competition, based on both my own first-person observation and reports from other adult skaters in the States:

Pre-Bronze: usually a scratch spin, beginner sit spins, flips, loops or loop/loop combinations, toe loops and salchows, also usually done at least once in combination. Spiral sequences, some

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footwork usually including 3 turns or mohawks. Any jump at the single lutz level or higher is no longer allowed at Bronze, and flying spins are also restricted.

Bronze: scratch spin, camel, camel/sits, backspins or back sits as part of the camel/sit combo, occasional beginner laybacks and flying spins, lutz/toe, lutz/loop or lutz/loop/loop combinations, flips and flip/loops, salchows, toes, all done in combinations and sequences or as single jumps. Jumps are more secure and are expected to be larger than at the pre-Bronze level. No more than 3 jump combinations or sequences are allowed. Footwork is faster and more complicated than in Pre-Bronze, with mohawks, 3 turns and sometimes the occasional choctaw and bracket. Skaters' speed and edge control is higher than in pre-Bronze. Spiral sequences, in a bauer's and spread eagles with strong edges or extended positions are common. Single axels and double jumps are not allowed.

Silver: often you will see at least one of the following: axel, axel/toe, axel/loop combinations. Lutz/loop or lutz sequence jumps, flip/loops, loop/loop, or other single jumps performed with a loop in combination, as well as a variety of single jumps. Greater artistic expression is expected at this level, along with greater speed and edge control than the previous two levels. Quality laybacks, solid camel/sit/change sits, and anything from beginner to moderate flying camels are the norm for the top of this group. Footwork sequences are usually faster and more complicated than in Bronze, along with better quality spirals, in a bauer's and spread eagles, which can be seen both in the inside and outside variety. Jumps more difficult than a single axel are not allowed in Silver.

Gold: where anything goes! Axels, axel combinations, usually at least one double jump, with the more advanced Gold skaters doing all or most double jumps, and most doubles can be seen in combination. All spins are allowed and expected at this level, and the quality, speed and position, as well as the number of revolutions, is higher than that of Silver level skaters. Because of Gold skaters' superior speed and program length (2:40), their programs are usually full of a variety of elements. Footwork is fast and difficult with brackets, choctaws, 3 turns in all directions; and other optional moves such as twizzles can also be seen at this level. This is the highest test one can pass in the US adult track, with a tremendously difficult Moves in the Field test requirement, and so the skating level is accordingly high. Skaters at the Gold level (and the standard-track reflective "Masters" level) are expected to be, and continually strive to attain, "the total package" in figure skating. The first triple jump at the US Adult Championships was landed in the men's division by Champion Master Men's winner Larry Holliday in 2002. No US lady has yet completed a triple jump at the Adult Championships, but with the expected influx of new skaters with the revised age requirement, one will most likely be landed within the next few years at the Masters level.

A good primer for the US adult competitive level requirements is available here:

http://www.sk8stuff.com/f_rules/adult_singles_freeskate.htm

The US Figure Skating website also featured an entire section devoted to the 2005 US Adult Championships, with 10 pages of pictures, articles, and full

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results. You can view them via the main page here:

http://www.usfigureskating.org/event_details.asp?id=20428

Several big changes were made at the 2005 USFS Governing Council meeting for adult skaters, with the most prominent one affecting the standard age groupings. Prior to this year, no skater under the age of 25 was allowed to officially test or compete in the adult track, although competitions often offered a "young adult" event if there were enough entries to warrant it. Starting this fall, skaters aged 21 and up will be eligible to compete in the adult track, and a new age group has been added to accommodate the change.

Previously, there were 4 adult age groups: Class 1 (25-35), Class 2 (36-45), Class 3 (46-55) and Class 4 (56 and up). The new groupings will most affect the number of entries in the 1 and 2 levels, as skaters within an 8 and 7-year range will be covered in each, respectively:

Class 1 (21-28)

Class 2 (29-35)

Class 3 (36-45)

Class 4 (46-55)

Class 5 (56 and up)

You can find out more about the new changes made to adult skating in the United States, including Adult Moves in the Field changes, Pre-Bronze well-balanced program requirements, and more here:

<http://www.usfigureskating.org/content/05Adults-ROA.pdf>

The number of adult-only competitions in the States also grew this past year with the introduction of 2 new competitions. To date there are now 9 annual all-adult competitions across the US -- the Sunshine Adult Challenge in

Miami, the New Year Adult competition in Washington, DC, the Winter Classic in NYC, the US Adult Championships, the Peach Classic in Atlanta, the Buckeye Open in Ohio, the North American Adult Invitational in Michigan, the Intermountain Adult competition in Utah, and the Halloween competition at Ice Works FSC. Adult Sectional Championships are also held every spring for adults in the Eastern, Midwestern, and Pacific areas of the country.

Adult skaters in the US are probably the most excited about the new ISU Adult open competition and the likelihood of expanded opportunities for adults to compete internationally. Many also hope that this new chapter in adult skating will encourage ISU member countries who do not currently offer an adult structure to institute one so that their skaters can participate in any future adult international qualifying events. Maybe someday there will even be an Adult World Figure Skating Championships!

Web Link

Kim Wilson in Victoria has developed a website for skating in Victoria. There is a section there dedicated to adult skating. Why not check it out!

www.geocities.com/skate_victoria/index.html



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Stretches

With the biggest competition on the adult calendar only 4 sleeps away, I thought I'd better make sure I put in some stretching exercises. Some of these I may have already gone over, but it certainly doesn't hurt to remind you of these all important stretches!

Hamstring

- Position yourself on the side of a bench with the leg to be stretched straight in front of you and leave the other foot resting on the floor.
- Slowly lean forward at the hips keeping your back straight until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of your leg.
- This can also be done by sitting on the ground and reaching forward in the same manner.

Calf Complex

A

- Standing with one foot in front of the other,
- Slowly bend the front leg to shift your weight forward.
- Keep your back leg straight and press your heel to the ground.
- Hint: it may be helpful to do against a wall.
- You should feel a stretch in the calf of your back leg.

B

- Using the same position as above, bend the back leg to feel the stretch in the calf.

Quadriceps

- Standing on one leg,
- Reach behind you and hold onto the ankle of your other leg.
- Pull the ankle up and back until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.

Iliotibial Band

- Cross one leg behind the other.
- Bend both knees slightly so that your knees are not locked.
- Bend over and reach towards the toes of the leg that is crossed behind.
- The stretch should be felt on the outside of the leg which is crossed behind.

Neck

For the right side:

- Place your right arm behind your back at the level of your waist.
- Place your left hand on the top of your head.
- Gently with your left hand guide your head forward until you feel a slight stretch, then into left side bending (left ear to shoulder) and then into left rotation (rotate your head to the left).
- You should feel a stretch on the right side of your neck.

Upper Back

- Cross one arm in front of your chest, keep it at chest height.

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- Place your other hand on the elbow of the arm crossed in front of you and pull your arm towards your chest.
- Leaning slightly forward and adding slight rotation may increase this stretch.
- A stretch should be felt through the shoulder blades and upper back.

Low Back

- Sit on the ground, legs out in front of you and knees slightly bent.
- Tuck your chin towards your chest.
- Reach forward until you feel a gentle stretch in your low back.

Triceps

- Place one arm over your head and bend your elbow while holding a towel or a stick in your hand.
- Grab the other end of the object with your other hand by reaching behind your back.
- Gently pull down on the stick or towel with the lower arm so that you feel a stretch in the back of the arm that is over your head.

Remember that a good jog, or brisk walk is always good too, as it gets the heart & blood pumping. If you have a skipping rope handy, this is one of the best exercises you can do. If you can handle jumping for 10mins per day, it's the best cardio work out you'll get. Start with 1 or 2mins a day and then work up to 10mins. Don't forget to do some stretches before you go for your run, walk or skip. Let your muscles warm up a bit!!!

Well, that's if from me this month. I wish everyone the best of luck in their competitions coming up this weekend – not that I don't wish you luck normally, but considering that this weekend is basically the *Adult Nationals*, as it has become affectionately known, I'm wishing you all even more luck!!! For those that are there, I see you all soon. It will be nice to put some faces to names finally!!!!

Break a leg everybody, and most importantly – have fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Alyssa

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Club Key

CI SC: Canberra Ice Skating Club

HI SC: Hunter Ice Skating Club

OFDC: Olympic Figure & Dance

BCAFSC: Blacktown Amateur Figure Skating Club