

# Skating Club of Phoenix Parent Guide



2007-2008

Thanks go to the “Survival Guide” created by the  
FSC of Cottonwood in Salt Lake City.

The Skating Club of Phoenix edition is based mainly on  
their document, edited and augmented by  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose of this Guide.....	1
About Skating Club of Phoenix.....	1
US Figure Skating.....	1
Lessons, tips for beginning skaters.....	2
How to pick a Private Coach.....	3
Ice Time.....	4
General session rules.....	5
Equipment.....	6-8
Ice Skating Competitions.....	8-9
Skill Level Progression Tests.....	10-11
Checklist for Testing or Competitions.....	12
Judging & Scoring Competitions.....	13-15
Coaching.....	15-16
Responsibilities of a Skating Parent.....	16-18
Setting Performance Goals.....	19
Glossary of Terms.....	20-25
Important Resources for Skaters.....	26



## **Purpose of this Guide**

The purpose of this guide is to help skating parents who are new to the sport learn some of the basic terminology and procedures that are used. It is not the ultimate authority, nor is it to be used in place of a Professional Instructor's expertise.

## **Governing Bodies for Figure Skating**

United States Figure Skating (USFS) is the governing body for the sport of figure skating on ice in the United States. It is a member of the International Skating Union (ISU) and a member of the US Olympic Committee (USOC). USFS is made up of 600 Member Clubs throughout the country, as well as 171,000 individual and associate members.

USFS will not make judgments on matters that are internal to the club. USFS assists member clubs in resolving concerns that involve USFS guidelines, rules and regulations. They also provide access to resource materials, publications, and technical expertise with well-qualified authorities in a multitude of technical areas. Knowledgeable staff can provide information and assistance in developing existing programs or in starting new programs.

## **The SCP Mission Statement**

The mission of Skating Club of Phoenix is to develop and support lifelong skaters, emphasizing fun, fitness, and sportsmanship, and to support the general policies of USFS.

Skaters are encouraged to obtain a current copy of the official USFS Rulebook, which governs the sport of figure skating, competitions, test structure, and provides other related educational and instructional materials.

Benefits of belonging to the Skating Club of Phoenix. As a valued member of the SCP:

- ! You will be a member of USFS.
- ! You receive a subscription to Skating Magazine.
- ! You are eligible to compete in USFS sanctioned competitions.
- ! You are eligible to take USFS tests and receive certificates and patches for tests passed.
- ! You receive the club newsletter and other communications.
- ! You have the opportunity to perform in ice shows.
- ! You are eligible to attend club sponsored clinics.
- ! You help support club skaters who are competing at regional, sectional and national levels.
- ! You may vote on issues at the club General Membership meetings if you are over age 18.
- ! You have the opportunity to enjoy club social activities and educational seminars.
- ! You are part of an organization dedicated to maintaining the positive spirit of figure skating.

## **Desert Schools Coyotes Center in Peoria is Home Ice for the Skating Club of Phoenix**

DSCC Peoria (Polar Ice) provides support for club activities, competitions and shows including use of facilities, donations, incentives for SCP members, and coordination with skaters in the Learn to Skate program. A strong three-way partnership and cooperation between Polar Ice, the Skating Club of Phoenix, and the teaching professionals helps to maintain our success. SCP skaters also train at Desert Schools Coyotes Center in Chandler, Oceanside Arena in Tempe, and Arcadia Ice in Phoenix. A skater's club affiliation does not dictate where the skater skates. Call each rink to get information on cost and schedules.

## **Group Learn-to-Skate Programs:**

Group Lessons: Desert Schools Coyotes Centers in Peoria and Chandler, Oceanside Arena in Tempe, and Arcadia Ice in Phoenix each offer Learn-to-Skate programs for ages 3 to adult. Call each rink to get information on levels, cost and schedules.

DSCC Peoria	623-334-1200 (home ice for SC of Phoenix)
DSCC Chandler	480-598-9400 (home ice for Desert ISC of Arizona)

Oceanside Arena	480-947-2470
Arcadia Ice	602-957-9966
Alltel Ice Den	480-585-7465 (home ice for Coyotes SC of Arizona)

**Why Learn to Figure Skate?** Ice skating can be a wonderful family participation sport where all ages can have fun together and enjoy healthy socialization. The sport uses and strengthens all of the body's muscles, improves cardiovascular fitness levels, develops coordination, enhances poise, grace, rhythm and good posture. Figure skating is an artistic sport which is accompanied by music in competition. It is also a team sport with the Synchronized Skating discipline being the fastest growing segment of the membership.

### **Tips for Beginning Skaters**

1. Always wear mittens or gloves - it helps with the fear of falling.
2. Always wear long sleeves and long pants, or a skating dress with tights. Ice burns sting!
3. Protective gear is optional. Consider: hair scrunchies for long hair, fabric or knitted hats, inline or hockey helmets, silicone headbands, knee and/or elbow pads.
4. Adults: if you are concerned about your wrists, please speak with your doctor about the pros and cons of inline skating wrist supports.
5. Skates should be buckled or laced snugly - not so tight to cut off blood flow, but not so loose the ankle flops around. Do not tuck pant hems into skates - it can cause blisters.
6. If you decide to get your own skates, please call a Coach so you can get some tips. Biggest rule: ALWAYS TRY THEM ON!! Skate sizes vary by manufacturer and DO NOT CONFORM TO SHOE SIZE. Look for leather uppers and stainless steel blades.
7. Brand new skates do not have to be laced as tightly or all the way up – knees need to be able to bend. Be careful - new skate blades are very sharp and stopping will be harder for a while.
8. Wear “trouser socks” that go up past the top of the skate, or skating tights. Rolls or holes in socks can cause blisters.
9. Lots of practice is the best way to improve! Think mileage around the rink!!

### **Private Lessons:**

Private lessons by a teaching professional (“Coach”) are available. The coaches at the above rinks are independent contractors, and as such, payment is made directly to the Private Coach. The ice time (either public session or freestyle) is paid separately to the rink. The lessons with a Coach are an hourly expense. You can take private lessons for any skill level.

### **Why Should I take private lessons?**

- \*Provide a “jumpstart” for the true beginner or very young (under 4) skater.
- \*A “booster” to help pass a level in class.
- \*Enhance group class instruction for a skater with high natural ability.
- \*Reward a job well done, in group skating class or off-ice accomplishments
- \*As actual physical support for the skater with special needs.
- \*Instruction for the skater doing competitions and/or testing. Program creation, off-ice plans, more in-depth instruction, etc.

### **How Do I Pick a Private Coach?**

You might want to observe private lessons taught by several Professional Coaches. Then you should take a lesson from 2 or 3 of the Coaches who interest you. After you have a lesson, you can decide with which Private Coach you would like to work. Qualifications of the Coaches are posted on the SCP website or on fliers at the various rinks.

Choose someone who can you develop a rapport with, someone you can be open with, and whose schedule works with yours. A Coach should be professional and serious about the job, have definite lesson times and consistently

follow through on plans. Get references from other parents whose child takes lessons from the Coach(es) you would like to try. Team Coaching is also an option.

Don't completely rule out a Private Coach due to age or fewer years of experience coaching. They may have more time to spend on you and/or may be more enthusiastic compared to the more experienced coaches or those in high demand (who may have become heavily involved in travel to competitions and the preparations for advanced skaters). Sometimes coaches "are full" and cannot take new students, or may need to take you on a "space-available" basis. Limited ice time for giving lessons is usually the reason.

Ask if the Coach is a member of the Professional Skating Association (PSA). Ask about the skating instruction they have received. What level skaters have they coached and how well have the skaters performed at competitions? Some coaches specialize in pairs, dance, or moves. The PSA has detailed recommendations to help you make your choice. Go to [www.skatepsa.org](http://www.skatepsa.org) for more information.

### **How much does a private lesson cost?**

Each skating professional sets their own rates based on experience, qualifications, and local "going-rate." For example, the cost is from \$22.00 to \$44.00 per half hour at DSCC Peoria. Lesson lengths vary from 15 to 60 minutes.

### **How to get the most from your lessons:**

Value your time and the coach's time. Focus on skating. Come rested and mentally prepared to work and concentrate. Eat right, warm up and stretch properly before each lesson. Ask questions. Don't wait until the last few minutes of the lesson to ask questions. If they are important enough to ask, they are important to have answered and maybe worked on during the lesson. Most Coaches will give you a written practice plan. Follow it each time you skate.

### **Do I need to schedule off-ice lessons?**

On-ice lesson time is spent learning and perfecting jumps, spins, footwork, choreography, and the artistic presentation of a program. Very little time is spent on conditioning. Off ice classes and working out at home or the gym are encouraged to improve overall fitness and the coordination and height for jumps. Most rinks offer off-ice conditioning classes, and all skaters are encouraged to take ballet or other dance classes. Pilates, yoga and stretch classes at your local gym are beneficial for flexibility and strength.

### **How many practice sessions and lessons per week do I need?**

The number of lessons you take each week varies according to several factors. Beginners usually take one or two lessons a week and skate 2-3 days per week. The Private Coach can monitor progress and adjust the amount of instructional time depending upon the progress. Skaters who 'do their homework' by practicing often at the rink, generally advance quicker compared to those who practice less frequently.

### **When Do I Skate?**

Keep current public and freestyle session schedules from the rink(s) at which you skate. You and your Coach will decide on a lesson time(s). It is a good idea to practice at least once between lessons. Consult with your Private Coach about the amount of time you should practice and how many lessons you should have.

### **ICE TIME**

**Public skating** is available at each rink listed. Call each facility for their schedule and cost. During public ice time, anyone can skate and there is no limit to the number of skaters that can be on the ice. Private lessons generally are not taught during public ice time because it is difficult to practice jumps, spins and moves due to the number of skaters.

**Freestyle Sessions:** A period of time when a limited number (25-35) of skaters practice including spins, jumps, and footwork in addition to moves in the field or ice dance. The skaters' program music can be played for practice on a first come first served basis. However, most rinks allow Private Coaches to 'bump' a position back in order to play

their student's music during a lesson. Ask at each rink what their procedure is.

**Stroking/Power:** A group class (usually 30 min) in which a Coach directs the skaters in skating moves intended to enhance endurance, power and footwork skills. Skaters must skate with the group; independent skating and lessons are not allowed during stroking sessions.

### **General Ice Arena Session Rules:**

1. The golden rule is always in effect: Do unto others as you would want done unto you! Manners and appropriate behavior are expected of every skater on the ice. Be polite and courteous to one another.
2. Be cautious and alert at all times. All skaters must keep their eyes open and pay attention to what is going on around them. Be sensitive to other skaters. Look in the direction you are skating!
3. Spins should be practiced near the center of the ice and not in the corners, especially the "lutz" corners.
4. Get up immediately after falling. Sitting/lying on the ice for prolonged periods of time is dangerous to you and other skaters and will not be permitted.
5. No kicking the ice, yelling or screaming "MOVE", or swearing at any time on or off the ice.
7. Skaters must keep moving unless receiving instructions from a Private Coach. There should be no standing around. Social time should happen only off the ice.
8. On crowded/full sessions, group program practice will not be permitted. On less crowded sessions, groups of no more than 3 skaters are permitted to practice together.
9. There will be an ice monitor to check-in skaters.
10. Once your music starts, you must finish your program (no stopping and restarting unless there is no one else in line). Right of way must be given to the person skating their program. If you don't know whose music is being played, ask your Private Coach or the Ice Monitor. Private Coaches may have the opportunity to 'bump' a music tape/CD in line during a lesson - ask at each rink what the rule is.
11. No chewing gum and no food or drinks, with the exception of water bottles, on the ice. Boards should be kept neat and sitting on the boards is not allowed.
12. The lobby must be kept neat and picked up. When not skating, skates are to be placed in your locker or bag. Other people will be using the lobby so do not leave anything of value out. Always remember to lock your locker if you have one.
13. As competitions or test sessions approach, everyone puts on the final push. Please try to be even more patient and courteous to everyone on the ice. Bad manners will not be tolerated. If there is kicking of the ice and rude behavior, measures will be taken to correct the situation.
14. Please remember that any professional has the authority to ask skaters who are rude or disrespectful to leave the ice. Skaters who are not working will be asked to move to the Boards. All Private Coaches deserve equal respect, regardless of whether or not that Private Coach is your Coach.

### **EQUIPMENT**

**Quality ice skates** are essential for the safety as well as the progress of the skater. Quality ice skates can be ordered from various manufacturers such as Jackson, Harlick, SP Teri, Reidell, GAM, and Graf. Ice skating sizes are not the same as shoe sizes and will vary depending upon the manufacturer. Get assistance from a Private Coach or skate specialist, who will measure your foot and help in completing the order correctly. Blades may come on the boot or may be ordered separately. Again, get assistance from a Private Coach to make sure that you get the right blade for your skill level.

**Freestyle boots** are very sturdy for good support to ankles, arch and foot while jumping. Fit is crucial, there must not be a lot of room for the foot to move around in the boot. Toes should have only a little room for up-and-down movement or side to side. If the toes are pinched or painful, there is not enough room. You shouldn't be able to lift your heel in the boot and the ankle and arch of the foot should have plenty of support. A boot is broken down and

should be replaced when there are deep creases across the top of the boot along the ankles or if the top flops over when the boot is taken off.

Skates should be laced as snugly as possible without cutting off the blood circulation. If the foot “falls asleep” or goes numb, it is laced too tight (or it’s too small!). Place the blade on the floor while lacing and make sure the heel is all the way back, and the tongue of the boot is all the way up, before starting. Start out at the toes and work your way up every time. If your laces are too long, do not wrap them around the boot - instead go back down to the bottom hooks and lace it up again over the top of the first layer. Do not over tighten at the top - knees must be able to bend forward over the toes.

Boots are not really comfortable right away. Friction points are common. Breaking them in, where they mold to your foot, may take several weeks depending upon how often you skate. You may use silicon pads during the break in period if needed. Boot experts can press out or deepen depressions or add padding to improve the comfort and fit if problems persist. Custom fit boots are also available.

The difference between cheaper and more expensive boots is in the materials and weight or stiffness of the leather. Younger, lighter skaters can use a lighter, less expensive boot. The thinner leather breaks in easier, but the boot will break down faster if subjected to the heavy use of freestyle jumps. Your Private Coach can help select the proper boot for you.

**Blades** are made for gliding over the ice, spinning and have a toe pick for jumping. Different moves and jumps are done from specific edges of the skate blade. The curvature from toe to heel is called the rocker and on the toe end is a serrated section called a toepick. The blade is concave across the width (called the “hollow”), making two sharp edges, which must be sharpened to maintain proper edges. As the skater’s skill at jumping progresses, a larger toe pick may be required.

Several factors affect the cost of blades. Less expensive blades are nickel-plated and made of softer steel. More expensive blades are made of harder steel and strengthened to withstand jumping. The Private Coach will help with selection of the proper blades for the skater’s skill level.

**Dance blades** are shorter in the back enabling the skater to do very close footwork. However, most beginning dancers use their freestyle skates for dance.

**Hockey skates** are skates designed specifically for playing hockey. The blades are made for speed and well as quick stops and turns, and do not have toe picks. The heels are shorter as well.

**Rental skates** are good for the recreational and/or entry-level skater who does not want to invest in buying skates while participating in group lessons. A skater who wishes to continue learning how to skate is well advised to purchase their own skates as soon as their budget allows. Progression will occur more quickly as the blades can be kept sharper and the skater wears the same pair of skates each time on the ice.

**Skates sold in sports stores** are one upgrade from rental skates and are not recommended for the regular or competitive ice skater. A good skating boot hugs and supports the foot and ankle and should not be soft and wobbly. Check with a Private Coach before purchasing any figure skate. When buying boots, make sure that the boot is all leather and the blades are made of steel. Beware of aluminum blades because if the blades are not made of steel, no one can sharpen them.

**Used skates** are available from skaters who have outgrown their skates, or who quit ice skating and want to sell their skates. Some used skates are very good and some are not. Never buy a pair of skates or blades without your Private Coach or skate specialist checking the quality and fit.

## Care of Ice Skates

Boots should be cleaned when needed with a soft cloth and saddlesoap. For stubborn marks, try Simple Green, Thoro, or finger nail polish remover. A high quality boot polish or SkateTape is recommended. Keep boot polish in the refrigerator; it lasts longer. Soles may be waterproofed with SnowSeal to keep the moisture out. Ask your Private Coach for information on sealing soles.

Blades and mounting plates should be wiped down with a soft absorbent cloth after skating. Once a month, check the blade screws to make sure they are tight. Skaters should own a screwdriver and keep it available. Many skaters use terry cloth blade protectors (soakers) to protect the bag from holes, the blades from nicks and to absorb moisture missed during wiping. Never leave hard skate guards on your blades as it will cause the bottom of the blade to rust. Hard skate guards are only used when you are walking in your skates. They protect the sharp edge of the blades from nicks or wear. Never step off the ice without putting on skate guards.

Skate blades need to be sharpened regularly. Sharpening does two things; it deepens the hollow between the edges, which wear down over time, and it polishes off nicks or abrasions caused by hitting debris. Sharpening improves the ability to hold an edge. Ask your Private Coach how often this should be done because it varies depending upon how you skate and how often you skate.

#### **Where do I get blades sharpened?**

Your Coach will know who the best person is for sharpening your skates. Do not attempt to sharpen them yourself or you will ruin your blades. It takes special equipment and technique to sharpen blades properly. Be aware that some sports stores sharpen blades using techniques for hockey skates, which will ruin figure skates.

#### **Storing Equipment**

Suitcases, backpacks, or duffle bags are also utilized to hold equipment. There is no place to store equipment bags at the rink, it is expected that the skater will carry the equipment bag to and from the rink each time.

#### **Clothing**

Freedom of movement is important so non-restrictive clothing is necessary. Skating tights, leotards, stretchy leggings, a skating dress, leggings, a close fitting sweater or shirt are all good choices. During the colder winter months, remember to layer your clothing. Gloves are worn by most skaters.

Skating tights are thicker and warmer compared to regular tights and fit over the boot or inside the boot. Most skaters choose to wear flesh colored tights. Danskin, Mondor, and Capezio are popular brands sold at local dancewear stores and skate pro shops.

#### **Where can I get competition outfits?**

Many skaters sell outfits they have outgrown through the SCP annual dress sale. The USFS Skating magazine has advertisements for skating dress retailers and there are also many internet sites to shop at. Local dancewear stores such as Dee's sell skating dresses. Locally there are dressmakers who can make a skating outfit. There are many dress patterns for making your own as well. Competition dresses should fit the program music or theme. Ask your Private Coach for suggestions or a design.

### **ICE SKATING COMPETITIONS**

Competitions are not a requirement of skating. The skater must set his or her own personal goals. However, competitions can be fun and very motivating because they provide an excellent opportunity for skaters to be creative, practice skills and presentation techniques, and learn good sportsmanship. At competitions skaters have an opportunity to assess their abilities compared to others in the same level by presenting a skating program. A skating program combines the different skating elements set to music, and appropriate to the competition level of the skater.

To compete in any competition, the skater must first be a member of USFS. All members of SCP are members of USFS. Skaters in the DSCC Learn to Skate program can become USFS Basic Skills members and/or ISI members.

#### **Competition Music:**

Music selection is decided by the skater and the Private Coach. The length of music is set by competition rules. Music with vocals is permitted only in Artistic/Showcase events and those specifically listed in the competition announcement. Music for all “Freeskate” events must be instrumental only.

**Competitions at the Basic Skills Level:**

Skaters in Learn to Skate classes may compete if they are members of USFS Basic Skills or ISI. Local competitions are: Fiesta Skate, Cactus Classic, Desert Breeze, Tucson Invitational, and Autumn Antics. Both DSCC rinks and the Alltel Ice Den also host lower level competitions. Your Private Coach will help you complete the application form to enter competitions at the appropriate skill level. A skater may not enter at more than one level.

As members of the SCP, skaters may also compete at competitions at other ice rinks, including out-of-state events. Arizona skaters compete in the Southwest Pacific Regionals which are held in October or November each year and are hosted by a figure skating club in the region. Anyone can compete in Regionals.

## Competition Events

A Competition includes one or more of the following events.

**Freestyle** - Skaters select their own music and theme, and choreograph the many difficult jumps, spins and footwork to best display their technical and artistic skills. Music duration and required elements are dependant upon test level. The competition entry forms usually provide information on the music duration and required elements.

**Artistic/Showcase** skating performances focus on entertainment and interpretation of the music chosen. Entries in this category can be dramatic/theatrical or light-hearted/comedic in nature. Costumes and props (if allowed) must fit the category and performance. Music can include vocal arrangements. Judges consider composition, interpretation, and style in determining the mark given, and the difficulty of elements is given less weight.

**Ice Dancing** is based on ballroom and other aspects of dance, with the emphasis on rhythm and steps. The beauty of ice dancing lies in its precise footwork, coordination, and flair.

**Footwork** - skaters perform footwork sequences of original design to music. The program should contain a variety of turns and steps. Judging takes into account the difficulty of the sequence as a whole: bilateral movement, quickness, counter-rotated turns, half to full revolution jumps, stops and starts, speed and power generation, body positioning and extension, and originality of the sequence.

**Spin events** are judged only on how well each of the spins is performed. For example: how strong and secure the entrance of the spin, how difficult the spin was due to a varied position, number and speed of the revolutions completed, the centering of the spin, and the security and strength of the exit.

**Pair Skating** is free skating performed in unison by partners (male and female), with the addition of lifts, throw jumps, connecting steps, solo spins, and pair spins. Unison is reflected as shadow skating or mirror skating. Jumps and spins are synchronized; stroking is simultaneous and in rhythm.

**Synchronized Team Skating** is a highly technical form of team skating characterized by speed, intricate formations and breathtaking transitions performed by teams of 8 – 20 skaters. This specialized discipline requires skaters to have excellent fundamental skating skills so they can perform intricate step sequences, difficult hand holds and quick changes of direction with the highest level of precision.

## Non-competitive Performances

SCP and each local rink provides skaters opportunities to perform for family and friends, without the pressure of being judged. Each year, there is a Holiday show and a Spring Show. There may also be opportunities, such as exhibitions, that arise throughout the year. To manage the number of skaters, groupings are based on skill level.

## USFS TESTS

As a skater advances and becomes more proficient in their skating skills, USFS, through their member clubs, offers test sessions in order for skaters to qualify for various levels of competitions. In testing, skaters do not compete against other skaters, but are judged according to how well they complete the required elements for the test they are taking. USFS Judges watch the skater perform the required elements and determine if the test is passing. If so, the skater can then move to the next level in pair, synchro, freestyle, moves in the field, and ice dancing.

## When do I test?

You and your Private Coach will determine when you are ready for a test. Test sessions are usually monthly through the Arizona Interclub Association. USFS sponsored test sessions are also available through clubs at other ice skating rinks throughout the country.

Your Private Coach will help you complete the application for a test session and must sign it. Test applications must be in the test chair's hands no less than 14 days before a scheduled test session. The applications should be mailed to the address listed on the test application for the figure skating club that is hosting the test session. The costs for test sessions are established by Arizona Interclub and are listed on the form.

## Testing Disciplines

- 1) Single and Pair Freestyle tests are skated to music (except Pre-Preliminary) and include jumps and spins.
- 2) Moves in the Field tests are completed without music and include edges, turns, power, glide, quickness, extension, footwork sequences.
- 3) Dance tests are skated on set or optional patterns with prescribed steps and music.

## Freestyle & Moves in the Field Test Levels

Pre-Preliminary	Junior
Preliminary	Senior
Pre-Juvenile	Adult Pre-Bronze
Juvenile	Adult Bronze
Intermediate	Adult Silver
Novice	Adult Gold

## Dance Test Levels

Preliminary: Dutch Waltz, Canasta Tango & Rhythm Blues

Pre-Bronze: Swing Dance, Cha-Cha & Fiesta Tango

Bronze: Hickory Hoedown, Willow Waltz, Ten Fox

Pre-Silver: Fourteenstep, European Waltz & Foxtrot

Silver: American Waltz, Tango, & Rocker Foxtrot

Pre-Gold: Kilian, Blues, Paso Doble, & Starlight Waltz

Gold: Viennese Waltz, Quickstep, Westminster Waltz & Argentine Tango

Junior Inter'l: Rhumba, Gold Waltz, Australian Waltz, Cha Cha Congelado

Senior Inter'l: Silver Samba, Yankee Polka, Ravensburger Waltz, Tango Romantica, Midnight Blues

## Pairs

Preliminary  
Juvenile  
Intermediate  
Novice  
Junior  
Senior  
Adult Bronze  
Adult Silver  
Adult Gold

## Free Dance

Juvenile  
Intermediate  
Novice  
Junior  
Senior

Ice dancers and freestyle skaters start out together learning basic strokes and use of edges. In time, they may take separate paths based on which discipline the skater finds more interesting and fun. Freestyle skating requires intensive work on jumps and spins; ice dancers and synchronized team skaters spend hours perfecting intricate steps and arm positions.

## Gold Medals

Gold medals are awarded by USFS to skaters who pass a Senior level test. It is a very significant accomplishment for a skater to pass the Senior Moves in the Field, Senior Freestyle, or Gold Dance level test.

## **CHECKLIST FOR TESTING OR COMPETITIONS**

Your Private Coach will have a checklist for you (either written or verbal).

**Practice Ice:** Where available, sign up for a practice ice session prior to a competition. Read instructions regarding the price and duration of the practice ice session. Some sessions allow for the skater's music to be played and some do not. Practice ice time helps the skater fit the program to the size or orientation of the ice rink and provide a real confidence boost a day or two before the official competition.

### **Prior to the Day of the Test or Competition:**

Complete the Test/Competition application; fill in all requested information, including your USFS number, and have your coach, parent/guardian, and SCP Officer sign the application, as required. Submit completed application and fees prior to deadline. Be able to provide proof of having passed the prerequisite test requirement, if requested. If you have a special need or request, let the test chair or competition registrar know as far in advance as possible. Accommodations cannot be guaranteed. If after applying for a test, you find that you cannot make it, notify the test chair immediately. Check with the test chair or registrar for the competition in advance to determine if the club uses a cassette player, CD player or both. Confer with your coach about your competition or test attire so you are sure to be dressed appropriately.

### **Day of Test or Competition:**

Plan to arrive at least one hour prior to your scheduled warm-up time, unless instructed otherwise. The schedule frequently runs ahead. Upon arriving at the rink check in with the registrar or assistant and determine if there have been any schedule changes. Turn in your tape or CD. Make sure tape is rewound and that tape or CD is clearly marked with your name and level. Again, have a backup just in case something happens to original. Bring with you:

Skates

Guards and soakers

Skating outfit

Tape or CD plus a backup

Jump rope or other warm-up equipment

Water and snacks

Extra laces

Girls - extra pair of tights

Girls – hair accessories, makeup supplies

Repair kit – screwdriver, skate polish, nail polish remover, band-aids, needle and thread, safety pins.

Something to do quietly until test/competition time (book, MP3 player with headphones, etc.)

Make sure skates are polished and have new or clean laces, or your over-the-boot tights are hole free. Dress properly for the test – girls: nice, simple dresses and sweater, hair pulled back from the face, light make-up optional; boys: nice pants and shirt. Keep your voice down so as not to interrupt another skater's concentration. Have skates on and be ready to get on the ice when called. Be aware of which end of the ice you will be starting your test.

### **During a Test**

Prior to starting your test introduce yourself to the judging panel. Wait for a signal (usually a verbal "okay" or a nod) from the judge-in-charge or other official prior to starting the test and each move. During Moves in the Field tests you may speak BRIEFLY with your coach between elements only. However, skaters should be ready to start when signaled to do so. At the conclusion of your test do not leave the ice until dismissed (usually a verbal "thank you") by your judging panel. If the judges request a re-skate of an element let the judges know whether you plan to warm it up (freeskating only) or just do it. Also, you may speak briefly with your coach.

### **After a Test**

Copies of your test papers will be given to you so you can see the results and read the judges' comments. If you pass your test you will receive a patch for the level of test you passed. Be mindful of other skaters' feelings. Retrieve your

tape or CD. Thank the judges and those in charge of the test session. Remember they are volunteering their time. Make sure you have all of your belongings before departing the rink. Parents should not approach the judges directly with questions - the Private Coach should act as the go-between.

## **JUDGING & SCORING COMPETITIONS**

Judges mark performances at competitions according to rules established by USFS. The recent ISU judging rule changes have seriously impacted how elements are judged. Your coach will know what should be included. Elements may be evaluated using the following (but is certainly not limited to just these!):

Jumps - height, ice coverage, technique, clean takeoff/landing.

Jump Combinations - all of the above with equality of both jumps.

Spins - smooth entry/exit, strong controlled rotation, number of rotations, speed of rotation, centering, change of edge, increase in speed of rotation during spin.

Flying Spins - all of the above for spins, height of jump, the position in the air and on landing.

Step & Spiral Sequences – difficulty of the steps, swing, carriage and smooth flow of the movement in character with music, pattern, bilateral movement, all edges used.

Difficulty of the Connecting Steps – Crossovers are not considered to be connecting steps.

Speed – between elements and in the entry and exit of elements.

### **Marks for Technical Merit consider the following:**

\*Difficulty of the element.

\*Speed between elements and in the entry and exit of elements.

\*Cleanness and sureness, secure edges and flow.

\*Poor technique such as cheated jumps (which are jumps in which part of the rotation is completed either before takeoff or upon or after landing, rotations on the ice instead of in the air) or wrapped jumps (where the knee is bent in the air and appears to be wrapped high around the skating leg) does not earn high marks.

### **Marks for Presentation consider the following:**

\*Harmonious composition of the program as a whole in conformity with the music. Utilization of space and the ice surface, not too much reliance on circular and straight line patterns. Highlights distributed over the entire ice surface. Balance overall program, not just designed for judges, sold to the spectators, all four sides to the arena are utilized.

\*Movements suit the music, appropriate movements to match highlights of the music (including connecting steps), speed tension and expression of movements match intensity/tempo of music.

\*Variation of speed, speed of movement changes with the pace and character of the music, using both long, sustained movements and short, sharp movements.

\*Easy movements and sureness in time to the music Demonstrate that you understand the music chosen.

\*Carriage and style that is pleasing and in control of body movements.

\*Choreography that is inventive and reveals the character of the music. Originality and innovative movements are rewarded.

Skaters (through their Coach) may ask a judge after a test or competition about their marks or can request a preview or critique of a program prior to a big competition and ask for suggestions on how to improve. Both the Judge and the Coach have an important role in helping the skater to progress in skill and ability.

Judges are volunteers who have a sincere desire to be of service to the sport of figure skating. Judging requires time, commitment, and study. Judges must learn and follow the rules and standards set by USFS. A judge must continue to study the rulebook, take a judges exam, observe and participate in Judges Schools and seminars, judge competitions and test sessions, and maintain an open and continuous relationship with coaches and skaters. Judges also volunteer their time and talent in support of skaters of SCP by leading educational sessions and providing critiques to help the skater learn what a judge looks for. Judges appraise skating tests and competitions and give marks, without fear of favor. Judging skating is not an exact science, which is why three judges are used for test panels and three to five or more judges for competitions.

A prospective judge must be:

1. 18 years of age or older (allowed to trial judge before age 18);
2. Trial judge a minimum of 8 test sessions (3 sessions must have different panels and 2 sessions must be outside their home club);
3. Attend Judges School;
4. Pass Judge Exam;
5. Receive a favorable endorsement from judging peers;
6. 75% accuracy rate while trial judging;
7. Be appointed by the judge's committee. Skaters who have achieved their Novice freeskating or Silver dance test may become a judge on the accelerated program. They do not have to trial as many tests to receive their appointment, but must have all the other requirements.

### **Test Judging Levels**

Bronze – PrePreliminary to Juvenile  
Silver – Intermediate to Novice  
Gold – Junior and Senior

### **Test Dancing Judging Levels**

Bronze – Preliminary to PreSilver  
Silver - Silver  
Gold - Gold

### **Competition Single/Pairs and Dance and Synchronized Judging Levels**

Novice  
Junior  
Senior

National  
International  
World

Judges must trial judge for the next level in order to get their next appointment. A set number of tests or competitions are required for each level. Gold and National level judges must also be recommended by their club, be approved by the Sectional Vice Chair the Judges Committee, the National Vice Chair of the Judges Committee and be approved by the Board of Directors of USFS. Becoming a Judge is not an easy process!

### **COACHING**

To be a coach, you must be a member of USFS (or ISI) and/or the Professional Skaters Association (PSA). If the coach has skaters entered in qualifying competitions then they must be a member of the PSA. Ranking in the PSA and attendance at PSA/USFS instructor workshops, seminars, clinics, and conferences prepare the Private Coach to train skaters more effectively and efficiently for the appropriate technical skills.

The Ranking System established criteria to qualify career accomplishments of PSA coaches based on the performance of their skaters. In this program, the career coaching record of a professional is established only through the accomplishments of a skater under his or her direction.

Level I - Non-Qualifying competition competitors

Level II – Regional competitors

Level III - Sectional (Novice or Junior) or Junior Nationals (Juvenile or Intermediate) competitors

Level IV - National Synchro, National (Novice, Junior or Senior levels) competitors

Level V – International competitors

Level VI - World and/or Olympic competitors

Level VII - Honors coaches who have coached at 2+ World and/or Olympic Championships

Level VIII - Honors coaches who have coached World and/or Olympic Medalists

Level IX - Honors coaches who have coached World and/or Olympic Champions

Level X - Honors coaches who have coached 2+ World and/or Olympic Champions

**The PSA Rating System** certifies professional coaches' skating skills and teaching experiences. Ratings are an assurance to clubs, rinks, skaters, parents and the general public that the coach they hire is technically qualified to

instruct at the level in which they are rated, regardless of background and skating achievement. More and more coaches are being required to become rated and many are choosing to do so because it is so beneficial.

Ratings are offered in Free Skating, Figures, Pairs, Dance, Group, Program Director, Synchronized Team, Free Dance, Choreography and Style, and Moves in the Field. They are offered at the Registered, Certified, Senior and Master levels. Ratings consist of both a written and oral examination. Once a rating has been earned, a coach must maintain at least 28 educational credits over a three-year period through attendance at educational events.

**The PSA offers an Apprentice Program** that serves as an opportunity for training with a PSA Master-rated coach. The Apprentice Program is suitable for skaters with advanced skills and competitive or show experience who are making the transition to coaching; established professionals who are interested in teaching more advanced techniques; coaches who are preparing for rating exams; young coaches just starting out, or other experienced professionals who want to improve their teaching skills.

**Intern/Apprentice coach classes** are available as LTS Interns at DSCC Peoria, to skaters at least 12 years old, who have passed at least Pre-Preliminary Moves or Adult Bronze Moves. In the apprenticeship program, skaters take three 4 hour courses, learning procedures and techniques for assisting skaters, substituting classes and finally teaching their own group classes. Upon passing the first course, Interns assist in the group classes. This provides a great opportunity for aspiring coaches to learn if they have the desire, patience and skill necessary to becoming a Professional Figure Skating Coach.

A good coach must be skilled at teaching the fundamentals of skating and skill development. He or she is knowledgeable, professional, well educated, organized and punctual. Other desired characteristics include being a good role model, being sensible, practical, polite, fair, respectful, calm and experienced.

A good coach knows the sport and the athlete. He or she knows what the skater is capable of doing and can handle different personalities to bring out the most in an athlete. A good coach understands what motivates the skater. They are a skilled teacher, a clever psychologist, a practical philosopher, and a sensible negotiator in order to encourage improvement, competence, and excellence. A good coach helps the athlete to enjoy their successes and to respond to failure with renewed determination and good sportsmanship.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SKATER'S PARENT**

The success of a young figure skater is highly dependent upon a three-way partnership and working relationship between the skater, parent, and Private Coach. Initially, the parent is more involved in daily decisions on training. As the skill level of the skater progresses, the skater must assume more responsibility for their training, the parent's involvement shifts from that of a manager to a motivational supporter.

The following are **excerpts from "The Skating Parents' Survival Guide"**, by US Figure Skating.

1. Encourage your child to skate, but don't pressure. Let your child choose to skate – and to quit – if he or she wants.
2. Understand what your child wants from skating, and provide a supportive atmosphere for achieving these goals.
3. Put your child's participation in perspective. Don't make skating everything in your child's life; make it a part of life.
4. Make sure the Private Coach is qualified to guide your child through the skating experience including advancing skill level.
5. Keep winning in perspective, and help your child to do the same. Help your child to set challenging but realistic performance goals, rather than focusing only on winning.
6. Help your child set and meet goals for themselves.
7. Be a positive role model for your child by encouraging and demonstrating good sportsmanship and club participation.
8. Turn your child over to the Private Coach at practices, tests and competitions – don't micro-manage!
9. Supply the Private Coach with information on any health conditions or concerns your child has or you have

- for your child.
10. Help build your child's self esteem.

### **Why Kids Participate in Ice Skating**

to have fun;  
to improve skills and learn new ones;  
to be with friends and make new ones;  
to feel the excitement of competition;  
to succeed or win, and  
to exercise or become fit.

### **Common Reasons Why Kids Quit Skating**

takes too much time/commitment  
enjoy non-skating activities more  
lack of fun  
little skill improvement  
comp. stress/over emphasis on winning  
too much parental pressure  
Private Coach was too tough

### **Good Sportsmanship is the ability to:**

Win without gloating  
Lose without complaining  
Treat your opponent with respect

### **Teaching Kids to have Good Sportsmanship**

1. Abide by the rules.
2. Try to avoid arguments, learn to manage anger.
3. Always be fair.
4. Listen and follow the directions of the coach.
5. Respect other skaters' efforts.
6. Offer encouragement to other skaters. Praise other skaters when they do well and comfort and encourage them when they make mistakes.
7. Accept the judgment calls of the officials.
8. End the competitions smoothly.

### **How to Be a Positive Role Model**

Children learn behavior from many different people – coaches, teachers, other adults, and peers. But the people they learn from the most are their parents. Your child not only soaks up what you say, but also what you don't say. Nonverbal messages – like a look of disgust or disappointment - often speak louder than words. Modeling good sportsmanship and respect for others provides an important lifelong lesson for your child. Keep comments as positive as possible and avoid criticizing officials, the club, and coaches in the presence of your child.

### **A Skating Parents Do's and Don'ts**

Do cheer for all the skaters.  
Do show interest, enthusiasm, and support for your child.  
Do be in control of your emotions.  
Do help when asked to by your Private Coach.  
Don't coach your child during practices or competitions.  
Don't drink alcohol at competitions or come to one having drunk too much.  
Don't advise the Private Coach on how to do the job.  
Don't make insulting comments to or about skaters, parents, officials, or coaches.  
Don't approach judges at competitions – this is the Private Coach's job.  
Don't solicit other skaters for your Coach.

**Be Involved...** Every youth sport program needs enthusiastic involvement from parents to be successful. Volunteering your time not only helps your child's program; it's also an enjoyable way to meet other adults and make new friends. Here are a few ways to become involved:

- Be an ice monitor
- Attend the General Meeting of SCP
- Volunteer on a committee supporting club activities
- Volunteer to help at competitions or test sessions
- Become a Club Board Member
- Help with fundraising

**...But Don't Get Too Involved** No figure skating Private Coach wants to be – or should be - second-guessed by parents on coaching decisions. Indications that a parent is too involved include:

- You are overly concerned with the outcome of an event.
- You spend a lot of time talking with the Private Coach about competition strategy, other skater's skill levels, and the way she or he conducts practices and coaches at competitions.
- Your child has stopped enjoying skating or has asked you to stop coming to competitions or practices.
- You require your child to take extra practice.
- You technically correct your child's skating elements.
- You insist on being present for every practice session.
- Both the Private Coach and your child should welcome a healthy involvement. Show interest, help the Private Coach where needed, encourage your child – and enjoy the sport yourself.

### **Emphasize Fun and Skill Development**

Without fun, your child may not want to keep skating. Children don't have fun when they are bored at practices, don't get to skate in competitions or take tests, when they feel too much pressure to win, and don't improve or learn new skills. A focus on developing skills takes the pressure off winning – which no one except the judges can control. However, all children can improve their skating skills. And when they see that improvement, they are usually motivated to improve more. Developing skills is one of the most satisfying aspects of any sport. Keep winning in perspective; emphasize personal improvement and define success as giving a maximal effort. Success is the easily measured distance between your origin and your final achievement. While pursuing self-improvement and achievement, athletes transcend themselves and become better people. Here are some valuable characteristics that are developed and enhanced in successful athletes:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Persistence   | Self-confidence |
| Courage       | Self-worth      |
| Perspective   | Desire          |
| Concentration |                 |

### **SETTING PERFORMANCE GOALS**

View skating as a vehicle for learning about commitment, self-improvement, and dealing with successes and failures. Performance goals – with emphasis on individual skill improvement – are much better than the outcome goal of winning. Performance goals are in the athlete's control and will help the athlete improve.

Performance goals should be specific, measurable, and achievable. They should be challenging but not too difficult to achieve. Performance goals are best set by the skater, with assistance from the Private Coach.

Physical conditioning and endurance training are key elements of performance goals. It takes less physical effort to skate the program and you can focus more on the artistic and mental aspects of the program.

### **Ways to Improve Your Skating**

1. Videotape yourself so you can see yourself how your coach and the judges see you.
2. Practice like you perform, create an attitude and routine practice that is close to the same way you want to perform.
3. Pick music that suits you.

4. Don't worry about your competitors. Focus on what you need to do to be your best. Don't give your opponents the advantage of getting inside your head by worrying about what they've done.
5. Leave the past in the past. If you make a mistake during a performance, don't dwell on the mistake, focus ahead on the moves you have control over so that the rest of the performance will overshadow that mistake.
6. Go to your Coach if you have a question or problem. Going to others at the rink may lead to multiple answers and a more complicated problem. A good coach welcomes this kind of discussion. You're paying for their assistance.
7. Learn to accept criticism/correction. Take criticism as the coach's way of helping you, remember that you're working together and the coach is saying these things to help you improve. You need the coach's feedback, expertise and viewpoint to do your best.
8. Become self-sufficient. Be able to do your own hair and makeup, and put on your costume. Take responsibility for finding out practice ice times and competition schedules. Being responsible for yourself demonstrates your dedication to the sport.
9. Take dance lessons to provide the additional training for proper carriage, posture and control of your body.
10. Keep your blades sharpened. Check your edges after every practice or lesson.

### **Ways to Improve your Fitness level**

1. Warm up properly before getting on the ice or doing any off-ice training.
2. Work on flexibility daily. It makes athletes more resistant to injury, gives full range of motion, adds to strength, speed and sureness of landings.
3. Train on the ice to develop the muscle memory you need to perform the specialized skills of ice skating. When you repeat a motion over and over, your muscles "remember" the motion.
4. Maintain a regular and consistent off-ice conditioning regime. The progress you make in conditioning comes slowly and can be lost quickly.
5. Train for endurance. Do double run-throughs of your program and take stroking/power classes on ice.
6. Improve your upper body and abdominal strength. Strong, decisive arm movement is as important to consistent jumps as strong legs.
7. Make the most of ice time; work hard. If you work hard, you'll get better. If you get better, you will love what you do even more.
8. Get plenty of rest to help your coordination, balance, and concentration and to prevent illness.

### **How to Avoid Injury**

Skating injuries occur mainly in three areas – knees, feet, and back. Exercises and precautions must be taken to minimize the risk of getting hurt. Ask your Coach for warm-up exercises to do before you skate.

Poorly fitting boots can have the same effect as an injury, so keep your Coach informed if you are experiencing foot pain or problems.

Off ice jump takeoffs and landings should be supervised by the Private Coach in the beginning. Skaters should wear sturdy athletic shoes and should never try to 'stick' the landings. Instead bounce up. When you land, you're still spinning around and the landing leg has to stop the spinning force. The floor isn't as slippery as ice, on the floor you can twist your ankle or worse on improper landings.

Both on-ice and off-ice jump counts should be monitored - high numbers of jarring landings contribute to injuries.

**GLOSSARY OF TERMS** (obtained from the Spectator's Guide by Campbell's Soups and USFS and Kristi Yamaguchi's Figure Skating for Dummies)

**Jumps**

Jumps are any elements in which both feet leave the ice at the same time. Revolutions can be zero, quarter, half, single, double, triple, and quadruple. Feet over head "somersaults" are prohibited in eligible events, but are allowed in professional events.

**Axel** - The easiest jump to recognize because it is the only jump with a forward takeoff. The skater glides forward on one foot, takes off from a forward outside edge, rotates (1 ½ revolutions for a single axel, 2 ½ for a double and 3 1/2 for a triple) and lands on the opposite foot skating backward. Name after its inventor Axel Paulsen.

**Cheated jump** - Any jump where the rotations are completed on the ice, before the takeoff or after landing.

**Falling Leaf** - A jump taking off from a backward outside edge, with the free leg moving forward to a semi-split or full split air position, with a half revolution. The landing is forward on the toe of the free leg and stepping forward onto the inside edge.

**Flip** - A toe-pick-assisted jump, taken off from the inside edge of the gliding foot going backward.

**Loop** - An edge jump, done from a backward outside edge take-off, landed on the same foot as the take-off. Also the name for a figure pattern. A half-loop lands on the foot opposite to takeoff on the inside edge.

**Lutz** - A toe-pick assisted jump, executed from a back outside edge One of the few jumps that takes off counter to the natural rotation of the edge. Named for Austrian skater Alois Lutz.

**Salchow** - An edge jump executed from the back inside edge and landed on the opposite foot. Named for Swedish skater Ulrich von Salchow, a nine-time World Champion.

**Split Jump** - A flashy move in which the skater jumps into the air from a back inside edge and toe-pick assist to perform a split in mid-air. When the hands touch the ankles or toes, it is called a "Russian Split". When a half-revolution is added after touching the toes, the jump is referred to as a "Split Flip." A Stag jump is done in the same manner, but altering the air position by bending the leading leg at the knee. A "Mulekick" is done when both feet are drawn up under the read end at the same time.

**Toe Loop** - a toe-pick assisted jump where the takeoff is from the back outside edge. When the takeoff is done from the back inside edge, it is called a "toe walley."

**Walley** - A jump done from the back inside edge to the back outside edge of the same foot. Its takeoff edge is counter to the jump's rotation, like the lutz.

**Waltz Jump** - An edge jump from forward to backward done from the forward outside edge. This jump is the basis for the axel takeoff.

**Spins**

**Spin** - A spin is the sustained rotation of the body in one spot on one foot. There are many different kinds of spins, usually named for the body position during the spin. If a skater leaps into the air before coming down into a spin, it is called a flying spin. Spins may be done traveling backwards or forwards on the spinning foot - a change of edge to a forward traveling spin earns higher points in ISU judging. Arm positions are changed and moved during the spin to gain speed and create creative or original spin positions.

**Combination spins** - spins which change body position and/or feet while continuing the spinning motion.

**Bielman spin** - A spin named after Denise Biellmann where the free foot in a layback spin is pulled up by both hands over the head and held in position. Variations: half Bielman--same hand/opposite hand, back Bielman, Scorpion (where the head is tilted back to the hips while in Bielman position).

**Camel spin** - originally called a parallel spin, has the free leg extended fully behind the skater parallel to the ice. Variations: Flying Camel, back camel, layover camel, catch foot camel, doughnut (where the free foot is caught and pulled in so the body creates a circular doughnut position).

Cross foot spin (+ back cross foot) - a spin where the free leg is kept straight and crossed to the front or rear of the spinning leg. Different than a scratch spin.

Illusion - a back spin done with the free leg swinging up to head level and then back down. The head goes down to the spinning foot while the free foot is high in the air. This may be repeated several times.

Layback - A spin position where the head and shoulders are dropped backwards and the back arches, while the free leg is in attitude position, or extended to the side or back. Variations: attitude, side-leaning, broken leg.

Overhead spin - Spins made popular by Michelle Kwan and Sasha Cohen where the free foot/blade is caught by one or both hands and pulled straight over the head from the front or side of the body.

Scratch spin, or blur spin - A spin executed so fast that the skater appears blurred. Free leg is crossed over the skating leg. Variations: headless, back scratch spin. Sasha's spin with her hands hooked behind her neck is a blur spin variation.

Sit spin - A spin in which the skater creates the "shoot-the-duck" position (full squat on spinning leg with free leg extended to the front.) Variations: back sit spin, Flying Sit spin, Flying axel sit spin, cannonball. The Death Drop spin is a flying spin which takes off like a flying camel spin (but "laying out" more horizontally in the air) and landing in a back sit spin.

## **Turns**

Bracket - A turn on one foot from forward to backward (or backward to forward), where the character of the edge going in changes (inside to outside or outside to inside), and the direction of travel stays on the same circle. The cusp of the turn is out of the circle.

Choctaw - A step from forward to backward (or backward to forward) from one foot to the other in which the curve of the exit edge is in the opposite direction to the curve of the entry edge. The character of the edge changes outside to inside edge or from inside to outside edge.

Counter - A turn on one foot from forward to backward (or backward to forward), maintaining character of the edge (outside to outside or inside to inside), but changing the direction of travel from one circle to a new circle. The cusp of the turn is into the new circle (in like a bracket and out like a 3-turn).

Mohawk - A step from forward to backward (or backward to forward), from one foot to the other, each edge forming parts of the same curve. The character of the edge remains the same (inside to inside or outside to outside).

Rocker - A turn on one foot from forward to backward (or backward to forward), maintaining the character of the edge, i.e., outside to outside or inside to inside, but changing the direction of travel from one circle to a new circle (in like a 3-turn and out like a bracket). The cusp of the turn is into the first circle.

Three Turn - A turn on one foot from forward to backward (or backward to forward), where the character of the edge going in changes (inside to outside or outside to inside), and the direction of travel stays on the same circle. The cusp of the turn is into the circle.

Twizzle - A traveling turn on one foot with one or more rotations, quickly rotated with a continuous (uninterrupted) action. The free foot may be in any position during the turn.

## **General**

Clean - A program with no mistakes. It also describes precise skating without scraping the blade, dragging the toe pick, etc., and jump landings that are fully rotated.

Crossover - A method of gaining speed and turning corners in which skaters cross one foot over the other.

Moves in the Field (MIF) - Part of the USFS testing structure. An MIF test is required at each level prior to taking the corresponding freeskate test for that level. MIF tests may be taken independently of freeskating, pairs and dance tests without effect on USFS competitive level. MIF teach all fundamental edges and turns while developing increasing edge quality, extension, quickness and power.

Referee - A competition official who supervises the judges' panel and who has full authority over a competitive event.

Regionals - The regional championships are the first step in the USFS qualifying competition structure leading to the U.S. Championships. The country is broken down into nine regions. Skaters must place in the top four at their regional event to

advance to Sectionals. Juvenile and Intermediate skaters go directly from regionals to the U.S. Junior Championships (top four places only). Novice, Junior and Senior skaters go to Sectionals.

Sectionals - The sectional championships are the second step in USFS qualifying competition structure leading to the U.S. Championships. The top four finishers in the Novice, Junior and Senior divisions from each sectional competition advance to Nationals. There are currently three sections - Eastern, Midwestern and Pacific Coast.

Spiral - A move in which a skater demonstrates flexibility and a fluid line by extending his or her free leg behind them into the air during a long glide. The ballet term is “arabesque.” A position is considered a spiral if the free foot is higher than hip level.

Swizzle - A method of two-foot skating without picking feet up from the ice, either forward or backward, by an in-and-out movement of the feet on inside edges.

Footwork - series of steps, turns, half or full revolution jumps with bilateral movement, stops and power generation, and varying body posture (high and low positions).

Connecting moves - any edge or skill that connects the required or highlighted elements.

Artistic/Showcase programs - programs done to music that focus on character or music interpretation rather than on difficulty of the various elements. Vocal music is allowed for these events - there is also a National Showcase competition where skaters in the Preliminary level and up may qualify to compete based on a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in the previous year.

### **Pair Skating**

Death Spiral - This is a required move in pair skating in which the man spins in a pivot position while holding one hand of the lady, who is spinning in a horizontal position on one edge of the skate with her body parallel to the ice.

Lifts - Any move in which the man in pair or ice dancing lifts the female partner off the ice. In pair skating, the man lifts his partner overhead with arms fully extended. In dance, a man may not lift his partner above his shoulders.

Throw Jumps - A Pair element wherein the man assists the lady into the air to complete a jump.

### **SYNCHRONIZED TEAM SKATING TERMS**

Block - A formation in which skaters line up one behind the other in two or more straight lines forming a block formation. The block moves as a unit over the ice.

Circle - A maneuver in which skaters are linked and rotate with step combinations in a circular motion. Skaters can skate forward or backward holding a circle shape.

Intersection - An intersection is a required element for the synchronized team skating short program and a common synchronized team skating formation. It is any type of maneuver that incorporates movement of one part of the team through the other part of the team.

Line - A formation in which the skaters are arranged in a single line. For the synchronized team skating short program, the line must extend across the ice surface width and travel the full length of the ice.

Wheel - A formation in which skaters form lines that are connected and rotating from one central point, similar to the spokes on a bicycle wheel.

## **IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR SKATERS**

Skating Magazine is the official publication of USFS and is a good way to keep informed. By joining USFS and SCP your family will receive 10 issues a year as a part of your membership.

USFS Directory provides vital contact information for all clubs and Basic Skills programs across the country. It also gives contact information for the USFS Executive Committee, board members, committee chairs, committee members, and officials.

USFS Rulebook contains all the bylaws for the association along with the technical rules that govern figure skating. Updated annually on September 1.

PSA Directory contains all member coaches with current ratings/rankings.

Figure Skating for Dummies by Kristi Yamaguchi, Christy Ness, Jody Meacham.

Ballet for Dummies by Feuerstein & Payne

Yoga for Dummies by Speck & Cisneros

Conditioning for Figure Skating by Carl M. Poe.

The Complete Book of Figure Skating by Carole Schulman.

[www.usfigureskating.org](http://www.usfigureskating.org) US Figure Skating

[www.skatepsa.com](http://www.skatepsa.com) Professional Skaters Association

[www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org) International Skating Union

[www.skatingclubofphoenix.com](http://www.skatingclubofphoenix.com) Skating Club of Phoenix

[www.polariceentertainmnet.com](http://www.polariceentertainmnet.com) Polar Ice, Inc.

[www.skateisi.com](http://www.skateisi.com) Ice Skating Institute