

Skater's Guide

With the new skaters to the club, brings new parents. We all know that the Sport of Figure Skating can be very confusing when first introduced to it.

Here is a guide that may or may not be of assistance to you in regards to making the right decisions. Coaches are familiar with the recent changes, programs, etc, in the sport and we feel that it is only fair that parents have the same knowledge as we do in this matter.

When first putting your children in skating, they will begin with a program called "CanSkate". CanSkate is made up of 7 stages... 1 being the beginners level and 7 being the last stage before StarSkate. The CanSkaters are taught by our trained Program Assistants and your Professional CanSkate Certified Coach.

After CanSkate, your children will be introduced to the next level called CanfigureSkate whereby they are introduced to the various disciplines in figure skating in a group lesson format. From there, they progress onto StarSkate. This will include skills, dance and freeski and stroking, interpretive and more. They will be under instruction with a Certified Skate Canada Coach, either by individual lessons or group lessons. Part of the session will be lessons and the rest of time they will be given time to skate/practice on their learned skills. This gives the skaters a chance to learn the responsibilities on the ice while not being under direct supervision. Parents must also be aware that once their children have advanced to the StarSkate level, new and better skating equipment will be necessary such as new skates and other related skating attire. In addition to this, parents will be billed for individual and group lessons by their coach. Lesson rates can be disclosed with the parent at this time prior to lessons given. As well, all other information you may require can be discussed with your child's coach. Some will progress (based on age and ability) into the Competitive Stream which requires an even greater commitment. Both StarSkate and Competitive skaters should be skating year round, winter, spring and summer

Dance: Consists of learning a progression of steps on a set pattern, with set music. Music is different for each dance. This is being skated without a dance partner that you would normally see on national TV.

Skills: Consists of learning quality figure skating such as edges, turns, pivots, etc. aimed at improving basic skating. This is also done on a set pattern and can be accompanied by music.

FreeSkate: Consists mainly of jumps, spins, field movements that are put into solo's which will be skated at competitions or other related events.

When first introduced to this part of Figure Skating, skaters can become intimidated as they watch the older and stronger skaters do their "more advanced" skating. Safety comes first with this sport and your skater's coach(es) will help them make the transition and you will be surprised at how fast they will adjust.

Stroking: Stroking is a group session - the only time you will see a group setting such as this unless at a seminar, etc. Stroking is the time to build stronger fitness in the skater and to practice basic skating drills. (Ex.: may include laps or exercising proper posture while skating)

Competitions: Each season there are several competitions (Interclub, Regionals, Provincials, Sectionals) which are designed for different ages and abilities. When competing, skaters are grouped with other skaters of the same age and test levels. (This is one of the reasons year round training is critical...most other skaters you will be competing with will be training year round). The age for competitions is defined as being the skater's age on July 1st of the preceding year. The age limit moves up with test level. Parents will receive an information/event announcement package for each competition their children are involved with well before the actual event. In the package you will be acknowledged with specific rules and regulations needed.

Test Day: This is the time for skaters to move up to the next skating level. Coach(es) will decide whether the skater is ready to be tested on their current skating level. Testing is done through a judge/evaluator, usually set up by the club and has a fee of approximately \$15-\$30/test sheet (subject to change). Parents will also be informed of specific procedures needed to follow for this particular event. (Ex: arriving well ahead of time, dressing as you would for competition, donation of food, etc.) This can also be a nerve-racking day, therefore lots of rest is always a good idea.

Skaters are tested in 4 main areas -- Freeskate, Dance, Skills and Interpretive.

Interpretive skating -This area of skating gives the skater their chance to be creative and make their own choices on what to incorporate into their solos. They have input into the choice of music, clothing, and overall theme.

Once the skater is given the result portion of their test sheet, upon completion of test(s), the sheets should be kept in a safe place, one for yourself one for the coach, on what the skater has passed. Keeping the skaters Skate Canada # safe is also a great idea.

For any further information on any of this, please do not hesitate to contact your local club representatives.