



Welcome to the Skating Club of Southern NJ

Mission Statement: The Skating Club of Southern New Jersey, an affiliated club of USFS, is committed to providing its members a sense of belonging and friendship. We recognize the hard work, discipline and perseverance that figure skating requires. It is our goal to provide guidance, teamwork, and mentoring to our members.

Congratulations!

You've taken the first step. You, or your child, has moved out of the Basic Skating Program and into the world of Figure Skating. Now that you have learned the basic elements of skating in this group environment, and have joined the Skating Club of Southern New Jersey, you are ready to further develop these skills by working with a private instructor. We've all been there and we know it can be a bit overwhelming. Our goal is to help you learn a little bit about this complicated sport or at least learn where to find the answers you need.

What is the USFS?

Your membership in the SCOSNJ also provides you membership to the United States Figure Skating (USFS). Get ready to start receiving your subscription to Skating Magazine, the official magazine of the USFS! This organization encompasses all levels of skating from Basic Skills to International competitors. Whether you are a recreational skater or aspire to become an Olympic contender, the USFS is the governing body for figure skating in the United States.

Structure of Figure Skating

Worlds and Olympics
Internationals
National Championships
Sectionals
Regionals
Club Competitions

Skating Disciplines



Freestyle

Freestyle is the discipline in Figure Skating that most spectators are familiar with. In Freestyle skating, or "Singles Freestyle" skating, a competitive skater performs a "program" that lasts anywhere from 1 to 4 ½ minutes, is composed of elements such as jumps and spins, and is usually skated to music.

Pairs

Pairs skating is similar in many respects to singles freeskating, except that 2 skaters perform together. This adds all sorts of opportunities for new moves, such as lifts, throws, and pair spins and jumps.

Dance

Ice Dancing is the discipline within skating that most emphasizes the "beauty" of the sport, rather than the athleticism. Dance emphasizes the techniques of edgework, flow, and motion of 2 skaters together in rhythmic interpretation of music. Ice Dancing has two main focus areas, the "Compulsory Dances", and the "Free Dances".

Moves-in-the-Field

Moves-in-the-Field, or "Moves" is a technical discipline, designed to help skaters improve their execution of the basic moves of skating. Edgework, turns, stroking, body control and extension are emphasized, mostly done with "power" as a primary focus. The Moves-in-the-Field discipline is primarily a test discipline, although some competitions are running Moves events. Moves-in-the-Field has test levels matching each singles freestyle level, and it is required that all skaters testing freestyle must pass the equivalent Moves test prior to taking the corresponding test in the freestyle or pairs disciplines.

Synchronized Skating

Synchronized Team Skating (once known as "precision skating") is a "team" event, with teams of 8 to as many as 24 skaters skating complicated routines similar to those performed by marching bands or drum corps. Large teams may execute patterns of incredible complexity and beauty. The teamwork and timing required makes this a challenging sport.

Competition and Test Levels

After you have completed the Learn to Skate Basic Skills and Freestyle Programs you begin to move towards testing with your coach's guidance, which will allow you to progress through a sequence of logical steps in your competitive development. The SCOSNJ offers several testing sessions throughout the year. Your coach will keep you informed.

Moves in the Field	Singles FS	Pairs	Dance
Pre-Preliminary	Pre-Preliminary	Preliminary	Preliminary
Preliminary	Preliminary	Juvenile	Pre-Bronze
Pre-Juvenile	Pre-Juvenile	Intermediate	Bronze
Juvenile	Juvenile	Novice	Pre-Silver
Intermediate	Intermediate	Junior	Silver
Novice	Novice	Senior	Pre-Gold
Junior	Junior		Gold
Senior	Senior		Junior International
			Senior International
	Adult PreBronze FS		
	Adult Bronze FS		
	Adult Silver FS		
	Adult Gold FS		



Ice Etiquette and Safety Guidelines

Skating is basically an individual sport, and activities during most practice sessions are pretty unstructured. It is important to know though, that some basic rules must be observed for safety, and to ensure that everyone can make effective use of their ice time. Our rink/club has its own set of rules, and you should be sure to know and follow them. This section outlines some basic concepts.

Before Skating

Always sign in and pay for your sessions.

Courtesy

First and foremost is courtesy. It is essential to respect the rights of other skaters and be constantly aware of who is around you. If you seem to be surrounded by skaters of significantly greater or lesser skills, be especially careful! Strive to avoid collisions!

"On Program" and "In Lesson" Get Priority

In our rinks, the skater who is "on program" (whose music is playing) has the right of way at all times, and other skaters are expected to give them free maneuvering room. Second in priority are those skaters who are currently in lessons with their pro. Always yield to these skaters as well.

Dangerous Singles Moves

When you are practicing elements like camel spins and back spirals be especially aware of the danger your exposed blade poses to other skaters. Conversely, as you skate, avoid skaters who are engaged in these moves.

Be Aware

If you're standing near the boards or entering the ice, don't enter the flow of skaters without checking to make sure you're not going to get into someone else's way. Be cognizant of and try to avoid the area around the jump harness when in use.

No Playing on the Ice

Refrain from standing around and visiting on the ice. This wastes expensive ice and presents an additional hazard for other skaters to avoid. There should be no food on the ice. Liquids should be limited to water or sport's drinks. For safety reasons, leave your headphones and cell phones in your skating bag.

Off Ice Etiquette

The Igloo Ice Rink is one of the most beautifully maintained rinks in the area. As a club, we are very proud to call this rink home. Please treat the rink, its staff, and your fellow skaters as you would treat your home and your family. When speaking of or with others always have a positive and respectful attitude. Remember the old adage, "If you can't say something nice, then don't say anything at all!"



Frequently Asked Questions

Equipment and Clothing

How do I choose a pair of skates?

The type of skates you choose is dependent on your child's level. We are very lucky to have a reputable pro shop at the Igloo, which can help you select the skate that matches your child's ability.

How do I care for my skates?

The leather of your boots is susceptible to water damage. Keeping the boots polished all the time with polish made especially for skates will help repel the water. When you buy a new pair of skates and have them sharpened for the first time, the pro shop should also seal the sole of your boot to prevent water damage. This can be reapplied as needed. It is also important to allow your skates to air dry. This means, take them out of your skating bag as soon as you get home!

Blades are made to slide on ice, not walk on floors. Always wear hard guards when you are off ice. Every time you remove your skates, you should always take off your hard guards and completely dry your blades and the soles of your boots with a hand towel. Then protect your blades by covering them with "soakers". NEVER store your blades in hard guards.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

Your blades are mounted onto boot with screws. It is not necessary or desirable for all of the screw holes to be filled. It is however, important to check that these screws are tight enough to keep the blade from moving. Due to the stresses and bending while you skate, they will loosen with time.

Your blades will need to be sharpened. It is very important to have them sharpened by a professional who specializes in figure skates. (figure skate blades are very different from hockey skate blades) We are lucky that at The Igloo, The Skating Director is also a professional skate sharpener.

Laces sound pretty insignificant, but worn laces can break at inopportune times, so make sure you replace them when they start to wear. It is important to use the right "length" of lace. Laces that are too long can drag close to the ice and become a hazard.

What should I wear when I practice?

If you are prone to getting cold, consider a layered approach. A couple of thin sweaters or sweatshirts will be better than one really heavy, thick one -- and you can shed layers as you heat up. Skating tights can also be layered or several companies offer heavier practice tights. Skate wear is recommended because the fabric used is tight enough so that it is not a hazard, but stretches to allow freedom of movement. Of course, when in doubt, the SCOSNJ offers a classic skating warm up suit! Remember to keep several pairs of gloves in your skating bag. They have a habit of getting wet and disappearing! Long hair should be pulled back and jackets should be zippered. Also, remember to leave your dangling earrings, long chained necklaces, and scarves at home.

Coaches

When do I need a coach?

You can start with a private coach at any time. You will definitely need a coach when you finish the Basic Skills Program.

How do I choose a coach?

First, start by talking to the Skating Director. He will help you to choose an appropriate coach dependent on your budget and skating goals. Keep in mind that if your child "clicked" with one of his/her Basic Skills Instructors this person may be a good coach for your child.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

How do I pay my coach?

Unlike the Basic Skills Program, the fee you pay to enter the ice does not include your private lesson. In addition to paying for ice time at the front desk, you must also make separate payment arrangements with your coach.

How do I change coaches?

Discussing changing coaches is not an easy task. It is a sensitive, difficult and personal issue for everyone involved. The Professional Skater's Association (PSA) has a Code of Ethics, which must be adhered to by all. You can find more information at www.skatepsa.com. Changes in coaching should always be done in person and in a way that is respectful to all involved. All financial obligations must be met before a new coach is chosen.

Testing

What is testing?

USFS sanctioned testing is a chance for skater's to progress in the skating world beyond the Basic Level. It is an official event with a panel of USFS appointed judges. Skaters are asked to prepare and perform different skills that coincide with their level of skating. Results are provided shortly after the conclusion of your test. If you do not pass at that time, you must wait 28 days before testing again.

When and where should I test?

Your coach is the best judge of when you are ready to test. Always speak with your coach before registering for any test session. SCOSNJ hosts several testing sessions a year at the Igloo. The dates and times of these tests are on our web site www.scosnj.org.

What do I wear?

A test is a formal occasion, but it is not a competition. There is no audience to impress. You do not need to wear your fanciest skating dress or clothing. You should dress neatly though. A nice practice dress or men's outfit is more than adequate for any test. If you need it, a club jacket or light gloves are fine.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

Competitions

What is a competition?

We all know what it means to compete, however, always remember as you go into a competition to focus on yourself, not the other skaters. It is great to "win" or to earn a medal, and we all want to strive for that as a goal, however, this is a sport that focuses on judges' opinions, and results can vary greatly.

When and where should I compete?

Most likely, your coach will know about the competitions in your area, and will advise you as to which ones you should enter. Your coach knows your abilities, and knows the general range of abilities expected at the various competitions held in your area. SCOSNJ will also apprise you of local events via e-mail and web site. Be aware that applications are usually due one to two months prior to the competition. It is important to mail your completed entry forms on time and to meet all deadlines. Your entry form must either be signed by an officer of the SCOSNJ or be accompanied by a copy of SCOSNJ letter of good standing. Also, make sure you make a copy of your entry form prior to mailing for your records.

How do I prepare for a competition?

Your coach will help prepare your program for your event(s). If your program requires music, he/she will assist with the selection. Your job is to make sure you bring two copies to the event.

You will need a competition outfit. Remember, skating is an elegant sport. You are judged from head to toe. Appropriate dress for skaters varies according to their age and level. At higher levels, competitors will often have special custom skating outfits that are not expected at the beginning levels. At beginning levels, boys wear skating pants with a fitted shirt tucked in. Girls are in a simple embellished skating dress. The club has a rack of used dresses for sale at the rink and, also sponsors a used dress sale at least once a year. It is a good idea to do a "dress rehearsal" prior to competition day. You should wear your outfit, fix your hair and makeup and have it all approved by your coach. Girls should also remember to bring at least two pairs of new or "hole free" tights.

Your skates should be sharpened at least two skating sessions before your competition. They should be cleaned and polished for every competition. Make sure your laces are clean and in good shape and always carry an extra set with you.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

What should I expect on competition day?

You should check in at registration at least 1 hour prior to your event. At registration, you will need to give your name, the name of your event, and a copy of your music. The attendant will direct you to the locker room. At this point, you should locate your coach for specific instructions on how and when you should prepare. (See competition checklist for more information.)

Once you are finished competing and are cheering for your club mates, remember that you represent the SCOSNJ. You should dress appropriately (you can always wear your club jacket!), and be attentive to and appreciative of the efforts of all skaters. Always be respectful!

How do I find out the results?

Usually it will take about a half-hour for results to be posted. You will generally find them in the same place as the skating order. You never know who is standing nearby so please be courteous when you see your results. Usually you can purchase copies of the results sheets from the host club.

Where and when do I get my medal?

Usually if you are in the top 3 or 4 positions, you will receive a medal. There are award ceremonies scheduled periodically, often during ice cuts. Check at registration for the location and time.

Can I video the event?

You can video and take pictures as long as you do not use external lighting. However, at most competitions a professional videographer and photographer are present.

Competition Checklist



Your polished skates (BOTH of them) with clean laces, remember to have them sharpened during the week prior to competition



Your dress or pants and shirt



A set of new or whole free tights



Hair items including scrunches, bobby pins, gel, hair spray, glitter spray



Makeup



Club jacket or sweater



Your music CD



Guards and soakers



Towel for drying skate blades



USFS number



EXTRAS (Must haves):

- **Always bring an extra copy of your music that you can give to your coach at rink side**
- **an extra dress (or pants and shirt)**
- **extra tights**
- **extra set of laces**



Don't forget your directions and phone number to the rink as well as your coaches cell phone number



A screwdriver – in case your blade loosens

Additional Information

The Skating Club of Southern NJ:
www.SCOSNJ.org

The Igloo Ice Rink:
Www.skateigloo.com

United States Figure Skating (USFS):
www.usfigureskating.org

Professional Skater's Association:
www.skatepsa.com

The Skating Parents' Survival Guide (Versions 1, 2, and 3) are available for purchase from the USFS web site. Go to USFS web site (address above), click on Member Services. From there, click on Form and scroll down to Parents. The order form will be listed.

Much of the information found in this handout was gathered from www.sk8stuff.com. You will find a complete list of recommended books as well as links to other great sites.

