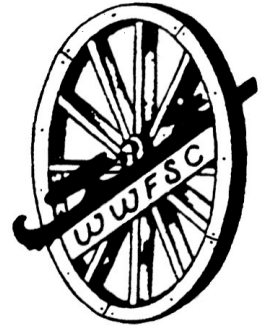


Rotations

Newsletter of the Wagon Wheel Figure Skating Club



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Renew Membership Now to Qualify for Testing

Don't forget to mail your 2003–2004 Membership Application Form and dues this month to the Wagon Wheel P.O. box. Skaters must be members in good standing for the new skating year in order to test with Wagon Wheel July 18 or August 14. This year members received a single form to renew both the club and USFSA membership. Also, spread the word to skaters who are just beginning to test that this is the best time to join the club to be informed about skating events and club functions this year.

The board of directors is seeking *your* opinion about what the club does well and your unmet needs. Be sure to tell the club what works and what doesn't by sending in a completed questionnaire with your membership renewal. The four-page, green questionnaire was mailed to current members with their renewal forms. We want to hear from *you*!

Board Elections Update

Wagon Wheel members elected coach/skater/skating parent Deirdre Kelly and reelected President Stan Kluzak and Vice President/Test Chair Joan Viviano to serve three-year terms from August 2003 through July 2006.

Officer Election

At the May annual meeting, Wagon Wheel directors elected the following officers for the 2003–2004 club year:

President: Stan Kluzak
Vice Presidents: Lanny Nelson and Joan Viviano
Secretary: Rick White
Treasurer: Mark Przblyski

The new director and next year's officers will take office as of August 1, 2003.

Report of Governing Council Meeting May 7–9

by Lanny Nelson

Your club's delegates to this year's Governing Council meeting May 7–9 in Norfolk, Virginia, were Stan Kluzak, Sharon Meyer, Lanny Nelson, and Joan Viviano. If you have any questions regarding decisions or reports, contact one of us and we'll try to answer.

Each delegate receives a book containing reports from group coordinators and committee chairs, results from this past year's Board of Directors meetings, and request for action from the various committees. Delegates attend seminars, workshops, and caucuses. In these pre-meetings the issues are discussed and questions answered. By the time the Governing Council convenes on Friday morning delegates are pretty well informed of the issues and sometimes have made up their minds on the many issues before the Council. The Governing Council must approve (all actions taken by the Board of Directors throughout the year)

This year there were many issues before the Council that directly impacted skaters and clubs and indeed the association.

- Most of the Bylaws considered this year were clean-up issues. We did establish a fee of \$125 to file a grievance with the USFSA. The Grievance Committee spends quite a bit of time and money to investigate and resolve grievances, some of which could be resolved within the club. It was hoped that this fee would help offset some of these expenses and encourage internal resolution of grievances.
- Also, clubs must insert a "conflict resolution process" into their Constitution and Bylaws by 2004.
- Qualifications for obtaining a bye to the next level of competition have been stiffened.

Governing Council Report, continued

- Modifications were made to the Intermediate Free Dance and Juvenile Free Dance. Adult Dance tests and competition duration were brought into alignment. The Starlight Waltz will be included in the Pre-Gold Dance Test. The Junior and Senior International Dance Tests were combined and the Midnight Blues added. Pre-Silver dance testers will no longer have to solo. (This action may have been marked *urgent*, which means it takes effect at the close of the Council meeting.)
- Judges will be required to maintain a designated number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) over a four-year period. This meeting is where candidates are advised of National and International appointments. This year one National Synchronized Judge and five National Singles/Pairs judges were appointed.
- Definitions for a well-balanced program for Adult skaters were approved.
- A new logo was unveiled, which can be seen on the USFSA web page.
- One of the major questions facing the Council was the Strategic Planning Committee proposals for revising the qualifying competition structure. A long discussion was held because proposals have been ongoing during the last couple of years. Some changes to the proposal for 12 regions/4 sections were made, and the "12/4" was passed over the "3/9 percentage system" by about 200 votes. This means that probably in the 2005–2006 competitive season skaters will compete in smaller regions allowing for greater chance of advancement to sectionals. Our region will consist of Illinois, Kansas, and Missouri. The structure for governance of this division must still be worked out, but it does constitute a major change to our qualifying competition structure.
- Synchronized skating teams will now have to meet certain test requirements (moves in the field) to compete at qualifying levels. The levels at the present are minimal, but hopefully this will eventually require skaters with Senior moves passed to skate on a Senior level team. At the moment senior level team skaters must pass the intermediate moves test by December 2003. A teams selection provision to the Junior Synchro Worlds and Senior Worlds, if necessary, was passed. This will allow a selection competition to take place at our 2004 Synchro Mids.
- A resolution was passed that essentially instructed our ISU representatives to request of the ISU some expression of honesty, integrity, and openness, together with full

participation of athletes and coaches in their governance. This is a watered-down version of the resolution requested by the World Skating Federation.

Much information was presented during the meeting, ranging from a new international synchro competition with Pacific Rim countries to electronic filing of tests. We also elected officers for the USFSA:

President: Chuck Foster
Vice President: Will Smith

Members at large from the Midwest are Beth Sisofo, Tamie Campbell, Lainie DeMore, and David Hamula. Danielle Hartsell is the Athlete representative from the Midwest.

A new club was admitted to the USFSA from Illinois. It is the Heartland FSC in Pekin.

Skater's Website Offers Wealth of Helpful Facts and Advice

Here's a valuable skating website to bookmark: www.sk8stuff.com. This site features pages on topics essential for skating families, such as Rules, Clubs, Competitions, Synchro, Officials, Vendors, How to Interpret Scores, and Judges. The following is condensed from the site, with acknowledgment of its copyright by the Figure Skater's Website.

About Levels and Testing

The USFSA defines a system of "tests" that allow a skater to progress through a sequence of logical steps in his or her competitive development. The tests also establish a benchmarking structure for competitive purposes. All USFSA sanctioned competitions group skaters according to levels of Tests passed. This allows skaters of similar abilities to compete against each other.

In very general terms, there are two types of testing defined by the USFSA: "Learn-to-Skate" tests, and "Judged" tests.

Learn-to-Skate Testing: Within the Learn-to-Skate (Basic Skills) program, testing is used to advance skaters from level to level. This testing is usually performed in front of the skater's instructors, and is very informal. Passage through the Learn-to-Skate program is not

required for competitive skaters. Some competitions that offer beginner-level events do use Learn-to-Skate levels to help group competitors, however.

Judged Tests: A much more formal test structure is designed for skaters who have advanced past the basics. These tests are judged by USFSA-appointed judges at formal "test sessions." The results are forwarded to the USFSA, which keeps official records of skaters' test accomplishments.

In each skating discipline, many levels of achievement are defined. Note that a skater's age does not figure into his or her skating level—only the demonstration of his/her proficiency through the passing of tests (though for competitive purposes there are some age limits placed upon skaters at certain levels).

Here is a summary of test levels and disciplines:

Singles FS	Moves in the Field	Pairs	Figures	Dance
Pre-Preliminary	Pre-Preliminary	Preliminary	Preliminary	Preliminary
Preliminary	Preliminary	Juvenile	1st	Pre-Bronze
Pre-Juvenile	Pre-Juvenile	Intermediate	2nd	Bronze
Juvenile	Juvenile	Novice	3rd	Pre-Silver
Intermediate	Intermediate	Junior	4th	Silver
Novice	Novice	Senior	5th	Pre-Gold
Junior	Junior		6th	Gold
Senior	Senior		7th	Junior International
			8th	Senior International
Adult Pre-Bronze FS				
Adult Bronze FS			Adult Bronze Fig	
Adult Silver FS			Adult Silver Fig	
Adult Gold FS			Adult Gold Fig	

All skaters must pass the Moves-in-the-Field (MIF) test associated with a particular level *before* taking the Freestyle or Pairs test at that level. (A skater cannot "opt out" of the Moves-in-the-Field tests.) Moves-in-the-Field is a technical discipline designed to improve skater's abilities in areas such as stroking, turns, balance, body position, and edgework.

How are Tests Conducted?

Test sessions are held on a regular basis by most USFSA affiliated clubs. A test session is usually a very official event at which many skaters test. All Tests are judged by a panel of USFSA-appointed judges who must not be related to the skater or the skater's coach. All results from a Test Session are sent by the host club's Test Chairperson to

the USFSA headquarters, which registers the skater's accomplishment and publishes a notice of that accomplishment in *Skating* magazine.

Skaters who are ready to test make application to the Test Chairperson of their club (or to another area club if their own club does not hold test sessions). There is usually a fee associated with taking tests to cover icetime, administrative expenses associated with the paperwork, and the judges' travel expenses. (Judges are not paid for their work; however, because many travel quite a distance to get to test sessions, their travel costs are reimbursed.) Generally, the Test Chairperson posts a schedule of skaters' test times a few days before the test day. Skaters should be at the rink and ready to skate before their appointed time. Your coach may be present at a test session, but may not disrupt the flow of the test.

A test session can be an "all-day" event. You will probably be scheduled in a grouping with several other skaters taking the same or similar tests. Your group will be scheduled for a "warm-up" time, followed immediately by the skating of the tests for that group. Usually, you are the only one on the ice during your actual test, but for some tests (some Moves-in-the-Field, and the Pre-Preliminary Freestyle) you may share the ice with others.

Judges will evaluate your performance. Usually, there are 3 judges for all tests. For some tests it is acceptable for a single high-level judge to judge your test, and this is sometimes done when icetime is limited. The judges are usually off the ice in a hockey-box or similar area, and usually have clipboards holding your test papers. Usually, there is one judge called the "judge-in-charge." If your test requires "instruction" (i.e. if the judges need to talk to you), this judge does the talking.

When it is time for your test, the judges or an announcer will inform you of your opportunity.

If this is a Freestyle or Pairs program, or a Dance test, you should skate to your starting position and wait for your music to start. If it is a Moves test or Pre-Preliminary or Adult Pre-Bronze Freestyle test, you should approach the judges for instructions on how they want to conduct the test.

When you have finished your test, you should stay on the ice until the judges "dismiss you." You should approach the judges, but not "too close" (sometimes they will need to discuss aspects of your test privately). The judges might ask you to "reskate" an element or two from the test. If this occurs, it is because that element was

"not quite right," and the judges want to give you another chance to try it. Usually, they tell you what about the element they would like to see improved. If you are asked to reskate an element, you have the opportunity to "warm it up" before you do it for real, if you choose to do so. If you want to warm it up, tell the judges *before* you do it that you are doing a warmup.

After you are dismissed, you wait for your results. Usually, the judges will complete a group of skaters before handing in their paperwork. Eventually you will get copies of your "Test Papers" containing the judge's comments on your performance and an indication of your "Pass" or "Retry" status. With a 3-judge panel, you must receive a passing mark from at least 2 judges in order to pass the test. Usually, you may keep copies of your test papers, and you and your coach should use them as a tool for developing your instructional plans.

If you should fail to pass a test, you are required to wait a minimum of 28 days before retrying the test (section TR 19.02 in the USFSA Rulebook).

Note About Judges

First and foremost: Judges are not horrible people, and they don't bite! Judges are often skaters themselves, past skaters, or parents of skaters. They have your best interests at heart and really want you to pass (they will not, however, pass a test for which the skater is not adequately prepared). Don't be afraid of them. Just skate your best and show them what you can do.

Second: Sometimes at your test you will see more than the usual 3 judges. If this is the case, one or more of them may be a "Trial Judge." This "apprentice" judge is learning how to be a judge;

it takes a long time and a lot of tests to do so. The Trial Judge's marks do not "count" on your tests; they only serve to establish a performance record for the Trial Judge. If there is a Trial Judge on your test, you may notice that the real judges sometimes take some time to explain fine points of your test to him or her. Be patient: This person might someday be a real judge at one of your tests or competitions, and you'd really like the judges to know what they're doing!

Club Event Calendar

July 10: Deadline for entering the GCFI ("Northbrook") Competition hosted by Wagon Wheel at the Northbrook Sports Center (see below).

July 18: USFSA test session at Crystal Ice House

August 14: USFSA test session at Crystal Ice House

August 28 through January 3: Fall Wagon Wheel Ice Contract (Thursdays, 5-6 and 6-7 p.m.; Saturdays, 7-8 and 8-9 a.m.) Northbrook Sports Center continues to provide Sunday Wagon Wheel ice from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

September 5-7: 2003 Greater Chicagoland Fall Invitational (GCFI) Annual Competition sponsored by Wagon Wheel at the Northbrook Sports Center. Call Ann Stellato as 847-298-6557 for information, or download the application from the club's website, www.wwfsc.com.

Wagon Wheel Contacts

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