



Competition and Testing Tips for Parents

Presented by the
U.S. Figure Skating Parents Committee

Tonight's Presenters:

- Linda Ogawa, Chair of the Parents Committee and U.S. Figure Skating Official
- Heidi Thibert, PSA Staff and PSA Master Rated Coach, and Club Board Meeting
- Mark Ladwig, Olympian, World and International Competitor
- Karen Terry Perreault, U.S. Figure Skating Official and SafeSport Sub-Committee Chair



Tonight's Agenda

- Overview of Preparing for Competitions and Tests
- Characteristics of Supportive Parents
- Coaches Expectations of Parents
- Tips and Information on International Travel
- Role of Officials, Communication With and Myths About



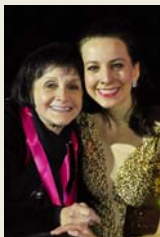
Competitions and Tests

- ✓ Teaches goal setting
- ✓ Offers tangible measurement of progress and accomplishment
- ✓ Opportunities to make new friends
- ✓ Life lessons – sportsmanship, overcoming setbacks
- ✓ Fun



Parent's Role in Skater's Support Team

- Time Management/Schedule Coordinator
- Transportation
- Finances
- Emotional Support
- Role Model



Competition/Testing Entry Tips

- Read the competition announcement or test application
- Understand rules, test requirements and results
- Be aware of entry deadlines for entry forms, practice ice, pictures, music
- Coach approval of events and levels
- Monitor LOC website for updates and changes
- Notify U.S. Figure Skating/LOC of coaching changes for proper credentialing and monitoring of coach compliance



Travel and Transportation Tips

- Coordinate travel/hotel with coaches, skating partner/team
- Know your way before you go – directions to rink, hotel, practice facilities, restaurants, supermarkets
- Check the weather and plan for travel delays
- Pack for contingencies (extra tights, laces, music)
- If skater travels without parent – provide medical releases, allergy and medication information, emergency contacts – per SafeSport Program refer to Travel Guidelines www.usfigureskating.org/safesport



Competition/Test Organization Tips

- Create a competition checklist
- Competition emergency kit (sewing kit, safety pins, Band aids, extra laces, tights, stones and glue)
- Organize/pack the night before
- Coordinate with coach regarding warm-up and meeting times
- Arrange times for relatives/friends to meet after event/test is over



Creating a Positive Experience

- Emphasize and compliment positive achievements
- Acknowledge disappointments then look forward to new goals
- Allow time to enjoy the moment –cheer on other skaters/teams, make new friends, have fun!
- Create positive team spirit – participate in rink/club exhibitions, send-off parties, good luck signs/banners
- Become involved – volunteer!

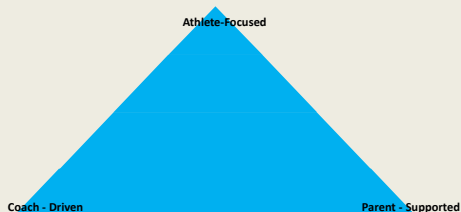


Characteristics of Supportive Parents...

- Focus on skill mastery rather than competition placements
- Decrease the pressure to win
- See sport as an opportunity for self-development
- Communicate effectively to child, coach and club
- Understand your role in supporting your child



Triad: "Athlete-Focused; Coach-Driven; Parent-Supported"



Test Sessions & Competitions

- The Decision
- The Goal
- The Preparation
- The Cost
- The Support
- The Performance
- The Outcome



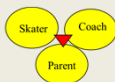
The Decision

- Coach/parent/skater team discuss/decide
- Correct level and on time
- Read the entry forms
- Signatures and approvals
- Completed entry



The Preparation

- Coach/parent/skater team agree on goal
- Travel plans
- Practice ice plans
- Identify potential stressful situations
- Equipment check
- Supplies (check-list)
- Coach prepares athlete for performance
- Athlete follows coach's directions
- Parent supports both athlete and coach



The Cost

- Coach
 - Coaching Policies
 - Expectations
 - Fees
 - Payment details
- Parent
 - Understanding
 - Agreement
 - Plan ahead
 - Follow through



The Support

Parents and coach together should:

1. **Redefine winning as:**
 - Making maximum effort
 - Continuing to learn and improve
 - Refusing to let fear and mistakes stop athlete
2. **Fill the skater's "emotional tank"**
 - Give feedback constructively within the respective roles of coach and parent
 - Provide unconditional support
 - Reinforce effort
3. **Communicate the principles of fair play by respecting:**
 - Rules of sport and directions of the coaches
 - Competitors and other skaters at all levels
 - Officials
 - Cooperation
 - Fairness and honesty
 - Importance of effort over outcome



The Performance

Coach's Role:

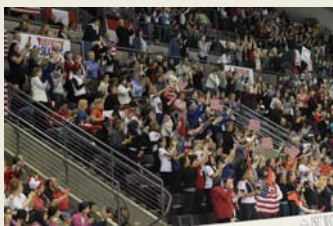
- ✓ Communicate directions
- ✓ Communicate expectations
- ✓ Be present when possible



The Performance

Parent's Role:

- ✓ Arrive on time
- ✓ Have supplies
- ✓ Registration
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Information
- ✓ Time keeper
- ✓ Observer & cheerleader



The Performance

Athlete's Role:

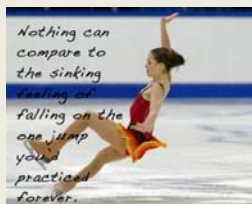
- ✓ Mindset
- ✓ Check-in with Ice Monitor
- ✓ Program Orientation (judges)
- ✓ Off-ice Warm up
- ✓ On-ice Warm up
- ✓ Off-ice Cool Down
- ✓ Results & Awards



Coach/Parent Interaction

Avoid Common Pitfalls:

- Communication
- Interference
 - Criticism of the coach or parent
 - Competition with the coach or parent
- Negativity
 - Modeling behavior
 - Comparison
- Blame



The Outcome

Coach and Parents should:

- ✓ Remember the benefits of the challenge
- ✓ Put the event in perspective
- ✓ Reinforce importance of effort over outcome
- ✓ Emphasize continuing to learn and improve
- ✓ Commend for refusing to yield to fear
- ✓ Give positive feedback
- ✓ Provide unconditional support



Major Events:

- **Make a plan!!!**
- Week before traveling : **Check 7-Day forecast** for appropriate clothing
- Carry-on necessary items (costumes, medicine, **skates**)
- Flights departing U.S. usually okay to carry-on skates, International connections & returns do not allow skates on.
- Photocopy of **passport** in luggage
- Dietary needs- *1 pack of Granola bars you like goes along way*
- **Allergies**- printed card identifying allergy for restaurant personal to help accommodate, Epi-Pen, Benadryl, etc.
- **Family phone numbers on sheet of paper (DEAD CELL)**
- **Credit Cards are nearly universal and best exchange rate**, but bring some cash, banks internationally usually convert if needed.
- **Small amount** of emergency cash in safe place (<\$100)
- Check with **Phone** company to allow use internationally



Internationals-Worlds-Olympics

- This is your child's "Work"
 - Sight seeing is secondary. (Stay +1 Day)
 - Attendance watching other events of Team USA is not mandatory, but encouraged.
 - Access to your child may be limited
- U.S. Team will have a Team Leader
 - Rigorous selection process to be assigned
 - Passed Background check / usually U. S. Figure Skating Official
 - They guide athletes at competitions with schedules, logistics of transportation, special needs.



Event Officials

- Technical Panel
 - Technical Controller
 - Technical Specialist
 - Assistant Technical Specialist
 - Data Operator
 - Video Replay Operator
- Judges and referee



Technical Panel Roles

- Purpose
 - Identify elements
 - Identify levels
 - Agreement between at least two out of three (specialists and controller)
- Field of play calls



Judge and Referee Roles

- Referee
 - Create schedule, write competition report (chief)
 - Run and administer the event (e.g., time the programs, communicate with tech panel, stop programs if there is a problem, assist with injured skaters, etc.)
 - Determine if ice conditions are safe
- Judges
 - Evaluate quality of elements (GOE)
 - Evaluate the quality of the skating, program and performance (components)



Who to Contact with Questions about Results

- Technical Panel
 - Technical Controller
- Judging panel
 - Referee (who will reach out to individual judges on the panel)
- Coach should be the contact person instead of parent whenever possible



How to Interpret Results: Elements

- Each element will be called by the technical panel and, where relevant, assigned a level
- The judges will evaluate the quality of the element and assign it a GOE
- GOEs range from -3 to +3. An element executed correctly, that does not have significant errors or achieve positive bullets receives a 0
- Judges use objective criteria to evaluate, but it is still a subjective evaluation (e.g., may differently evaluate good height, poor landing, traveling on spin, etc.)



Competition Element Example

Sample elements from a juvenile girls program

1A		0	0	1	0	1
2Lz	e	-1	-2	-1	-2	-2
2F		-3	-3	-3	-3	-3
CCoSp2		0	0	0	0	1
ChSt		1	1	1	0	1
2Lz + 2Lo	e	-2	-2	-1	-2	-2
2F + 3SEQ		0	0	0	0	0
LSp1		1	1	1	0	1
2S*		-	-	-	-	-



How to Interpret Results: Components

- The judges assign marks ranging from 1- 10 on each of the five components
 - Skating skills
 - Transitions
 - Performance and execution
 - Choreography
 - Interpretation
- Components are evaluated on a standard, global scale
- There is no "range" of components for a particular event; however, lower level skaters tend to score lower in components than senior level competitors because they are at a developmental stage



Competition Component Example

Sample components from a juvenile girl's program

Skating Skills	3.25	3.25	3.25	2.75	2.75
Transitions	2.5	1.75	2.0	2.25	2.0
Performance and Execution	3.5	3.0	3.25	3.5	2.75
Choreography	3.75	3.5	3.75	3.5	2.5
Interpretation	2.5	3.0	3.25	3.5	2.25



How to Interpret Results: Tests

- Pre-preliminary: pass/retry
- Preliminary – Senior: Moves in the Field
 - Each element is marked according to a standard
 - All elements are evaluated independently; scores for all elements add up to a total score that results in a pass/retry
 - Test cannot pass if there is a serious error
- Preliminary – Senior: Freeskate
 - Two marks given – technical and component
 - When totaled, marks must reach standard for level
- Comments
 - Judges write comments after each element that should provide constructive criticism for how to improve element
 - use comments as a guide for improvement



Test Paper Example

Juvenile Moves in the Field Test, element 1
(Passing Average, 3.0; Passing Total: 18.0)

Move	Score	Comment
Stroking: Forward power circle (Focus: Power) Starting from standing position, skater will perform fwd crossovers progressively increasing in foot speed & acceleration throughout entire move, from a slow but gradually accelerating pace to fully accelerated crossovers. As skater accelerates, circle circumference increases. Power circles are performed both in counterclockwise & clockwise directions. It is recommended that no more than 15 crossovers be utilized in completing each portion of this move.	2.8	Good control, but skater needs to improve power; did not accelerate enough in the clockwise direction



Myths about Judges

- A certain judge “hates” my skater
 - Not likely to be true; judges are trained to evaluate what they see on the day
 - Some judges may under-mark a skater consistently; may be evaluating quality of elements as poor (e.g., evaluate wrap as poor air position; mark down for under-rotated jumps)



Myths about judges (cont.)

- Judges are not approachable, scary
 - Judges volunteer because they enjoy the sport
 - Most want, and look forward to, helping skaters
 - Want to see skaters improve, do what they can to assist
 - Most judges are very approachable!



Myths (cont.)

- It is easier to pass tests as certain rinks, clubs
 - Major effort underway to train prospective judges consistently across the country
 - All judges must pass exams about skating standards
 - Passing a test when not ready is a disadvantage; difficulty in reaching standards at competition



Myths (cont.)

- The tech panel was wrong; my skater was going for a higher level than was awarded
 - Common reasons for receiving lower levels than planned:
 - Spins - Levels not called because they didn't conform to the rules (e.g., repeating a variation); skater did not perform the variation in the correct position; skater didn't go required number of revolutions
 - Steps – lack of edges on turns, didn't complete the attempted turns or steps



Myths (cont.)

- The judges were wrong; my skater completed the element and still received negative GOEs
 - Elements may be completed and still receive negative GOEs. Common problems include:
 - Jumps – under-rotation, wrong edge take off, poor air position, error on landing
 - Spins – traveling, poor position, slow spin, re-centering, poor fly
 - Steps – poor edge quality, not in time to music



U.S. Figure Skating Webpage "Parents" Tab

- Parents Committee
- Resources for the Responsibilities of a Skating Parent
- Parent Survival Guides I, II, III
- U.S. Figure Skating Parents Code of Conduct
- Hiring Coaches; Changing Coaches
- Conflict Resolution and more...



Parent Code of Conduct



CLUB/PROGRAM is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for members' physical, emotional and social development and ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

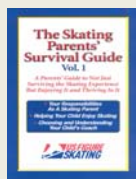
By signing below I hereby agree that:

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship by my actions, demonstrating positive support for all skaters, coaches, and officials at every practice, competition and test session.
2. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child and others ahead of my desire to win.
3. I will encourage my child to skate in a safe and healthy environment by maintaining a respectful and courteous attitude to others.
4. I will become familiar with the rules of the U.S. Figure Skating and teach my child accordingly.
5. I will support and respect all skaters and their right to participate.

To find the entire document, go to www.usfigureskating.org/safesport



Parent Education Survival Guides



Responsibilities
'Skate For Life'
Sportsmanship
Group Lessons
Next Steps

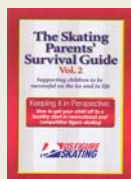
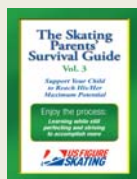


Figure Skating Pipeline
Coaching
Life Balance
6.0 Judging System



Off ice Training / Injury Prevention
Goal Setting
Sleep
Skating Expenses
IJS

www.usfigureskating.org

- "Athlete" tab
 - STARS Off-ice Testing and Guidebooks
 - Athlete Funding Opportunities
 - Camps / Training Tips
- "Clubs" tab
 - Resources for Club Management
 - SafeSport Program
- "Coaches" tab
 - Coach Compliance Requirements
 - List of Compliant Coaches
- "Events" tab
 - Find An Event search
 - Qualifying Structure
- "Programs" tab
 - Synchro, TOI, Showcase, Icemen, Solo Dance, High School, Graduating Seniors, Collegiate, and more
- "Technical Information" tab
 - Rulebook
 - IJS
 - Technical Notifications
- "Member's Only"
 - Access to member records
 - Update member record!!!

Final Thoughts

- Proper planning reduces stress for all – parent, athlete and coach
- Be flexible and adapt to whatever comes your way
- Remind yourself and your skater to “Enjoy the Moment”
- Kindness, courtesy and good sportsmanship makes events enjoyable for all