



Go Figure!

AUCKLAND ICE FIGURE SKATING CLUB NEWSLETTER

April 2005

Address label

2005 Committee:

Dael Haynes (*President*)
Ph 272 3536

Chris Pulman (*Vice-President*)
Ph 834 6686

Delwyn Watson (*Secretary*)

Nick Winspear (*Treasurer*)

Allen Kuo
Deborah Ley
John Potgieter
Michelle Potgieter
Ray Pulman
Bob Rout
Val Rout
Lenore Thode
Scott Thode

Postal Address

AIFSC
P O Box 15 540
New Lynn
AUCKLAND

Web site

www.aifsc.org.nz

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Contributions to this newsletter are always welcome. Please send articles, items for sale, etc., to Deborah Ley (ley.family@xtra.co.nz).

From the President

With 2005 well underway we approach our first competition: the Autumn Champs being held at Botany Ice Rink on Sunday, 1st May 2005. We will be trialing a "no door charge" policy for this competition so get all your family and friends to come.

Leading up to the competition, an ice sports day is being held at Botany Rink on Sunday, 24th April 2005. All the ice sports will be represented so come along and bring your friends. There will be coaches for all disciplines on the ice to help out and exhibitions during the morning.

Anne Shelton is coming over from Canada to run her "Annie's Edges" course during the first week of the April school holidays. This runs over 3 days and sounds like it will be a fun filled training seminar. The seminar was open to all and we have a large number of our members participating.

Following Anne, Viktor Kudryatsevi will be running a week's extensive training for those skaters invited to attend his workshop. Viktor is from Russia and will help our coaches and skaters with his expertise. This is all very exciting for those involved as many will not have had anyone at Viktor's level coaching them. All these workshops will culminate in our Autumn Champs.

May I take this opportunity of wishing all our skaters well for the 2005 skating year.

Dael Haynes
President: AIFSC

2005 Competition and Holiday Dates

School Holidays	April 15 – May 2	
Triglav Competition	April 14 – 18	Jesenice, Slovenia
Africskate	April 18 – 21	Cape Town, South Africa
Annie's Edges	April 19 – 23	Botany Downs, Auckland
Ice Sports Open Day	April 24	Botany Downs, Auckland
ANZAC Day	April 25	
Autumn Champs	May 1	Botany Downs, Auckland
Queens Birthday	June 6	
Hollins Trophy	June 10 – 13	Sydney, Australia
Queensland State Champs	June 22 – 25	Brisbane, Australia
School Holidays	July 8 – July 25	
Otago/Southland Champs	July 8 - 10	Dunedin
Auckland Champs	July 16 - 17	Botany Downs, Auckland
Centaurus Champs	July 17	Christchurch
NSW State Champs	July 19 - 24	Sydney, Australia
Glenburn Champs	TBA	Avondale, Auckland
North Islands	TBA	Auckland
South Islands	August 12 – 14	Dunedin
Australian Champs	August 20 - 27	Perth, Australia
School Holidays	September 23 – October 10	
New Zealand Nationals	September 26 - 30	Dunedin

Caring for your boots

Although quality materials and proper boot construction are essential for high performance skates, proper boot care can greatly lengthen boot life.

Four factors generally determine how long boots will last: skating level, skater size and weight, type of boot and, most importantly, maintenance and care of boots. If properly cared for, the life of a boot and blade can be dramatically prolonged to maintain the skate's original comfort and performance. For leather boots, it is essential that care be given after every use to best preserve the condition of the skate from the time of purchase. Premature break down caused by material deterioration is the biggest cause of boot wear. Leather deterioration is a result of chemical and thermal forces produced by the feet entering and corroding the leather.

When boots are skated on for an extended period of time they often become wet from perspiration on the inside lining and wet from ice shavings on the outside leather and blades. Composed of 98% moisture and 2% salts and acids, perspiration is a central element in boot corrosion. The foot produces and carries more bacteria than any other part of the body. To prevent these different types of deterioration, perspiration should be wiped from the inside and moisture from the outside of boots, including blades, after every use.

It is often necessary to loosen laces on the boots and pull the tongue forward to allow them to dry at room temperature. When wet skates are stored in skate bags or lockers they quickly become victims of mould, mildew and rotting leather.

The routine use of leather protectants is also a smart way of keeping leather looking and feeling like new.

Boot manufacturers recommend applying, bee's wax (e.g. *Dubbin*, available from most supermarkets) to keep heels and soles from weakening, and a leather conditioner to restore and condition leather uppers. The leather conditioner is used to condition and strengthen leather upper by protecting them from drying and cracking. The natural bees wax protects leather heels and soles from moisture absorption, and also lubricates and preserves leather against drying out and deterioration. Bee's wax will not weaken the leather. After protectants have dried, using a good shoe polish helps bring back the original colour and shine of boot.

Alternative heel and sole protection can be obtained by applying a number of coats of an enamel varnish when the boots are new (i.e., before blades are fitted), however moisture absorption can still be a problem wherever the enamel varnish coating is chipped or cracked through normal wear and tear, and where the blade screws attach to the sole and heel.

The care of blades is no less important than that of boots, since the condition of edges is a key factor in skate performance. Blade guards should be worn as soon as skaters leave the ice. This avoids scraping and chipping blade chrome, which leaves the steel underneath vulnerable to corrosion-causing moisture. After every skating session skaters should remove blade guards, wipe blades dry and then use blade blankets (a.k.a. soakers). This protects skates during storage and absorbs any condensation that occurs as the blades return to room temperature. Finally, regular blade sharpening should be performed to maintain a skate's best performance.

Auckland Skaters Overseas

Two of Auckland Home Club skaters are presently training overseas in preparation for upcoming competitions.

Joel Watson remained in North America after competing in March at Junior Worlds in Canada and is currently training with Coach, Tracey Poletis, at the Ice Skating Development Center in Delaware. The Development Center is experimenting with new jumping equipment which helps skaters jump up to 3 inches higher. Joel is working with some of America's top skaters including Kimmie Meisner - who recently landed a triple axel at US Nationals - and Shaun Rogers - who is attempting quad axels and can land them in harness. Joel is working on new programs to suit the new judging system, now being used in international competitions. Joel will return to New Zealand for our Nationals in September.

Caitlin Haynes has been in South Africa for the last few months. She will be competing in Junior Ladies at the Afriskate Competition in Cape Town on April 18th. Caitlin will be joined by other New Zealand skaters: Morgan Figgins, Cameron Hems and Mathieu Wilson. (See Caitlin's report below)

We wish both these skaters good luck with their training and competitions.

South African News

After a 2 month family holiday, we made our way to Johannesburg where my parents settled me in with my home stay family.

I started training on 28th January 2005. Never ever thought that with such a long break and only having worn my new boots for two weeks before leaving New Zealand that I would suffer so much. I would not recommend this to anyone - having a break and going back with new boots. It was not until the end of February and the purchase of bunga pads that my feet felt slightly normal.

Training is different to New Zealand, in that you do not only do on ice training with your coach, we have stroking lessons with a stroking coach, choreography with a specialized coach, we all go to the gym and do dance classes. The home stay family I stay with do home schooling and they fit their schooling around the classes at the gym and dancing.

We have Sunday and Monday off skating but go to gym on Monday afternoon to start our week. We train every day for two and a half hours in the morning and go to the gym three times a week with a dance class twice a week.

It is just so wonderful having female skaters on the ice to train with who are senior skaters and people we can try to emulate.

I am looking forward to competing at the Afriskate Competition in April which is a fitting way to end my training programme in South Africa. I will be returning to New Zealand with the New Zealand Skating Team after Afriskate and look forward to all the exciting events that are happening in New Zealand over the next few weeks.

Caitlin Haynes

Training in Russia and Four Continents Championships – 2004/2005

On December the 8th 2004, Slava Kuznetsov, Ricky Cockerill, Mathieu Wilson, and I departed New Zealand to go to Russia for training. The total travelling time was about thirty hours to get there so by the time we arrived we were all exhausted. Slava's friend Evgeny picked us up at the airport and delivered us to the hotel Moskvich. We stayed at the hotel for about the first ten days before we managed to get an apartment, which we stayed in for the rest of the time we were in Russia.

Both the hotel and our apartment were very close to the rink. The hotel was about five minutes walk from the ice rink and the apartment was about ten minutes walk. There was a metro station about five minutes walk away from the ice rink which we could use to go nearly anywhere in Moscow.

There were many stores around our local area where we could buy food and anything else we needed. Although there was a problem trying to communicate what we wanted to buy, we all picked up a bit of basic Russian language so that we could get by. After a while the store owners of a few local shops got to know us as we were always buying items from their shops and we tried to explain why we were in Russia.

The first time we went training was the day after we had arrived and it was good to meet all the Russian skaters that we would be training with and the coaches at the rink like Viktor Kudriatsev, and his wife Marina.

The second day of training we brought a whole lot of small New Zealand souvenirs to give to the other skaters to make a good impression. They were generally quite friendly to us, but only a few of them could speak English so it was hard to communicate. On the ice we made sure that we gave them right of way as it was their rink and as guests there we had to respect their need to train.

After this, nine weeks of hard training began. We trained two times per day, six times per week, having Sunday off. Each session we skated was an hour and a quarter long. We did this for nearly the whole time except for a few days when there was either speed skating or figure skating competitions running at the Moskvich ice rink and we were unable to train.

Training in Russia was such a good experience, because all the skaters train so intensely compared to New Zealand and they practically do not stop for the entire session. Also all the skaters were doing triple jumps which was hugely influencing to my attitude on the ice. The triple jumps I already had, Toe loop, Salchow, and Loop all became much more consistent because of the training environment. In practice, Slava obtained many new footwork patterns that we practised a lot, and sometimes we would sort of join in with what Viktor's group was doing.

Marina made two new programs for me. She made my short program first before New Year and my free after New Year. It was really fun, but still hard work making the programs with Marina because she was friendly, and her skating skills were very good. When we were making my programs, often it would be in a different session, so I got to skate three times a day quite a few times.

We also had dance/choreography classes four times per week with a man named Alexander Rhukov. He had been a top Russian dancer and had danced with the top Russian shows all around the

world and now he works at the ice rink helping the skaters with their choreography and presentation. The day before we left Russia he took us to play pool. It was surprising as it was underneath the ice rink. There was a room with about thirty pool tables at the rink and we hadn't known about it until just before we left. It was a shame because we didn't have too much to do when not training and we could have taken some advantage of the available resources.

Training in Russia was really inspiring and motivating. When I was really tired and did not feel like training, after stepping into the ice rink my mood just changed. It was hugely exciting to warm-up while watching world class skaters like Victoria Volchkova, Elena Sokolova and the Russian men's junior champion Alexander Ubsenski train.

By the end of the trip I was starting to get a bit physically tired from all the training, so I was glad to leave and head to South Korea for the Four Continents Figure Skating Championships.

In Korea, our hotel was intriguing, because it was an ocean liner, which had been converted into a hotel and was perched on top of a mountain, and it looked out toward the ocean. It was fascinating and the first night we got there I thought it was quite surreal. But the views were fantastic from so high up. You could see the coast line for miles and far out to sea. Our rooms were very nice as well. I shared with Joel Watson, and Ricky Cockerill had a room to himself.

We started training the day after we arrived, on the Sunday, and we were to skate our short program on Wednesday and free program on Friday. The ice rink was a half an hour bus ride, which seemed excessive at first but after a while I became used to it and it was a good time to mentally prepare before training or unwind, relax, and talk after training. The main arena was impressive and there were a fair number of seats for the spectators. The ice was good to skate on as well. The practice rink was below the main arena and was okay, although the ice didn't feel good and the rink was smaller than average.

Overall the trip was such an awesome experience and I am still digesting all the information I have and trying to put it into use in practise. It was such good experience for my skating and I think I really needed a trip like that at this point in my sporting career.

Tristan Thode

The Four Continents - and most ISU International Events - are now broadcast on ESPN, part of SKY's basic "Start-up Package". -Ed

Autumn Champs Raffle

At the autumn champs we will be doing a fund raising grocery raffle, would every club member please donate one grocery item. This is an easy way for every one to get behind some fund raising for the club. Deborah Ley and Val Rout will be collecting the items; they are at the Botany downs rink most days. Tristan Thode will be at Avondale to collect items. Have a look in the pantry and get behind this fund raising.

Thank you, Deborah Ley

Old Friends Website

This may be of interest to some of our club members. Old Friends has a website with some of our older (and recent) skaters listed on it. Would be good to see some more names registered there.

www.oldfriends.co.nz/social/AucklandIce-Figure-Skating-Club/23659.htm



Name: Ashleigh Gallagher
Grade: Freeskate I
Date of birth: 1st July 1994
Place of birth: New Zealand
Height: 1.4m
Profession: Student
Home club: Auckland
Main training rink: Paradise Botany
Year started skating: 2003
Coach: Michelle Frost
Hobbies: Skating, Scouts, Choir, Cooking, Reading
Main achievements: Being elected House Captain at school this year, Attending 2005 National Scout Jamboree and I am about to compete in my first skating competition.



Gift Boxed Ceramic Skates

AIFSC is pleased to be selling these ceramic gift boxed skates. Each one is handmade in NZ and features a NZ fern on both the box and the heel of each skate. These are beautifully packaged and make perfect gifts for skaters and skating friends overseas. Please note that these are limited in number. Price \$15.00

Please contact an AIFSC committee member or email del.watson@xtra.co.nz

Medal Test Passes

The following skaters passed their Elementary Stroking Tests on Thurs 7th April 2005 at the Botany Ice Arena.

Ashleigh Gallagher, Amber Harries and Alexandra Ley

For Sale

Selection of black boots (no blades)

- Sizes 7C, 2 x 7.5B, 7.5C, 8B
- 10.25" Gold Star blades
- 1 pr white Riedell boots with blades, 7.5A

For prices and further details phone Lenore Thode on 575 7867

AIFSC Tracksuit pants, child's size 10, worn once \$20.00. Also various boys skating pants and costumes. See Delwyn or email watsonfamilynz1@hotmail.com

Figure Skates: Graf Galaxy Extra Light: Ladies size 7 medium (Good condition ~ only worn for 9 months): \$450.00 Ph: 828 4742

Happy Birthday!

Those that have had theirs already, better late than never! To those that haven't had theirs yet – best wishes in the future.

January

Shirley Wong	1
Sydney Plested	7

February

Joanna Cornwall	4
Dee Pulman	7
Guy Pulman	8
Katie Brown	11
Simon Thode	11
Aimee Prendergast	17
Caitlin Haynes	24
Lisa Ting-Yu Kuo	28

March

Joel Watson	5
Aravinda Marinkovich	11
Luella Ware	13
Emma Hudson	19

April

Hannah McAvoy	6
Graeme Sullivan	19
Cathy Wang	25
Jahne Potgieter	25

May

Michelle Potgieter	4
Yuan Tien	15
Maryam Almester	20
Winnie Wong	24
Melissa Gallagher	28

June

Esther Gan	14
Anna Brocklehurst	22