

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Facing growing competition from other activities, StarSkate registration has fallen over 22% in a decade. Is this, as some suggest, a death spiral of plummeting membership and rising prices? Not necessarily.

With 2000 spectators, and dozens of teams, with hundreds of skaters, what I saw at the recent Atlantic Canada Regional Synchro Championships in Newfoundland wasn't a sport on its last legs, but one very much alive and kicking.

Amazingly, excepting four Valley teams, all the others were from NL. I looked at all those bodies, and saw a more secure future for NS figure skating.

Synchro retains kids too shy, too social, or too underprivileged, to skate alone. Without synchro, Clubs lose those skaters, their fees and the team-oriented parents, inclined to fundraise and join Executives.

Let's challenge ourselves to have teams in every Club when NS hosts Regionals in 2017. Let's work, together, to build bigger, wealthier Clubs.

-submitted by Ann Young

Results from Challenge

Pre Novice Ladies

- 48th Nikita White
- 50th Renee Fitzgerald
- 51th Stacey Wallace
- 52nd Amy Hartling

Pre-Novice Men

- 26th Brendan Bent

Novice Ladies

- 31st Hana Marmura
- 35th Rachele Siteman
- 40th Jenna Breckon
- 51st Clara Morin

Novice Dance

- 8th Ashlynn Stairs / Bradley Keeping-Myra

Junior Ladies

- 24th Stephie Walmsley
- 46th Katherine Short
- 47th Haley Warnica
- WD Jennifer Mahoney

Junior Dance

- 17th Matthew Webb/Margo Huen

Senior Men

- 24th Jerrod Myrden



Stairs and Keeping-Myra are 5th at Nationals

Brad Keeping-Myra and Ashlynn Stairs now train at Skate Oakville Training Centre, Ontario under the direction of Mark Bradshaw. They just competed at the Skate Canada Canadian Tire Nationals and were 4th after their compulsories pattern dances and finished 5th overall. A very exciting moment for a team who will be together just one year Feb 15.



Canada Games Clinic Held Jan 2nd and 3rd



Pictured to the left are skaters and clinic conductors who attended the Canada Games Clinic which was scheduled to be held at Shearwater Arena on January 2nd and 3rd. Jan 2nd went ahead at the Shearwater Arena but due to a storm on January 3rd the Shearwater Arena closed. With some fast thinking people and accommodating staff at St Margaret's Bay Arena Skate NS was able to secure ice at their facility and these dedicated skaters, parents and conductors braved the elements to get to the alternate arena on Jan 3rd to complete the Clinic. The Clinic was run by the fabulous conductors Susie McGrigor and Bryce Davidson.

The 21st Annual Karen Norman Memorial



Karen started skating with the Greenwood Club when she was five years old and progressed through Canskate and various programs winning many medals. Her first coach was our very own Club coach, Cheryle Gaston and she is remembered as an exuberant girl with a great love for life. Karen was selected to represent Nova Scotia in Novice Singles at the Canada Winter Games held in Lac St. Jean, Quebec. The Greenwood Skating Club inaugurated the Karen Norman Memorial Skate in 1993, after her untimely death at the age of 23. Her smile and enthusiasm was contagious and it was only fitting that our Club honor her memory by introducing young skaters to the world of competition. The Norman Family donated the Club Trophy to be presented each year to the Valley Club whose skaters have accumulated the most points throughout the day's events. Every skater leaves the rink with medals around their necks!!! The mascot of the Funskafe is one of Karen's favorites...the pink Flamingo! The treat bags received by the skaters are made every year by the Norman family and friends. This event is an opportunity for skaters to shine!



Shelburne County Skating Club
Junior STARSkaters
Photo courtesy of Ken Chetwynd

The Gap between CANSkate and STARSkate One Club's solution

All Clubs' have this dilemma...a CANSkater is almost ready to move up to STARSkate. A whole different world for the parents and the skater: more costly program, extra coaching fees, harder skills and faster skaters on the ice with them. How to make the transition as easy as possible and retain as many skaters as possible???

Yarmouth Skating Club recognized this problem and came up with a Group Junior program. Nothing new though this type of program has been done before so what did they do different?? They dropped the price and applied and received a grant to assist with getting the program up and running without going too far in the red. When Skaters sign up they get 30 minutes group lesson with Skate Canada Coach then the next 30 mins they are to work independently while the older STARSkaters come on the ice to start their session. Depending on which school they are running (Fall, Winter or Spring) the cost is \$50 - \$100. So not a great expense to the parents while giving the skaters exposure to see if they are interested. Only 3 skaters have decided they were not interested in continuing with STARSkate. The grant was only for the 1st year so yes they do run in the red on this program but they have increased STARSkate numbers by 70%. So the take away from how this worked for this Club is yes they loss money on this program but they gain more: An increase in numbers in STARSkate, long term stability of the Club, more parents/ volunteers and more PA's for CANSkate. This may not work for every Club but it worked for Yarmouth SC

Reminder

Skate NS AGM will be held on May 3rd at Cole Harbour Place. All Members are invited to attend Later that evening there will be a Celebration on Ice to celebrate the skaters of all ages in Nova