

## Adult Skating

October 2008



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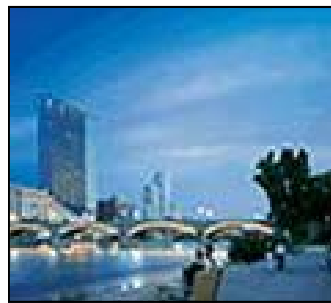
## 2009 U.S. Adult Championships

- by Jenna Graciano

The 2009 U.S. Adult Championships will be held **April 21-25, 2009**, in the beautiful city of Grand Rapids, Mich., and hosted by the [Greater Grand Rapids Figure Skating Club](#) at the [Patterson Ice Center](#).

Grand Rapids is known for outdoor fun, and a variety of enjoyable activities and attractions. When taking a break from the ice, there are hiking trails, bike trails, parks, beaches and boating opportunities in the lush, green beauty of Grand Rapids. The Grand Rapids Museum of Art holds more than 5,000 works of art, including Durer prints and Picasso paintings. Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park is one of the Midwest's largest tourist attractions, featuring Michigan's largest tropical conservatory, tranquil trails, gardens and world-class sculptures. Other places to visit are the John Ball Zoo, which has

the largest lion exhibit in the nation; Nelis' Dutch Village, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Netherlands theme park village; Michigan's Adventure Amusement Park; and Lake Michigan.



Additional practice ice will be offered at Griff's Ice House, approximately 20 minutes away by car. Other rinks in the area include the Jolly Roger Ice Club, Kentwood Ice Arena and Southside Community Ice

Center.

Temperatures in April range from 35-57 degrees Fahrenheit, so come prepared with layers of warm clothes. There is plenty to see and do during your off-ice time. Take the opportunity to enjoy the city of Grand Rapids, Mich.!

**Entries will be available online Nov. 20, 2008, at U.S. Figure Skating.**

Schedules, results, videos, pictures and athlete articles will be on [www.icenetwork.com](http://www.icenetwork.com).

For more information on Grand Rapids, Mich., please visit: [www.grandrapids.mi.us](http://www.grandrapids.mi.us).

## On Being *Bronze* . . . by Heather Ross

**"I just have to remember that I'm there to have fun."**  
- Melissa Bighi, *Bronze Ladies Class II*

Melissa Bighi will be in Las Vegas for the Pacific Coast Adult Sectional Championships in February 2009. Bighi, 36, has competed in a few local competitions in the Phoenix area at the pre-bronze and bronze levels since she began skating a few years ago, but the 2009 competition season will be her first foray outside of her local adult skating community.

"I never competed in an individual sport like this as a child," said Bighi, who represents the

Coyotes Skating Club of Arizona. She notes that performing alone on the ice is far different than the team sports she enjoyed in her youth.

Bighi is looking forward to skaters from other parts of the country at adult sectionals and the U.S. Adult Championships. "It's nice to be able to compare yourself to other people," she says. "I try not to think about the judges, though."

Looking ahead to the 2009 season, Bighi tries to avoid making her goals competition focused. "I hope to do my best and skate clean programs," she said. "That's the only expectation I can have."

## Rule Changes/Updates

Click [here](#) for 2008-09 Governing Council updates, test qualifications and dance selections.

### NEW FOR 2009

**Solo dance:** Check [details](#) for solo dance, and try this new event!

**Interpretive:** Prop rule clarifications - please read [2009 AN announcement](#) for details.

#### Championship Masters:

Divided into two categories — 1) Intermediate-Novice 2) Junior-Senior

#### Eligibility and Ages (2008-09 Rulebook):

Age categories have been adjusted (Rule 3292)

Tests qualifications now include adult tests OR standard tests passed (Rules 3730 through 3820)

Class I: 21 years through 30 years

Class III: 41 years through 50 years

Class V: 61 years and over

Class II: 31 years through 40 years

Class IV: 51 years through 60 years

*"Some artists paint with watercolors, oils and pastels. Others, 200 feet of ice."*

### Smart Training Designed For Adult Athletes

By: Kianoosh Samii

You have decided to compete at the U.S. Adult Championships. Whether in singles, pairs, interpretive, dance or solo dance, whether you're a seasoned competitor or first time entry, you need to train to be your best. Below is a guideline to training with specific goals in mind.

**Time Management:** Organizing your training schedule is key. How many months until you compete? In a short time span, you can create a decent training schedule, but ideally you should have 10-11 months. How many hours weekly will you train? Will this vary during the season? Will you be able to increase training closer to the competition? Quality practice matters more than the number of hours. Seasoned coaches and competitors tend to break training into four phases.

**Phase 1 - Back to Basics and Fundamentals** (June-August): The objective is to sharpen skating skills, edge work, turns, jumps, speed, power and flow, etc. Moves-in-the-field exercises are helpful tools, as is attending adult training camps during this phase. For pairs or dance, this is a good time to spend extra off-ice time practicing lifts. Enter this phase with specific goals. Talk to your coach and summarize feedback from fellow skaters and judges to identify and improve weak links in your skating. Smoothing transitions and enhancing your presentation skills and posture are often cited by coaches and adult skaters as common goals. By the end of this phase, you should have a series of steps, edge work and stroking to use as a five-minute, on-ice warm-up at every practice. Training should also include selecting and editing music, designing costumes and cross training off-ice (ballet, yoga, stamina-building, etc.). Do not neglect eligibility paperwork (non citizen, former professional skaters, etc.).

**Phase 2 - Choreography** (September-December): Revise an old program or start a new one, especially if competing in multiple events. Assembling program components to music can be helpful. Ice dancers should be preparing compulsory dances to music and working on introduction and ending steps. This is a good time to test stamina. Two months from now will be too late. Holiday-season rink schedules begin scheduling more public sessions. Take advantage of ice time before then. If you have stayed on schedule, you are doing well. Your program/free dance may still need work, but you should at least have compulsory dances completed, qualifying tests passed and lifts, step sequence, spins and jumps in place.

(Cont. page 3)



### Reminders of 2008 Changes

\*\* Skaters may enter a maximum of four events, including championship events. If qualifying for championship event(s) puts the skater over the four-event limit, he/she shall choose which event(s) he/she wishes to withdraw from without financial penalty.

\*\* Interpretative free skating is divided into two separate events:

- 1) Artistic/Dramatic Interpretative and 2) Light Entertainment/Comedy.
- Skaters may enter BOTH events but may not switch events after entering.*

**Working with Adults: More Fun Than Should Be Allowed - by Mickey Bolek**

When I started working with my coach Barb Walker and her ice dance partner Tim Bookwalter a year ago, our student/teacher bond was instant. We work two to three days weekly, and workouts are focused, intense and definitely fun. I look forward to having Barb and Tim there as I compete in my first U.S. Adult Championships in 2009. Barb possesses the qualities of a great adult skating coach. She is patient and technical, she truly understands the mindset and limitations of adults, and she knows how to push past them. I look forward to my lessons and progress, and am truly lucky to have Barb in my life. I recently spoke with Barb about her teaching and skating career.

MB: How long have you been skating and teaching?

BW: I've been skating for 30 years and teaching for 11 years.

**Coaches' Corner**

MB: What discipline do you enjoy teaching the most?

BW: I enjoy teaching people who want to learn, in dance, moves or freeskate. Wanting to learn is the first step to success. A student who is focused on goals is a big plus. Many adults skate because it is an escape from daily life.

MB: What encouraged you to teach as a full-time profession?

BW: I always knew I would teach. In 1997, I started part time after being an accountant for 10 years. I was frustrated at work and had a one-hour commute. My few skating lessons were really fun and interesting, and a year and a half later I quit my job to teach skating full time. I've been teaching full time for about seven years.

MB: What is the biggest challenge in working with adults?

BW: The biggest challenge is their body. In skating, body alignment is very important, but we have unaligned bodies from habits with walking, sitting and driving. My job is to realign the person and make a better skater.

MB: What do you hope to produce out of the teams you work with?

BW: All my teams are adults, and I hope they choose to compete. I get them comfortable for the season so they feel good about getting out on the ice. Medals are nice, but that's not the main goal. I hope to someday have youth teams.

**U.S. Figure Skating Web Site**

The Adult Skating pages are changing!  
Ideas or suggestions on navigation?  
E-mail Lexi Rohner at [lexisk8@aol.com](mailto:lexisk8@aol.com).

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**Phase 3 – Are We Having Fun Yet? (January- February)**

**SEND YOUR APPLICATION IN ON TIME!**

**Smart Training (cont.)**

Remember why you want to compete, and that you want to have fun. If you aren't having fun, re-evaluate and decide what to change. *A casual U.S. Adult Championships competitors survey determined that adult skaters invest time and money into skating for the camaraderie and fun.* Adult sectionals are a few weeks away. Programs should be completed, and you should be working on presentation, posture and smooth transitions. Begin imagining the audience, judges and your friends (throwing stuffed animals at you). Smile at your audience during practice and rehearse pouring out your emotions.

**Phase 4 – The Home Stretch** (March-April): You're almost there! Run programs back to back and pace yourself as you peak. If you are skating harder than usual, consider cutting back training hours. (For example, skate one hard hour instead of two.) With a month left before the U.S. Adult Championships, the competitive advantage of sectionals offers the benefits of judges feedback and a professional performance video. You can also relax before polishing your program. Avoid risking injuries, as you will have little recovery time. A smart training plan will help you feel good about yourself and your program, and enjoy the anticipation of arriving at competition, seeing old friends and making new ones. You are about to have the time of your life! (\*\*If you miss sectionals and head straight to the U.S. Adult Championships, you're still in the final weeks of phase three.)

**Performance Optimization:** Diet and nutrition are key elements in training. The right diet can optimize your training, and a poor diet can easily chip away your hard work and desired results. Your training objective is to improve your skating and be prepared to be your best when you step on the ice. Good luck!

*A d u l t S k a t i n g  
C o m p e t i t i o n C a l e n d a r*

**October 2009**

**25 – Buckeye Adult Figure Skating Open, FSC of Cincinnati**

**November 2008**

**1 – Halloween Classic, IceWorks SC**

**January 2009**

**TBD – Star of Texas Adult Open, Houston, Texas**

**February 2009**

**7 – New Year's Adult Invitational, Washington FSC**

**20 – Eastern Adult Sectional Figure Skating Championships,  
Hillsborough, N.C.**

**20 – Midwestern Adult Sectional Figure Skating Championships,  
Wyandotte, Mich.**

**20 – Pacific Coast Adult Sectional Figure Skating Championships,  
Las Vegas, Nev.**

**TBD – Deborah Burgoyne North American Invitational,  
Wyandotte FSC**

**April 2009**

**21-25 – U.S. Adult Championships, Grand Rapids, Mich.**

**May 2009**

**28-30 – ISU Adult International Competition, Obertsdorf, Germany**

**June 2009**

**TBD – Mountain Cup Adult Open and Training Camp, Villard de Lans, France**

**September 2009**

**TBD – Peach Classic, Atlanta, Ga.**

**\*\* Many open and club competitions nationwide also include adult open events.**

*Adult Skating*

*Committee*

*Mission Statement*

*It shall be the responsibility of the  
Adult Skating Committee to:*

*Encourage and support the growth  
of figure skating for adults;*

*Create and encourage the creation  
of programs addressing the needs  
of the adult skating  
community;*

*Work in conjunction with the Com-  
petitions Committee to  
continue the development of the  
U.S. Adult Figure Skating  
Championships and other adult  
competitive opportunities.*

**What to Expect  
at Competition**

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**Adult Skating Committee Contacts**

U.S. Figure Skating has an extensive volunteer network of committees supporting all disciplines and aspects of figure skating. The Adult Skating Committee (ASC) is dedicated to the growth and advancement of adult skating within U.S. Figure Skating. Committee representatives exist in most areas of the country, and are a valuable resource in assisting adult skaters with information regarding testing, clubs, rule interpretation and, most of all, networking with other adult skaters. To reach an ASC member near you, or to become involved, please visit [www.usfigureskating.org](http://www.usfigureskating.org) and click on "Programs" for Adult Skating, or click [here](#).

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