

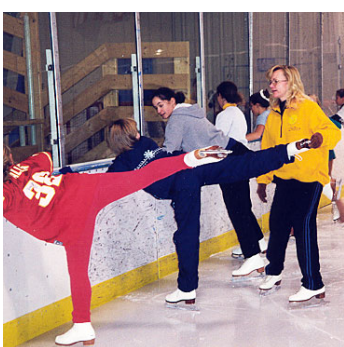
Clubs Matter

Figure Skating 101: Welcoming New Skaters into Your Club

Have you ever looked out onto the ice during Basic Skills classes, with all of the ice zones full, and wondered, "Where does everyone go after these sessions are completed?" Yes, the role of the Basic Skills Program presented by Marshalls is to introduce the public to the fun of skating, but it is also to feed the other "next step" programs such as figure skating clubs.

Offering a Bridge Program is the essential link to retaining these beginning skaters in the sport of figure skating and welcoming them into your club. A Bridge Program is custom designed to teach skating skills at a faster pace in a group-lesson environment and to introduce the benefits of club membership – all in a package program with a set fee.

Summertime, when ice is more available, is an ideal time to implement this program. Skaters from the winter and spring group lesson program will register for a Bridge Program that offers them an opportunity to learn at a faster rate, pass tests and be on the ice more than once a week in their restricted class zones.



Your club can offer these skaters a one-year introductory club membership fee that will register them as full club members and entitle them to receive the full benefits of U.S. Figure Skating. The package price for the program should be higher than the group lesson fees in your area but not so high so as to discourage people from joining.

Unique aspects of a Bridge Program include an introductory meeting before the first class and at least one other mandatory parent education session to discuss important topics such as:

- Proper equipment – recommendations on where to shop
- Appropriate attire – practice, testing and competition attire
- Ice etiquette and practice habits – skater code of conduct
- U.S. Figure Skating testing and competitive structures
- Preparing for a skater's first competition
- Benefits of joining a figure skating club
- Club programs and services
- Volunteer opportunities
- When and how to select a private coach

If you can, include special presenters to explain these topics in more detail. These individuals can include your club president, membership chair, boot and blade expert, parent of a high-level or elite skater or a U.S. Figure Skating official.

The skating curriculum should be specific to the ability of the enrolled skaters. If you include some of the lower Basic levels, make sure the emphasis is on the Badge curriculum so the participants can pass those classes and earn their badges. At the conclusion of the session you could also have a judge test those skaters who are ready for their pre-pre moves (full membership required).



The on-ice skating curriculum could also include:

- Proper stretching techniques
- Stroking and edges
- Introductory moves in the field
- Introductory dance
- Spins
- Jumps
- Artistry in Motion – choreography class
- Circuit classes that rotate around the rink
- Off-ice warmup and cool-down exercises before/after practice time

You can run this type of program as a full eight-week session, one-day camp, special workshop or as a class on club or open free skating times. It has been the experience of some clubs that up to 80 percent of the Bridge Program participants join the club and stay in skating.

This program introduces skaters to a "training program" and offers them an introduction to all of the elements in skating and what is required of them if they choose to continue to skate recreationally or competitively. Parents will be eased into the expense involved with the sport. Parent meetings should be encouraged, with the purpose being to educate parents about their future involvement in figure skating.

Try it – it really works!

A U.S. Figure Skating Bridge Program manual is available from Headquarters with more detailed information, lesson plans and worksheets to help you organize your Bridge Program. If you have any questions, please contact Susi Wehrli, senior director of membership, at swehrli@usfigureskating.org.

Kathy's Corner

Message from Kathy Drevs, Director of Member Services

Club Officer Updates - We're working hard to get this information to you prior to Governing Council. The forms will be mailed to the club secretary, so please watch your mail carefully so that none of this important information slips by.

Renewal Packets – We are also putting together the renewal packets for the 2007-2008 season. If you are preparing your club's renewal information, remember that the 2007-2008 fees are \$35 for first family members and \$12 for subsequent members in the same household. As we ready ourselves for the new season, be sure to register your officials and competitors first.

Insurance – Effective immediately, we have a new insurance broker. If you have questions, please send them to MemberServices@usfigureskating.org, and we will forward them to the appropriate person. The coverage is not changing, but we do need to update forms that we are in the process of completing.

As always, feel free to contact us at MemberServices@usfigureskating.org any time you have a question.

Need More Volunteers? Just Ask!

— Use a Prospective Volunteer Information Sheet —

Now is the perfect time to pass out a prospective volunteer information sheet to your members as they sign up for the next skating season. You probably do not know all the professions, talents and hobbies of your members and their extended families, but it would be much easier to find people to fill specific jobs or roles if you did. Keep these on file and when you need jobs filled, go directly to those with the appropriate expertise.

[Sample Prospective Volunteer Information Sheet](#) (PDF)

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Club Education

May 3, 2007 – Reno, Nev., at the Governing Council meeting
Registration form: Go to U.S. Figure Skating Online, then Clubs, then Club Education Seminars.

NARCE Skating Director Program

May 14-16, 2007 – Chicago, Ill.
The Skating Director Program presented by U.S. Figure Skating is designed for figure skating program directors, administrators and instructors who aim to offer the highest level of service and opportunity through their figure skating program. This program will teach the participants how to use the full array of U.S. Figure Skating programs to create a successful and financially viable figure skating program, from the basics to high-level competitive programming.

Registration form: Go to U.S. Figure Skating Online, then Programs, then Basic Skills, then either For Instructors or For Skating Directors, then the Resources box.

Share Your Great Ideas!

If you would like to share a success story with other clubs about a specific program, fundraiser, scholarship award program, governance issues or membership drive, and in the process generate a some publicity for your club, please write a short article (include pictures if possible) and send to Susi Wehrli at swehrli@usfigureskating.org. We will post responses to initiate a new forum for our clubs to share ideas with one another.

