

Clubs Matter

New Event Piloted for Nonqualifying Competitions

Have you noticed lately a drop in competition entries? Here is a proposed new event to encourage those athletes who may have lost interest in higher-level competition to test their skills against skaters of similar ability. The purpose of this added event is to create a new Competitive Test track that limits the difficulty of skating elements performed in each level. The Competitive Test track will align the test structure requirements with the competition levels, allowing our test-level skaters a fair playing field to continue competing and testing according to their current abilities.

Skaters may choose to participate in either the Competitive Test track or Freeskate track but not both during the same nonqualifying competition. The 6.0 judging system will be used for this new track. This will replace the Basic Skills FS competitive events and direct skaters from the Basic Skills badge levels into the Competitive Test track or Freeskate track.

U.S. Figure Skating has the responsibility of and mandate for selecting skaters for the World and



Olympic teams, hosting national championships at all qualifying levels and sanctioning all competitions within the United States. It has only been within the last 20 years that the qualifying structure was expanded for the lower levels and adults to make it more inclusive. While not all skaters are competitive at the highest levels, many have a passion for the sport and want to test their skills in a competitive environment. The purpose of the Competitive Test track is to encourage participation and retain skaters who may be discouraged by the high level of technical elements at a particular level.

Adding an alternative event for restricted competition will encourage these skaters, offer them opportunities for success in a competitive atmosphere while continuing to progress through the test structure, beef up their credentials for future endeavors and retain membership in U.S. Figure Skating. We will be offering more opportunities to keep skaters motivated along the pipeline and enthusiastic about their abilities.

Competitive Test track flow chart: <http://www.usfigureskating.org/content/FlowChart.pdf>
Competitive Test track level descriptions: <http://www.usfigureskating.org/content/Levels.pdf>

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Club Education

Upcoming Club Education Seminars:
 March 25, 2007 – Hallowell, Maine
Registration form: Go to U.S. Figure Skating Online, then Clubs, then Club Education Seminars.

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.



Kathy's Corner

Kathy Drevs, Director of Member Services

The 2007-2008 membership year will begin July 1. The members-only renewal site will open June 1 and Headquarters will also begin processing that same day. All judges and officials must be current registered members before they act in any capacity for the association. That means that after July 1 they must have a 2008 membership paid at Headquarters before serving any test session or competition.

Remember, the member registration fees will increase for the 2007-2008 season. The cost will be \$35 for first family members and \$12 for each subsequent member in the same household. Be sure to take this into consideration when setting your club dues. Also, the proxy deadline for Governing Council is April 13. If your delegates cannot attend, please assign your votes to someone who will be there so your club still has a voice in the governance process. Also coming in April are the annual club officers update forms. Keeping this information current is crucial to our operation as well as yours. When the forms arrive, please pay close attention to the deadlines. As always, feel free to contact us at MemberServices@usfigureskating.org any time you have a question.

Tips on Running a Better Board

The Board Meeting Rescue Kit: 20 Ideas for Jumpstarting Your Board Meetings (From Board Source, www.boardsource.org)

The goal for board meetings is to provide an opportunity for the board to get an accurate and complete report on what's going on within the organization. While these ideas may or may not relate to the way your club is run, they will hopefully get you to think about ways you can help your board and, ultimately, make your club more effective.

Before your meetings:

1. Establish Rules of Conduct
2. Draft recommendations
3. Require some advance reading
 - The organization: mission and history
 - The board: a roster of current members, job descriptions, a statement of responsibility, term limits, etc.
 - Committees: job descriptions and a listing for standing committees and task forces
 - Legal documents and policies
 - Finances: appropriate financial statements and a copy of the budget
 - Strategic framework: a summary of the organizations strategic framework, an annual operating plan and the long and short-term goals of the organization
 - Programs and services: an overview of the organization's programs and services, a staff list (if appropriate) with job titles
 - Upcoming events: a calendar of special events, board meetings

During your meetings:

4. Stay on topic
5. Use consent agendas
6. Focus on decision making
7. Involve all board members
8. Make sure the facilitator remains neutral
9. Hold meetings at a suitable site
10. Consider the seating arrangements
11. Keep finances understandable
12. Focus on the mission
13. Make the most of the minutes
14. Let the board members learn from others
15. Have a good time

After your meetings:

16. Encourage reflection
17. Encourage good attendance
18. Encourage relationship building
19. Get help when you need it
20. Encourage open communication

If you are interested in purchasing the full version of this publication or seeing what other items are available to assist your board, contact the Board Source at 800.883.6262 or on the web at www.boardsource.org.