



Parent Handbook

About this Booklet

Welcome to the Bedford Skating Club (BSC). In this information booklet we will try to provide you with information on the Bedford Skating Club, its background, its programs as well as some basic information and tips on the sport of figure skating. It is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to provide a general introduction to the world of figure skating in Canada.

If, after reading the information provided here, you have questions that remain unanswered, please do not hesitate to contact BSC's Recreational Administrator, Club Program Manager or your child's coach.

CHAPTER 1

The Bedford Skating Club

The Bedford Skating Club (BSC) was originally founded in 1976. Today the club employs one part-time program manager and one part-time recreational administrator and continues to be run by many volunteers. We have a membership of approximately 250 skaters ranging from preschoolers learning to skate through to STARSkate Gold Level, Competitive Skaters and Adult Skaters. A Board of Directors consisting of approximately 15 volunteer members governs the Club. Information on the make-up of the Board is found in Appendix A. The Board meets on a monthly basis to discuss issues and make decisions surrounding the operation of the Club. In addition, an Annual General Meeting is held each spring during which a new Board is elected for the year. This meeting is open to the general public and all parents are encouraged to attend. This is an opportunity for you to understand more about the internal workings of the Club and is also a chance for you to become more involved as a volunteer. As in any organization run by volunteers, we are always looking for more people to contribute by volunteering. Volunteering can be a very satisfying personal experience as you get to contribute to a great organization committed to ensuring your kids have the best skating instruction and development found anywhere. For more information on contributing to the success of the Club and ultimately to your child's skating experience, please see Appendix D or speak to anyone on the Board or call the Club Program Manager. There are many different ways you can contribute. Without the commitment of our volunteers the Bedford Skating Club would not be what it is today.

The Skating Season

BSC runs its sessions from the Dr. Gerald J. LeBrun Arena in Bedford. Our skating season is generally divided as follows:

- Fall/Winter School – October to March
- Spring School – April and May

Our STARSkate and Competitive skaters also skate during the summer on sessions run by other skating clubs.

A separate schedule detailing ice times and costs is produced for each season, generally 3-4 weeks ahead of the start date of the season. Registration information and forms are posted on the club website www.bedfordskatingclub.com

Staying Informed

At the Bedford Skating Club we do our best to try to keep you informed of upcoming news, changes, etc. Due to the diversity of schedules and large number of skaters within our Club it is up to you to keep yourself informed through the Club's web site, rink bulletin boards, Recreational Administrator and Club Program Manager and your skater's coach. We encourage all parents to regularly visit the Club's web site (www.bedfordskatingclub.com) to access program and registration information, ice cancellations, upcoming events, test day and competition results, news, and much more. Watch for the Club's newsletter and the Canskate newsletter, published periodically throughout the year.

The Programs – Where do you fit?

The Bedford Skating Club offers a number of Skate Canada sanctioned programs. Appendix E shows a diagram outlining the programs we offer and the typical progression of a skater who starts at an early age and progresses to a senior skating level. Each of the programs is described in more detail in the next chapter.

Etiquette and Rules

BSC Etiquette & Ice Rules

1. Good sportsmanship is expected at ALL TIMES.
2. Skaters must adhere to the session plan:
 - Dance - skaters are to work on dance or edges
 - Skills – skaters are to work on skills, footwork or field moves
 - Free Skate – skaters are to work on free style (only exception is if there is a dance partner available)
 - Spins – spins only
3. Spins are to be practiced in the centre of the ice between the 2 blues lines and the 4 red circles. Only spin outside this area if you are in a solo run through with the music playing. During the spin session, the full ice surface should be used.
4. All jumps are to be practiced towards the ends of the ice surface unless in a solo run through with music playing.
5. If you fall, get up immediately! Safety is always important.
6. Do not stand in the centre of the ice – keep moving at all times. If you need a break you are to stand at the boards.
7. Priority for music is given to professional coaches.
8. Skaters doing solos have the right of way. Be aware of who is skating a solo and stay out of the way.
9. If you are skating to or from the boards remember to do so quickly and always look left and right before heading into traffic!

10. Only plastic water bottles are allowed at the boards. Please remove all belongings when leaving the ice. No gum chewing or eating permitted.
11. No cell phones, Discmans mp3 players, I-pods, etc will be permitted on the ice. Example, no Discmans to choreograph programs.
12. Please be polite and patient with the individuals who are playing music for you.
13. Please be polite and respectful to other skaters and coaches on the ice.
14. Work hard and have FUN!!

Playing Music

1. A music-playing volunteer parent will be assigned every IceStar and STARSkate session. If the designated parent cannot be present for his/her session, the parent must find a substitute for the session.
2. The designated parent will also look after buy-ins.
3. A fee will be charged to parents who do not fulfill their music playing obligations according to the published schedule.

Attire

1. Female skaters are encouraged to wear skating dress or skirts at all times. On cold days, however, appropriate pants will be accepted – no jeans.
2. Male skaters must wear skating pants at all times.
3. All Skaters must wear warm-up sweaters or fitted jackets. No hoodies permitted on the ice.
4. Long hair must be up (pony tail, braids, etc)

Discipline Guidelines

1. Absolutely no drugs, alcohol or smoking. Skaters breaking this rule will face possible suspension or removal from Bedford Skating Club.
2. Dressing rooms, change areas and other areas around the rink are to be left clean and all debris to be picked up.
3. Treat other people as you wish to be treated.
4. Acts of vandalism to arena premises or equipment belonging to BSC or Centennial Arena will face possible suspension or removal from Bedford Skating Club Spring School.
5. Appropriate attire will be required for all sessions.
6. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
7. Failure to abide by the above guidelines may result in the participant being sent home immediately at his or her own expense and will be denied future programs of the Bedford Skating Club.

Tips on Equipment

Skates

For the beginner, skates need not be expensive. They can be purchased at retail outlets specializing in figure skates. There are also plenty of used skates available. The most important thing for the beginning skater is the fit of the boot. A common mistake is to purchase skates that are too large in order to accommodate extra room for growth. This strategy is not in the best interest of your child as they will not be able to perform to the best of their abilities. To allow for adequate room to grow, a general rule of thumb is to have the child push their foot all the way to the front of the boot with the boot unlaced. You should be able to slide a pencil down between the back of the boot and the child's heel. If there is more than one pencil width of space the boot is probably too large. As a skater moves into the Skate Canada STARSkate Program it is appropriate to move to better quality boots and blades. These can be purchased at local stores specializing in figure skates. Generally you can also find a good selection of used skates at a somewhat lower cost. Specialty stores will have staff experienced in fitting figure skates. Again, the fit of the boot is extremely important for best results.



Skate Care

Skate guards must be worn whenever the skater is walking on any surface other than the ice. Guards should never be left on for extended periods. After use, boots and blades should be towel dried. Guards should be removed when skates are put away to avoid the possibility of rust. Cloth blade covers can also be purchased at a reasonable cost to help protect the blades while the skates are being stored. Skates should be taken out of the skater's bag between skating sessions to allow the boot to dry at normal room temperature to prevent rotting of the leather. Skates should be sharpened periodically; 25 to 30 hours of ice time per sharpening is a good rule of thumb. It is important to choose a reputable skate sharpener as a poorly sharpened blade can cause frustration to the skater trying to master skating skills as well as potentially ruining the blade. Your coach or the Recreational Administrator would be happy to guide you to a reputable skate sharpener. There is a good resale market for figure skates. Figure skating specialty stores will usually be willing to resell skates on consignment when your child is

finished with them. As well, BSC parents periodically hold used skate and dress sales where good quality skates and skating attire can be purchased at a reduced cost.

Clothing & Accessories

Young skaters just beginning lessons should take to the ice comfortably and warmly dressed. Young girls will soon graduate to a skating skirt, warm sweater and leggings while boys will move to a neat sweater and slacks. This approach to clothing will allow the best freedom of movement. Keep in mind that a layered approach usually works best. We do not recommend skaters wear jeans, baggy pants or hoodies for safety purposes as well as comfort while skating. Hair should be pulled back from the face. Most skaters will want to carry a skate bag to organize their skating equipment. Generally the skating bag would contain the following:

- skate guards
- cloth blade covers
- small towel to wipe blades,
- plastic water bottle
- extra mittens/gloves
- extra pair of laces
- kleenex box
- jump rope
- bandaids
- compeed or 2nd skin (helps accelerate healing of blisters)
- large ziplock bags (can be used as ice packs)
- quarters for phone calls
- emergency contact list with name and phone # in the event of an emergency.

CHAPTER 2

Our Programs

CanSkate

CanSkate is a learn-to-skate program designed for the beginning skater four years of age or older. CanSkate is taught in a group format, although it can be supplemented with private lessons (lesson can help your skater move more quickly through the badges so that more choices are available for your skater at a young age). There are 7 badges in the Canskate program that teaches skaters to skate forwards, backwards, stop, turn, spin and jump. Canskate is an excellent starting point for any skater wishing to play hockey, ringette, figure skate or simply learn to skate. Skaters progress at their own speed as coaches test on a continual basis. Skate Canada certified coaches provide a focus on fun that creates the best quality-learning environment possible. As the skater progresses through the stages in the CanSkate program they will become eligible to move into Ice Stars or the Skate Canada STARSkate Program.

Ice Stars

The Ice Star program is intended to provide both the skater and the parent an introduction to Figure Skating. This program runs in conjunction with the CanSkate program and helps accelerate skaters through the badge system and provides a transition to the STARSkate Program. When a skater starts working on Badge 6 they become an Ice Star in the club. They will learn basic edge skills, stroking skills and free skating skills (jumping, spinning, footwork, field movements etc.). Ice Star skaters are taught only by professional coaches in a group setting of 5-7 skaters. For the most part, a professional coach is with the group the whole time. Occasionally the group will practice on their own as the coach tests a skater. If a group is a higher level they may even work on their own for 10-15 minutes on the session. It becomes increasingly important that a skater learn how to practice and spend time on their own due to the structure of the next level in the club. Ice Stars can supplement their group lessons with a private lesson. At any time in Ice Stars a skater can leave the recreational program and move to our Junior session.

Adult Programs

BSC offers a variety of adult skating programs:

1. **Ice breakers/Teen Skate** - A learn-to-skate session for beginning adult skaters. Helmets are mandatory and no experience is required.
2. **Ice Blazers** - For adult skater who has some previous skating experience and is able to skate forwards and backwards without assistance. Helmets are recommended.
3. **Metro Masters** - For the advanced adult skater. Group lesson time is not included; however, skaters are able to book private lessons with professional coaches.

STARSkate Program - Skills, Tests, Achievement, Recognition

The Skate Canada STARSkate Program is often the next step after CanSkate for the skater who is interested in continuing to improve their skating ability. The program consists of four different disciplines of skating: free skate, skating skills, dance, and interpretive skating. This program is characterized by a series of tests as the skater's skills improve. A listing of test categories is included as Appendix E. A skater can work toward becoming a gold medallist in each of the disciplines. The majority of skaters beyond the CanSkate level are registered in this program.

Once a skater enters the STARSkate Program, lessons are arranged directly with the coach. Coaches give individual or semi-private lessons for each skating discipline and lessons usually last 10-15 minutes. The number of lessons your child should take per week will depend on many factors. Some items to consider are the age of the child, how fast your child progresses with new material, how much the parent is willing to spend per week on lessons, the desires of the child etc. Avoid the temptation to compare your child to others when setting lesson schedules. Each child is an individual and their weekly schedule should be set in accordance with their needs and after discussion with their coach. Coaching fees are usually billed monthly throughout the session and are in addition to the BSC registration fee. Professional rates vary from approximately \$6.00 to \$11.00 per 15 minutes depending on the number of years experience, qualifications, personal skating background, educational and certification levels. You can view our list of professionals on our website www.bedfordskatingclub.com under contacts (coaches), a list is also provided in Appendix B.

Competitive Program

The competitive training program is for those skaters who have advanced high enough technically in the Skate Canada STARSkate Program, and who wish to train and compete at higher technical levels. Tests are taken at different levels but each competitive test is more technically demanding than those in the STARSkate Program.

In order to participate in the competitive program skaters must meet specific skill and age requirements:

- Juvenile: must be 11 and under, landing an axel and two doubles
- Pre-novice: landing three doubles to pass test (all to compete) and must also have strong skating ability and good spins.
- Novice: landing four doubles, to compete nationally must have double axel and some triples and must also have strong skating ability and good spins.
- Junior: landing a double axel or a triple jump (need both to compete), must also have strong skating ability and good spins. Must be 18 years or younger.

- Senior: landing a double axel and one triple or two triples (need all to complete). World level competition. Must have strong skating ability and good spins also.

The Disciplines

Free Skating

Free skating is the more exciting and athletic part of figure skating. As mentioned, it is usually the starting point into the STARSkate Program. The duration of free skate ice is normally between 45 minutes and an hour. Normally each child will receive a 15-minute lesson (pre-arranged with with the coach) and will be expected to practice on his or her own for the remainder of the session.

Shortly after starting the free skating program, the coach will choreograph a program to music that they think is suitable for the child. The solo will consist of different jumps and spins with interconnecting footwork and stroking. A one-time fee will be charged by the coach to develop the music and the solo for your child. Each Bedford home club Ice Star and Junior Skater has the opportunity to have the club contribute \$50.00 towards their first solo. The skater must have completed the Canskate Program (all 7 badges) to qualify.

Ice Dancing

Ice dancing is really ballroom dancing on ice. It is distinguished from pairs skating by the absence of jumps, spins and lifts above the shoulders. Each dance is a set of required steps performed to music. There are 21 compulsory dances in the test stream (a listing of the dances is included as Appendix C). The coach will recommend when your child is ready to begin dance. Often a partner will also give a skater lessons to prepare them for a test. Additional fees will be charged for the partner.

Skating Skills

Skating skills are exercises containing edges, turns, and field movements designed to teach fundamental movements to skaters at all levels. The basic components of all disciplines of figure skating are incorporated into the program. The objectives of the skating skills program are to develop edge quality for all edges, control of turns, power and speed, flow, correct posture, agility, flexibility, and musicality. The skating skills program is divided into 6 classes, beginning with preliminary and proceeding to gold. Each class consists of 3 exercises and is skated to music. Coaches are capable of teaching these skills either one on one, semi-private or to small groups of skaters. Generally, the coach will advise when a child is ready to begin skating skills, normally after some time has been spent in the Free Skate sessions.

Interpretive Skating

Interpretive skating is another component of the STARSkate Program. Interpretive skating is a form of skating in which emphasis is placed on the skater's ability to use their skills to interpret music rather than on their technical prowess. Skaters have the ability to try tests and compete in the interpretive stream of skating.



CHAPTER 3

Tests and Competitions

A skater should skate at least 2 days a week if they want to compete or take tests

Test Day - How does it work?

Unlike the CanSkate program, there are special days set aside for skaters to take tests. There is at least one test session for each school (i.e. fall/winter, spring and summer) with the longer schools often having more than one. There are separate tests for each level in free skate, dance, skating skills, and interpretive skating. This is the time set aside for skaters who have mastered certain skills to show evaluators and adjudicators that they have learned the required skills for progression to the next level. The test itself consists of specific moves and elements required for the particular level being tested. Coaches submit test lists in advance of test days when they feel a skater is ready to try a particular test. A fee is charged for each test that goes back to Skate Canada, our governing Association. Once the number of skaters for each test is known, the Test Chairman can put the schedule together. The schedule is available approximately one week before the test session starts. Test skaters should arrive at the rink at least an hour before the scheduled test time as tests can run early. Skaters need time to prepare, as most skaters establish a routine they use before taking a test. Costumes and skates should be carefully checked before leaving home to ensure top condition, especially laces. It is not recommended that you sharpen skates immediately prior to taking a test. It is a good idea to have a few practice sessions on newly sharpened skates before testing. Trained evaluators and adjudicators volunteer their time to come and evaluate our skaters. Test scores are categorized as excellent, good, satisfactory, or needs improvement for the particular level being tested. The skater needs to obtain a certain number of satisfactory or better rankings to successfully complete the test. Remember, not meeting the requirement does not mean failure. Everyone has good days and bad days. There is no limit to the number of times a skater can take a particular test however skaters must complete a group or level before they can move on to take a test from the next group or level.

Competitions - What should I expect?

Skating at competitions exposes the skater to yet another side of figure skating. Normally the coach will recommend that a skater take part in a competition when they feel that the skater is ready to participate. Competitions are held locally as well as out of town. There are approximately 4 competitions per year that a skater with a solo can enter. Coaches will charge a fee for the time spent with the skater at the competition. For out of town competitions, generally, the coaches' travel expenses will be shared amongst their skaters competing. It is recommended you discuss specifics with your coach prior to entering the competition. An entry

form (either the coach or the club office will have a supply) will need to be completed and the fee enclosed and forwarded to the club holding the competition by a specified date; late entries carry a monetary penalty. If the competition requires travel time, it is wise to make arrangements for accommodation at a local motel/hotel. Actual skate times will be confirmed to you either in writing or on the competition web site approximately 1-2 weeks prior to the competition. Skaters should arrive one hour prior to skate time to ensure that they have registered, adjusted costumes and make-up, and have sufficient preparation time. If there are many skaters competing at the same level they are divided into —flights. There is a draw to determine the starting order. Some competitions will choose place winners following the one flight while other competitions choose top skaters in each flight to advance to a final. The majority of skaters love the air of competition, but it may not be for everyone. Remember that competitions are optional – if your child is not interested in competing it is not required. Competitions offer a chance to meet, compete, and make friends with other skaters from different clubs. In spite of competing against each other, skaters are always supportive of each other's efforts and always behave in a sportsmanlike fashion.



CHAPTER 4

The Three Way Partnership

Role of the Skater

- Be honest.
- Remember, you only get out of something what you put into it.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses. Take pride in your strengths. Work on your weaknesses.
- Be committed to being an athlete.
- Always be supportive of your fellow skaters.
- Make a point to learn something every day of your life.
- Keep your mind open. Stay away from people who will try to close it.
- Stick to the task.
- Each test or competition is only a rung up the ladder of success. When you reach the top, the joy is not in being there but the realization of how much effort you put forth in order to get there.

Role of the Coach

- Be honest.
- Love children.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses. Take pride in your strengths. Work on your weaknesses.
- Establish personal standards in dress, lifestyle, ethics and morals.
- Accept the responsibility of your role and realize the effect you have on children.
- Communicate with the skater and parents regularly. Sometimes the parents don't know all of the questions to ask.
- Commit to learn something every day of your life. Know more tomorrow than you know today.
- Realize that there are teachers, coaches and managers; you may not be all three.
- The end result is not the tests passed or the competitions won, but the quality of your work in helping the skater become more prepared for the next challenges in skating and in life.

Role of the Parent

- Love your child for what he/she is.
- Be realistic about their ability.
- Be realistic about their strengths and weaknesses.
- Don't live your desires through your child.
- Understand their skating career will have peaks and valleys.

- Accept the judges' decisions. Do not blame a poor mark on a judge. Everyone has good days and bad days. To fail a test does not mean the child is a failure.
- Measure success by their development as a person, not as a skater.
- Communicate with the coach. Make sure you ask questions and understand the total commitment and involvement.
- Be a person your child can be proud of.
- In consultation with your child and your coach, set realistic goals.
- Understand that rink gossip can only be harmful to your child, the coaching team and yourself.
- Be supportive of all coaches and skaters.
- Avoid the temptation to make comparisons between your child and other skaters.
- Offer positive encouragement, rather than criticism



Appendix A

BSC Board of Directors

The BSC Board of Directors is made up entirely of volunteers. Elections are held at the Annual General Meeting each spring. The following are the positions on the board:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Programs Manager
- Recreational Administrator
- Skate Canada Registrar
- Test Chair
- Central Region Representative
- Senior Chair
- Intermediate Chair
- Junior Co-Chairs
- Facilities Management
- Members at Large (3)

Appendix B

BSC Professional Coaches

- Louise Loriaux-Mathers
- Tammy Burton
- Nancy Harvey
- Tasha Gallant
- Sarah Jane Falkenham
- Marie Bowness
- John Carnaghan (Power Skating)
- Renee Elliott
- Trevor Farquharson
- Tricia Lipton

For profiles on all our club professionals go to our website at www.bedfordskatingclub.com under contacts, and then coaches

Appendix C

Listing of Compulsory Dances

In the dance stream, there are 30 compulsory dances set by Skate Canada. A separate test is held for each dance. They are grouped into categories that align with the free skate levels:

Preliminary:

1. Dutch Waltz
2. Canasta Tango
3. Baby Blues

Junior Bronze

1. Swing Dance
2. Fiesta Tango
3. Willow Waltz

Senior Bronze

1. Ten-Fox
2. Fourteenstep
3. European Waltz

Junior Silver

1. Foxtrot Harris
2. Tango
3. American Waltz
4. Rocker Foxtrot

Senior Silver

1. Paso Doble
2. Starlight Waltz
3. Blues
4. Cha Cha Congelado
5. Kilian

Gold

1. Viennese Waltz
2. Westminster Waltz
3. Quickstep
4. Argentine Tango
5. Silver Samba

Diamond

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Ravensburger Waltz | 4. Yankee Polka |
| 2. Tango Romantica | 5. Austrian Waltz |
| 3. Rhumba | 6. Golden Waltz |

Appendix D

Volunteer Information

Our Mission.... The Bedford Skating Club provides the highest quality programs in a welcoming environment to everyone who wants to skate; promoting fitness and a life-long passion for our sport. Come skate with us!

Together we all win... For the Bedford Skating Club to fulfil its vision and mission WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! We have volunteer roles that need to be filled to enable the skaters to have the club support they need to learn, succeed and reach their goals.

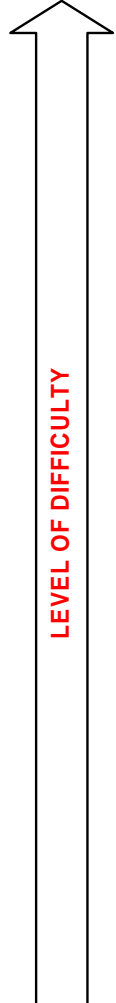
Why volunteer?

1. You get to contribute to a great organization committed to ensuring your kids have the best skating instruction and development found anywhere.
2. You get to work with great people who are equally committed to making a difference for each and every skater.
3. It costs you nothing but your time and you can decide how much time is enough. BSC wants you to know that each and every contribution counts and is appreciated.
4. Skating is an individual sport and the CLUB is the TEAM that supports and connects our members — we need you to help build our team.
5. Whether you're a first-time skater or an aspiring young athlete who dares to dream, skating is a life long sport for fun, for competition, for life

Volunteering as part of the board of directors, on the fundraising committee, acting as a parent rep, and helping out with hospitality are just some of the other volunteer opportunities available.

APPENDIX E

Skating Programs - Where do you Fit?



	<i>Dance</i>	<i>Skating Skills</i>	<i>Free Skate</i>	<i>Interpretive</i>
DIAMOND	6 Dances			
GOLD	5 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	Gold
SENIOR SILVER	5 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	Silver
JUNIOR SILVER	4 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	
SENIOR BRONZE	3 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	Bronze
JUNIOR BRONZE	3 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	
PRELIMINARY	3 Dances	3 Skills	Elements & Program	Introductory
ICE STAR		9 Levels		
CANSTAR		7 Stages		