

Wight Boots

Newsletter of the Isle of Wight Ice Dance & Figure Skating Club August 2007

Team's effort makes Phantom special

Island skaters achieved another first at this year's National Team Challenge at Bracknell on 1 July by winning the compulsory show number. Our previous best in this class was third.

The judges awarded marks of 5.3, 5.7, 3.4, 5.0, 5.4, 5.4, and 5.2, putting the Island almost four marks clear of the teams that had skated up to that point. Cheers broke out as the marks were read out, and the announcer had to start again so they could be clearly heard.

Audiences at the event tend to cheer only for their own team, but the show number devised by Island head coach Terri Fleming won applause from around the rink. Appreciation was particularly noted for the lifts by the central ring of skaters, and the sudden and dramatic costume change for the Masquerade element of the whole Phantom of the Opera routine.

Congratulations to all



The Masquerade begins: a still from the club's DVD of the event. More pictures on page 4

IW skaters who took part in the competition, almost all of whom took home gold medals. And a huge thanks to Terri Fleming for coming up with a winner and for training the free-skaters in the rest of the team.

Overall, the Island finished 5th with 36 points, just five points lower than last year. It hints at what we can achieve if we can pull together both the show number and the individual events at the National Team Challenge.

A DVD of the Island's entries is available, priced £5.00. It runs for 40 minutes and includes our individual performances at

the event plus run-throughs of Phantom at Ryde on 30 June. Details of how to obtain the DVD are on page 4 of this newsletter. **IM**

Island places

- Class 1:** 5th Maggie Read (2 points)
- Class 2:** 3rd Gemma Fishel (4 points)
- Class 3:** 1st Archie Bicknell (6 points)
- Class 4:** 6th Isabelle Coeshott (1 point)
- Class 9:** 5th Charlotte Aiken (2 points)
- Class 11:** 3rd Carol and Steve Taverner (4 points)
- Class 12:** 2nd Wight Diamonds (5 points)
- Class 14:** 1st Yelena Brown and Nicole Hinton (6 points)
- Class 15:** 1st Isle of Wight: Phantom of the Opera (6 points)
- Overall:** 5th place (36 points)

Coaches' Corner: Meet Matt Russell

Isle of Wight skater Matt Russell recently qualified as a level two coach. He talks to Wight Boots

Get all the latest updates online at www.wightfigureskaters.co.uk

Wight Boots: When did you start skating and what inspired you to take up the sport?

Matt: I started skating when I was nine after watching an ice show. It started off as a second sport – at the time football was my main sport. But I found a love for figure skating after having a few lessons and I just stuck to it. Football just faded out of my life.

WB: How quickly did you take to the skating? Did you have moments in the early days when it seemed too difficult?

Matt: I'm lucky to find that skating came very naturally. The only thing I really found difficult was motivating myself.

WB: Older skaters at the rink know you had quite a promising competitive career. How far did you reach at national level, and what did it feel like competing against other skater at this level? How much support did you get from family, friends and your coach?



Matt: I have passed my primary competitive test and up to level 10 gold standard test. I competed at the British Championships in 2002 at Dumfries, but a lot of the older skaters know that me and coach Anita Curtis had a really fiery pupil to coach relationship. We had a big argument at the British Championships and I placed 9th.

When Anita and I got on we would work well together and she would give me as much support as she possibly could and I thank her for all she has done.

My family also gave me their 100% support. I remember the year of the British Championships the figure for my skating was

around £10,000 so I would not know what I know and I would not have been where I have if it wasn't for them. My friends were there for me all the time through the highs and the lows, which helped me a lot.

WB: Is there anything you can pass on from that experience that might be useful to future competitive skaters?

Matt: Enjoy what you do: always put 100% into every performance.

WB: What made you take a break from skating? Do you now regret the break or did it prove useful?

Matt: A girl is the

reason for my long break in skating. I thought there was more to my life than skating but when apart from it I was miserable. I would say it was the biggest mistake I have ever made and I regret it almost every day!

WB: What revived your interest in skating, and what made you decide to start training as a coach?

Matt: When I came back I started to skate for leisure and after hearing what the people I was skating against two years earlier were doing I came to terms with not being able to compete alongside them. I then put my mind to coaching. With all the knowledge I have about skating I now want to teach everyone what I know.

WB: You've just qualified as a level 2 coach. How long did it take to train overall? What did you find was the hardest part of the training process?

Matt: I started my level 1 program around two years ago, passing my level 1 around one year ago and recently passing my level 2 on the 8 June 2007. It was a hard process because the tests that have to be taken aren't just about free they are about dance, synchro and pairs. Travelling around to other rinks and sports coach UK courses

was the hardest as the only rinks doing seminars were a good four to six hours away.

WB: What's it been like being mentored by Terri? No seriously, you can tell me - she won't read this... until it's published!

Matt: Being mentored by Terri was good. I have learned a lot from her she has also helped me out a lot.

WB: I assume you'll be coaching during the Galaxy Gliders sessions at weekends, and offering private tuition. What do you hope to achieve now you've qualified as a coach, and what do you hope to offer the Island's young skaters - I know you're quite a jump specialist, for instance?

Matt: I want what every coach wants: fantastic skaters that enjoy themselves. It is very important that skaters have goals and I will try to get them as close to those goals as much as I can. Yes I do like to jump but jumping isn't everything and I want the kids to have the same passion I do for skating.

WB: The IW team has just had a marvellous success with the show number at the National Team Challenge, in which you played a key part as one of our Phantoms. Has

the IW approach to the NTC changed in the time you've competed?

Matt: There used to be so much bitchiness in the rink between coaches and skaters alike but now the rink is an enjoyable place to be with no rivalry anywhere – only competitiveness between skaters, which is a good healthy environment to train in. The organization of the club I would say runs a lot better now than it used to.

WB: What's the highlight of your skating career?

Matt: I would say skating for Great Britain out in Aarhus in Denmark with some of the great British skaters (David Richardson, Luke Flint, Suzanna Bureiko and Antoinette Hempel). I thoroughly enjoyed it. I skated in the group above the one that I would usually skate in – these guys were landing massive jumps and they were men and I was barely 15. I was shaking in my boots the arena was so cold which didn't help. My turn came up I skated a clean program and I skated off the ice with a smile. I placed 4th – OK I wasn't on the podium but still skating for Great Britain at that level. Wow! it was great. I will always keep that memory as my greatest skating achievement.

IM

National Team Challenge 2007



Class 1: Maggie Read



Class 2: Gemma Fishel



Class 3: Archie Bicknell



Class 4: Isabelle Coeshott



Class 9: Charlotte Aiken



Class 11: Carol & Steve Taverner



Class 12: The Wight Diamonds



Class 14: Nicole Hinton and Yelena Brown

National Team Challenge 2007: DVD of IW entries

A DVD of the Isle of Wight's entries to the National Team Challenge 2007 is now available, priced £5.00. The DVD runs for about 40 minutes and includes the two final run-throughs of Phantom at Ryde on 30 June.

Copies are available to members of the club and their families. To obtain a copy, please contact Janet Marsh when she is at the rink. Alternatively, contact Ian Marsh on 01983 752014 during the day. All profits go to club funds, and cheques should be made payable to IWID&FSC.

Committee meetings in brief

Time is short, but we are trying to find details of how to take part in Ryde Carnival this year, with Phantom as the basis of a float; Nessie has also expressed an interest in being involved.

The club BBQ is now combined with the Synchro Camp BBQ and takes place on 14 August at 4.30pm on Appley Beach, Ryde.

Our club artistic competition takes place on Sunday 21 October from 4.30 to 7.30pm.

New trophies are required for some classes in the club's competitions, and the club will be purchasing these shortly at an expected cost of about £20 a trophy.

The Inter-Solent artistic competition with Gosport was scheduled to take place on Saturday 27 October. This event has been cancelled owing to difficulties following Planet Ice's full takeover

of the Gosport rink.

We are obtaining a travel first aid box that contains items that are suited to skating injuries.

Planet Ice has agreed to the club having a separate noticeboard, which will go up near the coaches' room.

The club plans to join the Isle of Wight Sports and Recreation Council at a cost of £5 a year. Membership allows us to enter skaters for sports personality of the year.

A sampler ice dance session has provisionally been agreed for 19 August with Gosport coach Leslie Liggett. The session starts at 4.15pm.

A receipt and invoice book is now available in the coaches' room for money handled by club officers.

The first committee meeting for the next National Team Challenge is in October. We intend to raise the topic of how

photographic permissions were handled at this year's event. No information is available about obtaining copies of photographic proofs posted on the Team Challenge website and we aim to find out how to get these. Our DVD of the event is now available (see opposite).

Wendy Fishel tendered her resignation as vice-chairwoman on 13 July, which was accepted with regret. Helen Wilks was unanimously voted to act in her stead (proposed Jeff Fishel, seconded Sian-Marie Edkins).

Sian-Marie Edkins will run another session about patch ice etiquette, probably in September.

Sian, not Karen Bicknell, now deals with orders for club tracksuits.

The collapse of Island Volunteers means that we need to find another organisation to carry out CRB checks. **IM**

Come and Strictly Ice Dance

Leslie Liggett from Gosport will hold an ice dance taster session for all IW club members and invited guests on Sunday 19 August from 4.15 to 5.45pm.

IW skaters who went

to the National Team Challenge will have seen Charlotte Aiken skating for the Island. A few days later Charlotte won the British solo ice dance championships at junior level. Although Charlotte

now trains at Guildford, her achievement shows what is possible.

For more information about the session, check poster details or email Karen Bicknell at darkiw@btinternet.com.

Are you safe during patch ice?

The club held a meeting on 1 June about etiquette during patch ice sessions.

Sian-Marie Edkins, newly appointed to the club committee, called the meeting to advise and inform all our skaters about patch ice etiquette. It has been noticed recently that patch ice time has been used for catching up socially and fun and games instead of practising our skating.

Sixteen skaters attended this meeting supported by their parents and Sian talked about the need for patch ice rules and made reference to the patch ice etiquette published in our last newsletter, and which is repeated below.

She reinforced the need for all skaters to pay patch and sign the book. This is for health and safety reasons and required by Planet Ice to keep us safe.

Terri joined the meeting and again reinforced the need for the rules and for making sure the book is signed. She also spoke of the need in future of limiting the number of skaters on the ice to ensure the safety of all skaters.

If you are asked to take notice of patch ice etiquette as printed below, please do not be upset, we are all here to look out for each other and keep each other safe.

Thank you to Sian for arranging this meeting and for all skaters and their parents who attended.

Sian intends holding another refresher on etiquette later this year, probably in September. Please make sure that you attend.

KB

Parents, guardians and patch ice

Patch ice is not a child-minding facility, so your child needs to know and understand patch ice etiquette. Please take time to make them aware of patch ice etiquette, and help to encourage safe behaviour.

Patch ice etiquette: the skater's code

Patch ice is a training session and a number of fast-moving, competitive skaters may be on the ice at this time.

Safety during patch ice depends on all skaters adhering to patch ice rules and etiquette.

- All skaters must pay for patch before using the ice.

- Courtesy and respect for professionals is

expected at all times and as such good manners and behaviour will be expected and no use of bad language or kicking of the boards will be tolerated.

- Skaters have right of way on the ice in the following order:
 1. Professionals (at all times)
 2. Skaters on a lesson performing to music
 3. Skaters on a lesson

4. Skaters performing to music but not on a lesson
5. Lower standard skaters should give way to higher standard skaters.

- No groups of skaters should be chatting on the ice. Talk at the barrier or off ice, never in the centre.

- Look after the music player and your CDs. Take turns with others who want to play their music.

Adults news

The adults have been busy over the past few months. Soon after returning from the Mountain Cup in France, Carol and Steve Taverner took Steve Wood to make his mainland debut in the Bracknell Adult Open.

Apart from difficulties with the music system, a good day was had by all, with Carol getting a silver medal and Steve T getting a bronze. Steve W skated a strong and competent routine despite the breakdown of his music.

Basingstoke and Gosport were disappointed that we did not put a team in the show number – maybe next year! The second day of the open focuses on

dance, so if we can get a dance coach we can compete then as well.

Carol and Steve were back at Bracknell three days later for the National Team Challenge. This fun event encompasses a range of ages and abilities from each club. We came third in the Veterans ice dance, and were proud to be part of the winning show number, Phantom of the Opera. It was great to see how well this number was received by the other teams, and a huge thrill when the marks appeared. I don't imagine that we will ever get a 5.7 again!

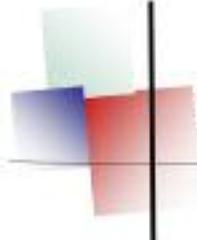
With more time available out of the ice hockey season, Karen Bicknell has arranged for

a dance coach to come over from Gosport on the afternoon of Sunday 19 August. This will be an informal introduction for anyone wishing to start or return to dance. The session starts at 4.15pm. We hope the coach can commute on a regular basis if enough customers can be found. Please come and support this venture – we have been asking for a dance coach for years.

Adult synchro continues on Mondays from 7.30 to 8.00pm. More skaters have joined of late, so we can work on an impressive routine.

Enjoy the summer, but don't stop skating. See you all at the dance afternoon on 19 August. **CT**

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Our New Fitting Studio Will be Opening Soon in Ryde. New Lines of Products for practice wear.



Synchronized skating dresses

Wight Diamonds wore their new black and green dresses for the first time in competition at the National Team Challenge.

One of the main expenses that the synchro teams face is the cost of dresses. All team members are required to contribute £25.00 a year towards the cost of obtaining the dresses. Skaters who belong to more than one team still only pay £25.00.

Dresses and practice costumes remain the property of the synchro teams and are looked after by the team managers and coach. It is important that the dresses are available to the team at all times, no matter who wears them. The £25 contribution entitles a team member to wear, but not own, a team dress. Dresses cost far more than £25 each.

Team managers Sarah

Danzig and Janet Marsh are at the rink most Saturdays from 6.30 to 7am and 9 to 9.15am. They run a savings club to help cover the costs of belonging to the synchro teams.

Other synchronized skating expenses over the year include tights, travel and accommodation, coach's competition expenses, synchro camp, and a practice uniform (cat suits).

IM

The Eureka Cup for most improved skater

Earlier this year coach Terri Fleming instituted a monthly award for the most improved skater.

The result is the Eureka Cup, which was donated by webmaster and newsletter editor Ian Marsh. Ian is UK agent for

a company called Eureka Miniatures, whose name provided a fitting title for the trophy.

At the end of June, the cup was presented to Gemma Fishel during the final rehearsals of Phantom for the National

Team Challenge. Naomi Hunter was the first IW skater to receive the cup, and it then passed to Maggie Read.

Cup holders should return the trophy to head coach Terri Fleming when required.

IM

Club BBQ

This year's club BBQ now takes place in conjunction with the summer synchro camp BBQ at 4.30pm on 14 August at Appley Beach, Ryde.

Tickets for the BBQ are £2.00 for anyone not at the synchro camp and details will be available soon. Please do not bring nuts to the BBQ.

IM



iSkate magazine

iSkate magazine is available at the rink through Karen Bicknell or the rink shop Impact Sports (open during most patch times and at weekends). The club gets a small fee from iSkate for each issue sold here.