



Rim of the World Figure Skating Club

October 2008 Newsletter

In this issue:

President's Message

Rim of the World Open Championships Recap

Membership and Fund Raising

Test Sessions

Club Business

Congrats to David Kent

President's Message

The end of the year is fast approaching, and what a year it has been. A year ago the future of the club was uncertain, but a full season of skating, several test sessions and two home-ice competitions later we are going strong. Despite these successes, we are not yet out of the woods. Every organization wants to improve year upon year, but we have a few pressing issues this year that must be resolved if we are to continue operating as a club. These will be discussed later in this newsletter.

Though the ISI and USFSA Basic Skills competition was organized by Jan Perkins on behalf of the skating school, our club was instrumental in the actual operation on the day of the event. Our original charter was simply to provide the hospitality, however club members worked the registration desk, ran and posted results, assisted with awards and played the music. The effort of all of the members was truly appreciated by rink management, the skating school and me.

September 6 and 7 was the 26th Annual Rim of the World Open Championships, which was a resounding success. Again, thanks to the hard work of the membership. We received a number of congratulations and kudos from judges, parents, skaters and coaches. While there are a number of areas that can be improved upon, the members of this club should be very proud of what we accomplished.

Overall, we had a very busy, but very successful summer. At the risk of being redundant, this is entirely due to the commitment and hard work of

all of the members. You all have my thanks and gratitude for your efforts and dedication.

With that in mind, I need to try to impress upon all members that becoming involved in the club on a regular basis is very important. While assistance for special events is great, and necessary, we also need more people helping to make decisions and perform the various tasks that need to be done throughout the year.

Dean Kent - President

Rim of the World Open Championships Recap

As all who attended can attest, the 26th Annual Rim of the World Open Championships event was a success by any measure. Several coaches sought me out during the competition to tell me how pleased they were with it. I had emails from judges and parents who wanted to express their pleasure. One parent even called me directly simply to tell me that he thought it was the best competition that his daughter had competed in all year.

Not everything went perfectly, of course. We did have a few judging discrepancies, experienced a little disorganization with the runners and monitors, and missed a few items for the judges in the hospitality. These, and other issues, will be discussed at a special meeting in a few weeks to start planning for next year. We will discuss those things that worked well, and those that didn't.

Financially, we just about broke even with the competition. Andrea will be providing the final numbers shortly, which I will share with all of the members. In the past, competitions were considered a big source of revenue for clubs, but it has become apparent to me, after discussing with several other clubs, that this was not the case this year. I believe going forward that competitions, just like test sessions, will be mostly a 'break even' venture.

Another area of concern is the judging system used for the competition. I will give a quick overview here, but one of the questions we need to discuss for next year is whether to use the new (IJS) system at lower levels to avoid some of the judging issues we saw.

This year, we used IJS for Juvenile and above, while the old 6.0 system was used for all of the lower level events. For those who are not entirely familiar, the old judging system requires the judges to rate each skater relative to all of the others. This means that they have to try to keep in mind how well the skaters have executed each element, as well as how well their performance was, until the end of the event. This is very difficult, and the problems (and charges of favoritism) with this system is the reason that the IJS system was developed.

The IJS system, on the other hand, splits the judging panel into two groups - one which rates the performance (choreography, interpretation, transitions, etc.) and another that rates the technical aspects (whether a jump was completed, the difficulty of the element, etc.) The rating in each of these has a specific point value, which is then fed into a computer to come up with the final rankings. Judges do not need to rate anyone relative to another - making it somewhat more objective.

From the club's perspective, the difference is that the old system is faster. Taking the IJS system down to, for example, Preliminary level would increase the amount of time necessary for the events - meaning greater expenses for ice time. It also means that we would require judges trained in this system, so travel and accommodation costs could increase.

We are hoping to soon begin the formation of next year's Competition Committee, as well as create a procedure book so future competition planning will progress much more smoothly. I would like to encourage everyone in the club to become involved in some manner, and hopefully to volunteer to assist with the planning. This does not necessarily mean a big time commitment, because the earlier we begin the less stress we will have to deal with later on.

Membership and Fund Raising

The two most pressing issues for the club at present are membership and financials. The USFSA requires a club to have a roster of at least 25 members to be considered 'active'. Currently, we have 22 members. If we are unable to boost our membership by the deadline that USFSA imposes (which it has not yet done), we will likely become inactive, which would mean we would lose our ability to give test sessions, and of course, our competition. We would likely lose the date that we currently have reserved, as there are certainly other clubs that desire that date. There are a couple of methods we can use to get these additional members, including offering a special one-time membership to family members at a much reduced rate.

While we do still have sufficient funds in our account to operate the club, we need to identify some fund raising opportunities. Test sessions, and now apparently competitions, generally lose money. Traditionally, the club provides some

financial assistance to skaters who qualify for Sectionals and Nationals. There are other benefits we would like to be able to offer, but without a source of revenues this is not possible.

Fundraisers can be difficult, because every organization does them. Households with several children can quickly become tired of the constant fundraising activities of selling chocolates, cookies, wrapping paper, magazines, etc. What I would like to do is to try to identify other avenues for generating revenue while we pursue some of the traditional methods. Also, remember that we are a tax-exempt organization, and therefore any donations are tax deductible to the donor. As the end of the year approaches, if you know of anyone who is looking for a way to reduce their taxes, let them know they can assist your child at the same time by giving a tax-deductible donation to the club.

Test Sessions

As I write this, Regionals has just concluded, which means that it is time to start planning for our next full season of test sessions. This is a subject that we will be discussing at our next board meeting, so if anyone has specific preferences on days and times for test sessions, please be sure to either attend the board meeting or let Dean or Andrea know. Even better, if there is anyone who would be willing to take on the role of test chair, that would be very helpful.

We have a test session tentatively scheduled for October 29, from 10am to noon. Test fees will increase this year by about \$5.00 per test, and the hospitality fee will be changed to a hospitality/ice fee of \$10 to reflect increased costs.

Club Business

Our last official board meeting was held on July 27. We will be scheduling a meeting soon to begin discussing important issues that will affect all members. I encourage every club member to attend the board meetings. We are also still in need of a Secretary.

If there are any specific issues that need to be discussed please let Dean or Andrea know so we can get it onto the agenda. Currently, the topics to be discussed are: Club logo and jackets, fund raising, test dates and fees, formation of next year's competition committee.

Congrats to David Kent

Congratulations to home club member David Kent for His 6th place finish at the Southwest Pacific Regional Championships, gaining him a berth at the 2009 U.S. Junior Championships, being held December 8-13, 2008 in Lake Placid, NY.