



Oxford Skating Club

Oxford Skating Club
Synchronized Skaters'
Handbook



Oxford Skating Club

We congratulate and welcome you to the Synchronized Skating Teams of Oxford Skating Club. Thank you for being an important part of our club!

This handbook is designed to give skaters and parents needed information for the upcoming year, including OSC goals and expectations of team skaters. Please read through this handbook carefully and completely, and ask whatever questions that you feel are necessary to clarify items that you do not understand. For parents of younger skaters, the OSC Board of Directors encourages parents to take the time to read this handbook and discuss the contents with your skater. If you come across anything that does not seem clear, please contact one of the OSC Board members, whose contact information is posted on the OSC website at www.oxfordskateclub.com.

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WELCOME TO THE OXFORD ICE CRYSTALS!

History of Synchronized Skating Programs in the Oxford Skating Club

For years, synchronized skating has been part of the Oxford Skating Club. OSC, established as a fully sanctioned club within United States Figure Skating in early 1980, has had team skaters (until 1999 called 'precision skating') that performed for ice shows and exhibitions since the early 1990's.

In 1992, OSC established a competitive precision skating track with USFS, and the rest is history, as they say. Since that time, the Oxford Ice Crystals Synchronized Skating Teams have participated in and earned respectable finishes in regional and national competitions. In 1993, the Oxford Ice Crystals participated in the Wyandotte Challenge and earned a respectable fourth place. In 1994, the Intermediate Team placed first in the Silver Round at the Midwestern Precision Championships in Milwaukee. The Ice Crystals Intermediate Team went to Midwestern Regionals in 1995 and qualified for the Gold Round and placed eighth. In 1997, OSC's Intermediate Team qualified for the U.S. Precision Team Nationals. The Preliminary team (made up of many of our current Intermediate team skaters) placed fourth at the 1999 Midwestern Sectionals.

More recently, the 2001 Intermediate Team placed second at the Colonial Classic in Boston and placed sixth in the Final Round at the Midwestern Sectionals. In 2002 at the Midwestern Sectionals, the Junior Classic team placed second and in 2003 placed in the final round. In 2003 and 2004 at Midwestern Sectionals, the Teen Intro team placed into the final round, as did, the 2005-06 Open Jr. and Open Juv. teams. The USFS Beginner team had a great 2005-06 season with three 1st places in this new USFS division. So clearly, you can see that Oxford Skating Club has a history of fielding competitive synchronized skating teams, and expect to continue that tradition into the future. Welcome to that Club...you ARE the future of OSC!

The Mission Statement of the Oxford Skating Club

Oxford Skating Club is a non-profit organization where all figure skaters, recreational to competitive are encouraged to meet their individual skating goals. OSC promotes sportsmanship and creates opportunities to develop skaters to their fullest potential in a positive and supportive environment.

Synchronized Skating Teams at OSC

One of the goals of the Board of Directors of the Oxford Skating Club is to ensure that any skater interested in skating on a synchronized skating team is given that opportunity. To that end, skaters are evaluated by coaches at Synchronized Skating Clinics and Try-outs, and based upon both individual and team skills, placed on teams. OSC utilizes team structures from both the United States Figure Skating Association (USFS) and the Ice Skating Institute (ISI) to ensure that every interested skater is appropriately placed.

More about USFS and ISI

USFS (United States Figure Skating) and ISI (Ice Skating Institute) are the two skating organizations that sanction synchronized skating events, and support synchronized skating teams in the U.S. Each organization has its own designation of team divisions, levels and skills required for each team level. As synchronized skating is still a relatively new sport, both organizations revisit their team designations and associated skills on an annual basis, making it difficult to assume team placement from year to year.

At the time of this printing, USFS has three divisions of teams (open, national-qualifying, and international-qualifying). Open teams have the broadest range of skills and ages allowed to skate on those teams (ex. open juvenile, open junior). Nationally qualifying teams have more narrow age and skill ranges associated with them (ex. pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate). Internationally qualifying teams are even narrower and very limited in age and skill levels (ex. junior, senior).

ISI (Ice Skating Institute) also has multiple team designations with requirements for each team. ISI teams may have the same designation (level name) as a USFS team, but have different requirements for that team. ISI teams and USFS teams do not compete against each other, although there have been times when teams have been able to compete (due to the range of ages and skills) in both ISI and USFS competitions (an example might be a USFS open juvenile or intermediate team that also fits the age and skill requirements of an ISI teen team). ISI team designations include: tots, junior youth, youth, senior youth, teen and adult.

Clubs can field any combination of teams from different divisions of USFS and ISI. Oxford Skating Club often fields both USFS and ISI teams. The determination as to whether OSC skates USFS or ISI teams is completely determined by our coaches, when they consider the ages and skill levels of the skaters trying out for our teams. Please visit their websites www.iceskatinginstitute.com & www.usfigureskating.org for more information regarding these two organizations.

Club Expectations of the OSC Skater – The Skater’s Code of Conduct

OSC has very specific expectations of team skaters, and assume that skaters will work diligently to meet those expectations. The following are general requirements for all team members. Additionally, each team coach and/or team manager may have additional expectations and requirements for their specific teams. Parents should go over the following requirements with their skaters so that all involved know what to expect. Skaters will be held accountable to all expectations, those provided here, and those added by team coaches, managers, and other team-associated personnel. Perhaps most important than any of the other expectations outlined here, the Club expects that all skaters and parents will display good sportsmanship behavior. This includes being respectful to all teammates, club skaters, parents, coaches, and officials.

General Team Practice Etiquette and Tips

- Skaters are expected to be on time for each team practice session. Practices start exactly when scheduled. Ice time is expensive and therefore coaches waste no time waiting for late skaters. Skaters should also build in time to stretch, warm up and put skates on prior to

getting on the ice. Parents can help with this! Coaches will impose appropriate consequences. (See section on Discipline on page 10 of this document.)

- The last person to get on the ice is responsible for shutting the door(s).
- No skater is to enter the ice until a coach is present and the Zamboni doors are closed.
- Once practice begins, NO ONE IS TO LEAVE THE ICE, so skaters should be prepared with :
 - Plastic water bottle
 - Tissues, if needed
 - Inhalers, take all necessary medications prior to practice if possible
 - Sweatshirts/cover-ups usually may only be worn during team warm up
 - Restroom, use before practice
- Ice skating dresses and tights are required for team practice. No shorts, jeans, skating pants or sweats.
- No gloves or mittens at team practices.
- Hair should be worn back in a ponytail for all practices.
- For off-ice practices (off-ice practice is a time for teams to focus on specific elements to the program defined by the coaching staff), gym shoes are required (no sandals). Clothing that allows for movement is best (no jeans or other tight, restrictive clothing).
- Off ice or conditioning/strength class is required for some teams. Team calendars will identify times and dates for these classes.
- Skaters should focus on the coaches and practicing. No talking or visiting during the practice.
- Skaters should follow all directions given by the team manager. The manager should be treated with respect and skaters should remember that the manager is communicating coaching directions. Skaters who repeatedly disregard instructions provided by the team manager are subject to disciplinary action.
- Good sportsmanship (behavior and attitude) – at all times skaters are expected to conduct themselves in a mature, positive and supportive way of all team members.
- Skaters will be asked to sign a “Skater’s Contract” indicating that they understand the consequences for not complying with the team rules. Consequences will be administered according to the OSC Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policies and Procedures Handbook. All skaters are responsible for making sure they have read and understand these policies and procedures.

Attendance

- Attendance is mandatory & tardiness will not be permitted. As ice time is limited and expensive, disciplinary action will result from absence or tardiness. Skaters must attend all scheduled team practices, on and off the ice, unless special approval has been given by the team coach in advance.
- Skaters are expected to participate in all scheduled team competitions, exhibitions, clinics and meetings.
- If a special practice is called, every effort should be made to attend.
- Any absence must be communicated to the team coach (es) & team manager prior to the absence, via phone or email. Communicating with a teammate to send the message to the coach regarding an absence is NOT acceptable.
- An absence from a scheduled practice during the two weeks prior to an exhibition or competition may result in the skater not participating in the event.

- If a practice is canceled due to inclement weather, skaters will be notified by phone and/or email by the Team Manager or his/her designate.

Development of Individual Skills

- Coaches will set requirements for team members regarding the continued development of individual skills (e.g. private lessons, power class, dance class, etc.)
- Securing a coach for private lessons is strongly recommended. This coach will help the skater to develop individual skills, as well as help the parent negotiate the skating levels, terminology and testing process.
- Group lesson and private lesson coach fees and ice time are paid separate from “team” fees.
- USFS continues to pursue the development of skill and test levels that will serve as criteria for placement on the different levels of synchronized teams, making the continued development of individual skills a priority for team skaters.

Membership

- All team members must be current members of the Oxford Skating Club (OSC) and United States Figure Skating (USFS). These costs are included in the team fees for the 2008-09 skating season. Membership in OSC allows you to participate in club activities such as the Holiday show, in club test rates for USFS testing, club newsletter, OSC special events, USFS annual membership, club T-shirt, OSC sponsored classes and freestyle sessions, as well as fundraising opportunities.
- Parents may also be either skating or non-skating members of the OSC and USFS. This gives one the right to vote in the election of Board members and any Club or national matters.
- Each year teams are designated USFS or ISI teams. Occasionally, some teams may compete in both organizations, requiring all members of that team to be registered members of both ISI and USFS.
- If team members are required to be a current member of the Ice Skating Institute (ISI), it is the skater’s responsibility to enroll as an ISI member. Visit their website (skateisi.com) or see the Goggin Ice Center Skating Director concerning ISI membership applications.

Team Competitions

- Coaches will provide each team with an itinerary for the competition weekend. This schedule is to be followed and the activities outlined are all mandatory for team members.
- Parents and skaters, must be careful about what is said while in the stands, at the rink and in the hotel at these competitions (no negative comments). You never know who is sitting or standing around you and what might be overheard.
- It is expected that all skaters and parents display good sportsmanship behavior. This includes being respectful to all teammates, club skaters, parents, coaches, and officials.
- Especially at competitions (hotel, rink, restaurant, etc.) no skater should behave in such a way that brings attention to him/herself in any way while in the hotel and at the rink. It is never appropriate to say anything negative about other clubs, teams, coaches, staff or judges.

Locker Rooms at Competitions

- The locker room is where skaters will get physically and mentally prepared for their upcoming performance.
- The coaches ask that no parents be in the locker room. (The coach may ask the team manager(s) to stay)
- The team manager(s) will help bring the skaters to the locker room and pick them up again after they skate.
- There are no cameras of any kind permitted in the locker room, including those on cellphones.

Team Uniforms

- Competition wear is chosen by the coaches of the team and tied to the theme of the program to which the team is skating. Hairstyle and makeup will also be coordinated, and required.
- Team warm-ups are required and will vary depending upon the team placement of the skater. Usually, skaters will be required to minimally have an OSC fleece and warm-up pants for warm-ups, but coaches may specify additional required warm-up wear. For the 2008-09 season, most warm-up wear required is included in team fees. Warm-ups may be ordered during the first week of practice and if the same practice dress is used, you may be able to purchase a used one at the annual skate/clothing exchange in September/October.
- Practice Wear: Practice wear is worn for at least one team practice once a week (the coach will designate the practice dress day) and at practice ice sessions at competition. Practice wear is required. For the 2008-09 season, practice wear costs are included in team fees.

Summer Ice Skating and Synchro Camps

- Miami University offers a summer freestyle camp and a synchronized camp. Most of our teams are expected to attend one of the synchronized camps offered. Historically this has been the 2nd week of synchro camp. Refer to your acceptance letter for your specific camp information. It is highly recommended that team skaters also attend a summer freestyle camp (at MU or otherwise) to improve individual skills to better develop our teams.

Skating Roles on Oxford Skating Club Synchronized Skating Teams

Each year, the coaches determine the types of teams (USFS, ISI) and levels of teams that OSC skaters fit into (determined by age and skill levels). All of the teams have predetermined (by the skating associations) numbers of skaters who can be rostered and skated. Often, there are more skaters at a level than is possible to skate in any given competition. As a result, coaches have determined that skaters may fit into one or more of the following roles in any given year. It should be noted, that a skater's role can be changed throughout the season at the coaches' discretion, or as a result of disciplinary actions.

Full

- A full position skater has a defined and designated spot on the roster of their designated team. The full skater will skate in all competitions, exhibitions, and shows as determined by the coaching staff. All team travel is expected. As a full member of the team your team fee is

equal to that of other full members of the team. The skater is expected to pay any additional items required for the team.

Crossover

- Crossover skaters have very important roles on two teams. They generally are in a leadership role of the first team and may crossover into a full or swing position on the second team. They will pay the full fees of the team they are crossing up to plus team dress and make-up and any additional personal apparel required by the second team. They are required to travel with both teams and participate in both teams events.

Swing

- A swing position skater shares one spot in line with another skater(s). The swing skaters alternate skating in line for all competitions, exhibitions and shows as determined by the coaching staff. If identified as a swing, you are placed on the roster for that competition season. All team travel is expected. As a full member of the team, your team fee is equal to that of the other members of the team. A swing may also be crossing over from another team

Alternates

- Alternates are a very important part of every team. These team members must be knowledgeable of every skater's position and movements throughout the entire program. Alternates may be called upon to skate in the line, as needed and dictated by the coaching staff, for exhibitions and/or shows. No alternates will skate in competition. If you skate in the alternate role for an OSC team, your fee is based on 70% of the total team fee for that year.

Trainer

- The position of "trainer" is an opportunity for a skater to have a positive experience that will challenge the skater with new skills and skating concepts. In order to skate as a trainer on one OSC team, you must be identified as a full "skating member" of another OSC team and be placed on that roster for competition and pay full team fees for this position. If the two team schedules conflict, your responsible will be the team for which you are a full position skater. As a Trainer experience is strictly learning based, no trainer will skate in competitions, exhibitions and/or shows for their 2nd (training) team or be expected to travel and therefore no team fees will be incurred for the 2nd team. If you wish to participate or partake in 2nd team functions or materials annually budgeted (for example, team wear, team dress, tape, laces, extra classes, etc), you will be asked to pay a fee for those.

College Skaters

- From time to time the Oxford Skating Club finds it advantageous to recruit college students to its teams in order to increase the numbers of skaters on a team to an optimal level. College student recruited to skate on an OSC team may be provided consideration regarding team expenses, if needed. Any college skater is welcomed to try out for Oxford Skating Club teams and, if chosen, to skate on the teams (where their age and skill levels are compatible with USFS/ISI guidelines).

Club Expectations regarding Disciplinary Action – The Mandatory Three Strike Rule

It is important to understand that the expectations outlined above are not suggestions, but requirements, and failure to meet those expectations will result in disciplinary action mandated by the OSC Board of Directors. Disciplinary action is not voluntary on the part of the coaches, team managers, or others associated with OSC teams. It is a requirement of their positions. This is for the benefit of all skaters, so that all are treated fairly and equitably. To that end, the OSC Board has established a mandatory three strike rule that will be implemented in the event that a skater does not meet the expectations outlined above and those provided by individual team coaches and team managers as supplemental to these listed herein.

The three strike rule is as follows:

- Strike 1 – A written warning is given to any skater on a first offense/
- Strike 2 – A written reprimand is given to any skater on a second offense/ violation of Club, team, or USFS rule, or unmet expectation.
- Strike 3 – A second written reprimand with a required additional action (for example, fines, benching, dismissal from the team and/or Club, etc.) is given to any skater on the third offense/violation of Club, team, or USFS rule, or unmet expectation.

It should be noted that each of these disciplinary actions is in conjunction with a conference with a coach, team manager, Board member, or other skating official, with the goal of reaching resolution of the conflict brought about by the offense. Parents will be included in those conferences. Skaters and parents should become familiar with the complete disciplinary process by reading the Oxford Skating Club Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policies and Procedures Handbook.

Club Expectations and Responsibilities of Skating Personnel (Director of Synchronized Skating, Coaches)

Coaches hired by the Oxford Skating Club are exceptionally qualified for their roles in the OSC Synchronized Skating Program. All skating personnel who are on the ice with OSC skaters have had many years of synchronized skating experience themselves, and have moved into coaching. Coaches are professionals at what they do, and should be respected for their knowledge and skills regarding synchronized skating and working with young skaters. Coaches and the Director of Synchronized Skating are responsible for the following:

- Identify placement of skaters on a team.
- Put together a competitive program that abides by ISI and/or USFS rules for the appropriate team level with themes that are age-appropriate to the team.
- Provide final approval of all costume and equipment requirements for their team.
- Prepare off-ice warm up routines, on-ice warm ups and lesson plans for each practice.
- Develop and implement team-building exercises.
- Provide and maintain productive and organized team practices.
- Attend all competitions and exhibitions.
- Assist in the preparation of skaters' itinerary for all competitions and exhibitions.
- Present plans for the season to the OSC Board.
- Make recommendations to the OSC Board for skater programs, parent education, further enhancement and/or development of OSC and its teams.

- Effect a supportive and encouraging environment for all OSC skaters
- Promote Club and team unity
- Communicates with team manager, treasurer, and assistant coach(es) if unable to attend practice, events, or competitions with the understanding that contractual agreement of salary may be affected.
- Present themselves as skating professionals at all times.
- Will review and abide by contract as agreed upon with Board of Directors
- Read and uphold all Club rules, regulations, and codes of conduct as defined in OSC By-laws, Disciplinary Policy, Skaters' Handbook, and all other documents.
- Further their knowledge and expertise in synchronized skating, trends and/or changes in requirements.
- Maintain PSA and USFS memberships and report them to Synchronized Skating Committee Chair
- Make the OSC Board aware of any issues and/or problems she/he has with individuals or the team(s) through open and ongoing communication.
- Conduct parent meetings with team manager (as jointly agreed upon) at beginning and throughout season to communicate/clarify expectations, pre- and/or post-competition/event briefings, travel, judging, etc.
- At least one conference per season with skaters and parents.
- Be available to parents for consultation as needed
- Uphold the mandatory Three Strike Rule as set forth in the Disciplinary Policy defined above. Coaches will impose appropriate consequences (written warning or reprimand as appropriate) for violation of expectations, rules, regulations, and code of conduct as defined above, while always using a professional attitude and approach with the skaters and their families. Additionally, coaches are responsible for completing the requisite paperwork associated with any disciplinary action that they take.
- Communicate regularly with team manager(s)
- Works with team manager and travel coordinator to develop competition travel schedules.
- Promote on-going development and growth of OSC according to the mission statement of the organization

Club Expectations and Responsibilities of Team Managers

Team managers are very important to the functioning of all OSC teams. Team managers' duties and time commitments will be varied, depending upon the level of team that they manage. However, in general, team managers are responsible for the complete operation of the team. Specific responsibilities include:

- Uphold coaches' guidelines and expectations for skaters; communicate and reinforce these to the parents and skaters in a timely fashion.
- Remind skaters of the rules and expectations for good sportsmanship, team spirit, and personal appearance that reflect a high standard to promote OSC.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the coaching staff, other team managers, and the OSC board.
- Handle all aspects of "off ice" responsibilities for the team, on behalf of the coach(es) to allow the coach(es) to focus on skating.
- Communicate regularly with all team members and parents
- Implement coaching decisions such as when to arrive at the arena, how to wear hair, etc...

- Reinforce both on-ice and off-ice appearance with regard to makeup, hair, and costumes as directed by the coaching staff
- Inform parents of volunteer opportunities within the team structure and coordinate a volunteer roster of duties that pertain specifically to the team
- Serve as a primary liaison between the coach(es), team members, and parents
- Attend and oversee all practices, regular and extra in person or by named designate.
- Conduct parent meetings jointly with coaches as needed, but especially prior to the season and prior to travel
- Show an attitude that reflects positively on the position, the team and OSC.
- Serve as a role model and example in promoting good sportsmanship at all times.
- Encourage and promote every skater on the team by insisting that skaters follow rules, regulations, code of conduct, etc. as outlined by the coach and in the OSC Skater's Handbook.
- Communicate expectations of skaters to parents, and expectations of parents as defined in Grievance Policies and Procedures.
- Understand the disciplinary policies outlined by OSC and uphold the mandatory Three Strike Rule as set forth in the Disciplinary Policy defined above. The Team Manager is held responsible for imposing appropriate consequences (written warning or reprimand as appropriate) for violations of expectations, rules, regulations, and code of conduct as defined above, while always using a professional attitude and approach with the skaters and their families. Additionally, team managers are responsible for completing the requisite paperwork associated with any disciplinary action that they take.
- Is present at all meetings of a disciplinary nature in the presence of an OSC team coach
- Must be familiar with Club rules, regulations, policies, expectations, handbooks etc. in order to address questions and inquiries
- Promote on-going development and growth of OSC according to the mission statement of the organization

Club Expectations and Responsibilities of Parents

Parents of OSC synchronized skaters are enthusiastic supporters of their children, and deserve gratitude and respect always. As an integral part of the synchronized skating program at OSC, parents, like all others associated with OSC, have a set of expectations to uphold and responsibilities to meet. These are as follows:

- Support the coaches in every way possible.
- Support and reinforce the directions given by the team manager. Review these with your skater.
- Read this manual and complete the "Skater/Parent Agreement" Form and return it to your team manager no later than the first team practice.
- Get skater(s) to practices and meetings on time. Skaters should be well rested, have eaten and arrive with all necessary equipment for every practice, competition and exhibition.
- Notify the team coach & team manager, in writing via email and by telephone, when your skater will need to miss a team practice, and the reason for the absence.
- In the case of an emergency, notify the coach as soon as possible.
- The Club is supported and run by parent volunteers. Each parent/family is asked to volunteer time to the club during a skating season. Please review the many ways you can help on the membership form under "Volunteer Opportunities" or ask an OSC board member.

- Check e-mail daily for notices from coaches and team managers. Not knowing something because you neglected to check your e-mail is not an excuse, and may put your skater in a position where the Three Strikes Rule may pertain.
- Team fee payments must be kept current.
- Be a positive role model for your skater(s).
- Forms due back to team manager.
- The Skater Letter of Commitment must be signed by both the skater and parents and returned to your team manager in order for your skater to be recognized as a member of a team.
- Once your skater receives his/her USFS membership number, skaters and parents should go to the USFS website to complete the required medical form. Print and return to your team manager. Ask for assistance if needed.

Fees and Payment Options

Team fees are due monthly. At the first Parents' Meeting of the year (in June), you will receive a statement for your skater's team fees. At that time, you will be required to pay a payment. The amount and the number of months over which your payment is spread will depend on the team to which your skater is assigned. Skaters on travel teams will have a longer time to pay team fees due to the higher costs associated with those teams. Payments are due on the 1st of each month, so plan accordingly. Late fees of \$25 will be assessed on all monthly payments received after the 10th of the month.

- Team fees for the 2008-2009 season generally include: coaching fees and ice time, ice cuts, competition wear, practice wear (if required), OSC required warm-up gear (if needed), make-up and hair needs for competition, competition videos for coaching critiques, competition fees, and administrative costs (webserver fees, bank fees, etc.). Please see individual team fee structures to determine exactly what is included in the fees for your skater's team, as each is slightly different.
- Payments can be mailed to the OSC Treasurer (name and address posted on website & invoices), paid by Paypal (through the OSC website), or given directly to the Club Treasurer or team manager. Your team payments do not get paid at the Goggin Ice Center skate desk. Make checks or Money orders payable to: Oxford Skating Club or OSC. Checks returned for insufficient funds will be charged a service fee equal to what the bank charges the Club. Please refrain from paying your fees in cash if at all possible.
- Please remember the Treasurer is a volunteer, and there are many possible hands that your payment will go through before reaching the Treasurer, so keep track of your payments and invoices.
- **ALL TEAM FEES MUST BE CURRENT FOR SKATERS TO BE CONSIDERED 'IN GOOD STANDING' FOR PARTICIPATION IN COMPETITIONS, TESTING, AND TRYOUTS.**
- Skaters and their families have many opportunities throughout the season to earn "crystal credits" through approved Club activities can help defray team costs. Earned "crystal credits" are applied toward the skater's account.
- Corporate donations received will be applied to the specific need for which the donation was solicited. If solicited by a specific team, the donation will be applied to that team's fees.
- Past fundraising opportunities have included: candle sales, braided bread and cookie dough sales, poinsettia sales, spring plant sales, jewelry sales, and special events employment at Kings Island.
- The **Synchronized Skating Scholarship** (SSS) Fund is one additional way for skaters to help defray the costs associated with synchronized skating. The fund was founded by Oxford Skating Club member, Michael Anne Higgins (who currently skates on the Intermediate Team). Up to

\$500 worth of scholarships will be awarded for the 2008-09 season. Details for how to apply and guidelines for the scholarship can be found on the OSC website, www.oxfordskateclub.com.

APPENDIX A

Important Information for Travel Teams Skaters and Parents

Skaters associated with OSC teams that travel have an additional set of expectations that they must meet. Specifically, skaters are required to travel to all competitions with the team. (Exceptions are made only for skaters who are crossover skaters when their first team is also traveling and alternates as noted in the definitions of those two roles.) If a team skater is given permission (from the coach only) to travel separately to a competition, the skater is still responsible for his/her portion of any travel fees incurred by the team. (For example, if a skater does not ride the bus to a competition for some reason, that skater must still pay his/her portion of the bus fees for that trip).

To address some of the questions that often arise with respect to travel, we have included the following:

- **How we get to competitions?**
 - Buses are chartered so that the entire team is transported and arrives together.
 - Air transportation will only be used when there is a great distance and limited time frame.
 - The exact date and departure time are usually not known until as late as one week prior to the competition weekend. As soon as the coaches hear from the competition officials about each team's practice and competition times, they will notify the OSC Board. This information will be passed on to the appropriate teams through their team manager.

- **Who rides the bus?**
 - A coach rides on each bus.
 - Skaters are required to ride the bus to and during the competition (this works best in situations of tight schedules and weather complications).
 - Teams will be assigned to buses.
 - Based on the number of seats available, parents may be invited to ride the team bus. This will be determined prior to each competition.
 - Team Manager(s) will notify families about the availability of seats on the bus(es). Families can then inform the manager of their choice to ride the bus or drive.
 - Directions to the hotels and rinks will be provided in the travel packet given out prior to the first competition.
 - Parents who drive to the competition may take their child home with them after the competition. Please inform the team manager and coaches in advance. The cost is the same even if you drive your child home.
 - *Note: Release of skaters following a competition is typically after the awards are posted and awards ceremony for their event.*

- **Bus Etiquette**

- Skaters are asked to remain in their seats during the trip on the bus. This is not only a coach and Board request, but an issue of safety and liability for the bus company. Skaters are not to sit on the back of the seats, on the floor, or on other skaters' laps. Each skater must be in his/her own seat. This will be reinforced and consequences for noncompliance will occur (see Three Strike Rule outlined above).
- The noise level should be kept to a minimum. There will be no screaming or running on bus.
- Snacks and drinks are allowed on the bus. The snacks should be healthy, no candy or chocolate on the bus. All drinks must have a screw-top lid.
- Time will be allotted for homework. During this time everyone will be asked to be quiet.
- Time will also be given for video movies to be played (prior approval by Team Manager(s) for appropriateness).
- **Cost of travel**
 - The cost to ride the bus is determined by the number of people riding the bus for that given competition.
 - Team managers will ask for the number of people riding the bus before each competition. The cost will be determined after the count is taken.
 - The Team manager (or other identified team parent) will collect payment by the date established. All bus fees must be paid prior to the trip.
 - If you have participated in individual fundraising, you may apply the "Crystal Credits" toward bus fees, only if team fee payments are current. The treasurer/team manager will let you know the amount of your "Crystal Credits."
- **What skaters wear on the bus?**
 - Skaters will be notified prior to each competition via your team itinerary as to what your travel dress should be. Always check your email right before leaving home and print a copy of your itinerary to take with you on the trip. Generally, at all competitions, team members should be dressed in the OSC warm-ups with team t-shirt shirt and clean, respectable gym shoes. Shirts should be tucked in, jackets zipped and shoes tied whenever we disembark from the bus. Hair, if not already in a bun, should be in a ponytail.
- **Shuttle service for parents who drive**
 - For parents who drive to the competition, the Club offers the opportunity to ride the bus from the hotel to the rink during the weekend, IF there is space available. The cost is will be determined based on need and availability for the weekend per person. Let the team manager know and pay them if you want to use this option. (OSC is not responsible for lost parents, we will do skater counts each time we re-enter the bus).
- **Where the team stays?**
 - A block of rooms is reserved for the skater and his/her family. Parents must call the hotel directly to make reservations by the date designated by the travel coordinator (all the details will be in a "travel packet" provided at the beginning of the season).
- **What to pack?**

Each skater should pack two bags. One bag contains personal travel items, a second bag contains necessary skating items only. Each skater will be asked to show the team manager (or designated parent) a list of necessary items (skates, team make-up, team dress, etc.) prior to boarding the bus. (A list of these items is sent before each competition with the itinerary).

- **When may the skater depart for home?** This is always a tough call and will be established for each competition based on the schedule and what is best of all the teams (and the requirements specified by the bus company).

APPENDIX B

Frequently Asked Questions about USFS Testing

- **What is the purpose of testing?** Passing a USFS test is a way of documenting that a skater has mastered certain elements of skating. Test levels achieved are also a way of credentialing skating professionals.
- **What is the schedule of the test sessions?** Test sessions are made available through the OSC at the Goggin Ice Center, usually 2x per year (generally mid-March, and either late April or early May). These dates will be posted on the OSC website. OSC members may also test at Miami test sessions. Dates for those test sessions will be announced via the OSC website. Skaters may also test at other arenas; special forms may be needed so check with the OSC test chair.
- **Will test levels be used in team placements?** Test levels will be considered (and in some levels mandated by USFS) when placing skaters on a synchronized skating team. Guidelines are posted on USFS web site for team requirements. OSC will follow all USFS guidelines for team requirements.
- **What is expected of OSC team skaters?** All skaters should attempt at least one USFS Moves in the Field as advised by their private lessons coach (es).
- **Which test(s) and when should my skater test?** Discuss testing with your private lesson coach. It is his/her responsibility to let you know when you child is ready to test. This is in large part what the skaters should be working on during their lessons. Your coach will also help with paperwork; there are deadlines and separate fees involved.
- **Who are the judges?** The USFS judges have attended a Judges' School and completed a certain number of "trial judging" sheets (this process can take a number of years). The judge pool usually comes from former skaters and parents of skaters. No judges currently live in Oxford, thus we bring in judges for our test sessions. We use the judges from nearby as much as we can in order to hold down the costs.
- **How much are the judges paid?** Nothing! They are reimbursed for travel, food and housing expenses. Many give up 35-40 weekends per year to promote skating and serve our children.
- **What do the test fees go toward?** Ice fees for the test session at Goggin Ice Center, USFS administrative test fees, and travel expenses for judges.
- **Do I pay a professional or coach's fee?** The skater's coach will usually attend the test session. He/she will give feedback during the warm-up and will "put your skater on the ice" for the test. The pro will generally be paid something for being with your skater during the test session. Often, the same fee as a 15-minute lesson is appropriate. If you test dance, the partner will charge a fee

for doing the actual test with your skater. If you skate with the partner on practice ice, there will be a lesson fee for that time as well. The professionals, especially the dance partners, do this for a living.

- **What do we do on the day of the test?** A test schedule will be posted on the OSC website and at the Goggin Ice Center at least two days prior to the test session. Be at the rink one hour before your scheduled warm-up (which is several minutes before the actual test). This is generally a practice session for skaters prior to the test session. Come to the rink nicely dressed with groomed hair neatly pulled back. Check in with test registration and then with your coach about other details. If you are testing Free Skating, you need to turn in your program tape. Following your test, you will be allowed to see the judging forms to see your results (copies are usually made available by your coach). If the schedule permits, the judges are usually willing to talk to skaters and coaches about the test, especially if the skater did not pass.
- **What happens if one does not pass?** The judges' forms will tell the skater and coach what the judges want to see improved. A skater can retest in 28 days.