

# Pacific Coast Championships

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"Why can't California remain content with its sun-tanned athletes and its movie stars instead of encroaching on the province of the frozen North?" humorously complained the Editor of the "Boston Globe", after the National Championships in Philadelphia, where five California skaters won honors "in a sport that should be monopolized by Boston". The perturbed editor should have been present at the Pacific Coast Championships, held in Oakland, on March 12, to see the many skaters who will further disturb his peace of mind in future nationals. Over fifty entries, traveling generous Western distances to participate, winning by the quality of their free skating the enthusiastic admiration of the first imported International Judge (Mr. Engel of New York), made the third Pacific Coast Championships an important event in skating history.

The all important school figures began at 8 A. M. Who said watching school figure competitions would be dull? It wasn't. The roped-off practice patch, where contestants feverishly warmed up; the sober judges, huddled in their overcoats and galoshes; the hush as figure tracing began; the tension as judges computed; the shrill whistles calling for a decision; the slightly hysterical shrieks as a favorite earned a high score: all these held an enthusiastic gallery until 2:30 P. M.

But if the school figure competitions were tense and silent, the free skating and dancing competitions were alive with release for pent-up emotions. The cheering began when diminutive Phyllis Thompson (Oakland) proceeded to tuck away the Pacific Coast Juvenile title with her recently acquired California State honor, competing with wee Betty Mitchell and Ariel Reynolds, equally adorable aspirants from the St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, who placed second and third. Then the large field of competitors for the Novice titles swung into action. Jean Sturgeon (Los Angeles) overcame the lead of Dorothy Beeskow (St. Moritz) in the morning figures, to win the Ladies' Novice title, Elaine Wittig (Seattle) taking third place. Murray and Sheldon Galbraith, San Francisco boys skating under the banner of the Oakland Figure Skating Association, renewed their fraternal battle for a crown



and again brother Murray came through with the prize. The crowd whole-heartedly applauded both, and then took John Kinney (Seattle) to its heart with a burst of applause as he finished the solo that won him third place.

The rivalry became more intense when the Juniors took the ice. Just a year ago, Maribel Vinson, visiting in Seattle, wrote for "Skating": "Two older children, Betty Lee Bennett and little Miss Lundequist, daughter of the Swedish Consul, show real promise." That promise was fulfilled when "Little Miss Lundequist" whirled herself into the Ladies' Junior title and Betty Lee Bennett took third place. Patricia Merifield (Los Angeles) skating with rhythmic smoothness, won second place. Seattle monopolized top honors in the Men's Junior as well, Damian Bourque and LeRoy Tarp emerging first and second respectively. Meryl Baxter (Oakland), flashing the engaging Baxter grin, won third place.

The excitement reached its climax in the race for the Senior titles, four of the five contestants having just returned from the Nationals where each one had earned a National honor. Lloyd Baxter's (Oakland) dizzy spins and leaps won the free skating points, though Ernest Berry (Los Angeles) took the title with the usual excellence of his school figures. Then Marianne Lindelof and Barbara Ann Gingg (both of St. Moritz) renewed with Mary Taylor (Los Angeles) their perennial three-way struggle for supremacy, and three thrilling demonstrations of free skating delighted the excited observers. Marianne good-naturedly passed on to graceful Barbara Gingg the symbol of supremacy which she has worn so graciously during the past year, while Mary Taylor, in third place, bided her time for the next try.

In the Senior Pairs, Barbara Ann Gingg and Lloyd Baxter had a good time skating to "You're a Sweetheart", and they won first place. Edna Holmes and Ernest Berry won second place with a smooth performance that included some spectacular spread eagles. Patricia Merifield and Damian Bourque won a cheer and third place as a clever acrobatic stunt concluded their number. In the Junior Pairs, Seattle again provided both winners and runners-up, proving the value of carnival experience. Betty Lee Bennett and John Kinney were everyone's choice for first place. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Beymer repeated last year's win of second place, Dorothy Beeskow and Arthur Rude (St. Moritz) coming in third.

The four dance couples surviving the eliminations of the afternoon, were Barbara Ann Gingg and Drexel Gibbins (St. Moritz), Edna



Holmes and Ernest Berry (Los Angeles), Marianne Lindelof (St. Moritz) and Lloyd Baxter (Oakland), and Mr. and Mrs. William Radcliffe (St. Moritz), who finished in the order named in the Dance Competition. For the first time in Pacific Coast Competition the tango was included, as well as the foxtrot, waltz and fourteenstep. Both audience and judges were grateful for the program plan that interspersed the dances between the various free skating competitions, both for the variety it provided and for the "emotional" breathing spell allowed.

Because skating is such a beautiful sport, and because the fluttering of softly flaring skirts helps to make it so, the costumes must be mentioned in passing. White and pale blue seemed to be favored by the skaters. Vivid costumes in red, American Beauty, orchid, cerise and pink warmed up the picture. Black lent a striking accent. All were lovely. Popular with the ladies was Jean Sturgeon's dainty white costume, with its charming touch of Tyrolean embroidery, while the masculine vote went to the pale pink confection that adorned the blond beauty of Edna Holmes. Fresh flowers and tiny caps kept tumbled curls in place and emphasized the youthfulness of the eager skaters. Rabbit's foot charms were standard uniform for boys and girls alike, appearing at cap, belt or shoe, to bring luck

Officials of the St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, which sponsored the competitions, were highly gratified that the U. S. F. S. A. was willing to send Mr. Carl Engel of The Skating Club, Inc., New York, to assist with the difficult task of judging. The eager groups clustering around Mr. and Mrs. Engel whenever they appeared, testified to the benefit derived from exchange of opinions on every aspect of skating, from tempo of dance rhythms to methods of judging. Acting with Mr. Engel as judges were Mr. John L. Wood (Los Angeles) and Mr. Charles Peffers (St. Moritz) who may take a well-earned bow for a job as consistent and outstanding as was humanly possible. Mr. James F. Connell (Yosemite Winter Club) was a popular referee. The smooth, uninterrupted precision of the competitions spoke volumes for the careful planning of "behind the scene" details, testimonial to the ability of Mr. Howell Janes, Chairman of the Competition Committee, the workers who loyally assisted him, and the co-operation of the Oakland Ice Rink officers, Mr. Jay Fredkin, Mr. John J. Allen, Jr., and Mr. Harry Swanson. The St. Moritz Club donated two handsome silver trophies for the Pacific Coast Singles Championships, each of which may be kept permanently by the first three-time winner. Trophies for



the Dance Championships were donated by Van Wormer and Rodrigues, jewelers who designed the competition medals.

How can we end without reporting an interview with Mrs. Carl Engel, the delightful wife of our Judge from New York? She agreed with the three judges that the outstanding feature of the competitions was the smooth perfection of the free skating programs, which it seems incredible could have been attained in so few years of Western skating. "But," she added, "the real highlight of the competitions was the outstanding attention paid to me, of course! I think the people in the West are wonderful, and I'm convinced that young men have listened to Horace Greeley's admonition to 'Go West' for here they all are—and they are all good skaters!"

#### MEN'S SENIOR

1. Ernest Berry, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club*.
2. Lloyd Baxter, *Oakland Figure Skating Association*.

#### LADIES' SENIOR

1. Barbara Ann Gingg, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland*.
2. Marianne Lindelof, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland*.
3. Mary Taylor, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club*.

#### SENIOR PAIRS

1. Barbara Ann Gingg, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club*, and Lloyd Baxter, *Oakland Figure Skating Association*.
2. Edna Holmes and Ernest Berry, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club*.
3. Patricia Merifield and Damian Bourque, *Seattle Skating Club*.

#### MEN'S JUNIOR

1. Damian Bourque, *Seattle Skating Club*.
2. LeRoy Tarp, *Seattle Skating Club*.
3. Meryl Baxter, *Oakland Figure Skating Association*.
4. Noel Coffey, *Oakland Figure Skating Association*.
5. George Monnier, *Oakland Figure Skating Association*.

#### LADIES' JUNIOR

1. Britta Lundquist, *Seattle Skating Club*.
2. Patricia Merifield, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club*.\*
3. Betty Lee Bennett, *Seattle Skating Club*.
4. Edna Holmes, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club*.
5. June Rasmussen, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland*.

#### JUNIOR PAIRS

1. Dorothy Lee Bennett and John Kinney, *Seattle Skating Club*.
2. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Beymer, *Seattle Skating Club*.
3. Dorothy Beeskow and Arthur Rude, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club*.

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\*Miss Merifield belongs to both the Los Angeles and Seattle Clubs.



#### MEN'S NOVICE

1. Murray Galbraith, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
2. Sheldon Galbraith, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
3. John Kinney, *Seattle Skating Club.*
4. William Hart, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
5. Arthur Rude, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*
6. William Hoyt, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*
7. Fletcher Hoyt, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*

#### LADIES' NOVICE

1. Jean Sturgeon, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club.*
2. Dorothy Beeskow, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*
3. Elaine Wittig, *Seattle Skating Club.*
4. Ramona Allen, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
5. Marcella May, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
6. Rosemary Brown, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Association.*
7. Peggy Hoyt, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*
8. Barbara de Julio, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*

#### JUVENILE GIRLS

1. Phyllis Thompson, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
2. Betty Mitchell, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*
3. Ariel Reynolds, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club, Oakland.*

#### DANCE

(nine couples entered)

1. Barbara Ann Gingg and Drexel Gibbins, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club.*
2. Marianne Lindelof, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club,* and Lloyd Baxter, *Oakland Figure Skating Association.*
3. Edna Holmes and Ernest Berry, *Los Angeles Figure Skating Club.*
4. Mr. and Mrs. William Radcliffe, *St. Moritz Ice Skating Club.*

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