

MIDWESTERNS

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When the entries for the '76 Midwestern Figure Skating Championships came in, it became readily apparent that the competition would be tight, tough and terrific. As the events unfolded December 11-13, hosted by Denver's Colorado SC, the skaters' actual performances fully lived up to expectations.

Senior Man Scott Cramer, coming to Mids with a first place from Southwesterns, goes on to Nationals with another first to his credit. It was a hard fought placement, however, for Scott was in third after the compulsory figures and second after the short program. His strong, dynamic, superbly skated long program brought him a standing ovation from the audience and a string of firsts from the judges, thereby allowing him to overtake Billy Schneider's commanding figure lead. Billy Schneider skated the long program directly after Scott and in no way succumbed to the terrific pressure that Scott

had placed on him. His high content program, featuring double Axels, triple toe-loop and intricate diagonal and serpentine footwork, was performed with skill and assurance. Frank Sweiding came from fifth in figures to capture the bronze medal with a mature program of double and tuck Axels and triple Salchow.

After taking the lead in figures, Karen DeAngelo, 1975 Midwestern Senior Ladies' Champion, skated a short program the perfection of which was marred only by one missed jump in the jump combination. Her long program, set to Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, clinched the title for her. Teri Klindworth and Editha Dotson, who train at the host Colorado Ice Arena, battled it out for second and third places. Editha's artistic interpretation of the music from the *Carmen Ballet* by Shchedrin garnered the silver medal for her. Beautiful spins and expressive arm movements evoked an ap-

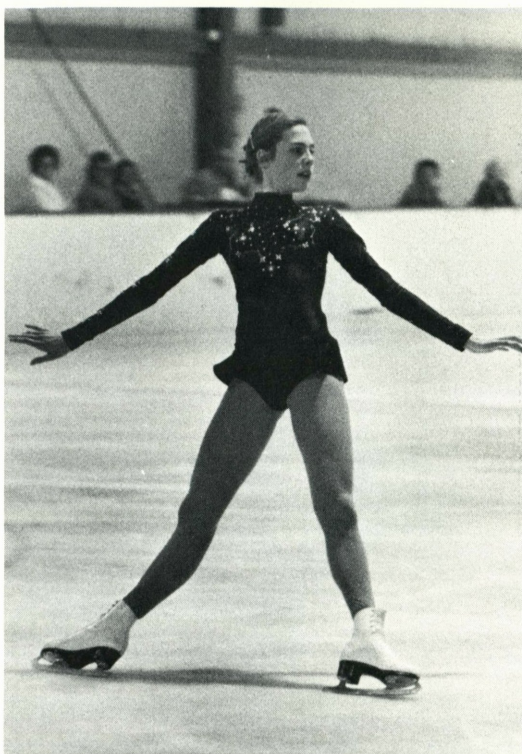


Photo: Larry Shirkey; opposite, top right: Doris DeWitt



Superb free skating brought the Junior Ladies' title to Kathy Gelecinskyj (above) and the Senior Men's crown to Scott Cramer (above, left). Cramer's performance was highlighted by a triple Salchow/triple Salchow, the first time that combination had ever been performed in competition. Jackie Booth, with new partner Eric Walden (left), took the silver medal in Gold Dance, while Holly Blunt & Bruce Hurd (opposite) won Senior Pairs.

Karen DeAngelo (below) led all the way to retain her Senior Ladies' title over the challenges of silver medalist Editha Dotson (right) and bronze medalist Teri Klindworth (below, right). (Opposite:) Colorado SC caddies, from left to right: Debbie McClure, Heidi Albrecht, Louise Van Sickle, Bernie Krause, Gay Willson.





preciative response from the audience as well as the judges. Teri, who pulled to second on the strength of her beautifully executed third figure, captured second place in the short program, but was third overall. Her free skating displayed all the double jumps coupled with interesting moves and agile footwork.

A second standing ovation was given to the Junior Ladies' Champion, Kathy Gelecinskyj from the FSC of Minneapolis. Her strong program included three big double Axels, one of them preceded by a double Lutz and a second coming out of a big spiral. Its spectacular finale was an arena-length layback lunge terminating in double toe-loop, half loop, double Salchow and flying camel into a sit spin. The second placed Junior Lady, Laura McDonald, presented an arresting interpretation of the classic "Blue Danube" by Johann Strauss. Each measure of her beautifully choreographed program included an interesting skating movement, either a graceful head or hand motion, layback spin or powerfully executed jump including double Axels, double Lutz and a split/split/half loop/half loop/double toe-loop combination. Sandy Lenz of the Wagon Wheel FSC came from fourth in figures to take third overall with solid performances in both the short and long programs.

Junior Men's laurels went to Scott Hamilton, David Kinser and Ted Masdea. Their programs included the full range of double jumps. The only Junior Man to do a triple combination was Patrick Hughes, whose triple Salchow/double loop combination in the short program helped bring him up to fourth overall.

Kelsy Ufford was the unanimous first place choice of the judges in Novice Ladies' singles. Her exciting program, set to modern music, fea-

tured a Russian split/double toe-loop/double Axel combination. Alicia Risberg, Colorado SC, moved up from fourth in figures to capture the silver medal with a well executed, difficult program including split/double flip/double toe-loop combination and flying change sit spin. Third place went to Sharon Meredith, whose *West Side Story* program had two double Axels.

Berths to Nationals in the Novice Men's classification went to Stuart Bailey (FSC of Minneapolis), James Santee (Broadmoor SC) and Greg Kajfez (Midland FSC). Stuart's program featured high, clean jumps, including a double Lutz and double loop.

A strong Intermediate Ladies' class was headed by Marianne Zauss of the Colorado SC. Her program was exceptionally mature for this group and featured double Lutz, double toe-loop and double loop/double loop combination. Mary Beth Trotter of Tulsa FSC and Michelle MacLean of St. Paul FSC were second and third, respectively.

Intermediate Men Eddie Dom and David Montaleone ranked first and second in figures and maintained those placements in the final standings. Gary Kemp, seventh in the initial round, came up to capture third by turning in a first place free skating performance.

Very sound compulsory dances and a light and lively OSP rumba were topped off by a fluid, high quality free dance to give the gold medal to Gold Dancers Cathy Macri & Tim Hodges. Jackie Booth & Eric Walden were awarded the silver, and Kathy Russell & David Hold, the bronze.

In the Silver Dance, Detroit SC's Carol Fox & Richard Dalley were number one all the way. Solid performances were also turned in by silver medalists Kelly Ann Morris & Michael



Laura Pierce & Rick Berg (left) took the bronze medal in Silver Dance. Other Silver Dancers included Randi Rodenkirch & Lee Cobb (below, left), Karen Kelley & Ronald Plank (opposite, top) and Linda Munz & Donald Steiner (below).



Photos: Larry Shirkey



Seibert, who have skated together only three months, and bronze medalists Laura Pierce & Rick Berg.

Only three couples entered the Senior Pairs' competition, and the judges didn't deviate from their placements after the short program. Holly Blunt & Bruce Hurd were their choice for first; brother and sister Beth Ann & Frank Sweiding, second; and Janet Van Camp & Gordon Black, third. Good unison and high, well executed lifts characterized the group as a whole.

Winners of Junior Pairs were Joy Hoepfl & Bruce Forciea, whose program featured an impressive throw Axel and an original lift (called the "JB," after Joy and Bruce). Broadmoor SC's Kathy Laisure & Brian Kader were a close second, while Denver FSC's Debbie Weinstein & Richard Dodson were third. Debbie had broken her elbow while doing a tabletop lift earlier this fall, and the pair had only resumed lift practice on Thanksgiving. Their program included the ill-fated tabletop as well as the unusual star lift and cross spread eagles.

Novice Pair winners were Dana Jo Boles & Dale Copenhaver, followed by Cindy Bailey & Andrew Ouellette. A second brother and sister team, Cheryl & David Michalowski, were third.

A midnight dinner-dance at the Regency Inn concluded the week's activities, and the competitors, with their usual enthusiasm and energy, turned in 6.0 performances on the dance floor!—

Lois C. Miller

