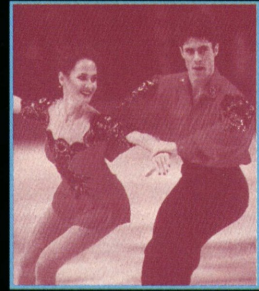
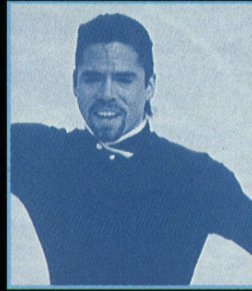
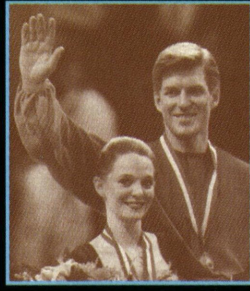


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1996 STATE FARM U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS



Q & A With Rudy Galindo ■ Fond Recollections 1976-1980

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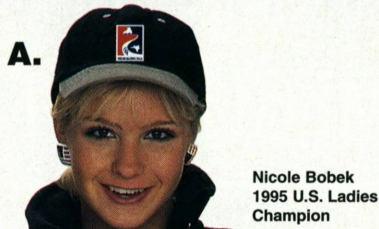
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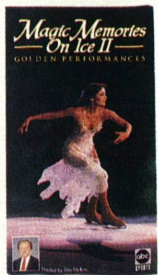
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SKATING

VOLUME 73 NUMBER 4

FEATURES

THE CHAMPION SERIES FINAL

This first-ever competition proved a worthy addition to the roster of I.S.U. events.

by *Jean-Christophe Berlot*

SHOCKWAVES IN SAN JOSE

THE SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

A remarkable performance from a hometown hero and the stunning withdrawal of a defending champion rocked the State Farm U.S. Championships in San Jose.

by *Terry Terzian*

THE JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

The top juniors exhibited the skills necessary for graduation to a higher level of competition.

by *Lisa Miller*

THE NOVICE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Competitors in the Novice Championships demonstrated that the brightest skating stars in the U.S. may also be the youngest.

by *Alexandra Stevenson*

Q & A WITH RUDY GALINDO

The newly crowned U.S. men's champion discusses his unforgettable week in San Jose as well as his promising future.

by *Terry Terzian*

COVER

Highlights of memorable moments from the 1996 State Farm U.S. Championships, left to right: Michelle Kwan with USFSA President Morry Stillwell, Jenni Meno and Todd Sand, Rudy Galindo, and Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow.

Photograph by David Madison/DUOMO.

The 1996 World Team, left to right, front row: Brian Wells, Tara Lipinski, Dan Hollander, Todd Eldredge, Shelby Lyons; back row: Jason Dungjen, Kyoko Ina, Renee Roca, Gorsha Sur, Todd Sand, Jenni Meno, Michelle Kwan, Rudy Galindo, Tonia Kwiatkowski, Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow.

Photograph by Paul Harvath.



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DEPARTMENTS

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ON THIS PAGE

After being paired for only two years, Shelby Lyons and Brian Wells made their first appearance on the national podium by taking the bronze medal in Championship Pairs.

Photograph by Paul Harvath.

Fond Recollections, 1976-1980

by **Charles A. DeMore**
Past President

I have many fond recollections of the four years I served as president of the United States Figure Skating Association from 1976-1980. When I put "pencil to the paper," I didn't realize how difficult it would be to recall my most outstanding memories during my term of office.

The latter part of the 1970s was exciting, challenging and revolutionary. History was being made and the future was being planned.

In the summer of 1973 my wife, Elaine, and I went to Oberstdorf, West Germany, and St. Gervais, France, as judge and team leader for the American team at the Coupe des Alpes competitions (Nebelhorn

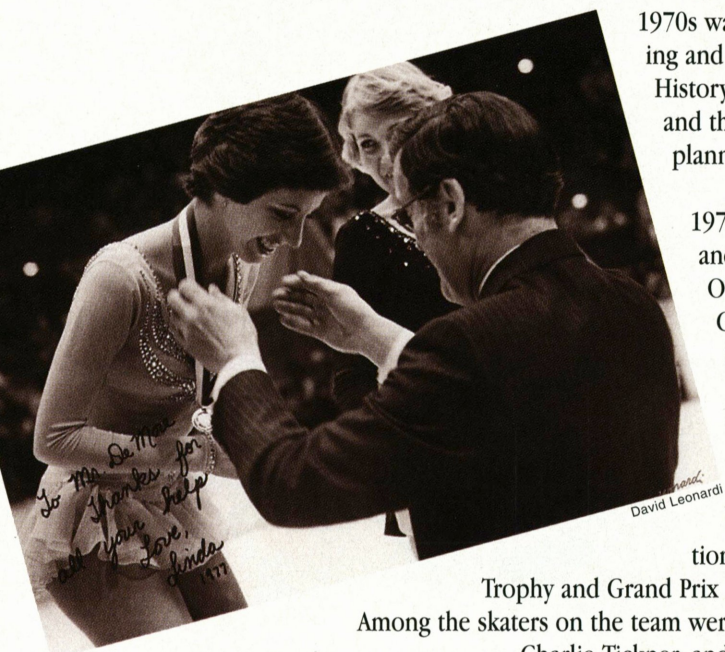
Trophy and Grand Prix International).

Among the skaters on the team were Linda Fratianne, Charlie Tickner, and Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner. Linda, Tai and Randy were barely teen-agers but had made their mark as outstanding junior skaters and established themselves as future stars; Charlie, a little older, was still trying to make his mark in the skating world. For all of them, it was their first entry into the international figure skating scene.

Each won a gold medal at one or the other competition. The European officials and judges were very complimentary and predicted these youngsters would be future world champions.

In 1977, Linda won the Ladies' World Championship in Tokyo with one of the gutsiest, most inspiring performances seen in skating. Coming from a sick bed with a strep throat and unbelievably high temperature, she finished ahead of Anett Pötzsch of the German Democratic Republic. Tai and Randy won the bronze medal in pairs.

Continued on page 47



Congratulations!
U.S. Senior Ladies' Champion Linda Fratianne receives the gold medal from USFSA President Charles A. DeMore in 1977.

SKATING

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SKATING (ISSN: 0037-6132) is published monthly by The United States Figure Skating Association, 20 First Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80906-3697. Issue: Vol. 73, No. 4. Subscription rates: United States, one year \$25 (U.S.); Canada, one year \$35 (U.S.); Foreign, one year \$45 (U.S.). Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of the first issue. Second Class postage paid at Colorado Springs and at additional mailing offices. Copyright ©1996 by The United States Figure Skating Association (USFSA), Colorado Springs, CO. Phone (719) 635-5200. SKATING assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. Postmaster: Send address corrections to SKATING, 20 First Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80906-3697.

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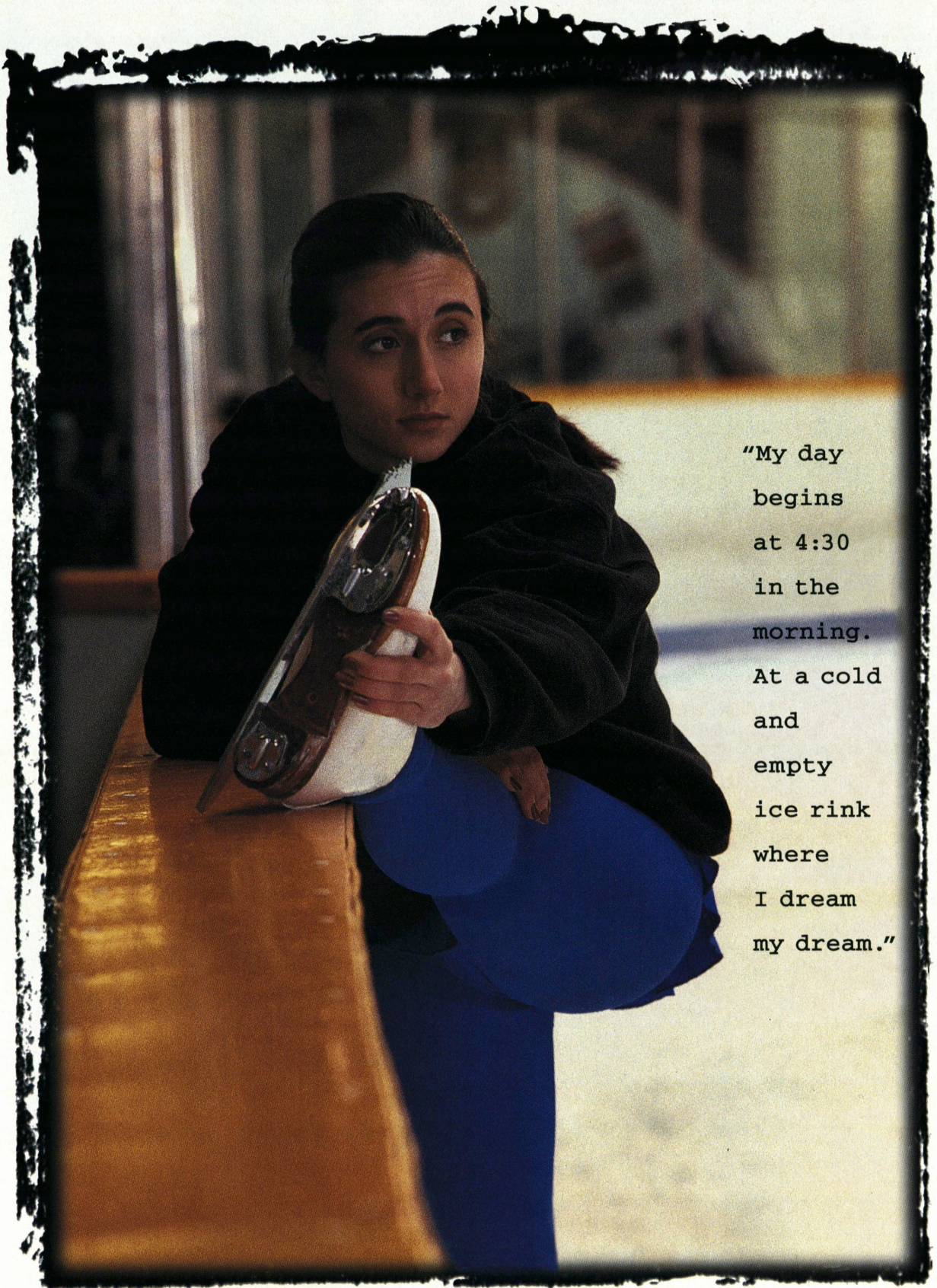
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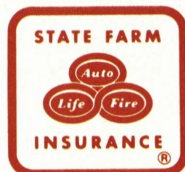


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Champions Series Final earns high marks

By Jean-Christophe Berlot

The first-ever Champions Series Final, held in Paris, France, brought to fruition a concept the I.S.U. had announced a year earlier: a series of five international competitions open only to eligible skaters, culminating in a final competition for the highest point-earners at the conclusion of the series.

Not surprisingly, those who emerged last fall from the five competitions comprising the Champions Series (Sudafed Skate America, Sunlife Skate Canada, Trophée de France Contrex, Sparkassen Nations Cup and NHK Trophy) were among the top skaters of the world.

Prize money for the Champions Series Final totalled \$676,000.

The Men's event turned into a replay of the 1994 Olympic Winter Games, with Russia's Alexei Urmanov and Canada's Elvis Stojko battling for first place. Urmanov opened his short program with a magnificent triple Axel to triple toe loop combination. Stojko opted for a triple to double, as did France's Eric Millot, and the three headed into the free program in that order.

Returning to his 1994 "Christopher Columbus" program, Stojko performed perfect quadruple toe to double toe and triple Axel to double toe combinations, which brought the audience to its feet. However, Urmanov's classical line, high jumps and precise footwork soon reversed the score. His marks placed him first, in front of Stojko. Although Millot failed to land his triple Axel, he did manage to pull off a beautiful triple loop to triple loop combination which secured him third place overall.

Although the week had started ideally for Todd Eldredge, his practice sessions were among the most brilliant of the field, the competition was not nearly as rewarding. A slight hand down on the ice while executing the triple Lutz placed him sixth in the short program and with small mistakes in the long, he finished fifth overall.

The two Russian pairs of Eugenia Shishkova and Vadim Naumov and

Marina Eltsova and Andrei Bushkov skated near-perfect long programs. Eltsova and Bushkov came from fourth after the short program to second overall, while Shishkova and Naumov maintained first from start to finish.

1996 U.S. Champions Jenni Meno and husband Todd Sand were in third place after the short. First on the ice in the long program, their throw double Axel was unsurpassed, however, a faulty landing on their side-by-side double Axel cost them their place on the podium. Mandy Wötzel and Ingo Steuer of Germany came in third and Meno and Sand finished fourth.

1995 World Champion Chen Lu of China promptly took the lead in the Ladies' short program, followed by Josée Chouinard of Canada. 1996 U.S. Champion Michelle Kwan fell on her triple toe loop and had to settle for fourth place, behind newly crowned European Champion Irina Slutskaya of Russia.

Slutskaya opened the free skate with a flawless performance that included all five triples — three in combination. Chen's free skate was a near disaster, as she fell on her first triple Lutz, singled her second and doubled her Salchow and loop. Chouinard's otherwise solid performance was marred by a fall on the triple Lutz. Last to skate, Kwan's "Salome" was near perfection, with all five triples and a beautiful triple toe to triple toe combination. Kwan won, followed by Slutskaya and Chouinard, with Chen finishing fourth.

The real competition in dance was not for first place, so obviously superior were Olympic and 1995 World Champions Oksana Grischuk and Evgeny Platov of Russia, nor was it for second place, as their teammates Anjelika Krylova and Oleg Ovsianikov held that position from start to finish. It was instead for third place, which was fiercely contested by Shae-Lynn Bourne and Victor Kraatz of Canada and Marina Anissina and Gwendal Peizerat of France.

The French took third place in the

compulsory Silver Samba, but Anissina fell heavily at the end of their original Paso Doble and the Canadians pulled up to third. However, in the free dance, Anissina and Peizerat skated an exuberant program and won the coveted third place.

"I enjoyed it as something new," remarked Stojko of this first outing for the Champions Series. Obviously, the concept will be developed by the I.S.U. for next season. But thrilling athletic performances, an enthusiastic audience, high monetary prizes and good television ratings earned this first-ever Champion Series Final high marks. ■

Jean-Christophe Berlot is a Paris-based free-lance journalist and author of the book, "Passion Patinage."

RESULTS

CHAMPIONS SERIES FINAL PARIS, FRANCE FEBRUARY 23-25, 1996

MEN

JUDGES: 1 Michael Foll, GER; 2 Anne Hardy Thomas, FRA; 3 Gerhardt Bubnik, CZE; 4 Marie Claire Heintzmann, CAN; 5 Maira Abasova, RUS; 6 Margaret Wier, USA; 7 Junko Hiramatsu, JPN. SUBSTITUTE JUDGE: Yuri Guskov, KZK. REFEREE: Sally-Anne Stapleford, I.S.U. ASSISTANT REFEREE: Katsuchiro Hisanaga, I.S.U.

NAME, COUNTRY, SP-FS-PLACES

1. Alexei Urmanov, RUS, 1-1-1.5
2. Elvis Stojko, CAN, 2-2-3.0
3. Eric Millot, FRA, 3-3-4.5
4. Ilya Kulik, RUS, 5-4-6.5
5. Todd Eldredge, USA, 6-5-8.0
6. Viacheslav Zagorodniuk, UKR, 4-6-8.0

LADIES

JUDGES: 1 Mieko Fujimori, JPN; 2 Anatoli Bogatyrev, RUS; 3 Linda Leaver, USA; 4 Zhili Wang, CHN; 5 Alain Miquel, FRA; 6 Rolf Pipoh, GER; 7 Elizabeth Clark, CAN. SUBSTITUTE JUDGE: Vladislav Petukov, UKR. REFEREE: Monique Georgelin, I.S.U. ASSISTANT REFEREE: Charles U. Foster, USA.

NAME, COUNTRY, SP-FS-PLACES

1. Michelle Kwan, USA, 4-1-3.0
2. Irina Slutskaya, RUS, 3-2-3.5
3. Josée Chouinard, CAN, 2-3-4.0
4. Lu Chen, CHN, 1-5-5.5
5. Hanae Yokoya, JPN, 7-4-7.5
6. Olga Markova, RUS, 5-6-8.5
7. Maria Butyrskaya, RUS, 6-7-10.0

PAIRS

JUDGES: 1 Anatoli Bogatyrev, RUS; 2 Junko Hiramatsu, JPN; 3 Marie Claire Heintzmann, CAN; 4 Yuri Guskov, KZK; 5 Margaret Wier, USA; 6 Anne Hardy Thomas, FRA; 7 Michael Foll, GER. SUBSTITUTE JUDGE: Zhili Wang, CHN. REFEREE: Sally Rehoric, CAN. ASSISTANT REFEREE: Britta Lindgren, I.S.U.

NAME, COUNTRY, SP-FS-PLACES

1. Eugenia Shishkova & Vadim Naumov, RUS, 1-1-1.5
2. Marina Eltsova & Andrei Bushkov, RUS, 4-2-4.0
3. Mandy Wötzel & Ingo Steuer, GER, 2-3-4.0
4. Jenni Meno & Todd Sand, USA, 3-4-5.5

DANCE

JUDGES: 1 Pierre Husarek, FRA; 2 Elizabeth Clark, CAN; 3 Maira Abasova, RUS; 4 Mieko Fujimori, JPN; 5 Vladislav Petukov, UKR; 6 Rolf Pipoh, GER; 7 Linda Leaver, USA. SUBSTITUTE JUDGE: Gerhardt Bubnik, CZE. REFEREE: Hans Kutschera, I.S.U. ASSISTANT REFEREE: Wolfgang Kunz, I.S.U.

NAME, COUNTRY, CD-OD-FD-PLACES

1. Oksana Grischuk & Evgeny Platov, RUS, 1-1-1-2.0
2. Anjelika Krylova & Oleg Ovsianikov, RUS, 2-2-2-4.0
3. Marina Anissina & Gwendal Peizerat, FRA, 3-4-3-6.6
4. Shae-Lynn Bourne & Victor Kraatz, CAN, 4-3-4-7.4 ■

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Sunday, October 27 – Thrifty Car Rental Skate America International 1:00-3:00 PM
Sunday, November 17 – Thrifty Car Rental Skate America International 4:00-6:00 PM
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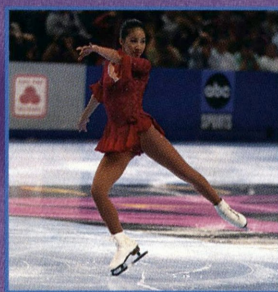
1996 STATE FARM U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

Shockwaves in San Jose!

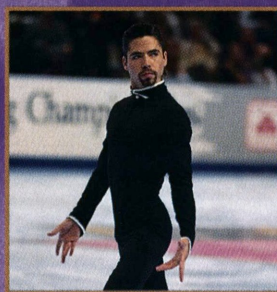
By Terry Terzian ■ Photographs by Paul & Michelle Harvath

A hometown hero's remarkable upset and the stunning withdrawal of a defending U.S. champion were but two of the sources of major tremors that rocked the new, state-of-the-art San Jose Arena during U.S. Championships week, Jan. 14-20. ■ More than 100,000 supportive spectators experienced the shockwaves as 300-plus of the country's top skaters vied for 19 U.S. titles in three divisions. ■ By week's end, the Local Organizing Committee, in conjunction with the host club — The Peninsula FSC — and the Junior League of San Jose had proven that excellent organization and warm hospitality makes for memorable events for fans, skaters and officials alike. ■ Read on and see why it's unlikely that anyone who was there will ever forget that moving week in San Jose.

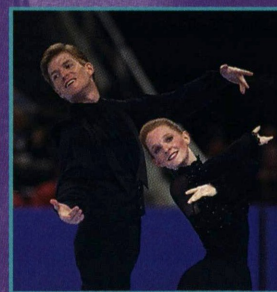
LADIES
MICHELLE KWAN



MEN
RUDY GALINDO



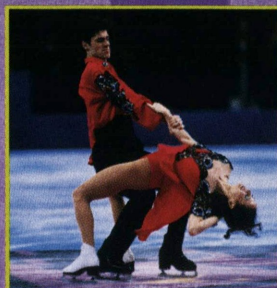
PAIRS
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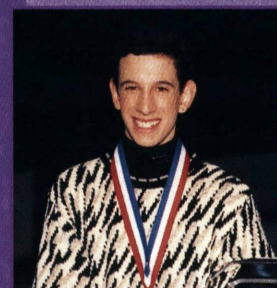
1996 CHAMPIONSHIPS GOLD MEDALISTS



LADIES FIGURES
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DANCE
PUNSALAN / SWALLOW



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A script produced by any of Hollywood's most imaginative writers would be humdrum in comparison to the events that unfolded on the San Jose ice.

Aspiring skater puts his successful single's career on hold to focus all attention on his pair's career and after two U.S. crowns his partner decides she's had enough. She goes on to attain Olympic fame and glory; he resurrects his single's career only to witness a steady decline in his national standing. While he struggles on the ice, a series of personal tragedies off the ice test his inner strength and resolve to the utmost.

After the dispiriting results at last year's U.S. Championships, 26-year-old Rudy Galindo ceased training for eight months and returned to the ice only with the constant reassurance and support of his sister Laura — who would become his coach. The former World Junior Champion (1987) would enter the fray one more time — and this time in front of his hometown crowd.

What Galindo accomplished on the San Jose ice can only be described as magical. Skating with a steely-eyed focus and an unflappable determination, Galindo threw off triple-triple combinations in abundance and with ease. His choice of music for the short program, "Canon in D" by Pachabel, was tailor-made for his lyrical, balletic style. Looking regal in red and gold, he executed the only triple Axel-triple toe of the evening and many felt he should have been placed higher than the third the judges awarded. [Although, as one observer noted, an apparent change of edge from outside to inside heading into his solitary triple Lutz may have resulted in a deduction being taken on some judges' scorecards.]

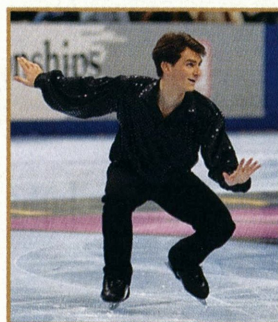
The partisan crowd was ready to erupt as Galindo took to the ice for his long program, the final skater of the afternoon. Galindo responded with a performance to "Swan Lake" that is surely a front-runner for the next edition of "Magic Memories on Ice." His first jump combination, a triple Axel-triple toe was immediately followed by another, a triple Lutz-triple toe. A bevy of other triples followed along with unique spins and enchanting choreography. The arena was in bedlam and stratospheric marks of mostly 5.9s (as well as two 6.0s for presentation — the only perfect scores awarded all week and the first perfect scores in Galindo's career) would translate to a gold medal.

"I can't describe this moment right now, it means so

much to me," related an awe-struck Galindo at the news conference afterwards. "All week long I kept imagining the crowd standing after a clean long program. I would wake up at night. I couldn't even sleep."

In comparing this victory with the two pairs titles he won with Kristi Yamaguchi in 1989 and '90, Galindo said: "This is a lot sweeter. I did it on my own."

"He came out here and accomplished what he wanted to do," explained Laura Galindo. "He's worked very hard the past four months since he's come back. As his coach I'm very honored and as his sister I'm very proud."



ELDREDGE

Just missing in his attempt to win a fourth U.S. title was Todd Eldredge. The reigning World silver medalist delivered two strong performances to place second behind Galindo. His error-free "Swing Kids" short program was rated first by all nine judges and his new long set to dramatic music from the soundtrack of "First

Knight" was solid except for a shaky landing on the opening triple Axel and a double toe that was meant to be a triple near the end of the program.

"This was the first time out for this program so maybe it was a little rougher than I would have wanted," Eldredge said. "I had to concentrate a lot throughout the program. Obviously, Rudy skated better tonight so he deserved to win."

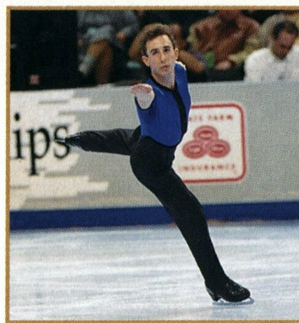
USFSA President Morry Stillwell put the events into perspective. "We had a very fine panel of judges out there and they are trained to recognize excellence and they had to reward it tonight. This is probably the biggest jump in the National ranking of a skater I've ever witnessed in my 30 years of association with the sport. Many of the judges were weak as they came off the panel. I was teary-eyed."

While the collective attention of the San Jose audience was understandably riveted on their hometown hero, the story behind the bronze medal winner was equally inspiring. Twenty-three-year-old Dan Hollander of Royal Oak, Mich., has been making a quiet though steady climb up the senior ranks, placing 10th in 1994 and seventh last year. He is proficient at all the basics of

skating including crisp, clean edges, fast stroking, well-positioned spins and powerful, consistent jumps. In fourth place after the short, Hollander pulled up to the bronze medal with a terrific long which featured two triple Axels (one in combination with a double loop) as well as five other triples. Along with the bronze, Hollander earned the right to join Galindo and Eldredge on the U.S. World Team.

"I've had one goal this year and that's to make the World Team," Hollander said. "Deep down inside I really wanted it but I didn't think I'd be ready for it yet. All I could think of is all the years and back-to-back programs I've been doing and that it would be so stupid to just throw it all away now when I'm so close."

Along with the victors there were also the casualties. Two-time U.S. Champion Scott Davis was in second place



HOLLANDER

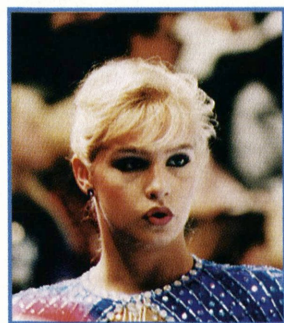
The aspirations of two-time bronze medalist Aren Nielsen were decimated with a fall on his triple Axel in the short program. Skating first in the next to last group in the long, Nielsen's performance was quite strong, but it was too late and he ended up a dismal eighth.

after a strong though imperfect short program. Davis began well in his long, but a succession of stumbles and jump fallouts spelled disaster and he dropped to a final fourth. Up-and-comer Michael Weiss had some troubles in both programs resulting in a fifth-place finish, up one spot from 1995.

CHAMPIONSHIP LADIES

The center of media attention — and controversy — heading into the week of competition was last year's U.S. Champion and World Bronze Medalist Nicole Bobek.

In October 1995, 18-year-old Bobek developed a swelling in her right ankle that caused her pain upon landing jumps. Despite medical advice to rest the tendonitis-stricken ankle, Bobek persevered through a busy schedule of fall competitions, with mediocre results including a sixth at Skate America and a third at Nations Cup. In December, with little time remaining for the ankle to fully heal and to train adequately prior to the U.S. Championships, Bobek opted to honor her commitment to perform in a whirlwind 22-city tour of "The Nutcracker on Ice."



BOBEK

While on tour Bobek opted for a coaching change — her ninth in nine years. She returned to Barbara Roles Williams of Las Vegas, Nev., who had trained her between the ages of 9 and 11.

At a pre-competition press conference, Bobek stopped short of discussing any details behind the break with Richard Callaghan.

"Things didn't seem to be clicking as well as they did last year. I figured it was time to move on. Mr.

Callaghan and I still talk. There are no hard feelings."

Bobek indicated that although there was still considerable pain on landing jumps she fully intended to do everything in her programs and not water them down in any way.

Skating to the jazzy "In the Mood" from "The Cotton Club," Bobek was forced to put a hand down between the triple Lutz and the double toe in the opening combination of her short program. The balance of the program was well-skated with the usual large dosage of Bobek flair. Although Bobek would place a creditable third in this portion of the competition, she was visibly upset as the program ended and was consoled by Roles Williams as they awaited the marks.

Difficulties with her jumps during the warm-up for the free skate set the audience abuzz. Then came the announcement two skaters later that Bobek had withdrawn. Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Warren King after examining Bobek backstage had recommended that she not skate in order to avoid the chance of further injury.

"After the warm-up I just knew there was no way that my ankle was going to hold up," a tearful Bobek said.

While her hopes of retaining her U.S. crown were now dashed, the question of whether or not she would be given a medical bye and named to the World Team remained to be decided.

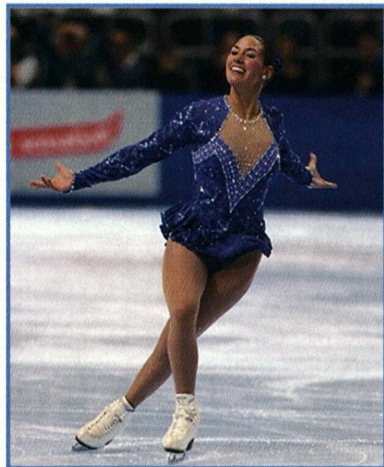
With her chief adversary unable to finish, the way was clear for Michelle Kwan to annex her first U.S. title.

Skating with self-assurance and poise belying her 15 years, Kwan captured first place in both portions of the competition. The increased maturity and sophistication with which Kwan has skated all year was very much in evidence in San Jose. Seven flawlessly-executed triple jumps were incorporated into her "Salome" long program including a triple toe-triple toe combination. Only a popped Axel at the very end of her program marred an otherwise superlative performance (and caused her to point "a gun" to her head in jest!).

"I feel like I skated my best except for that single Axel at the end," said a composed Kwan. "I didn't come here expecting to win. I've worked really hard this year, going over my programs again and again. I'm in good shape and I'm ready for everything."

When asked if his student could win a World title this year, Frank Carroll was down-to-earth.

"Part of our philosophy is to never make predictions and I think people who predict in skating are nuts. They're wrong nine out of 10 times. We just train hard and see what we can do. I think if Michelle skates the way she has been skating all year there's a good chance she can be in the top three."



KWIATKOWSKI

Looking nearly invincible in the practice sessions was longtime senior competitor Tonia Kwiatkowski. Her best was not left on the practice ice, however. The 24-year-old put together two of her finest performances ever in garnering the silver medal. Elegance, speed, beauty, technical difficulty, delightful choreography — Kwiatkowski had it all.

"I always knew I could do it and now I've proved it," said a radiant Kwiatkowski. "It felt really comfortable out there and I was able to maintain the confidence and keep the same timing that I've had all year in the practice sessions."

Kwiatkowski, who had been the object of some good-natured razzing by the media for being one of the oldest and most experienced competitors in the ladies' event, hobbled into the post-competition news confer-



LIPINSKI

ence with the aid of a walker.

"I don't feel that old!" she exclaimed defiantly though jokingly. "It doesn't matter how old you are it's how you feel and I feel good. It's just great to still be in skating and competing at the level I'm competing at."

Pulling up from fifth in the short program to capture the bronze medal with a strong free skate was 4-foot-8-inch, 69-pound Tara Lipinski. At 13

years and seven months of age, Lipinski was the youngest entrant in the senior ladies' division.

Lipinski, second in Juniors last year and fifth at the Junior World Championships in December, proved incredibly adept at triple jumps and with further polish will be a force to reckon with in the years ahead.

"I'm so happy I skated well," said Lipinski. "It would be a big surprise if I went to Worlds, I'd be so excited."

"I think Tara has definitely earned the right to go," declared her new coach of less than two months, Richard Callaghan. "If she skates the way she did tonight she'd do exceptionally well at Worlds. I won't be happy if she doesn't go."

Rounding out the top five were two other young athletes that show a great deal of promise, last year's U.S. Junior Champion Sydne Vogel and Karen Kwan, Michelle's 17-year-old sister.

The USFSA's International Committee met in a closed-door session shortly after the conclusion of the Ladies' event to decide who would represent the United States in Edmonton at the World Championships. Later, it was announced that Lipinski would join Kwan and Kwiatkowski as the third member of the team and that Bobek would be first alternate.

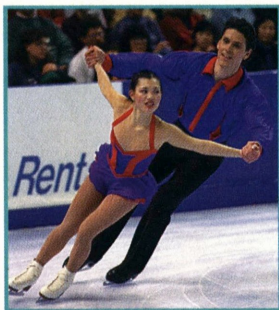
In announcing the decision, Jim Disbrow, Chairman of the International Committee, said: "The Committee looked at all of the issues at hand and they came down to the fact that the team that would best represent us currently would be these three. The skaters that completed the U.S. Championships here have proven that they have what it takes to be World Team members."

With their victory in San Jose, Jenni Meno and Todd Sand became the first U.S. Pair to win three consecutive U.S. titles since Kitty and Peter Carruthers won four in the early 1980s.

They did it with their usual elegance and refinement — though there were a couple of uncharacteristic technical gaffes.

In an effort to keep on par with all of the other top pairs in the world, Meno and Sand have incorporated side-by-side triple toes in their Short Program this year. Although Meno landed hers without a hitch, Sand fell hard. The rest of their new “Fantasie Impromptu” program by Chopin was beautifully skated. Still the damage had been done and Meno and Sand would enter the free skate in second place.

Coach John Nicks was quick to deflect responsibility away from his pupil. “This is the first time Todd has been asked to do the triple toe under pressure in a long time. There’s a lot of difference between skating in front of six people and 6,000 people and perhaps I haven’t done a good job of simulating the pressure in practice.”



INA / DUNGJEN

Seizing the opportunity were Kyoko Ina and Jason Dungjen, runners-up the two previous years to Meno and Sand. Their first element, the split double-twist was easily the best of the competition and when they nailed their next element, side-by-side triple toes, Dungjen’s elation was evident. Ina and Dungjen had

edged Meno and Sand in the short program for the first time in their careers.

Drawing to skate first in the final group, Ina and Dungjen unleashed an exceptionally ambitious long program to “Slaughter on Tenth Avenue.” In the opening 45 seconds, the tandem successfully executed a throw triple Salchow, side-by-side triple toes, split triple-twist and a throw triple loop. Although this was undeniably one of their best performances ever, marks of mostly 5.7s and 5.8s clearly left room for Meno and Sand.

In the end it was their trademark polish and seamlessness that carried Meno and Sand to the top of the podium. Meno’s fall on the throw triple Salchow midway

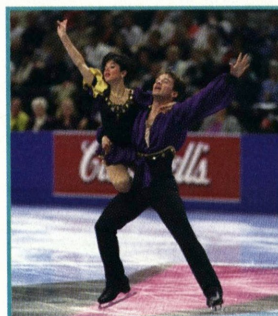
through their “Nessun Dorma” program resulted in technical merit marks below those of Ina and Dungjen, but presentation marks of mostly 5.9 made up the difference. Interestingly, of the seven judges that awarded first place ordinals to Meno and Sand, five of them actually had the two couples tied with the tie broken in favor of Meno and Sand with a higher mark for presentation.

“We were a little nervous here, a little more nervous trying to defend our title for the third time,” said Meno. “We’re skating as husband and wife and whatever happens out there we still love each other very much. Last night we had a little mistake, tonight we had a little mistake, but I think because of our relationship and because of our feelings for each other we can get past that.”

Ina and Dungjen took the close decision in stride. “Our goal this year was to be able to skate technically well as well as perform well as entertainers and I think we accomplished that,” Ina said. “We have a lot more work to do before Worlds where we hope to place in the top five.”

The battle for the bronze medal (and the third spot on the World Team) was hotly contested. Round one went to 16-year-old Stephanie Steigler and her new partner John Zimmerman IV, 22. Although Steigler and then partner Lance Travis won the bronze medal at last year’s Nationals, they parted company soon thereafter. Zimmerman won Novice Pairs in 1994 with Brie Teaboldt and after a last-place finish in the senior division in 1995, considered quitting the sport. Coach Peter Oppegard liked what he saw in Zimmerman in ’94 and helped bring him and Steigler together. Their fiery Argentine tango short program was a big hit with the crowd.

Several mistakes during their free program left the door open for the final competitors of the evening, 14-



LYONS / WELLS

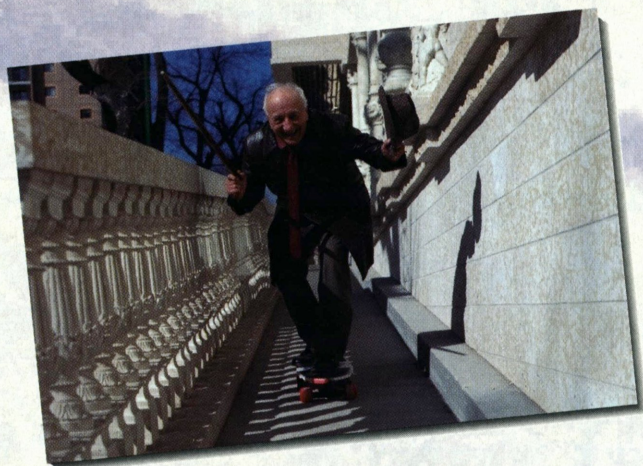
year-old Shelby Lyons and her partner 25-year-old Brian Wells. Their technically demanding program included two sets of side-by-side triples, both of which Wells had difficulty with. The throw jumps were solid and the speed and unison strong and in a very

close decision Lyons and Wells prevailed over Steigler and Zimmerman for the bronze.

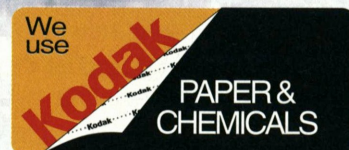
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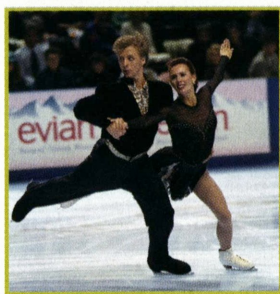
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The dance competition pitted last year's and 1993's U.S. Champions, Renee Roca and Gorsha Sur, against their longtime rivals, Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow, winners of the 1991 and 1994 contests.

Roca and Sur had a full docket of activities this past fall, with appearances in Skate America, Nations Cup, Starlight Challenge and Brian Boitano's "Skating Romance."

In contrast, Roca and Sur's chief adversaries spent most of the fall off the ice, as Swallow rehabilitated an injury to his pelvic bone.



ROCA / SUR

After the compulsory dances, Roca and Sur found themselves in a dead heat with Punsalan and Swallow, with the latter team victorious in the first dance, the Silver Samba, while Roca and Sur rebounded to win the Tango Romantica. Ironically, this was the exact same position the

two teams were in after the compulsories in Detroit in 1994. There, Roca suffered a broken wrist in a collision with another skater in a practice session prior to the Original Dance, ultimately forcing her and Sur to withdraw and abandon their Olympic dreams.

The Paso Doble, this year's Original Dance, broke the tie in favor of Punsalan and Swallow.

Skating second in the final group, Punsalan and Swallow presented a sultry, impassioned free dance to a collection of Argentine tango music including "Tango Americano" and "Tus Ojos de Cielo" ("Your Eyes of Heaven"). The husband-and-wife team displayed excellent ice coverage, improved speed, several innovative lifts and even some hydroblading in what was, without a doubt, one of their finest competitive programs to date. Marks of mostly 5.8s (and several 5.9s for artistic impression) confirmed the judges' approval as well.

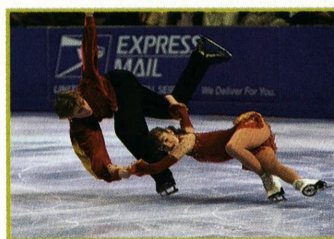
The final skaters of the evening were Roca and Sur. Their five-week-old free dance to an instrumental version of "House of the Rising Sun" was a marked departure from previous efforts. Although well executed, the program seemed tame compared to that of previous years. The marks were a notch below those of Punsalan and Swallow.

Commenting on their free dance, Swallow said: "The program was developed in a way that passion was our main idea. We wanted to do something that is really easy for us to do and that's be passionate to one another. The Argentine tango is the most passionate of dances — and intimate."

"We were really satisfied with the way we skated tonight," Sur said. "The program is new, it's a totally different approach from what you see in ice-dancing these days. Unfortunately we didn't have enough mileage on it. That was the only drawback."

In assessing the U.S. chances at the upcoming World Championships, Swallow was upbeat. "We have two very good teams. Let's see what we can do. There's no reason we can't have two couples in the top 10. It's time for the U.S. to do that. We've been pushed aside long enough and I know we're both hungry for it."

Third place changed hands after each stage of the competition. Two-time bronze medalists Amy Webster and Ron Kravette suffered a fall in a practice session early in the week that resulted in a dislocation of Webster's right shoulder. Although the tandem was able to skate to third place in the compulsories, they were necessarily tentative in the more demanding Original Dance and dropped out of serious medal contention. Kate Robinson and Peter Breen were well-positioned to claim the bronze until an uninvolved performance to "Petite Fleur" dropped them to a final fourth.



CHALOM / GATES

After the ice chips finally settled, last year's U.S. Junior Ice Dancing Champions 16-year-old Eve Chalom and her 20-year-old partner Mathew Gates added a bronze medal to their growing collection. Their energetic

Spanish-themed free dance (to the familiar "Trinidad Strut Soca," "Cerezo Rosa" and "Mambo No. 5") was appreciated by the San Jose crowd.

"We're amazed," declared a wide-eyed Gates, of British descent. "We're kind of in dreamland right now."

"We were coming here expecting to be maybe in the top 10 and we were hoping for seventh place," added Chalom. "It doesn't feel like we're really in third-place and World alternates."

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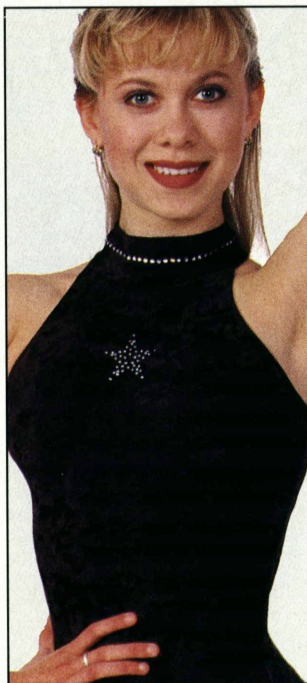
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Cassy Papajohn of Littleton, Colo., and Everett Weiss of Albuquerque, N.M., coasted to victory in the Championship Men's and Ladies Figures competitions respectively.

For the 17-year-old Weiss, who also was honored in San Jose as one of 12 1996 USFSA Scholastic Honors Team members, the win was much more decisive. Weiss earned seven of the nine judges' first-place marks on the first two figures — LFI, RBI Rocker and RFO, LFI Paragraph Bracket. He earned all nine judges' first-place marks for his final figure — the LBOI, RBIO Change Loop.

Anthony Chicalace of Bartlett, Ill., improved on a fourth-place finish in the same event at the 1995 U.S. Championships to win the silver medal. The oldest competitor in the entire U.S. Championships, 34-year-



CHICALACE



BARDIN

old Anthony Bardin of Sun Valley, Calif., took home the bronze medal.

In the ladies' competition, Papajohn

jumped into the early lead with a first-place finish after the first figure — an LFO, RBO Rocker — but had to rebound from a third-place finish on the second figure to hang on to the top spot.

Melanie Dupon of Gilbert, Ariz., the 1994 U.S. gold medalist and 1995 U.S. silver medalist, and McKenzie Savidge of Newark, Del., tied for the silver. ■



DUPON



SAVIDGE

Terry Terzian is a professional contract bridge instructor and director and longtime skating enthusiast. He resides in Castro Valley, Calif.

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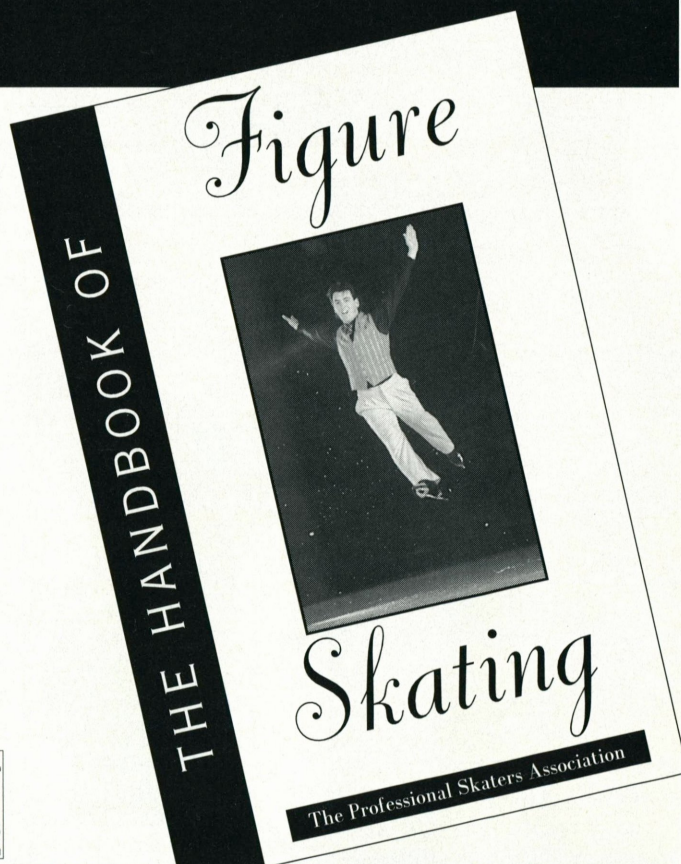
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1996 STATE FARM U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Lisa Miller
Photographs by
George Rossano, Paul & Michelle Harvath

The Junior division has long been a launching pad for many of the future U.S. skating stars. Recently, as evidenced by the rapid rise in the ranks by such skaters as Tara Lipinski, Sydne Vogel and ice dancers Eve Chalom and Mathew Gates, this meteoric rise may be less than a year in the making. This year's Junior competition is certain to produce a class of alumni at least on par with any in recent history. In each category, the winners were differentiated from the rest of the field by demonstrating their readiness to advance into the Championship level. Each exhibited the maturity, technical difficulty and style necessary to be able to compete at the next level thereby promising a bright future for the next generation of U.S. skaters.

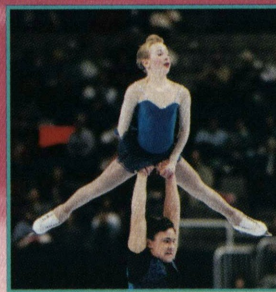
LADIES
SHELBY LYONS



MENS
TIMOTHY GOEBEL



PAIRS
VLANDIS / GUZMAN



1996 JUNIOR GOLD MEDALISTS



LADIES FIGURES
EVELYNN RAPHAEL



DANCE
JOSEPH / BUTLER



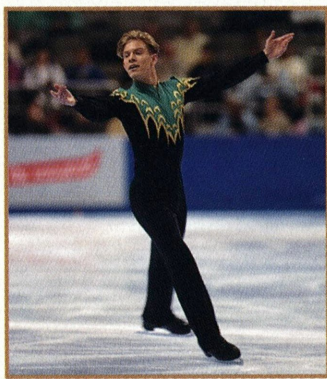
MENS FIGURES
LLOYD SARBACKER

JUNIOR MEN

Fifteen-year-old Timothy Goebel returned to the top of the U.S. Championships' medal platform with convincing wins in both portions of the Junior Men's competition.

Goebel, who captured the Novice title in 1994, seemed particularly inspired in the free skate where he blended a snappy style with upbeat choreography for a very entertaining program packed with clean jumps and strong spins. Goebel's strong and high triple flip was complemented by triple flip and triple loop — each combined with double toe loops — and a triple Salchow on the end of a double Axel/half-loop combination. In addition, Goebel attempted a very high triple Lutz/triple toe loop combination but his hand went down on the Lutz — his only major miscue of the program. Scores for technical merit ranged from 5.2 to 5.5, while the scores for presentation were 5.0 to 5.4 — enough for a clean sweep of all nine first-place ordinals.

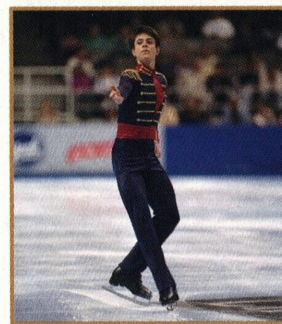
The oldest competitor in the Junior Men's division, Jeff Merica, 21, of Annapolis, Md., made his first Championships a memorable and produc-



MERICA

tive one when he vaulted from a fifth-place standing after the short program into the silver-medal position. Merica's free skate included six attempted triples (two in combination with double toe loops). While not all of his landings were clean, Merica's was a well-executed program particularly for his debut at this level and he seemed more comfortable as the program continued. His marks earned him the second-place ordinals across the board.

In contrast to Merica, Ryan Jahnke of Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich., is no stranger to the U.S. Championships — having competed in the past four consecutive. Jahnke came into San Jose hoping to improve on his bronze-medal finish in 1995 in this same event, but would eventually settle for the same placement.



JAHNKE

Entering the free skate in fourth place, Jahnke, dressed in military attire, appeared nervous and somewhat rushed throughout his long program that included five attempted triples; some with shaky landings and a fall on the triple flip. His marks — ranging from 4.6 to 5.2 for technical merit and 4.8 to 5.3 for presentation — indicated a wide variance of interpretation of his program.

JUNIOR LADIES

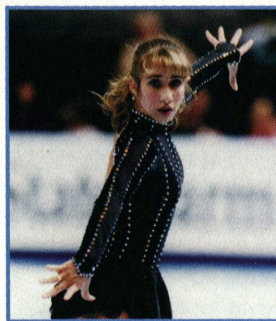
Shelby Lyons was one of 10 skaters competing in more than one event at the 1996 State Farm U.S. Figure Skating Championships, but the 15-year-old was far and away the most successful at pulling "double duty."

Lyons' busy and productive week began with her winning the Junior Ladies' title — vaulting from a fourth-place standing after the short program — and ended with her and her partner Brian Wells earning a spot on the 1996 U.S. World Team with a third-place finish in Championship Pairs.

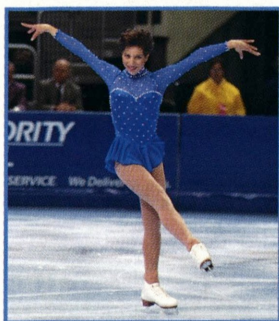
The U.S. title capped a remarkable first Junior season for Lyons. In October, Lyons won the World Junior Selections Competition at her training rink in Colorado Springs, Colo., to earn a trip to the 1996 World Junior

Championships, where she finished eighth.

Lyons' only mistake in her long program — a fall on her triple Lutz — did not diminish the support of the crowd or judges for her technically difficult program that included four triples — one a triple flip/double toe loop combination. Her delivery reflected the maturity and experience that is readily apparent in her pairs skating. With eight of the nine first-place ordinals, Lyons' victory in the free skate was enough to allow her to edge 1995 U.S. Novice champion Erin Sutton of Northville, Mich., who



SUTTON



MIRO

placed second in both portions.

For her part, Sutton attempted a technically difficult free skating program that included five attempted triples, creative choreography and good positioning on her combination spins, spread eagle and spiral. A fall on her triple

loop and a slight miscue in between her triple Salchow-double toe combination likely kept the 1995 U.S. Olympic Festival champion out of the top position.

The leader after the short program, Diana Miro of Westbury, N.Y., saw her title hopes and technical marks suffer when she fell on a triple toe loop and doubled another in a program otherwise characterized by a pleasing style, charisma and interesting choreography that earned her high marks for presentation.

JUNIOR PAIRS

Fresh off of a solid sixth-place finish at the 1996 World Junior Championships, Natalie Vlandis and Jered Guzman were able to greatly improve upon their seventh place finish at the '95 U.S. Championships by winning both portions of the Junior Pairs event en route to the title.

The pair, who trains in Lake Arrowhead, Calif., could best be described as electrifying in their free skate set to music from themes to the James Bond films. With technical moves that included a beautiful and high split triple twist, solid side-by-side double Lutzes and beautiful positions in both spins and death spirals, this pair seems poised to make an impressive launch into the Championship ranks. The judges seemed impressed as well, with technical merit scores from 5.2 to 5.4 and scores for presentation in the 5.2 to 5.5 range.

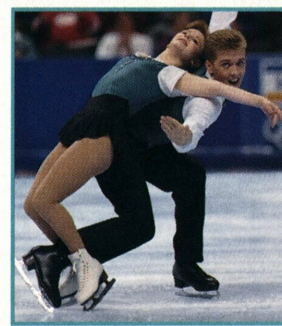
Naomi Grabow and Benjamin Oberman, who share training ice with Vlandis and Guzman in Lake Arrowhead, enjoyed an impressive debut on the national scene by capturing the silver medal. A high opening split triple twist and two cleanly landed side-by-side doubles helped earn the pair technical marks of 4.8 to 5.1. The only major technical break was a fall by Oberman on a side-by-side double Axel. Although they lacked the spark which will come with more experience at this level, their musical interpretation and choreography were consistent from their short program to their long and their scores for presentation ranged from 4.8 to 5.2.

In their second appearance at the U.S. Championships as a junior pair, Jacki Davison and J. Paul

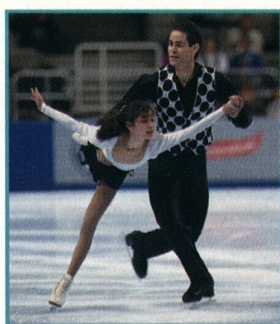
Binnebose, training in Newark, Del., jumped from ninth last year into the bronze medal spot.

The pair started out strong in the long program with a split triple twist (although not as high as that of Vlandis and Guzman) followed by a throw triple Salchow. They seemed to lose some concentration after Binnebose singled an intended side-by-side double flip and seemed tentative overall in their execution of key moves and received scores of 4.7 to 5.3 for both technical merit and presentation.

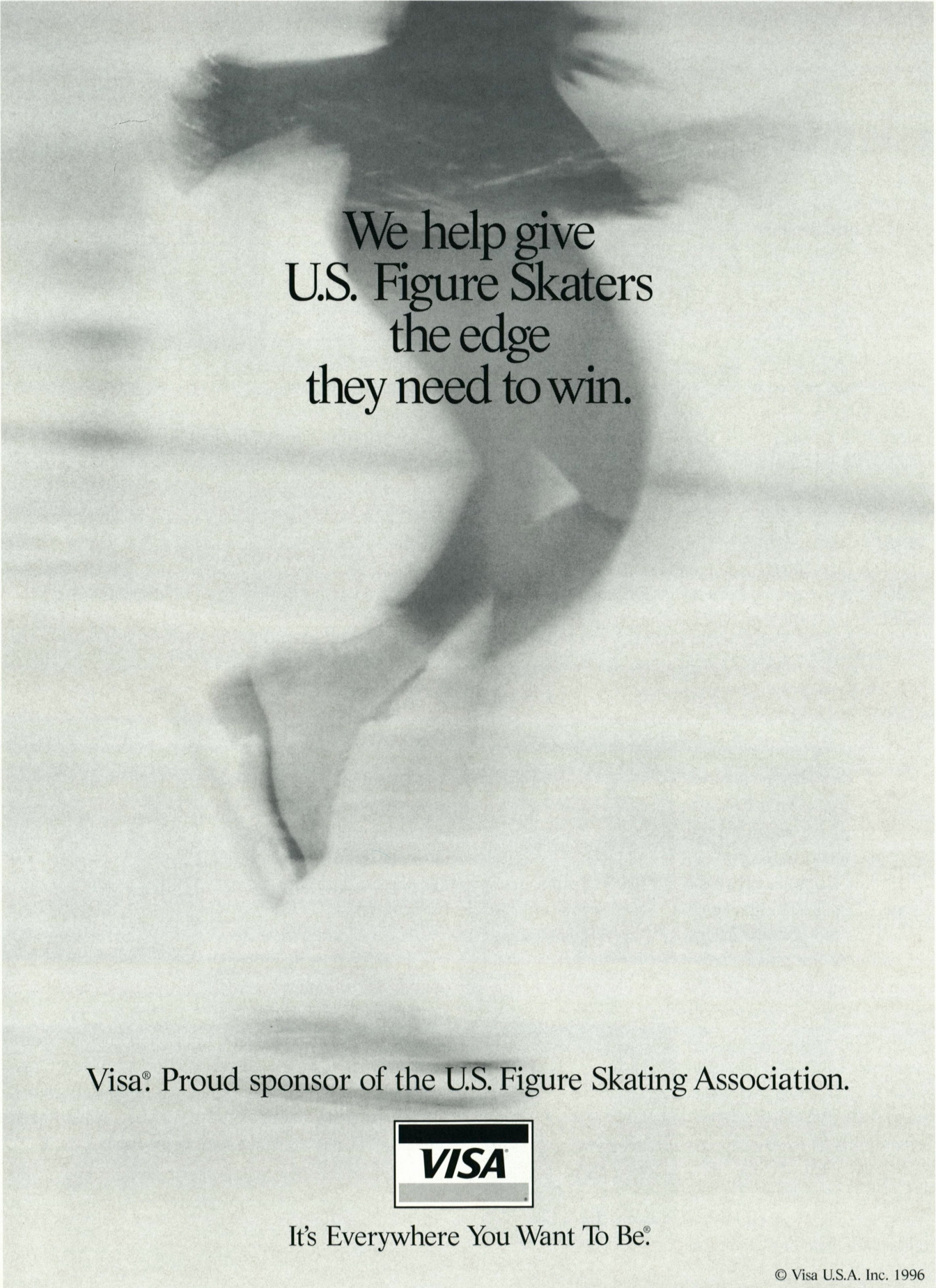
The fourth-place pair, the brother-and-sister team of Tiffany and Johnnie Stiegler of Los Angeles exhibited the same qualities that have made them an audience favorite at the past two U.S. Championships. Their charming style continues to reflect poise and maturity beyond their years — Tiffany celebrated her 12th birthday while at the competition, while Johnnie will turn 14 this year. While their technical abilities are, at present, noticeably below the level of their competitors, they continue to show great promise. Their lifts were good and they had nice positions in their death spirals and a strong, high throw double loop, but their split double twist needs more height and both fell out of an attempted side-by-side double Lutz. Even so, their high marks for presentation (5.1 to 5.4) kept them near medal range. For them, it is not a lack of maturity in the classical sense of needing more experience in front of the crowd and the judges — it is a lack of athletic maturity that earned them low technical scores of 4.6 to 4.9. While they will grow into their athletic ability, other pairs may never realize the natural magnetism and style that the Stieglers possess.



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JUNIOR DANCE

The odds-on favorites to capture the Junior Dance title did not disappoint, but not without an early challenge in the compulsory dances.

Jessica Joseph and Charles Butler came into San Jose looking to improve on their bronze-medal finish at the 1995 U.S. Championships. Moreover, the Bloomfield Hills, Mich.-based couple was coming off of a respectable 10th-place finish at the 1996 World Junior Championships.

The early challenge came from familiar foes Naomi Lang and John Lee, who share coaches and training ice with Joseph and Butler. Lang and Lee, the 1995 U.S. Novice champions, edged Joseph

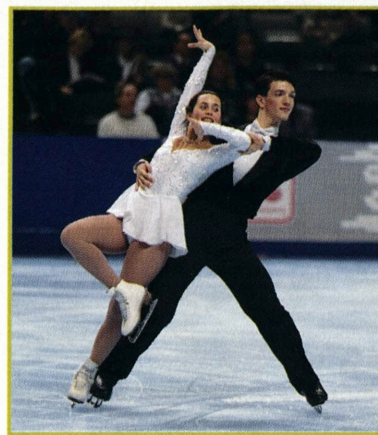


LANG / LEE

and Butler in the first compulsory dance — the Quickstep — but found themselves in a dead heat entering the Original Dance after Joseph and Butler captured a unanimous first in the Austrian Waltz.

From there on out, it was all Joseph and Butler, although Lang and Lee never relented. In the Free Dance, Joseph and Butler's unison and flair truly outshone the 13-couple field as they went on to win the portion and the title.

The University of Delaware couple of Tami Tyler and Jonathan Nichols made an incredible leap in the standings from sixth after the compulsories into the bronze-medal position in this their first U.S. Championships.



TYLER / NICHOLS

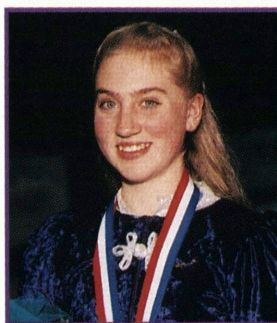
JUNIOR FIGURES

With less fanfare than another hometown hero would generate later in the week, Evelyn Raphael brought home San Jose's first gold medal of the Championships by winning the Junior Ladies figures competition.

Raphael, 15, who lives in San Jose and trains in Belmont, Calif., registered the second, third and first place marks in the three figures respectively to overcome the 12-skater field for the title. Elizabeth Handley, 16, of Amherst, N.Y., vaulted from a fifth-place standing after the



HANDLEY



BRUNS

first figure into the silver medal spot in the final standings. Cammi Bruns of Colorado Springs, Colo., dropped from first after the first figure into the bronze medal position.

The win was more decisive in the men's figure competition where Lloyd Sarbacker of Madison, Wis., training in Nashville, Tenn., registered the first-place marks in all three figures to capture the gold. Colin Bennett of Potomac, Md., (photo not available) earned the silver for the second consecutive year, while Robert Shmalo of Cincinnati, Ohio, took home the bronze. ■



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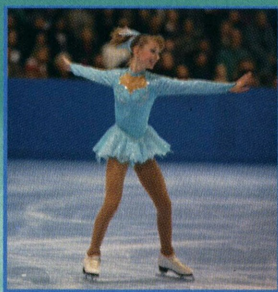
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1996 STATE FARM U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

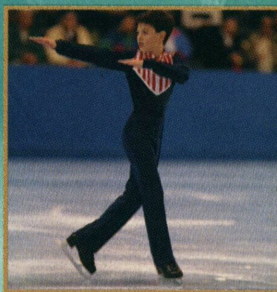
By Alexandra Stevenson
Photographs by Michelle Harvath

Many of U.S. figure skating's brightest new stars are also the youngest as evidenced by the results of the Novice competitions at the 1996 State Farm U.S. Figure Skating Championships. ■ Gold medals were claimed not only by the youngest of the 13 Novice Ladies' Free Skating competitors and the youngest of the 12 Novice Ice Dance couples, but also by the youngest of the five Novice Men's Figures skaters. ■ The Novice Figure events got Championships Week in San Jose off to a strong start attendance-wise, as a sold-out crowd of more than 900 packed the Ice Center to see the competition. The remaining Novice events in the San Jose Arena were well-attended, thanks in part to the Monday holiday in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

LADIES
J.J. MATTHEWS



MENS
JOE KNAZEK



PAIRS
SEABOL / COPPAGE



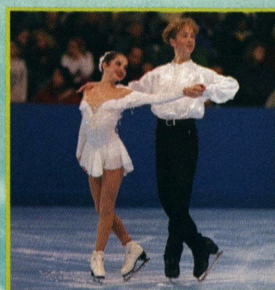
1996 NOVICE GOLD MEDALISTS



LADIES FIGURES
AMANDA ADAMS



OPEN NOVICE DANCE
KLURFELD / SIVORINOVSKY



NOVICE DANCE
SILVERSTEIN / PEKAREK

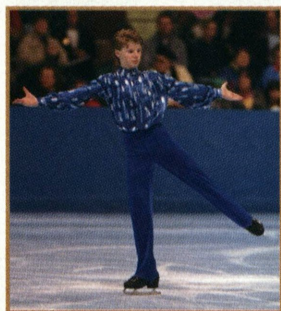


MENS FIGURES
DANIEL NGUYEN

NOVICE MEN

Fifteen-year-old Joe Knazek from Cleveland, Ohio, is only 4-feet, 10-1/2 inches, but he stands tall on the ice.

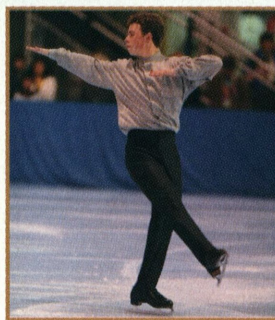
Knazek was last year's bronze medal winner, but he came into this event somewhat nervous. "I had a stress fracture diagnosed in my left leg in October so I didn't do regionals or sectionals so I didn't know how this would go," said Knazek, who is trained by Carol Heiss Jenkins and Glyn Watts.



OVERETT

In the short program, skating to the closing theme from the 1994 Olympics, Knazek did triple toe to double toe for his combination and was second behind Matt Savoie of Peoria, Ill.

In his free skate to music from the movie "Rocky," he dazzled both judges and the audience alike with an array of five triples, including loop and Lutz, plus a combination of three doubles, flip-loop-toe loop.



FROMKNECHT

Knazek had originally planned to become a hockey player, but three years ago the coach steered him to figure skating because of his size. Hockey's loss is figure skating's gain.

Savoie, a 15-year-old from Peoria, Ill., dropped to fourth. Braden Overett, a 14-year-old from Denver, Colo., who was fourth in the short and second in the free, took the silver medal. Kurt Fromknecht, a 16-year-old from Erie, Pa., who was unable to compete in 1994-95 due to a back injury, finished third in both portions of the competition to capture the bronze.

"I was really pleased with the triple Lutz because that's the first time I've had it in competition," Knazek said enthusiastically. It was also the first time his grandfather, who lives in California, had seen him skate "live" although the family keeps him posted with videotapes.

NOVICE LADIES

Eleven-year-old J.J. Matthews of Anchorage, Alaska, has spent her life doing everything ahead of schedule and this year's Novice Ladies' competition was no exception.

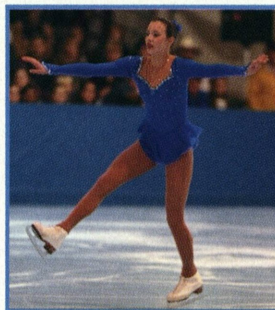
Matthews' "Tico Tico" South American short program with its double Axel to double loop combination of jumps lost out in a very tight decision in the initial round.

However, her graceful waltzing to Chopin's "Grand Valse Brillante" in the free was placed first by eight of the nine judges -- despite a fall on one of her three triples, the Salchow, and a second fall at the end.

Matthews likes the contrast between these two routines. "They show different aspects of my personality," she explains. "One is perky, the other elegant." The 4-foot, 10-inch, 84-pound Matthews appears as bubbly and vivacious off the ice as on.

The audience certainly responded to her beaming smile as she took the ice at the start of both programs.

Matthews' mother is a skating teacher in Anchorage who would take her younger daughter to the rink to sit



GORDON

in her stroller and watch her work.

"It didn't seem quite right to leave her in her stroller," J.J.'s mother recalled. "So, I put her on skates at 23 months old. Right away, she showed she had been watching very closely. She stuck her arms straight out to her sides

and began to march. Of course, then she fell over but she got straight up and tried again."

Throughout her career, Matthews has won an incredible number of gold medals. Last year, she was National Intermediate champion. And, in school she has been selected to take part in a special program one day a week for gifted children.

Matthews is trained by Traci Coleman, who produced last year's junior champion Sydne Vogel. While Vogel has since moved south to train in Colorado Springs, Colo., Coleman's Anchorage, Alaska, stable

remains stocked with young talent in the form of Matthews and 13-year-old Christina Gordon, who finished third in both portions to capture the silver medal in the Novice Ladies competition in San Jose.

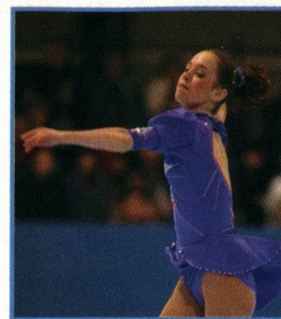
For the past two years Matthews and Gordon have been battling for the top spots in the same competitions, but their rivalry stays on the ice, according to Coleman. "They really are close friends. They go to the movies and they help each other. It's much easier to train when there's someone else having to go through the same slog as you."

Abby Davidson, a 15-year-old from Huntington Woods, Mich., gave a smooth, enjoyable, mature performance to win the short program using the energetic music from "The Railway Children," a piece which 1980

Olympic champion Robin Cousins interpreted beautifully in his eligible days.

The judges were split closely over the merits of Matthews and Davidson. Four of the nine judges put one first and another four put the other first. The decision went to Davidson because she gained three votes of second place while Matthews was given only two.

However, Davidson was only fourth in the free and dropped to third overall.



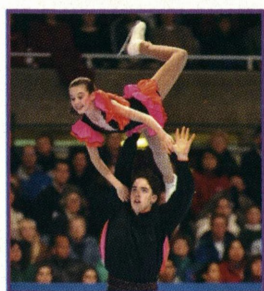
DAVIDSON

NOVICE PAIRS

Florida's Cheyne Coppage is dreaming his own "Impossible Dream."

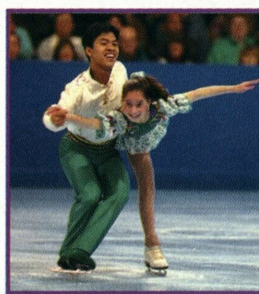
This was the music, from "Man of La Mancha," which the 16-year-old and his 13-year-old partner, Brandi Seabol (who is named after the popular song), used for their short program for which they gained six out of nine first-place votes.

Skating to an unusual version of "Star Wars," they also won the long by the same margin. Coppage dashed immediately to phone his mother when the result was confirmed. He hoped the good news would provide a tonic for her, since she is very seriously ill.



GUILD / MULDOON

Well-known coaches Rita and David Lowery moved to Tampa Bay "in semi-retirement" three years ago. They could hardly have predicted this success then because Coppage and Seabol were only at the Axel stage. However, they teamed together 18 months ago and have since worked



CONNALLY / MYINT

extremely hard.

The Lowerys describe their coaching philosophy as "the clean, pure approach. Like John Curry, we like everything to be finished. We don't like skaters trying what they cannot do."

This meant that Seabol and Coppage did not try a triple twist as did three other pairs: Carissa Guild and Andrew Muldoon, 16-year-olds who were second in both sections; Christina Connally, 11, and Arnold Myint, 18, who were fourth in the short but advanced to take the bronze medals; and Rebecca Erb and Joel Vinson, who finished fifth.

Eleven-year-old Erb was so determined to do well before her home area crowd in this her second nationals, she put too much effort into the twist and elbowed her partner. "She gave me a black eye and I had to skate the rest of the program with one eye half-closed," said Vinson, a 17-year-old who appeared to take the injury in good spirits.

NOVICE DANCE

Novice Dance was divided into two sections this year. One was restricted to under 17s; the other was "Open."

The move was intended to encourage young skaters to team up early, a policy which helped bring success to the old Soviet Union.

Among the intended benefits were that young skaters could be channelled into the junior (age-restricted) internationals where they could gain experience and the knowledge of what is needed to get to the top. And, they become known to the international judges.

The winners of the first-ever Novice Open Dance



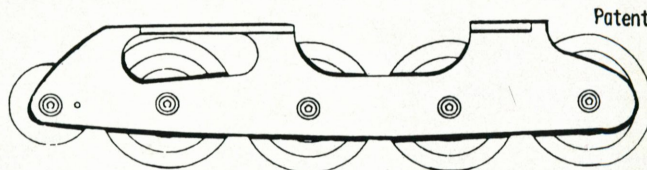
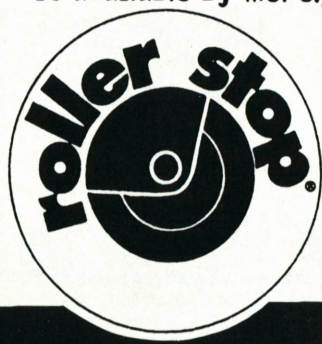
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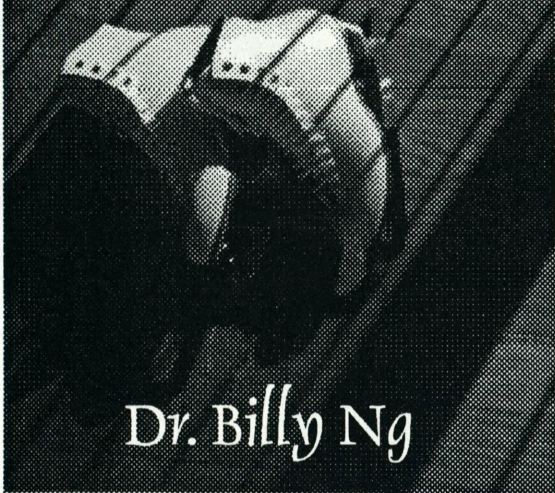
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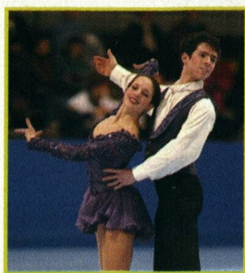
* Why boot manufacturers persist on incorporating these must be part of tradition!

title were Mollie Klurfeld, 14, of Arlington, Va., and Martin Sivorinovsky, 18, of San Francisco, Calif., a couple training under 1980 Olympic Champion Natalia Linichuk at the University of Delaware.

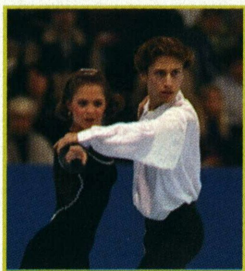
However, they were eclipsed in the first compulsory by Cerise HENZES, a 15-year-old from Pittsburgh, Pa., and Walter LANG, a 17-year-old from Norwell, Mass., who were second overall of the seven couples. Another University of Delaware team, Nichole BLOCH and Dirk PETERSON finished all portions in third place to earn the bronze overall.

It would have been interesting to see how Klurfeld and Sivorinovsky would have fared competing against 12-year-old Jamie Silverstein and 14-year-old Justin Pekarek, who dominated the other division.

Pekarek is last year's Intermediate national champion, but his partner grew too tall for him. Silverstein, who



HENZES / LANG



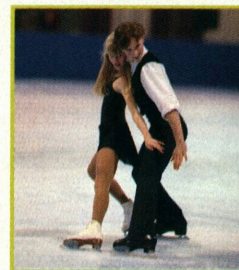
BLOCH / PETERSON

tried pairs briefly with little success, had done dance tests but did not have a partner.

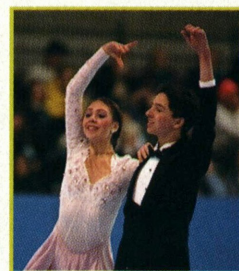
He is from Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and she is from Pittsburgh, Pa. They were brought together by Suzy Semanick, the former U.S. champion who teaches in Pittsburgh. Semanick skated professionally briefly with Igor Shpilband, who coaches Pekarek.

Semanick arranged a tryout and the two teamed up this summer immediately adopting a very intensive training program with Silverstein moving to Michigan.

Silverstein and Pekarek used "Tico Tico" for their free. Elizabeth Philpot of Kent, Wash., and Nick Hart of Edmonds, Wash., training in Dallas, Texas, were third in the three compulsory dances, but overtook the University of Delaware's Alison Sandler and Nicholas Wakeman, whose ambitious classical free was less well received.



PHILPOT / HART



SANDLER / WAKEMAN

NOVICE FIGURES

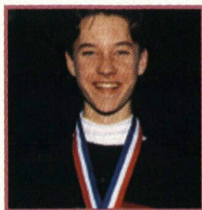
Fourteen-year-old Daniel Nguyen from Westminster, Colo., was the clear winner in the Men's contest earning seven first and two second places.

However, Amanda Adams was hard pressed to win the Ladies' division. Adams, a 15-year-old from Hockessin, Del., gained only three first-place votes. One of the nine judges marked her 11th out of the 12 entries.

Both Adams and Bethany Peterson, a 10-year-old from St. Joseph, Minn., established a majority of seven votes of third or better. Adams won because the sum of those seven votes equalled 14, while those for Peterson added up to 15. Fourteen-year-old Jessica Koslow of Long Beach, Calif.,



HAYES



FISCHE

took home the bronze. The Ladies' Figures competition was comprised of three Group 4 Figures including RBI, LBI Double Three; LFI, RBO Bracket and RFOI, LFIO Change Loop.

Behind Nguyen in the Men's competition was 16-year-old David Fisch of Indianapolis, Ind., while Christopher Young, a 17-year-old from Stockton, Calif., captured the bronze. The Men's Figures competition was comprised of Group 2 Figures including RBOI, LBIO Change Double Three; LFI, RBO Bracket and RBO, LBO Loop.



PETERSON



KOSLOW

Alexandra Stevenson is a free-lance writer for various skating publications.


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Q&A

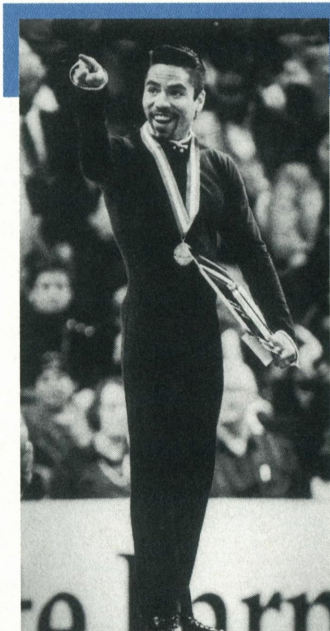
[r u d y g a l i n d o]

Those who have a deep appreciation for figure skating live for the truly wondrous performance. Not just one brimming with triples and pleasant choreography, but one that transcends technique, touches the soul and awakens the innermost emotions.

By that definition, such performances are exceedingly rare; even those who have followed the sport closely for many years usually can count them on one hand.

What transpired at this year's U.S. Championships will for many be the most recent addition to their "Treasury of Skating Classics." In delivering two exhilarating performances, an almost-forgotten Rudy Galindo upset heavily-favored Todd Eldredge and sent the hometown crowd into delirium.

Since his astonishing triumph in San Jose, 26-year-old Rudy Galindo has been on a high-speed rocket ride which took him first to the eastern United States for participation in the winter edition of the Campbell's Soups Tour of World Champions. From there, Galindo jetted directly to St. Petersburg,

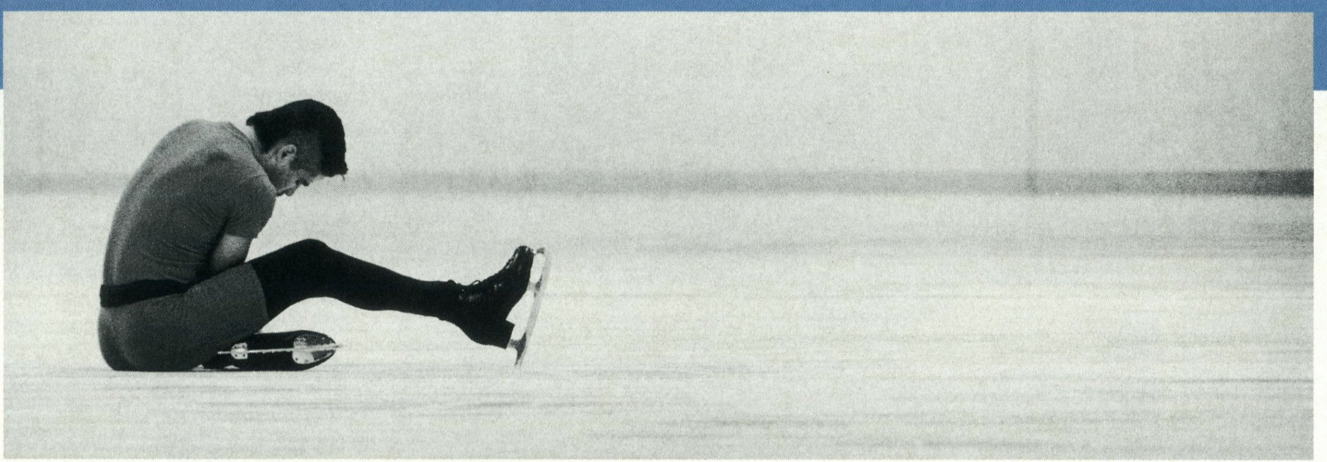


Russia, to compete in Centennial On Ice, which commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the First World Figure Skating Championships. An ankle injury suffered just prior to the Winter Tour forced Galindo to withdraw after the short program at the Centennial

competition. The compelling story of Rudy Galindo has prompted local and national media to descend on the Galindo camp en masse. There have been interviews with *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, *People*, *USA Today* and *ABC's Prime Time Live* to name but a few. Television movie-of-the-week production firms have been in active discussion regarding "*The Rudy Galindo Story*." We caught up with Rudy in late February, just two weeks before his scheduled departure for the

1996 World Championships in Edmonton, Alberta. What follows is a look back on that golden week in January, a look ahead to Galindo's immediate future and a look at the whirlwind of activity that has engulfed Galindo since that time.

INTERVIEW BY TERRY TERZIAN
PHOTOS BY STEVE KEEGAN



SKATING: Did you think you had won after your free skate in San Jose?

GALINDO: No, actually I didn't. I just thought I had skated well enough to make the World Team. I didn't know until after the computer results came up.

SKATING: What were your first thoughts after realizing you had won?

GALINDO: It was incredible. I wondered if it was a dream. I walked around wondering to myself, "When am I going to wake up?"

SKATING: Did you ever really believe you would be national men's champion?

GALINDO: I thought maybe I had a chance of making the World Team, like the third spot. While I was training for Nationals I never imagined, never even thought about winning. I was just working so hard to see if I could make the World Team.

SKATING: How has your life changed since winning Nationals?

GALINDO: People think it's going to change a lot, but it really hasn't changed too much. My daily routine is still pretty much the same with skating, going to the gym and

going to my dance class. In between, there's been a lot of interviews and television reporters, but we make sure that they don't interrupt my training schedule.

SKATING: What does going to the World Championships mean to you and what do you hope to achieve there?

GALINDO: It means a lot to me. It's like an Olympics only in a non-Olympic year. It's such a prestigious event. It means that you made it to the top. Making it to the Worlds by myself is especially gratifying. A lot of people are putting pressure on me by saying, "If you do the same program you did at Nationals, you'll be World Champion." But what

got me to the World Championships is just to have fun and not worry about what other people are saying about me and my skating. As far as outcome — hopefully I can make the top 10. There are so many good skaters — I'm just happy that I've made it to Worlds.

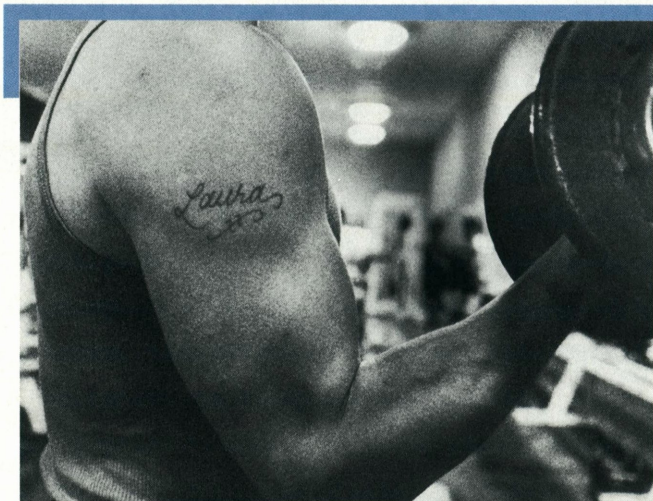
SKATING: How are you approaching Worlds training-wise?

GALINDO: The training I'm just going to keep the same, exactly the same kind of training that I did before Nationals because obviously it worked... just to make sure that I have fun and try not to focus on the outside distractions.

SKATING: Please tell us about your sister Laura's background in skating and the impact that

she has had on your development as a skater. Is it difficult being coached by your own sister?

GALINDO: She started skating at age 10. She went up to the Pacific Coast level in Junior Ladies. She didn't quite make it to Nationals. My dad couldn't afford it anymore, so she quit skating. My Dad was having a hard time paying for my bills, so she took a up a fast food restaurant job to support some of my skating. Then she went into the ice shows and after she came out she began teaching skating and she's been doing that for the past 11 years. I can't explain how much she's done for me. It's incredible. She's practically my



Galindo works out in a local gym in downtown San Jose. The close bond between Galindo and his sister is illustrated by a tattoo of her name on his right bicep.

Left: Galindo catches his breath on the ice during a 5 a.m. practice at the Ice Centre in San Jose.

Right: Galindo's sister/coach Laura goes over choreography in Rudy's long program.

mother, my best friend, my coach — all of the above. I always thought it was going to be a strain having my sister as my coach — but it's brought us even closer together. You always see these relationships on ice with families teaching and they're always arguing — but we never do. It's brought us really close.

SKATING: Do you feel under more pressure since winning the title?

GALINDO: The pressure's building up, but I think I'm doing a pretty good job of keeping level-headed. I'm doing full run-throughs of the short and long and doing pretty well. Laura knows how much pressure is on me right now. I've been stressing out a lot. I get mad over little silly things, like an easy jump or something. She knows I'll be coming back mad and she'll say: "Rudy, it's OK. Just have fun!" Like she did before Nationals. So now she knows how much the stress has gotten to me, so she's set me up with a sports psychologist.

SKATING: Your national ranking declined from fifth in 1993 to seventh in 1994 to eighth in 1995. How discouraging was this? Did you consider quitting the sport?

GALINDO: Not everyone is aware that in both 1994 and 1995, three days before I left for Nationals, I came down



with asthmatic bronchitis really, really bad. Every year I get sick once a year and it's always been near Nationals time. Two weeks before this year's Nationals I got really sick. I got so nervous. I'd been training so hard and done so well at Pacific Coasts — and this happens again. Luckily it was two weeks before Nationals and I went to the doctor, got antibiotics and was well in time for Nationals. That bronchitis really wears you out. Of course, it is depressing seeing your ranking decline. This year with Nationals being in my hometown of San Jose, of course, I wanted to do it. So, I took some time off after last year's Nationals, taught skating a little bit and made some money so I could skate. So, I never really thought that I was

going to quit.

SKATING: Some people feel the judges have "had it out for you" and haven't given you the marks you deserved especially for some of the fine long programs you've delivered over the years. Do you agree with this assessment?

GALINDO: Oh no. That's what people always say, but I always try to tell them that it comes down to me not hitting the short program in the Nationals. Even though I do a good long, it's very hard to get top marks with the final group of skaters waiting to skate. I have to do that short program.

SKATING: What do you think made the difference in this year's short program?

GALINDO: Being comfortable with my skating and as I said before not worrying about what people are saying. If

some people came up to me and said things about what I should change I would just walk away from it. I wasn't worried about placement this year. I just wanted to have fun. I wasn't worried about whether people were going to hate me or love me anymore after I got off the ice. I knew that my family and friends would always love me.

SKATING: In the practice sessions in San Jose as well as in the actual competition you appeared more focused than in previous years. To what do you attribute this?

GALINDO: I just thought to myself that I'm just as good as the other guys if I just put it together. I realized that I could do the jumps like the others. I believed in myself. In training for Nationals, I made sure that I did full run-throughs of my short and long everyday and that I didn't put pressure on myself. If I fell in practice instead of getting up and being mad for the rest of the day, I would just get up and start laughing. I used to get really angry if I fell or made mistakes. Now I laugh and say: "Oh well, it's not competition, no big deal."

SKATING: What's allowed you to change in this way?

GALINDO: Being happy in my life, with my family and friends, my Mom and my sister.

SKATING: You threw off triple-triple combinations with great ease in San Jose. How do you do it?

GALINDO: I try to train myself that no matter what position I land the first triple in, I try to pull the second one off. Even if my nose is two inches from the ice, I try to stand up and do the second triple.

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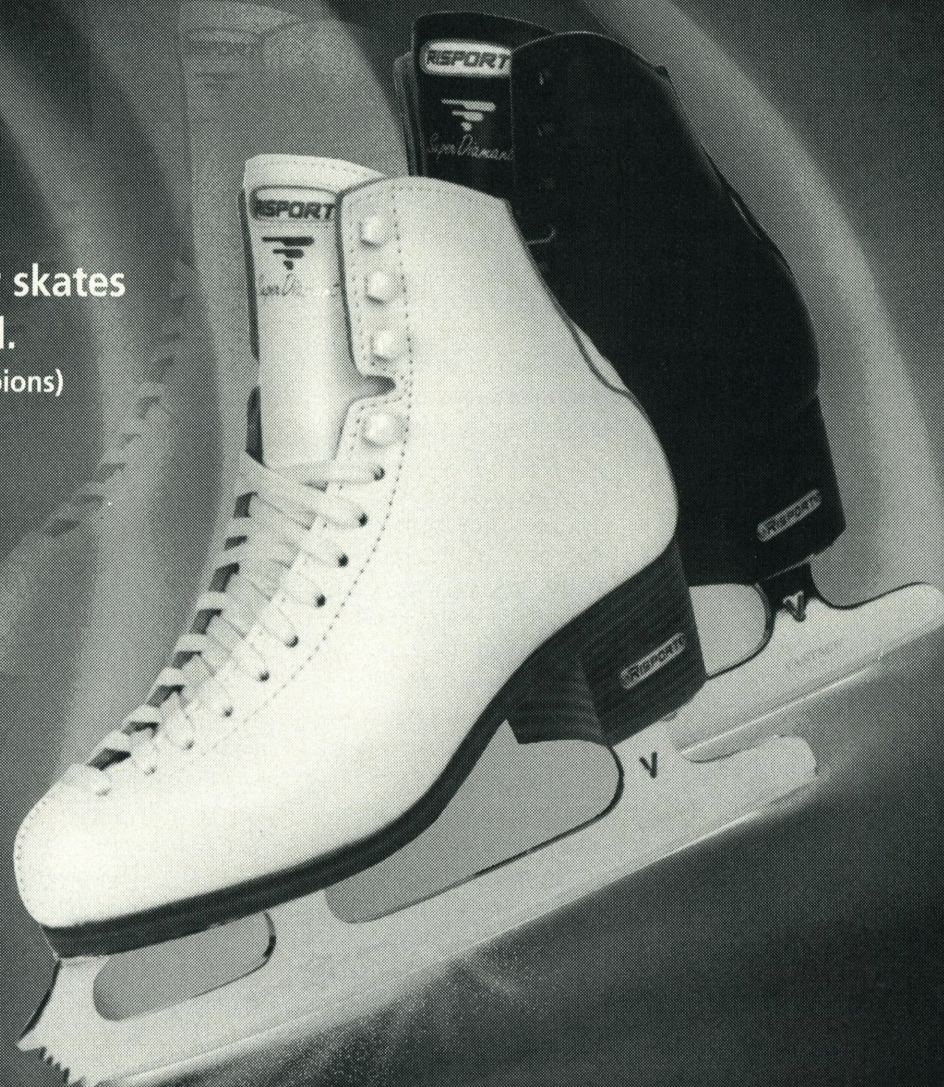
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SKATING: Are there any skaters you have patterned your style after or emulate?

GALINDO: I remember my first coach, Colleen Blackmore of the Eastridge Ice Arena in San Jose, always tried to encourage John Curry's style in me, from when I was 8 years old all the way through my skating career. To always have nice fluid lines and balletic lines. People always ask about idols – I really didn't have one growing up. From 1990 all the way up to now I skated and trained a lot with Brian Boitano and got to know him as a person. You know what – I think he's my idol now! His consistency amazes me.

SKATING: Have you ever considered returning to pairs skating?

GALINDO: Never. Although I didn't look, it would have been very hard to find a pairs partner as tiny and good as Kristi. It's almost like a marriage – kind of hard to get up and try to find somebody right away.

SKATING: Do you and Kristi stay in touch?

GALINDO: We occasionally get to talk to one another on the phone and when she has time she comes to the arena and skates. She is so busy! She gave me a call from the Kansas City stop of the "Stars On Ice" tour to congratulate me. It was great just to talk with her one-on-one on the phone. In a way, I was starstruck. I thought: "Oh my God, I'm talking to Kristi Yamaguchi!"

SKATING: How has the City of San Jose and the local skating community reacted to your victory?

GALINDO: They've been really incredible. The mayor of San



Jose, Susan Hammer, and the city had a special celebration for me and they named Jan. 23 "Rudy Galindo Day." Everywhere I go there's been nothing but support.

SKATING: What special opportunities have you had since Nationals?

GALINDO: I got to do a hockey puck drop for the San Jose Sharks – and they actually won that night (laughs)! I also got to go backstage and meet the cast of "The Phantom of the Opera" at the Curran Theater in San Francisco. That was really neat and I got to learn all about the production. I got a call from President Clinton's office congratulating me and inviting me to schedule a time to go to the White House to meet the President! I got a ton of stuffed animals at Nationals, more than would ever fit in my bedroom. I was happy to donate them to children with health problems at Lucille Packard Children's Hospital.

SKATING: Do you enjoy all of the attention you're getting?

GALINDO: Of course. I think anybody would. It's part of the sport. I just miss my naps (laughs)! I used to take an hour nap every afternoon. Now I can't!

SKATING: Do you feel like a different person since winning the National title?

GALINDO: I try not to change too much. People say I could go out and do this and this. My simple life with my mom and my sister...it worked at Nationals. If I can win the National title on nothing, then I can still do it on nothing. One thing about this Nationals title is that I really knew who my true friends are. They're the ones who stuck by me during the bad times and were still there for the good times. That's the one thing I really appreciate about the Championships.

SKATING: How has your mother Margaret reacted to your victory and sudden fame?

GALINDO: She's really happy for me, though being an Italian woman she doesn't show too much emotion... she's not getting crazy, jumping up and down and screaming, "YOU DID IT!" It's more like, "You did it and on to the next thing." She's not going to Worlds and she doesn't like me going on planes.

SKATING: How do you spend your time when away from the ice?

GALINDO: I spend a lot of time either in the gym or in

Galindo embraces Erin and Mackenzie Schwartz, two of his former skating students. Galindo paid for his training by teaching skating at San Jose State University.

the choreography studio or cutting music in the music studio. I'm not a movie person, but when I go I like to see action movies and don't like to see sad movies. I like alternative rock music, not too hard, not too soft. Of course, when I go to sleep I put on my classical music. On the weekends, my sister and all our friends go to Chevy's (a Mexican restaurant chain). We go every weekend. We love our Chevy's (laughs)! Mexican food is my favorite.

SKATING: Do you consider yourself a primary contender for the Olympic gold medal in Nagano? What do you think it will take to win?

GALINDO: If I keep the same attitude, I think I have a chance for a medal in Nagano. A clean program with two triple-triples and nice style. There are probably eight or nine skaters who have the capability of winning. Whoever skates the best long that night will win. I think it's the toughest nowadays in men's skating with so many good skaters. I think the judges are looking equally at technical difficulty and artistry nowadays. Whoever puts the whole package together...

SKATING: What does being the men's national champion mean to you?

GALINDO: (voice cracking) It means the world to me. It's so incredible I can't even explain it. Sometimes people will say "Well, you're National Champion..." and I'll say "No!" (laughs) It's funny, it's weird, I can't explain it. ■



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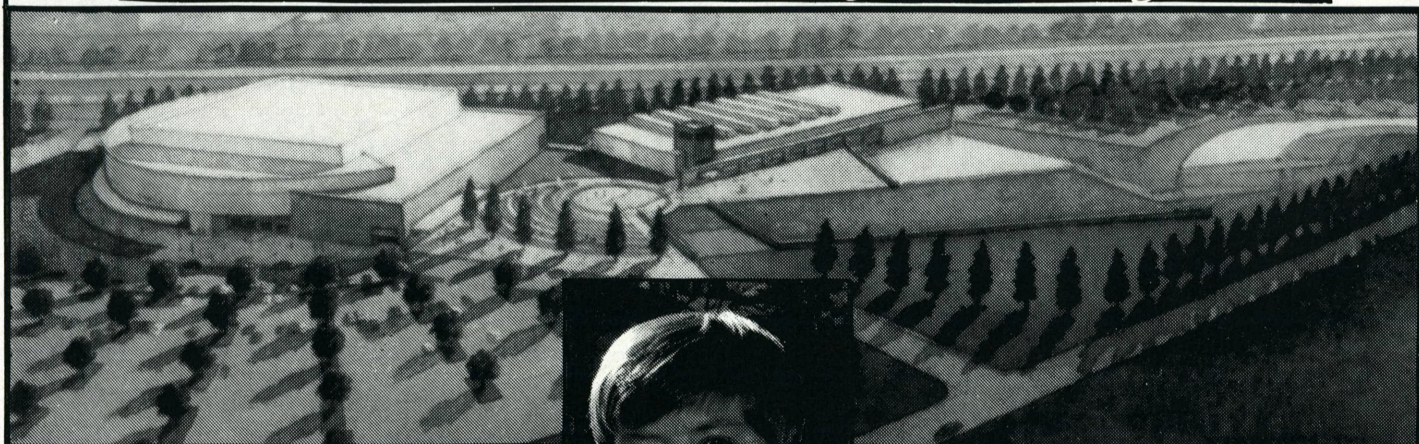
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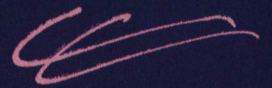


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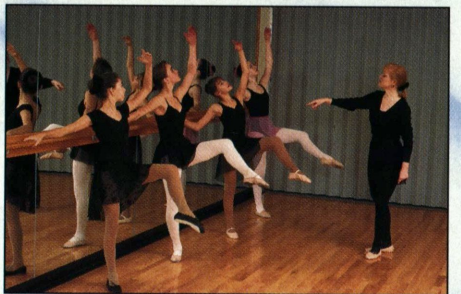
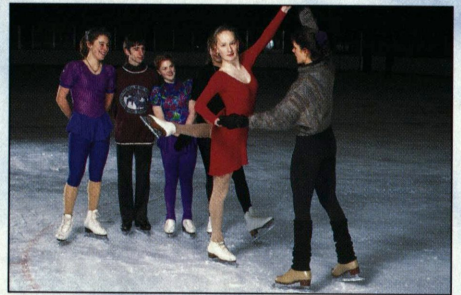
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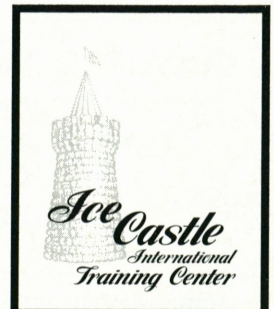
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75th Anniversary

Continued from page 6

In 1978, Charlie Tickner, won the World Championship in Ottawa doing it "My Way," the first American man to do so in seven years. Linda traded places with Anett Pötzsch and took the silver medal while Anett won the gold. Tai and Randy again won the bronze medal in pairs.

In 1979, Linda regained her title as Ladies' Champion in Vienna beating out Anett Pötzsch as she did in 1977. But the big news was that Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner were the World Pairs Champions, only the second Americans in the history of pair skating.

The 1980 Olympic Winter Games were in Lake Placid, in upstate New York, and the wonderful results of the past four World Championships created an aura of excitement and anticipation. Linda barely lost the gold medal to Anett Pötzsch by the slim margin of .7 of a point (189.00 to 188.30). Linda's loss was disappointing but nothing like the heartbreak Tai and Randy suffered. Randy suffered an injury two weeks prior to the start of the Games, and it was agonizing to watch him fall again and again during the warm-up for the Pairs' Short Program. Tai and Randy withdrew just before they were to skate, never to compete as amateurs again. At those same Games, the little guy with a big heart, Scott Hamilton, emerged on the scene with a fifth-place finish.

The youngsters from 1973 lived up to the predictions and expectations: all were World Champions during my presidency.

The idea of the USFSA owning its headquarters and museum came from Treasurer Rolf Hessler who, in 1976, insisted that surplus funds be appropriated and set aside for a building fund. After a detailed study, it was determined that the USFSA should own its office and museum facility in Colorado Springs, Colo., near the newly relocated headquarters and training center of the United States Olympic Committee.

In June 1977, I approached our good friend, William Thayer Tutt, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Broadmoor Hotel, and negotiated the purchase of a one and a half acre parcel of land a short distance from the main entrance of the hotel. The purchase of the property was



It's a deal!

Charles A. DeMore (left), president of the USFSA, negotiates the purchase of property for the new USFSA Headquarters with Leon Wilmot (center), vice president of the Broadmoor Hotel, and William Thayer Tutt (right), chairman of the Broadmoor's Board of Directors.

authorized by the USFSA Executive Committee (later renamed the USFSA Board of Directors) at its October 1977 meeting along with engaging an architect to prepare preliminary plans and cost estimates.

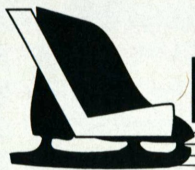
The following April a 14-year mortgage loan of \$1 million (a lot of money at that time) at the very favorable interest rate of 6.1 percent was arranged through a local bank and guaranteed by industrial revenue bonds issued by El Paso County. The 1978 Governing Council meeting held in Minneapolis was memorable, indeed. The delegates fully supported the actions of the Executive Committee to appoint a Construction Committee consisting of Joe Serafine, Ben Wright, Rolf Hessler and myself, to authorize the preparation of construction plans and bid documents and for the solicitation of contractor bids.

The evening was cool on Saturday, Oct. 7, 1978, as members of the Executive Committee and local dignitaries gathered at the corner of Hazel and Holly Streets in Colorado Springs to break ground for the new headquarters-museum building. As the sun was sinking behind the mountains in the west, Past President F. Ritter Shumway invoked a blessing for the success of the building and the future of the United States Figure Skating Association in its new home.

One year later, on Oct. 6, 1979, the Executive Committee and dignitaries from the national and international skating community met again at the headquarters site under sunny skies to celebrate the ribbon-cutting ceremony and the opening of the USFSA National Headquarters and World Figure Skating Museum and Hall of Fame and to see the famed and newly acquired Grafström Collection. It was a festive affair that will be long remembered.

What I have described is only the "tip of the iceberg" for much was accomplished by many in the short period of three years. The details of the relocation to Colorado from Boston and the building of the Headquarters and Museum are voluminous and much too detailed to recount here.

I am very honored and privileged to have served the USFSA as its president. Like many occurrences in my life, I was in the right place at the right time. For this reason, I have many fond recollections!■



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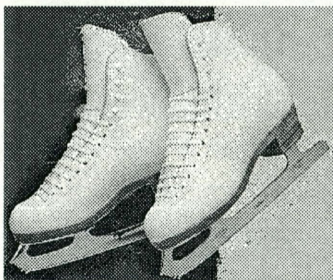
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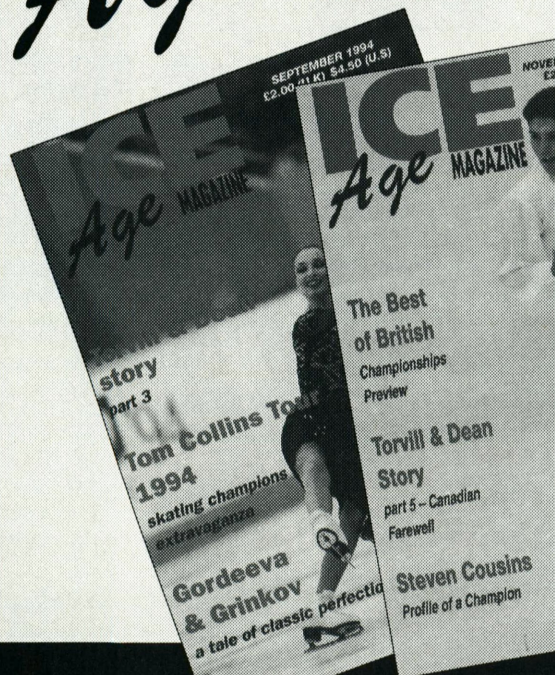
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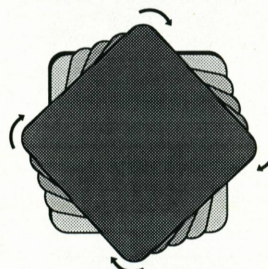
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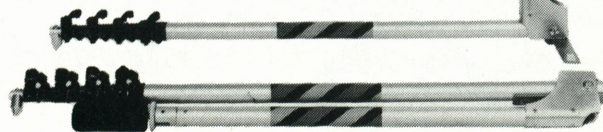
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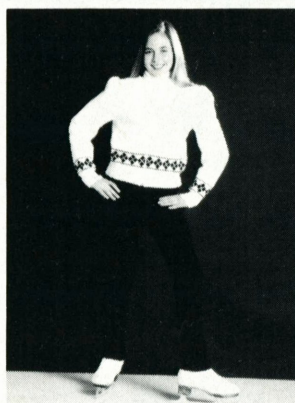
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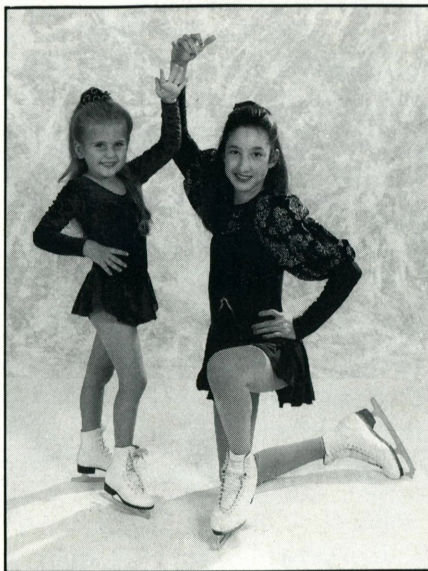
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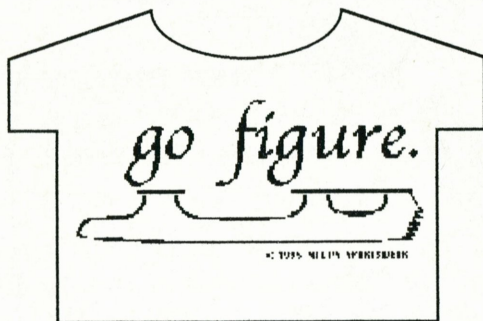
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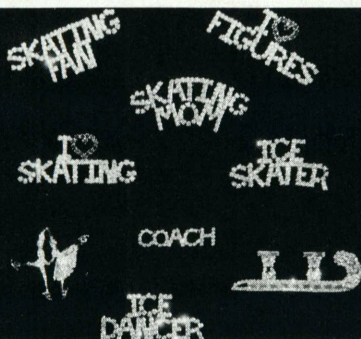
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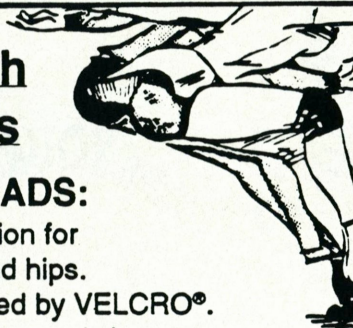
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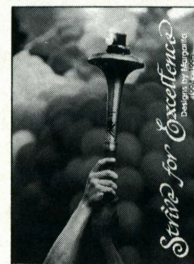


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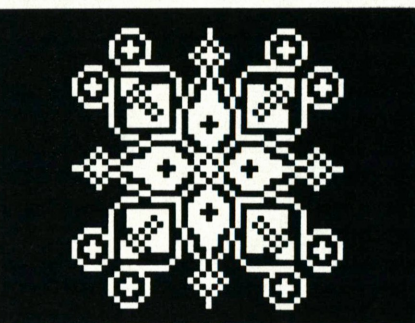


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