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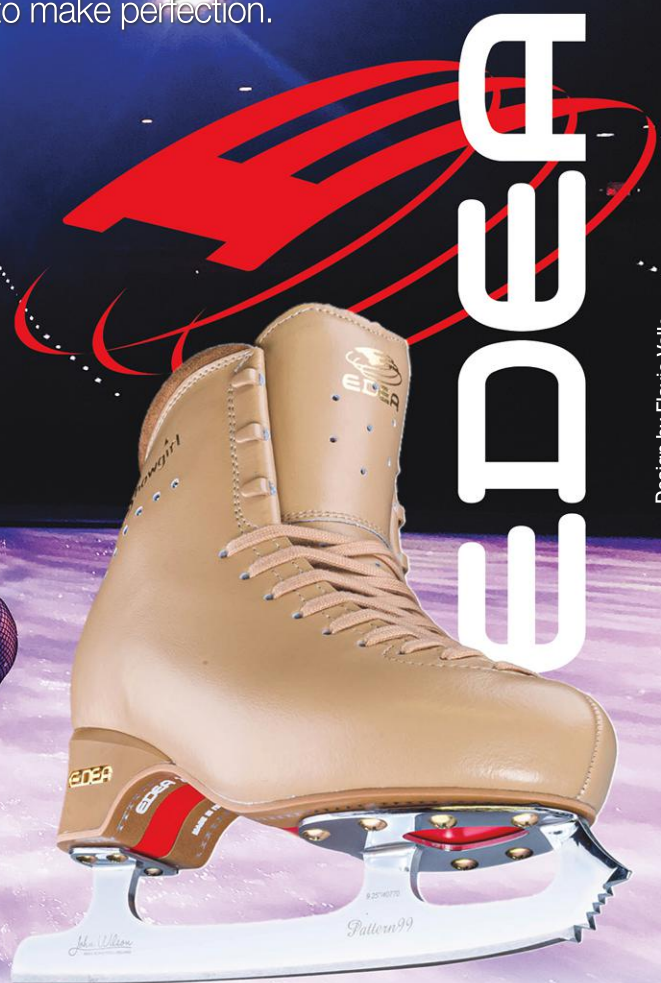
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SKATING

Editor's letter	4
Icebreakers	5
Contributors	14
Athlete Corner	48
Ice men	49
Adult Corner	50
Collegiate skating	53
Kids Zone	54
Kids Spotlight	55
Where are they now?	56
Sports science	58
Results	63
Classifieds/puzzle ans.	64

ON THE COVER: Jay Adefff/U.S. Figure Skating

The top skaters in the country rose to the occasion at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships, held Jan. 11-21 at the Orleans Arena in Las Vegas. Despite the pandemic turning their season upside down, the athletes arrived ready to compete and delivered memorable performances that were enjoyed by ardent skating fans from coast to coast. Claiming gold medals were (l-r) ladies champion Bradie Tennell, pairs champions Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier, ice dance champions Zachary Donohue and Madison Hubbell, and men's champion Nathan Chen. Coverage of this marquee event begins on page 20!



Pairs champions Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier

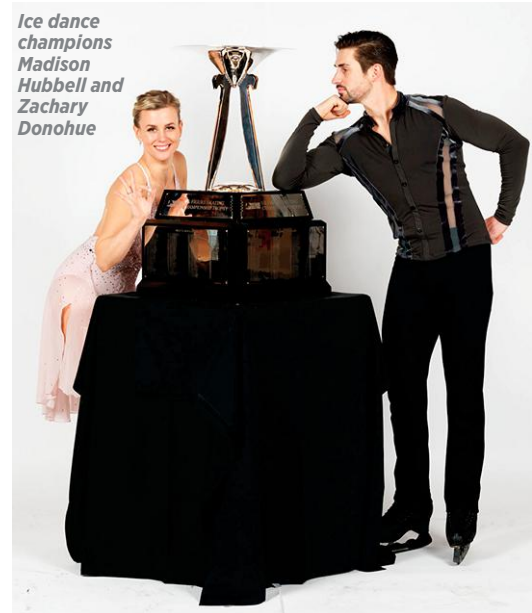


Men's champion Nathan Chen

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Ladies champion Bradie Tennell



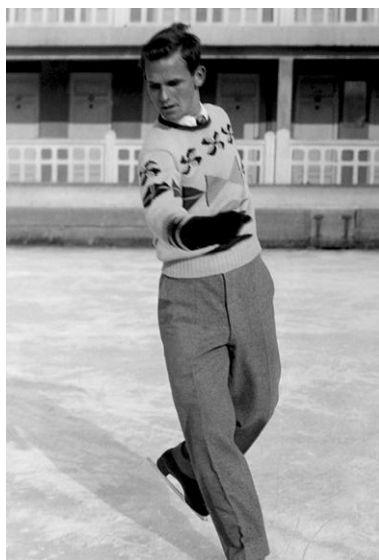
Ice dance champions Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue

6 Figure Skating in Harlem to hold Champions in Life Virtual Benefit Gala.

8 Golden Age of American Skating arrives.

40 Junior medalists crowned in Las Vegas.

58 The role of the sports dietitian detailed.



CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE ON A SUCCESSFUL U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

U.S. Figure Skating has much to be proud of following a highly successful 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Las Vegas.

With the extraordinary resolve of our athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and headquarters staff, we were able to safely stitch together a competitive domestic season that culminated in an exciting live championships that played out on televisions, mobile devices and a variety of screens across the country.

The opportunity to compete for national medals during this global pandemic meant everything to our athletes, whose training and continued Olympic dreams were put on hold at times during this past year. (March 11 was the day the 2020 World Championships were canceled.)

Across the board, the athletes expressed their gratitude freely during media interviews and in conversations with officials and staff members.

"It is so good to be back at a skating competition," ice dance silver medalist Evan Bates [with Madison Chock] said at the Orleans Arena in Las Vegas. "We're full of optimism, and part of that is because we're here and we have this opportunity to compete thanks to U.S. Figure Skating, who managed to put together this competition with incredible management and organization. We feel so safe and happy to be here."

Chock and Bates hadn't competed live since winning the Four Continents Championships in February 2020. They are scheduled to continue the current season this month with their teammates at the 2021 World Championships in Stockholm, Sweden.

Despite the absence of spectators in Las Vegas, fan cutouts and a Kiss and Cry Live video board helped the skaters feel the support of family, friends and fans.

The live video board was created after organizers talked with athletes at 2020 Guaranteed Rate Skate America, who said they missed seeing their family and friends. With much behind-the-scenes magic, U.S. Figure Skating staff arranged for loved ones to appear live via teleconference as their skater entered the Kiss and Cry. Those reactions made for some special moments.

For the junior athletes, Chief Referee Sam Auxier encouraged officials to applaud the skaters as they were introduced to center ice for their six-minute warm-up.

"It was a great and moving moment for officials to acknowledge and wish our skaters good luck," technical controller, judge and 2021 U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame inductee Gale Tanger said.

Medals were awarded off ice in an open corridor. Instead of having President Anne Cammett ceremoniously place the medal around an athlete's neck, medal winners picked up the coveted hardware off a table and did the honors themselves or for their pairs or ice dance teammates.

"I'm proud of our membership and staff and how we have genuinely come together during this extraordinary time," Cammett said. "Everything this past season was built from scratch, taking countless hours of thought, research and collaboration to allow our athletes to continue their journeys to become true champions both on and off the ice."

When everyone returned from Las Vegas after the two-week competition, we at headquarters received a surprise video from our athletes expressing their gratitude and appreciation for all that U.S. Figure Skating did to make this challenging season and U.S. Championships a reality for them.

I must say, I (as did some co-workers) had a lump in my throat as I watched this. It meant a lot to me and to all of our headquarters staff, officials and volunteers, who take great pride in seeing our athletes compete and succeed. To receive this thank-you video reminded me of just how special this organization is.

It must be that "Get Up" spirit.

"Our headquarters staff made an extraordinary effort to protect the well-being of every credentialed individual," Tanger said. "In turn, every participant exhibited the ultimate respect and cooperation in following the guidelines, making these championships a sports model of success. We were all incredibly grateful and proud that our sport and our country were able to hold a national championship. We are further grateful that the best interest of our skaters and officials was the highest priority of the association."

Looking back, I respect the energy and creativity so many people brought to not only make this event but this season something we will never forget. I think Tanger said it best:

"After navigating this challenging season with virtual events and connection and trying to reach out to skaters and coaches from afar, it was a true celebration and huge accomplishment to be able to bring together our nation's best athletes within the protection of a sports bubble.

"I don't think I have ever appreciated skating more."

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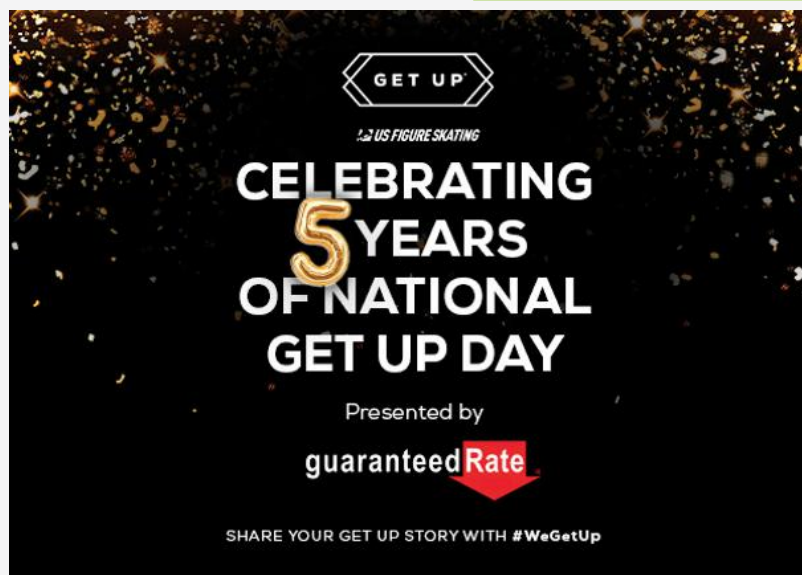
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To be featured in the KIDS Spotlight, email your information to tdean@usfigureskating.org and include action and nonskating photographs of yourself. Include in your submission your name, address, home phone number (not for publication) and U.S. Figure Skating member number. Answer as many of the questions that you see printed in the KIDS Spotlight as you want, and we might feature you.

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2021 NATIONAL GET UP DAY CELEBRATED WORLDWIDE

Individuals across the globe celebrated the fifth annual National Get Up Day presented by Guaranteed Rate on Feb. 1.

Skaters and non-skaters alike took part in a social media takeover, telling their own stories of perseverance and reminding others that it's OK to fall, as long as you get up and keep going.

One of the most prominent posts came from Olympic champion Scott Hamilton, who created a series of tweets explaining how the challenges he faced helped him reach the top of the podium and beyond.

Former and current Team USA skaters also shared their own experiences, including Christina Carreira, Tai Babilonia and Jason Brown.

"I'll never let falling down stop me from getting back up," Brown said in a Twitter post, accompanying a photo of him lying on the ice with a big smile.

Organizations and individuals outside the skating community also participated in National Get Up Day. A few that shared inspiring posts included Dive Ontario, USA Allstars cheer team, Burkhart Marketing Partners, NJ Healthy Kids Initiative and title sponsor Guaranteed Rate.

The Get Up celebration continued into the rest of February with the Get Up Virtual 5K presented by Guaranteed Rate. Hundreds of skaters, members, fans and anyone interested completed a 5K by running, walking, swimming, biking and even skating. Finishers sent in a photo with their 1961 race bib (inspired by the 1961 World Team tragedy that preceded the Memorial Fund) to receive a T-shirt and certificate.

All proceeds from the 5K benefitted the U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund.

2021 U.S. ADULT CHAMPIONSHIPS
MOVED BACK TO JUNE 23-26

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Adult Sectional Figure Skating Championships will not be held. As a result, registration will be open to all eligible athletes who wish to compete at the 2021 U.S. Adult Figure Skating Championships. The event, originally scheduled for April 14-17, will be held June 23-26 in Rochester, Michigan.

The new structure, created by the Competitions Committee and the Adult Skating Committee, is based on recent survey results submitted by adult athletes. This new competition structure and timeline will allow athletes the necessary time to train properly for competition while limiting all attendees' travel to only one event.

U.S. Figure Skating will continue to assess the viability of this plan based on local and state regulations to ensure the health and well-being of all attendees. A final evaluation of the viability of hosting the 2021 U.S. Adult Championships will be made no later than May 10. Registration is slated to open via EMS on May 12 at 4 p.m. ET.



FIGURE SKATING IN HARLEM PLANS VIRTUAL GALA

Figure Skating in Harlem's Champions in Life Benefit Gala is going virtual this year. The annual event supports the program's skaters while honoring the successes of alumni. While there won't be any in-person festivities, the organization still expects hundreds of supports to attend.

For the 2021 event, Figure Skating in Harlem will pay tribute to skaters of color from across the globe, including Starr Andrews, Vanessa James, Mae-Berenice Meite and the Figure Skating Harlem students. The gala will also honor three "champions in life:"

- Susan Kittenplan, a media executive and avid skater
- Mabel Fairbanks, a figure skating trailblazer and 1997 Hall of Fame inductee
- Atoy Wilson, a champion figure skater and Mabel Fairbanks Legacy awardee

"This event is more vital than ever, allowing us to meet the critical needs of our girls right now, both the hundreds who are enrolled in our programs and additional at-risk girls in the broader community who have been thrust into this uncertain environment and who crave our support struc-



Olympic medalists Tim Goebel (back row, left) and Meryl Davis (back row, right) joined celebrities Robin Roberts and Al Roker (back row, middle) for the 2019 Figure Skating in Harlem Gala.

ture and connection," the gala's website states. "With your support, we are able to pivot and create dynamic online programming in health, fitness, education, college access and emotional resilience, engaging the whole FSH community and beyond."

The 2021 Champions in Life Virtual Benefit Gala will stream on April 22 at 7 p.m. ET. An e-reception will take place at

6:45 p.m. ET. The organization is still taking sponsorship donations for the event. Learn more at <https://usfigu.re/39PuXCp>.

CORRECTION

On page 17 of the February issue, the title for Elliot Schwartz was incorrect. He is exclusively a skating official. We apologize for the error.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: In celebration of the 100-year anniversary of U.S. Figure Skating, SKATING magazine will take a look back at the people and events that shaped each decade in the 10 issues of 2021. I would like to credit the late Ben Wright, whose book titled *Skating in America: The 75th Anniversary History of the United States Figure Skating Association*, served as an invaluable resource for this project. Wright, who is in the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame and a former president of U.S. Figure Skating, was the association's chief historian until his death in November 2019. I would also like to thank Jim Hines for his copy-editing eye and his extremely helpful books on figure skating history.

THE GOLDEN AGE ARRIVES

World War II changes figure skating landscape

BY TROY SCHWINDT

World War II forced the cancellation of the World Championships and European Championships from 1940 to 1946, and the Olympic Winter Games in 1940 and 1944.

The U.S. Figure Skating Championships continued unchanged through 1943, but the senior men's event was canceled in 1944 and 1945.

The impact of the war changed the landscape of figure skating in the world. With Europe being the epicenter of the war, the United States overtook Great Britain, Austria and Germany as the dominant country in the sport, starting with the second half of the 1940s.

A charismatic skater by the name of Richard "Dick" Totten Button emerged on the scene with his superior athleticism and technical prowess. He went on to win two Olympic, five World and seven U.S. titles, paving the way for what became known as the "Golden Age of American Skating." For the next 14 years (1947 to 1961), up until the plane crash that claimed the lives of the entire U.S. World Team, the U.S. dominated international podiums.

From 1947 to 1950, the U.S. won 12 World medals — four of each color, representing all three disciplines (no ice dance at Worlds until 1952). Button won three of the four golds, with the pairs team of Karol and Peter Kennedy claiming the other in 1950.

A NEW DECADE DAWNS

Jane Vaughn Sullivan and Gretchen Van Zandt Merrill ushered in the new decade,

combining to win eight U.S. ladies titles between 1941 and 1948. Sullivan went on to have a distinguished career as a skating judge, earning induction into the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame.

Merrill, the winner of six consecutive U.S. titles, won a bronze medal at the 1947 World Championships and finished eighth at the 1948 Olympic Games in St. Moritz, Switzerland. Merrill, also a hall of fame member, was a role model for many young female skaters, including 1956 Olympic champion Tenley Albright.

Yvonne Sherman also shone brightly, winning two U.S. ladies titles and one U.S. pairs title with Robert Swenning. A 1991 hall of fame inductee with her ice sport executive husband William Thayer Tutt, she secured two World medals; at the 1948 Olympics, Sherman competed in singles, and pairs with Swenning.

Hall of famer Eugene Turner, Robert Specht and Arthur Vaughn carried the torch for the U.S. men early in the decade, handing it over to Button in 1946.

The pairs teams of Doris Schubach and Walter Noffke, and Donna Pospisil and Jean Pierre Brunet each won multiple U.S. titles before hall of fame siblings Karol and Peter Kennedy went on a run of five consecutive titles (1948 to 1952). Known as the "Kennedy Kids," they competed at the 1948 Olympics and earned a total of five World medals, as well as an Olympic silver medal in 1952. The



Gretchen Van Zandt Merrill carts home the hardware after one of her six consecutive U.S. titles.

1946 ice dance champions, Anne Davies and Carleton Hoffner, won a World pairs bronze medal in 1949.

THE GOLDEN AGE BEGINS

After the war that ravaged Europe, destroying or closing many rinks, U.S. figure skating stood positioned to become a force on the world stage. Great Britain, Austria and Germany had combined to win 30 of 36 medals at the World Championships between 1936 and 1939, and the numbers were similar at the 1936 Olympic Winter Games, where they had won six of nine medals.

"Can you imagine going to Europe in 1947 and 1948?" Button asked in a 2009 SKATING magazine story. "The world's most devastating war had just concluded; we were the fresh young Americans and we swept into Europe — healthy, with good training and family support, not devastated by the Second World War, and we advanced the sport. It was [like] shock troops came in. We didn't know we were causing this; it just happened."

After finishing a controversial second to Swiss rival Hans Gerschwiler at the 1947 World Championships, Button went undefeated the rest of his career.

That 1947 result so disappointed 10-time World champion and former ISU president Ulrich Salchow that he presented Button with one of his own trophies.

"Button was a real master in free skat-

The 1948 U.S. Olympic Team (l-r) James Grogan, Yvonne Sherman, Robert Swenning, Eileen Seigh, Dick Button, Gretchen Van Zandt Merrill, Peter Kennedy, Karol Kennedy, John Lettengarver



ing,” Salchow said. “He showed that he was a skater of great courage and grand form, also that he is on the way to become a real artist. Not more acrobatic than necessary, manly in style, powerful, simple and natural.”

Button’s success trickled down to many up-and-coming U.S. skaters who admired and revered his skill and talent. Adopting his athletic style, brothers Hayes and David Jenkins, and the ladies Albright and Carol Heiss followed Button to the top of Olympic and World podiums in the decade to come.

“The pre-war style was more stylized,” Hayes Jenkins said. “Dick truly revolutionized the sport. There’s no doubt about it.”



Karol and Peter Kennedy emerge as one of the top pairs teams in the world during their run in the 1940s and 1950s.

1940s TIMELINE

(COMPILED BY RYAN STEVENS)

- **1940:** There were a record number of entries in the novice men’s and ladies events at the U.S. Championships: 18 men and 25 ladies. In both cases, more than half of the field was cut after the school figures, per the rules of the time.
- **1940:** One club in San Francisco had an unusual rule that required that there be an equal number of male and female members. This rule was, of course, impossible to enforce, especially with so many men being called up to serve in the military. The club’s president took the unusual step of writing to SKATING magazine to tell members to share their dance partners. She quipped, “This is a skating club, not a mating club.”
- **1941:** The first United States Figure Skating Association gold dance tests were held during Lake Placid dance weeks. There was a 138 percent increase in dance tests taken in the U.S. over the previous year that season.
- **1941:** The first United States Figure Skating Association rulebook was published. The cost was \$1. Prior to this, the association’s rules for competitions and tests were published sporadically in separate little booklets.
- **1941:** The cost of participating in a dance session in Rochester, Minnesota, was 77¢.
- **1942:** United States Figure Skating Association membership was up to 105 clubs, and the Midwestern Committee was organized. The Eastern Committee was organized a year later.
- **1942:** Judging was changed from the international scale of 0 to 6.0 to 0 to 10.0, the scale that was later used in professional competitions. The rationale behind this was that judges could have more room to provide a greater scale of marks and not get

boxed in. By this time, the open marking system was being used, with marks displayed after each performance on placards. This, of course, changed the experience for skaters and audience members alike.

- **1942:** There were 3,700 spectators at the U.S. Championships in Chicago — a new record at the time. The event was originally supposed to have been held at the St. Moritz Ice Skating Club of Berkeley, but was moved to the Midwest when parents of skaters refused to send their children to the Pacific Coast, which was perceived as a dangerous place to be. This was at a time when many Asian Americans were being herded to internment camps, and martial law was in effect.
- **1942:** The Skating Club of New York still had a live orchestra for its skating sessions three days a week.
- **1943:** As a result of the introduction of the new gold dance tests two years prior, the ice dance competition at the U.S. Championships became the gold dance event, and a new junior silver dance event was added at the U.S. Championships in New York City.
- **1943:** Marcella May and Jimmy Lohead made history as the first ice dancers from the West Coast to win a U.S. title. All previous winners in dance had been from East Coast clubs like Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and skaters from California had only been competing at the national level for less than a decade.
- **1945:** United States Figure Skating Association received Class A Membership in the United States Olympic Committee, giving U.S. figure skating a voice at the Olympics.
- **1946:** 25th anniversary of the United States Figure Skating Association. A booklet titled *The First Twenty-Five Years* was published, with eight past presidents recalling the significant events that shaped the association during their presidencies.
- **1947:** The U.S. Championships were held for the first time on the Pacific Coast, at Berkeley Iceland.
- **1948:** California rink operator Frank J. Zamboni unveiled his Zamboni ice resurfacers. Sonja Henie bought one for her tour and called it the “Little Monster.”
- **1948:** SKATING magazine celebrated its 25th anniversary.
- **1949:** The ISU adopted a rule requiring referees to immediately — and proactively, without a protest launched — request an explanation from judges whose marks “varied considerably” from the rest of those in the panel. One of the judging controversies that ushered in this post-war rule change was the judging of the pairs event at the 1948 World Championships. American siblings Karol and Peter Kennedy, silver medalists in 1947, were fourth. Swiss judge Dr. James Koch had given them extremely low marks that placed them in ninth. No other judge had placed them outside of the top six, and four actually had them in the top three. To add insult to injury, Dr. Koch had placed an unknown Swiss pair, who placed 10th, ahead of the Americans, something none of the other judges did. Dr. Koch was never disciplined. In fact, four years later he became the ISU president.
- **1949:** Skating made its debut on American television. In his column in the February 1949 issue of *Skating World* magazine, Harry Hirsch recalled, “The National Broadcasting Company scored a revolutionary first on television when it televised the first ice show from one of its studios in Rockefeller Center.”
- **1949:** Armando “Pancho” Rodriguez made history as the first Latino skater to compete at the U.S. Championships.

THE LEGEND

Dick Button took U.S. skating to the top

EDITOR'S NOTE: The articles on America's World and Olympic champions for U.S. Figure Skating's 100-year Centennial Celebration are abridged by Dr. James Hines from those included in his *Historical Dictionary of Figure Skating*. Check out page 4 of the January 2014 issue of SKATING magazine in the SKATING Magazine Archive, and read about Button's memories of his victories at the U.S. Championships.

RICHARD "DICK" TOTTEN BUTTON'S competitive career as a senior skater began in 1946 at the United States Figure Skating Championships. It was the first time the senior men's event had been held since 1943.

Having won the novice title in 1944 and the junior title in 1945, Button completed an unprecedented three-year sweep through the ranks of men's skating by winning the senior title in 1946, the first of seven consecutive U.S. titles, tying the record set by Roger Turner, 1928–1934, which has not since been duplicated by skaters in any discipline.

The World Championships were resumed in 1947. In a close decision, the judges split three to two. Button placed second to the more senior Hans Gerschwiler of Switzerland. A year later, in 1948, Button soundly defeated Gerschwiler at all three competitions: the European Championships, the Olympic Winter Games and the World Championships.

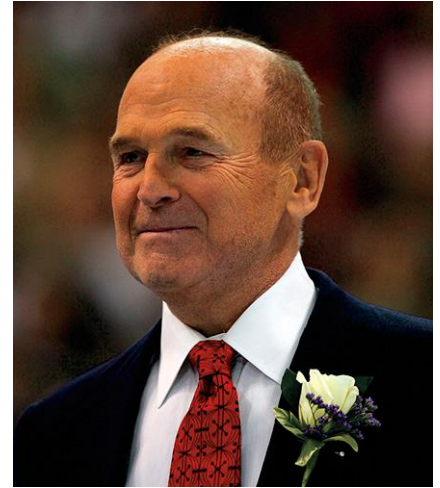
He represented what came to be known

as the "American School," a more athletic style than that of Gerschwiler, who had competed before the war. At the Olympics that year, Button became the first skater to complete a double Axel Paulsen jump in competition. He won the free skating from all nine judges and the compulsory figures from all but one. Button was unbeatable through the remainder of his career of four more years, winning unanimously every competition entered.

On just two occasions did an individual judge not place him first in both compulsory figures and free skating. Button's other firsts include the first "triple double," a combination of three double jumps, and the first triple jump, specifically a triple loop. He is also credited with inventing the flying camel spin, sometimes referred to as the "Button camel."

Throughout his competitive career, Button was coached by the legendary Gustave Lussi. After retiring from eligible skating, Button enjoyed a short career as a show skater with Ice Capades and Holiday on Ice, but it is in other roles that he had the greatest influence. Perhaps no name is better known in figure skating than Dick Button, a result of his visibility for more than 40 years as a commentator for ABC.

Through that forum, he had the opportunity to champion the sport more than any other person. His tenure with ABC began in 1962, exactly 10 years after his career as



Dick Button

a competitive skater ended, and it provided him with a historical perspective possible from watching the sport evolve for more than a half century. Button established professional competitions as early as 1973. First was the World Professional Figure Skating Championships, an invitational competition usually referred to as the "World Pros." The World Challenge of Champions, a one-event competition with exhibitions following, was added in 1985. Both competitions continued almost through the 1990s, when the companies were sold and eventually disbanded.

Button was inducted into the U.S. and World Figure Skating Halls of Fame with the first class in 1976.

Button took figure skating to new heights with his unparalleled athleticism and technical skill.



Button is presented with the trophy for winning the 1947 North American Championships title, in which he edged teammate Jimmy Grogan. Button and Grogan placed first and second, respectively, three times at the biennial event, which pitted Canada against the U.S.

AMERICAN SKATERS CONTRIBUTE TO WAR EFFORT

BY RYAN STEVENS

Skaters from around the world rallied in the war effort. Countless American skaters served in the military, including such champions as Robin Lee, Eugene Turner, Bernard Fox, Bobby Specht, Ollie Haupt Jr., Al Richards, Skippy Baxter and Walter Noffke.

The increased number of skaters who entered the military had an extreme effect on the American figure skating communi-

Joan Tozzer collects her trophies as U.S. ladies champion. Tozzer played a significant role in the U.S. war effort.



ty. With so many young men drafted and transplanted to other parts of the country, one club's loss was another's gain in some cases, but in others, promising careers were cut short by their service.

The U.S. government took over many rinks to use as drill halls and storage areas. Some clubs turned to outdoor skating on ponds or frozen tennis courts. Gas rationing, tire shortages and bans on pleasure driving for non-essential purposes in some areas made it hard for members of clubs to travel to skate in other areas.

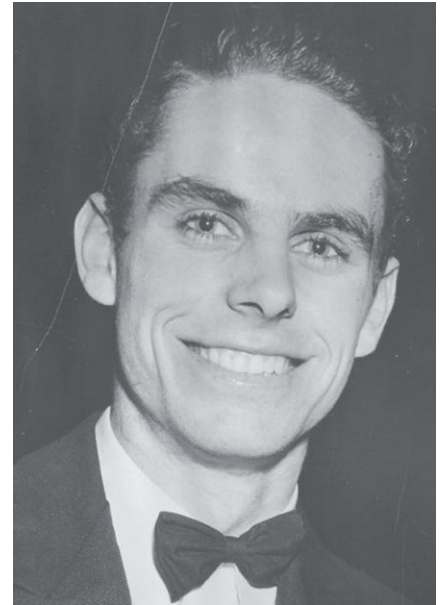
Most clubs provided free or discounted ice time to men in the service.

The United States Figure Skating Association had a Trophies Salvage Committee. Skaters past and present were encouraged to donate old pewter trophies and medals to be melted down and manufactured into war equipment. Clubs were required to pay for gold test medals earned, and the production of new medals and trophies was limited.

Skating clubs sold war bonds, made bandages and donated proceeds from carnivals to the Red Cross. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Philadelphia Skating Club and Humane Society arranged for a mobile unit of the Red Cross to visit its club. Skaters donated more than 265 pints of blood. SKATING magazine donated typewriters to the military.

Many women were engaged in war work. One skater whose life was directly affected by the attack on Pearl Harbor was U.S. and North American champion Joan Tozzer. At the time of the bombing, she was living in Honolulu, where her husband was serving in the military. Her son later recalled hiding under a bed with his nanny during the attack. After the U.S. joined the war, Tozzer enlisted in the Army's Women's Air Raid Defense and the USO, aiding in the war effort by working in a top-secret, underground mapping program.

Winfield A. Hird, the managing editor of SKATING magazine prior to the war, was killed in China in 1943 as a member of the U.S. Air Force. British figure skater Freddie Tomlins, the 1939 World silver medalist, was killed while serving with the Allied Forces. He was quite familiar to American audiences because he did his training in Canada and skated in quite a few carnivals in the United States around that time. He was known for



Eugene Turner

his huge jumps.

Across the ocean, Londoners were forced to subsist on meager rations, and contend with fuel oil shortages and gas rationing. They spent more of their time doing war work and running at the sound of sirens to their Anderson shelters than they did living normally. For some, figure skating was their sole escape from this dreary existence, and the Richmond Ice Rink was their mecca.

Allied servicemen from all over the world insisted that it be kept open. So special was the rink considered — a meeting place of discipline, excellence and fun without alcohol — that the government made a special order to black out the 500-foot-long building to allow it to remain open. After all, the Richmond rink was an institution where more than 4 million people learned to skate. Despite the blackout efforts, a 2,000-pound bomb was dropped on the rink's engine room. Miraculously, it didn't explode, thanks to some quick thinking by the rink's staff.

However, the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, forced North Americans to wake up to the possibility of an enemy attack on home soil. Blackout drills were advertised to U.S. citizens in advance, and by 1942, blackouts became the norm on the West Coast. In early 1942, Tozzer wrote to

SKATING magazine editor Theresa Weld Blanchard, explaining, “We have breakfast at 7, lunch at 12 and supper at 6, as the blackout starts at 7:30. If you are asked to go out to dinner, you go at 5, eat at 6, and get home by 7:30 unless the hostess is kind enough to ask you to spend the night.”

The 1945 North American Championships at Madison Square Garden were skated under wartime/blackout conditions as well. The entire building had to be cleared and lights out before midnight. This forced a delay in presenting medals and trophies to skaters.

SKATING magazine nearly doubled its subscriptions during wartime, and Weld Blanchard recommended that the magazine be sent free of charge to members in the military. Those serving often wrote in to express just how much reading about skating lifted their spirits and gave them something to look forward to when (if) they came home.

Ryan Stevens is a former figure skater living in British Columbia. He won four medals at the Nova Scotia Provincial Championships before turning to judging. Since 2013, his passion for studying unique and, at times, obscure aspects of figure skating’s history has led him to write hundreds of articles for the blog Skate Guard. He’s also penned a biography of British skater Belita Jepsen-Turner and features on skating during the Edwardian era and Great War. He’s been consulted for research about skating history for CBC, NBC, ITV, print projects and numerous museums and archives in Canada and Europe.



“Skippy” Baxter served in the U.S. military from 1943 to 1946 and was a member of the famed 10th Mountain Division that fought in Italy. A member of the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame, Baxter was best known for his show skating and backflips.

A LOOK BACK AT THE 1940S

The 1940s was the decade of World War II and massive military mobilization. On the home front, the nation endured wartime rationing, and grew food in victory gardens. Millions of women entered the workforce. When the GIs returned from the war, the women returned to the home; the reunited couples generated the so-called Baby Boom, increasing the nation’s population by more than 70 million.

Around the nation: Elected to four terms and the only president to serve more than two, Franklin D. Roosevelt died in office in 1945. The two-term limit had been an unwritten rule since George Washington had declined to run a third time in 1796; it became law with the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution in 1947.

In sports: In 1940, the Chicago Bears trounced the Washington Redskins 73-0, still the most lopsided victory in National

Football League history. Legend has it that the pregame comments of Redskins owner George Preston Marshall inflamed the Bears’ passions; they entered the game wanting revenge, along with the title, and took both.

The cost of living: In 1940, a single-family home with two stories and six rooms cost \$8,500, and only 55 percent of Americans had indoor plumbing. The average annual salary was \$1,299, and the minimum wage was 30¢ an hour. A new Pontiac was \$828, and a gallon of gas cost 18¢. Boys wore sports coats at \$13 each; a girl’s white pinafore cost \$1.

Cost of skates: In 1940, a pair of “professional” skates from CCM Inc., Buffalo, New York, cost \$25, while “pastime” skates were \$6.50/pair and “juniors” were \$5/pair. CCM, founded as the Canada Cycle and Motor Company Ltd.

in 1899, originally produced bicycles in Toronto, Ontario. The company started making skates and other gear for hockey in 1905, acquiring Manitoban George Tackaberry’s “Tackaberry” brand in 1937. “Tacks” would become their signature skate.

The cost of other items in:

	1940	1950	1960
Daily newspaper	3¢	5¢	7¢
Postage stamp	3¢	3¢	5¢
Hershey Bar	5¢	5¢	5¢
Loaf of bread	10¢	14¢	23¢
Kellogg’s Corn Flakes	11¢	16¢	27¢
Theater ticket	15¢	90¢	\$1
Pound of coffee	24¢	87¢	59¢
Dozen eggs	45¢	45¢	46¢
Bicycle	\$26.95	\$37.88	\$46.88

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EDITOR'S NOTE: U.S. Figure Skating is celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2021. As part of this historic celebration, SKATING magazine will recognize 100 "contributors" to the organization. In each issue, we will profile 10 people who have made a significant impact at the club level through their hard work, time commitment and ingenuity. These individuals were nominated by their peers for their selfless commitment to make skating a fun and fulfilling sport for all. One of the 10 contributors in each issue will be someone who has impacted the sport at a national level. Nominees who aren't included in the "100" list in SKATING may be recognized on U.S. Figure Skating's social channels or in their respective clubs' social media.

AL BEARD, ACCOUNTING GURU

BY ED RABINOWITZ

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American essayist and poet, defined a pioneer as someone who does not walk where a path leads, but rather "goes instead where there is no path and leaves a trail."

That's a pretty accurate description of Al Beard, who has been a pioneer in the figure skating accounting community for nearly 50 years. But Kathy Bosworth, a figure skating accountant who has worked with and learned from Beard over the last 20 years, offers an even more succinct description of the man she calls her mentor.

"He's priceless," Bosworth says.

Beard began blazing a trail in the figure skating accounting community in 1972 when he created a computerized scoring program, HAL, which revolutionized the sport. Introduced at the 1972 U.S. Championships, the program provided results in minutes, not hours, and was a testament to Beard, who had returned to school to learn the Fortran language necessary to develop the program.

That's because Beard was not a programmer. He was a computer designer for the Minneapolis-Honeywell Company whose interest in skating was sparked by his young daughter, who competed for the Phoenix Figure Skating Club. He recognized not only the need to accelerate the scoring process at competitions, but to more actively engage fans.

But that's only the beginning of Beard's legacy. Mike Meyer, the national vice chair for accountants in the DORM (Domestic Officials Recruitment and Management) group, explains that as technology evolved, so did HAL.

"We've gone from HAL for DOS to HAL for Windows, and then when we went to the new International Skating Union software, Al adapted that to our software so we could use it for our lower-level events," Meyer explains. "His ability to assess what the organization needed to move forward was incredible."

Beard, who served as secretary of U.S. Figure Skating in the mid-1970s, and was the chief accountant at many qualifying, national and international competitions, also taught



Al Beard

his computer creations to his accounting colleagues, adapting his teaching methodology for all audiences — experienced, as well as those new to the sport.

"He mentored me; he brought me along," Meyer recalls. "He was so patient, but he also has a great sense of humor. So he could pass along information and make it interesting."

Even when technical difficulties popped up during competitions, Beard remained unflappable. Bosworth explains that if you didn't know Beard well, you could hardly tell from his reaction rinkside that something was amiss.

"Like a duck on the water," she says of Beard. "Everything is fine on the surface. But under the water the feet are always moving."

Beard was also keenly aware of the crowd at competitions. In 1992, he adapted his software program to work on an arena Jumbotron, thus providing live, skater-by-skater results to the audience.

"He always felt that people in the arena should know as much information as anyone else," Meyer says, "because they paid a lot for their tickets."

Since 1988, Beard has served as an accountant or technical accountant at nine regional championships, 11 sectional championships, 11 championship-level events, and six international competitions. In 2014, he was inducted into the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame. It was then that he said, "I am proud to have laid the foundation for others to build upon."

And according to Meyer, that's exactly what's happening.

"With the pandemic, Al began, and then nurtured other accountants who are programmers, to facilitate virtual competitions."

Even though Beard has reduced his involvement in recent years, Bosworth says he's still an invaluable part of the software training group and the troubleshooting group.

"We'll think everything is fine, and then Al will say, 'Wait a minute, how does this work?'" Bosworth says. "And we'll say, 'Oh, we hadn't thought of that.' He's really the guru of accounting. If he hadn't come along, there's no way we'd be anywhere near where we are today."



Kristine Bolinger
and daughter, Kara

KRISTINE BOLINGER

For 18 years, Kristine Bolinger, president of the Colonial Skating Club of Pennsylvania in Warminster, has never missed a beat — literally. At every show, test session or competition, skaters of the greater Philadelphia area take the ice and expect to hear her cheers from the stands.

“Kristine is the club’s biggest fan,” said her daughter Kara Bolinger, a Colonial SC of Pennsylvania member. “From our youngest skaters to our adult ice dance champion, Shay Sterlace, she attends every event. She goes above and beyond to be sure all of our skaters have plenty of opportunities, as well as providing opportunities for the next generation of coaches.”

Her reputation in the greater Philadelphia area, however, extends beyond her rinkside support. Bolinger has made her love for skating and the Colonial community nearly tangible through years of tireless volunteer work at the club’s rink, Revolution Ice Gardens. One of her most notable contributions has been revitalizing the rink’s Learn to Skate program.

“She is a hardworking, selfless and dedicated club president,” Colonial SC of Pennsylvania member Alexandra Pannepacker said. “[Kristine] spends many days and nights at the rink, helping with learn-to-skate, freestyle sessions, clinics and hosting test sessions and competitions. She even will step in if hockey programs need help.”

But Bolinger’s care and work ethic aren’t limited to Warminster. As president of the Association of Philadelphia Arenas Figure Skating interclub, she encourages skaters across the city to foster their love of the sport.

“[Kristine] is welcoming, professional and goes above and beyond for every member

of our club,” Colonial SC of Pennsylvania coach Niki Anderson said. “She’s right there to help and always coming up with ways to get skaters more involved. She is truly the glue that holds us together.”

— Megan Sauer

LEATRICE BULLS

Leatrice Bulls doesn’t have time to waste.

A 2020 Harvard University graduate, Bulls is navigating her first professional job, as a business technology analyst at Deloitte



Leatrice Bulls

in New York, and trains up to 15 hours each week with the Skyliners senior synchronized skating team.

A Maryland native, like her mom Leatrice Bulls (same name), Bulls was a longtime volunteer at Fort Dupont Ice Arena in Washington, D.C. As a competitive Black skater, she often incurred microaggressions from mostly white synchronized skating teammates trying to look alike.

Bulls, 22, is the youngest member of U.S. Figure Skating’s first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) task force, which is composed of highly successful professionals. With knowledge gleaned from her own experiences, social justice classes and a keen sense of America’s racist history, Bulls helped shape the group’s direction.

DEI working group chair Kristin Arneson Cutler, Midwest vice president on U.S. Figure Skating’s board of directors, took notice. A white attorney from Minnesota, Arneson Cutler asked Bulls to join her as task force co-chair.

“When an organization is working to change its culture, strong, thoughtful and committed leadership is needed to take accountability and pursue positive change. Leatrice is just that leader,” Arneson Cutler said. “She brings to the DEI task force her own deeply personal experience, her passion for figure skating as well as a powerful intellect and deep work ethic.”

Jaclyn Ward Helms, the first African American judge at a U.S. Figure Skating Championships and a DEI professional, is elated to see a young talent like Bulls emerge.

“Leatrice is a brilliant young leader and U.S. Figure Skating is lucky to have her behind the scenes working to make the sport more inclusive,” said Ward Helms, a member of the working group and now task force. “She’s a quiet leader who has a talent for listening to others’ ideas, distilling those ideas and then enhancing them. Leatrice is also a gifted communicator who is generous with sharing her knowledge with others. Leatrice is an absolute delight to work with and work for. I look forward to seeing the ways in which she changes the sport for the better.”

— Barb Reichert

PATRICIA COOK

Before 1974, figure skating was an unheard of field trip, hobby and sport in New Orleans. But when the city’s first rink opened, a group of young adults — led by Dr. Patricia “Paddy” Cook — joined together to create the Figure Skating Club of New Orleans. A year later, Cook spearheaded ef-



Patricia Cook

forts to get the club accepted into U.S. Figure Skating. She continued to be an instrumental member of the club, organizing shows, test sessions and get-togethers, even after most of the original skaters retired.

“Although a busy neurologist, Paddy never failed to take a phone call from me, since we were always planning a test session or some other skating function,” said Cathey Wetzell, Cook’s longtime friend and a fellow founding member of the FSC of New Orleans. “I would call her office and only had to identify myself to the receptionist before I was immediately connected. Everyone knew that the club was a priority to Paddy.”

Even before she launched the FSC of New Orleans, Cook was no stranger to charting new paths. When she was attending medical school at Louisiana State University, Cook was one of only two women in her entire program. Sisters Kerrie Slaton and Terrie Poehl, who were also founding members of the club, noted parallels between her dedication to her career and the FSC of New Orleans.

“When she got into skating, it was hook, line and sinker,” Slaton said, describing Cook’s all-or-nothing mantra.

As an adult skater, she practiced ice dance and freestyle — but as her friends reflect, Cook’s main goal on the ice was inclusivity. When the movie *RISE* was released in 2011, decades after the first skaters practiced daily, Cook reached out to every original FSC of New Orleans skater and planned a time when they could see the film.

“And that, to me, was really indicative to what she wanted with skating,” Poehl said.

Several of the club’s materials documenting the beginning of figure skating in New Orleans were damaged or lost in Hurricane Katrina — but to Cook’s skating

friends, the image of her with fiery red hair while skating in knee pads remains crystal clear in their minds and at the center of their fondest skating memories.

— Megan Sauer

DOROTHY AND BILL ESTEY

Creating a skating organization takes a village, but in 1969, Dorothy and Bill Estey curated the team that helped found the Wyandotte Figure Skating Club.

Their altruistic passion transformed the sport in Michigan, and they created programs that encouraged skating across all levels. For example, they assisted in starting the Michigan High School Series. Fifty-two years later, they are still pillars of the club, accounting and awarding medals at home competitions.

“If it weren’t for Bill and Dorothy’s dedication to this sport, Wyandotte FSC wouldn’t exist,” said Kimberly Jaynes, vice president and a coach at Wyandotte FSC. “They are still active at the rink, and while they have guided the club through its worst times, they’ve also been there to celebrate our victories. So many of us who have been involved in skating and Wyandotte FSC for so long look up to them and admire them for their passion and love for not only figure skating but the Wyandotte FSC.”

The couple’s enthusiasm for the sport rippled from the Wyandotte FSC and into skating communities across Michigan. They volunteered at the 1994 U.S. Championships in Detroit, and at the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships held in the state. They remain longtime delegates of the Tri-

State Council and Detroit Metro Council, and have represented the Wyandotte FSC at Governing Council.

Bill’s skating career began on wheels, but he exchanged his roller skates for toe picks and edges, and never looked back. He skated on the precision team Silver Belles and Beaus, and was involved in precision skating’s earliest days. Bill stayed involved on the ice with thoughtful, innovative ideas. The club’s long-running Ice Travaganza show was his idea; he was also a cast member.

His high school sweetheart, Dorothy, never skated, but soon got involved in the skating community by training to be a competition accountant. In a testament to her dedication, Wyandotte FSC awards a club member the Dorothy Estey Volunteer Award (trophy) every year. The motto of the award: Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they have the heart.

In December, the couple celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary.

“They have devoted countless hours volunteering in the skating community,” Wyandotte FSC Treasurer Mary Moss said. “Figure skating is a part of their lives, and the lives they have touched are so grateful for their years of service and dedication.”

— Megan Sauer

MIKE ITZIN

Mike Itzin has judged more than 15,000 tests in the state of Minnesota. You can’t miss him; he’s the guy sitting rinkside, sporting his signature Green Bay Packers cap.

Judging may be his favorite role, for the joy of watching skaters grow, but it’s certainly



Dorothy and Bill Estey

not the only role Itzin has or has taken on.

Currently membership chair and sanction chair, Itzin has previously served as both vice president and president for the Three Rivers Figure Skating Club in Minnesota.

His leadership and service don't end there. Itzin works with state-level organizations including the Twin Cities Figure Skating Association as second vice president, and the Minnesota Skating Scholarship Fund as treasurer.

"He does more for figure skating than anybody I've ever met," said Sarah Fercho, vice president of Three Rivers FSC.

In 2015, Itzin received the Champion for Skating award given by the Twin Cities FSA in recognition of his continued service to the sport.

"He gives everything that he has — time, talent and treasure — to the sport," Fercho said.

Itzin helped found the Three Rivers FSC in 1995, albeit under a different name. He is proud of its growth. While he's committed to continuing his contributions, he simultaneously wants to impart his extensive knowledge.

"He knows how things work and what needs to get done to get things done," said Patti Itzin, a coach and volunteer at Three Rivers FSC and also Itzin's daughter. "He wants to share that with everyone."

He also recognizes the need to teach and train new judges. He mentors these upcoming leaders and others as part of his legacy.

Itzin is humble, and although he will credit the people around him for their efforts alongside his own, his years of dedication are unparalleled.

— Danielle Terzer



Mike Itzin



Renee Kloecker

RENEE KLOECKER

Renee Kloecker's contributions to Westminister Figure Skating Club of Erie have time and again proved indispensable.

"Renee has been the single board member to keep the club together," Westminister FSC of Erie President Christine Lucas said.

When the only rink in Erie, Pennsylvania, closed down due to mechanical problems, Kloecker remained positive. She encouraged the board to never give up. During the construction of the new rink, Kloecker stayed on top of its progress and made sure to see it through.

This past year, Kloecker tragically lost her daughter, Connie. Connie was a coach in Virginia. Figure skating had further bonded the mother-daughter duo.

When prompted, Kloecker asked that donations in her daughter's name be given to the Westminister FSC of Erie. The club has been struggling financially due to the rink closing and COVID-19, but from this extraordinary gesture, it received more than \$7,000 in Connie's memory.

One thing that Kloecker and her daughter had in common was their kindness.

At Learn to Skate USA programs, Kloecker's the one to hurry over to a lonely 5-year-old to keep them company. She's taught hundreds of young skaters, but what makes the biggest impression is that she listens, asks questions and gives her undivided attention.

Katie, the daughter of the club president, was one of the many skaters on the receiving end of Kloecker's benevolence. Despite their 60-year age difference, it took only a few weeks after their initial introduction for Katie to start referring to Kloecker as her best friend.

"Renee had no idea what an impact she was having on my little girl's life," Lucas said. "Renee had that type of impact on many skaters' lives, without even trying."

Beyond her work with the board, Kloecker is also a judge, committing her weekends to others. She's been a member of the Westminister FSC of Erie for decades, and continues to be a fierce advocate, a creative thinker and a dedicated volunteer.

"Someone volunteering their time so selflessly year after year after year is something extraordinary," Lucas said.

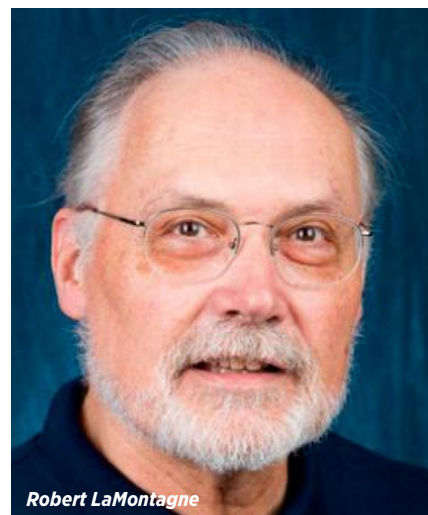
— Danielle Terzer

ROBERT LAMONTAGNE

Bob LaMontagne, a beloved judge and referee, has been at the heart of the action since his daughter, Danielle, began taking skating lessons in 1998. While he spends most of his time at the Smithfield Figure Skating Club in Rhode Island, his calm, friendly presence is well known by several clubs throughout the New England area.

"[He provides] outstanding service to our sport and continues to encourage trial judges, clubs and skaters," said Thomasa Palladino, an officer of the Hudson Mohawk Figure Skating Club in Troy, New York. "Grassroot clubs would not be able to host events without Bob's willingness to serve."

LaMontagne's reputation precedes him, as he appears to have solutions for every problem. Palladino's favorite memory of him was at a Hudson Mohawk FSC competition when he fixed the rink's sound system after 45 minutes of technical difficulties. Without his expertise, she's not sure whether the competition would have proceeded.



Robert LaMontagne



“His dedication to our sport, both on and off the ice, is what made events memorable,” Palladino said.

In 2014, LaMontagne received the Lee Ann Miele Award for his commitment to figure skating — both as a judge and as the former president and treasurer with the Smithfield FSC. Ironically, it was Miele who suggested that LaMontagne try trial judging, and years later, he remained one of the most sought-after competition officials in the Northeast.

After he won the award, Jill Vigorito, then-vice president of the Smithfield FSC, joked it made sense, as he was “one of the first ones to arrive at club events and one of the last ones to leave.”

While LaMontagne is also the chair of the physics department at Providence College, the jack-of-all-trades still finds time for his favorite hobbies: building model trains and piloting his model aircraft.

— Megan Sauer

LISA SHAW

With a heart of gold and a passion for service, Lisa Shaw has not only impacted the IceWorks Skating Club community but the larger Aston, Pennsylvania, community in which it resides.

“It’s clear that she loves people first,” said Kim Kaloyannides, a board member at Ice Works SC. “You could tell that she loves the sport but not only that, she loves the people in the sport.”

Skating is competitive and individualistic in nature, but Shaw encourages volunteerism to help unify the skating community. Her efforts have created camaraderie and given people noncompetitive goals to collectively work toward, such as serving others.

For example, Shaw leads Wheelchairs on Ice, a club event in which disabled kids are invited to the rink, and club members push the children around on the ice. For a few hours, they get to experience the feeling of skating.

Similarly, around Christmastime, a Giving Tree is set up in the rink lobby. Members can sponsor families in need, and help provide them with holiday gifts.

“I have never met another leader that gives more than Lisa Shaw. She is like Superwoman,” Kaloyannides said.

Shaw is a fair and strong leader. She immediately intervened when financial pressures began to mount due to COVID-19. She worked out a system to pay the club’s coaches upfront so their expenses were subsidized while they were out of work.

By watching the way Shaw leads, Kaloyannides said that we can all learn to be better leaders in our own lives, whether that be in the workplace, as parents, volunteers or peers.

In her role as president, Shaw does so much for the club behind the scenes. She wears many hats and works many hours, all driven from a love for figure skating and those she serves.

“Lisa is a true treasure to the sport and anyone lucky enough to know her,” Kaloyannides said.

— Danielle Terzer

MAY WIZA

At a U.S. Figure Skating Governing Council meeting a few years ago, May Wiza was asked to make a speech pitching intercouncils. Although put on the spot, Wiza was extremely charismatic. Her passion and sincere belief in what she does made what many would see as a daunting task easy.

Wiza has a way with words. When recruiting volunteers, she doesn’t just get people to agree, she makes them excited and want to be involved.

Her decades of devotion have set an example that inspires others to stay involved beyond their own or their kids’ skating careers.

Wiza is the president of Glenwood FSC and vice president of the Skating Council of Illinois. In her roles, she advocates for valuable opportunities geared toward skater development.

“What I find inspiring about May the most is that she tries to make sure that skaters within the Chicagoland area have access to competitive opportunities that they don’t have to travel far for,” Deborah Swanson, treasurer of Glenwood FSC, said.

By hosting competitions in Chicago, they not only become more accessible to the local skaters, but they become more affordable, too.

Wiza has chaired the Midwestern Sectional Figure Skating Championships, Midwestern/Pacific Coast Synchronized Skating Sectional Championships, National Theatre On Ice, Dance-Pairs Chicago and more. There is something for everyone in figure skating, and Wiza makes sure all skaters are represented in their respective disciplines.

She’s taken advantage of having these events hosted locally by also using them to expose the community’s youth to skating and grow the sport. For the Midwestern Sectional, she invited nearby schools to come watch the competition and learn about the sport.

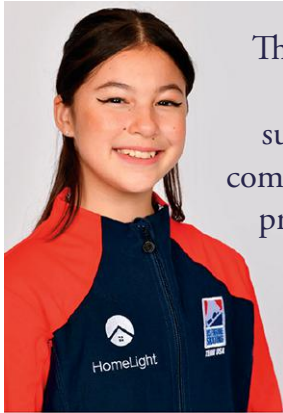
“I think when people hear of Glenwood they think of May, and they think of how kind and proactive she is,” Glenwood FSC Vice President Marie Cortez-Sifuentes said.

— Danielle Terzer



WHAT DO FANS MEAN to the sport of figure skating?

COMPILED BY KAMA STIGALL



The fans mean a lot to me. They're so supportive at every competition and they provide really good moral support.

— **ALYSA LIU,**
TWO-TIME
U.S. CHAMPION

I think it's incredible when we connect to them because you see the smile on their face and it just automatically puts a smile on my face. They love the sport so much and it's amazing to see how much they love skating and support us.

— **STARR ANDREWS,**
2017 U.S. JUNIOR SILVER MEDALIST



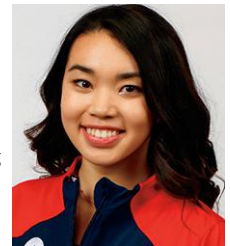
BRADIE TENNELL, 2021 U.S. CHAMPION

— The sport wouldn't be the same without them — they are amazing. The way they are so passionate about the sport, it's so gratifying. We spend so much of our lives training and trying to improve ourselves, and without the fans' appreciation for the sport and our performances, it truly wouldn't be the same. It's fun to come to a competition and interact with the fans. The things that fans notice about your skating, even if it's something as small as a head movement, it's meaningful. If someone compliments me, I think to myself, I'm so glad you noticed that because it took me so long to get that correct.



KAREN CHEN, 2017 U.S. CHAMPION

— For sure, fans are a huge part of our support system and my support system. It's one of the best feelings in the world to step onto the ice and hear the crowd go wild, clapping and cheering for you. Having the best skate of your life and having the fans stand up and cheer — it's one of the best feelings in the world. I just finished competing at Skate America and we had cardboard cutouts of fans and a cheering soundtrack. It definitely helped with the vibe, but it's just not the same as actually having the fans there, holding U.S. flags and cheering — it's incredibly unique.



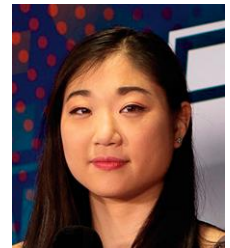
JEAN-LUC BAKER, THREE-TIME U.S. BRONZE MEDALIST

— Our fans do make an impression on us. We do listen, we do hear, and we do love our interactions with them, whether it's on the concourse at an event or at our home rink, or when we visit somewhere. And from adult skaters to younger kids — any age really — they have made such an impact on our career. It's so, so important to remember why you do this and how much you love skating, because at the end of the day, that's all you can really control.



MIRAI NAGASU, TWO-TIME U.S. OLYMPIAN

— U.S. Figure Skating has done a great job combining the connection between fans and skaters. Every year at the U.S. Championships, there is a Friends of Figure Skating breakfast that allows the skaters to meet people who are behind the support system. Fans are able to get to know their favorite skaters and grab a quick bite. I think it's a win-win event, because the skaters receive acknowledgement of their hard work and the fans give that appreciation to them, and as a result, the skaters go home and work even harder.



I think figure skating in the U.S. is a tighter community than other sports. If I were to go to any competition, I'd probably recognize most of the faces there. U.S. Figure Skating has taken huge steps to connect to everyone and make sure that every athlete has a reliable support network. Even though we as athletes might not realize it every single day, I think we've got to be eternally grateful to U.S. Figure Skating for creating such a supportive community. I'm grateful to be part of this community because I know so many great people who would give anything for the success of the athletes.

— **VINCENT ZHOU, 2019 WORLD BRONZE MEDALIST**



'A CRAZY YEAR'

Athletes demonstrate resilience on biggest stage

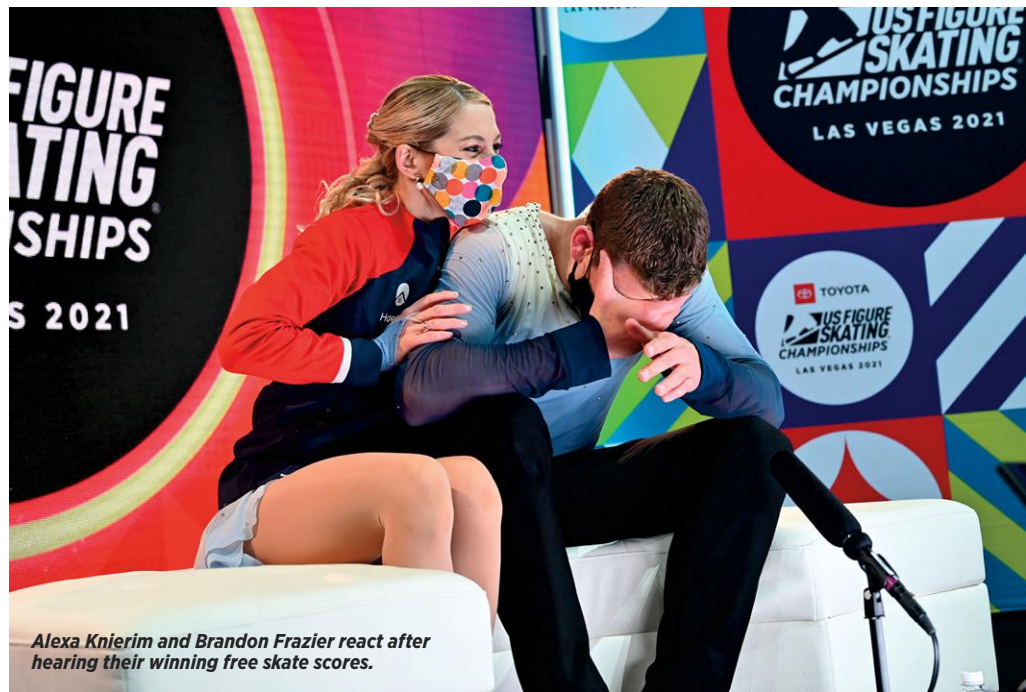
Vincent Zhou summed up what many skaters, coaches and officials expressed during their time at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Las Vegas.

"It's been a crazy year," said Zhou, who earned the silver medal at the marquee event, held Jan. 11–21 at the Orleans Arena. "It's pretty cool to have such a high level of competition at U.S. nationals in a year where nobody's been able to see anything coming. I'm grateful to have had this competition."

Athletes and their coaches have navigated the uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic for nearly a year. Most rinks across the country were shut down for different lengths of time, training time was scaled back, and coaching and choreography were conducted via Zoom and FaceTime. The event, which was scheduled to be held in San Jose, California, was moved to Las Vegas late in the fall because of COVID-19 considerations.

Through it all, everyone involved remained connected and committed to making this season a reality. Three major virtual events — Peggy Fleming Trophy, ISP Points Challenge and the 2021 U.S. Figure Skating Championships Series presented by Toyota — kept athletes and officials engaged and on track to compete and judge at the 2021 U.S. Championships.

"They are really hungry to compete and



Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier react after hearing their winning free skate scores.

show what they can do and how they've progressed, probably more so than in any other year," Chief Referee Samuel Auxier said.

While no spectators were allowed to attend, U.S. Figure Skating created a com-

petitive atmosphere complete with piped-in crowd noise, more than 300 virtual fan and pet cutouts that sat rinkside and a Virtual Kiss and Cry Live, in which family and friends of the athletes could be seen cheering on their skater.

Practicing and competing inside a bubble, the skaters and coaches were able to safely focus on the job at hand while pursuing coveted U.S. medals and the opportunity to qualify for the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2021 in Stockholm, Sweden, later this month.

Highlights from the competition included Nathan Chen winning his fifth consecutive U.S. title, Bradie Tennell reclaiming the ladies title after first winning it in 2018, the new pairs team of Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier setting scoring records en route to the title, and Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue securing their third ice dance title in four years.

"Showing up is a victory in itself, and I know that sounds clichéd," Frazier said. "It's amazing what a year can do, and for what everyone's going through, these moments are a victory."

Kaitlin Hawayek is all smiles and Jean-Luc Baker pays tribute to SpongeBob SquarePants in the kiss and cry.



TIM NWACHUKWU/GETTY IMAGES



Mariah Bell displays her appreciation for her friends and family in the Virtual Kiss and Cry Live.

While the skaters delivered on the ice, fans enjoyed the competition from the safety and comfort of their own homes thanks to a robust TV schedule. Nearly 4.5 million viewers (based on Nielsen reporting) tuned in to the senior competition on NBCSN and NBC over the four days. They also streamed coverage on Peacock Premium.

The Virtual Fan Experience website provided another way for people to feel connected, with features such as fantasy skating, U.S. Championships-themed bingo and the Fan-Cam. Those individuals who purchased cutouts had the chance to see them up close and personal, as photos of the virtual fans were posted throughout the event.

One lucky person won the Toyota Giveaway prize of four tickets to the 2022 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Nashville, Tennessee. More than 34,000 people enjoyed the many features of the Virtual Fan Experience. Nearly 106,000 people visited the U.S. Championships event page at www.usfigureskating.org, and more than 10,000 accessed the event program.

"I find it very appropriate that our

It was "Viva Las Vegas" for Yaroslav Paniot after his Elvis Presley free skate medley.



resiliency — which has pushed U.S. Figure Skating forward through decades of sometime unthinkable challenges — has propelled us into our 100th year as an organization," U.S. Figure Skating President Anne Cammett said. "Years from now, when people look back at this time, the skating community can hold its head high knowing that together we continue to thrive."

U.S. WORLD TEAM SELECTIONS

U.S. Figure Skating announced its selections for the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2021. The team was selected

following the U.S. Championships.

The World Championships are set for March 22–28, 2021, in Stockholm, Sweden.

Ladies

- Karen Chen
- Bradie Tennell
- Alternate 1 — Amber Glenn
- Alternate 2 — Mariah Bell
- Alternate 3 — Audrey Shin*

Men

- Jason Brown
- Nathan Chen
- Vincent Zhou
- Alternate 1 — Tomoki Hiwatashi
- Alternate 2 — Maxim Naumov*
- Alternate 3 — Camden Pulkinen

Pairs

- Jessica Calalang/Brian Johnson
- Alexa Knierim/Brandon Frazier
- Alternate 1 — Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy LeDuc
- Alternate 2 — Audrey Lu/Misha Mitrofanov
- Alternate 3 — Emily Chan/Spencer Howe*

Ice Dance

- Madison Chock/Evan Bates
- Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker
- Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue
- Alternate 1 — Christina Carreira/Anthony Ponomarenko
- Alternate 2 — Caroline Green/Michael Parsons
- Alternate 3 — Molly Cesanek/ Yehor Yehorov*
- *pending ISU decision on minimum score

2021 U.S. World Team (back row, l-r) Brian Johnson, Brandon Frazier, Jason Brown, Vincent Zhou, Nathan Chen, Zachary Donohue, Evan Bates, Jean-Luc Baker; (front row, l-r) Jessica Calalang, Alexa Knierim, Karen Chen, Bradie Tennell, Madison Hubbell, Madison Chock, Kaitlin Hawayek



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

SENIOR LADIES

'I'M KIND OF SPEECHLESS'

Tennell returns to top of podium; Glenn, Chen shake things up with silver, bronze

BY BRANDON PENNY

Bradie Tennell was beaming following her short program, and again the following night after her free skate at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

"I'm kind of speechless, actually," Tennell said after the free skate.

Tennell's performances were every skater's dream. They were what she trains in practice and exactly what she hoped to put out in competition. The idyllic skates amounted to the 22-year-old winning the ladies title with a total of 232.61 points.

Her short program to "Moderation" by Florence + the Machine broke her own U.S. Championships record with 79.40 points, while her free skate to "Sarajevo" by Max Richter and "Dawn of Faith" by Eternal Eclipse earned a personal-best 153.21 points. She was the only skater in the field of 17 ladies to earn all positive GOEs in both programs.

"I think that's the most relaxed I've ever skated at any competition ever," Tennell said after her short program. "It was just so much fun. I enjoyed myself, and that feeling when I finished the program is what I work for every day and why I go to the rink every day."

The ladies event proved to be the most dramatic discipline, following two years in which the same women finished in the top three.

It appeared those three — Mariah Bell (Rocky Mountain FSC), Alysa Liu (St. Moritz ISC) and Tennell (Skokie Valley SC) — would repeat that feat as Liu was second and Bell third in the short program.

Amber Glenn (Dallas FSC) and Karen Chen (Peninsula SC) rose to the occasion, however, to claim the silver and bronze medals with 215.33 and 214.98 points, respectively. Chen and Tennell were selected to the World Team and will aim to earn the U.S. ladies three spots for the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 with their finishes.

Liu landed just behind them with the pewter medal and 213.39 points, while 2020 Skate America champion Bell placed fifth with a score of 199.95. Bell had a series of mistakes in her free skate, which included a fall on her opening triple flip.

Two-time defending champion Liu is typically a favorite at any competition, but she entered this one with zero expectations

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Bradie Tennell makes history by winning a second U.S. title, three years removed from her first one. Her clean free skate capped an unforgettable weekend for the Illinois native.

and was pleased to leave with the pewter medal. The 15-year-old had changed coaches and experienced a growth spurt in the off-season; she then suffered a hip injury in the fall. As she continues to become accustomed to her body and relearn her history-making jumps, Liu was just happy to be at her first and only live competition of the season.

“I’m up for any challenge, and I’m just going to keep pushing forward,” Liu said.

Having also won the 2018 U.S. title, Tennell is now listed as the first woman in 101 years to win her titles three or more years apart. It is a goal she kept in the back of her mind, quietly working toward a return to the top of the podium and making the choices necessary to lead her there.

“Winning the title back means every-

Tennell breaks her own U.S. short program scoring record with a flawless performance that featured a triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination.

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Senior ladies medalists (l-r) Amber Glenn, Bradie Tennell, Karen Chen, Alysa Liu



thing to me,” Tennell said. “It was one of the driving forces behind my move to Colorado this year. It’s the driving force behind me waking up to train every day. They say it’s about the journey, not the destination, but the destination feels pretty good, too.”

Tennell moved from Illinois to Colorado in the summer, transitioning from her longtime coach to famed jumps technician Tom Zakrajsek. He was unable to make the

trip to U.S. Championships, though, having tested positive for COVID-19 11 days prior to the start of competition.

It marked Tennell’s first time competing without her head coach present, which she said was par for the course.

“I don’t remember the last time life has gone according to my plan, so I’m trying to dodge and weave, roll with the punches.”

Since moving to Colorado Springs,

Amber Glenn’s skating journey hit one of its peaks, with a sterling free skate that was second best in the segment. The silver medalist opened her clean program with a successful triple Lutz-triple toe combination.



SENIOR LADIES



Amber Glenn reacts to her free skate scores. It was the 2014 junior champion's highest finish in the senior ranks.

Tennell has begun to feel more confident in herself and more in command of her skating, for which she credits Zakrajsek.

"I really enjoyed myself, and that is my goal for every competition, and I feel like I achieved that goal for the first time since 2018 nationals, and that is what I'm most proud of."

Glenn enjoyed herself just as much and was left in shock by her own abilities as she put out the programs she has longed for at her sixth senior-level U.S. Championships.

Glenn attempted a triple Axel in her short program to "Scars" by Madilyn Bailey, which earned 70.83 points and put her in fifth place, just 1.54 points from third. Though she fell on the landing of the jump, Glenn was relieved to have finally included it in competition.

A weight lifted from her shoulders, Glenn had the free skate of her career to "Rain in Your Black Eyes," which was mixed and choreographed by Misha Ge. She vaulted to second place with a score of 144.50 points.

The 21-year-old learned on the day of the free skate that an infection in her right foot had spread to her knee, causing her calf and shin to swell. For Glenn, the injury had a silver lining: the freedom she needed.

"Knowing that I was in pain and knowing that I had already come out here and accomplished what my goal was, which was to attempt the triple Axel in a competition, I kind of just let myself skate for me, not trying to live up to anyone's expectations or goals," Glenn said. "I released myself from all of those expectations and pressures, and just let myself skate."



Karen Chen glides to the bronze medal, with her signature spins and footwork on full display. The 2017 U.S. champion produced the event's third-best free skate.

The 2014 U.S. junior champion, Glenn was 13th at her senior debut in 2015 and then spent six months off the ice in the 2015–16 season, thinking she was through with the sport. Upon returning to skating, her results slowly improved; she finished fifth last year, but she struggled to put out the programs she desired in competition — until this year.

"I came back to the sport, changed coaches, changed mindset, and my mindset coming back was I'm going to skate for me and my own happiness, not for a title or for success or for other people's goals," she said. "I wanted to skate for me, and now to come back and have a national medal five years later is amazing."

Chen, 21, also had a redemptive return with her finish this year, though hers was to familiar territory.

The 2018 Olympian withdrew from the 2019 U.S. Championships and then finished fourth in 2020. This year she set new personal-best scores, with 70.99 points to her "Rise" by Katy Perry short program and 143.99 points for her "Butterfly Lovers Concerto" by Takako Nishizaki free skate, and took the bronze, which she had also done in 2015 and 2018.

"I feel like a veteran to the bronze medal," Chen laughed. "It's my third bronze

medal now, which is wonderful; I'm grateful for it. I think it's just a great confidence boost especially for next year, since it is an Olympic year and it's going to be a big challenge for me and other skaters because of how important it is."

Alysa Liu delights the TV audience with her passion and skating skills.



The journey might have
gotten longer,
but the destination is
still the same.



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The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 have been moved to next year. But our dreams aren't canceled, only delayed. To Team Toyota and athletes everywhere, please continue to stay safe, as we continue to stand behind you.

#TeamToyota

SENIOR MEN

‘IT MEANS THE WORLD’

Chen reaches a feat 69 years in the making; Zhou returns to silver, Brown takes bronze

BY BRANDON PENNY

Nathan Chen (Salt Lake Figure Skating) has been making history at the U.S. Championships for one reason or another since his first appearance in 2010, when at age 10 he became the youngest novice champion.

He continued the trend at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships, where he became the first man in 69 years — and only the second since World War II — to win a fifth consecutive championship-level title. The last was Dick Button, who won seven from 1946 to 1952. Only Button, Todd Eldredge (six titles, the first in 1990 and final in 2002) and Roger Turner (seven from 1928 to 1934) have more.

“It means the world,” Chen said of being mentioned in the same sentence as the two-time Olympic and five-time World champion. “Dick is a true skating icon. It just feels incredible to be trying to chase something that someone like that has done. I’m nowhere near the level that he was at, but it’s just cool to be able to be mentioned in his realm of legend-ness.”

Chen totaled 322.28 points to top 2019 World bronze medalist Vincent Zhou (SC of San Francisco), who finished with 291.38 points, and 2020 Four Continents silver medalist Jason Brown (Skokie Valley SC), who scored 276.92 points. Yaroslav Paniot (All Year FSC) was fourth with 266.97 points.

Brown, Chen and Zhou were named to the World Team for the third year running.

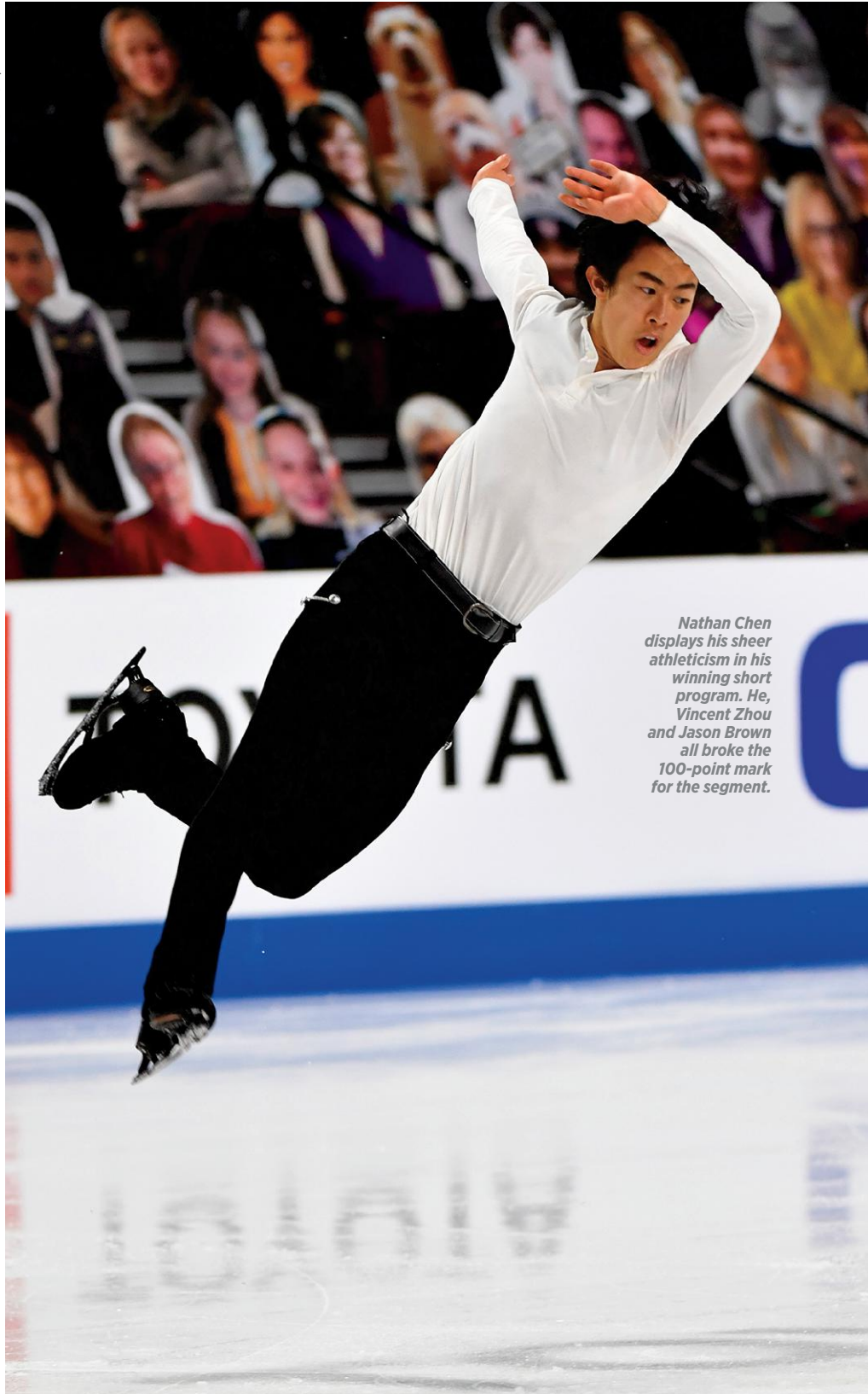
While Chen’s victory in Las Vegas was some seven decades in the making, the 21-year-old was simply glad to be competing in a season that has canceled or altered many of the sport’s marquee competitions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I’m thrilled to be here,” Chen said. “This season has been just crazy, so the fact that we’re all here, we’re all healthy, that we’re able to do this is just incredible, so I’m feeling extremely blessed.”

As he begins to gear up for the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, Chen included his most daring jumping layouts, in both the short program and free skate, since 2018.

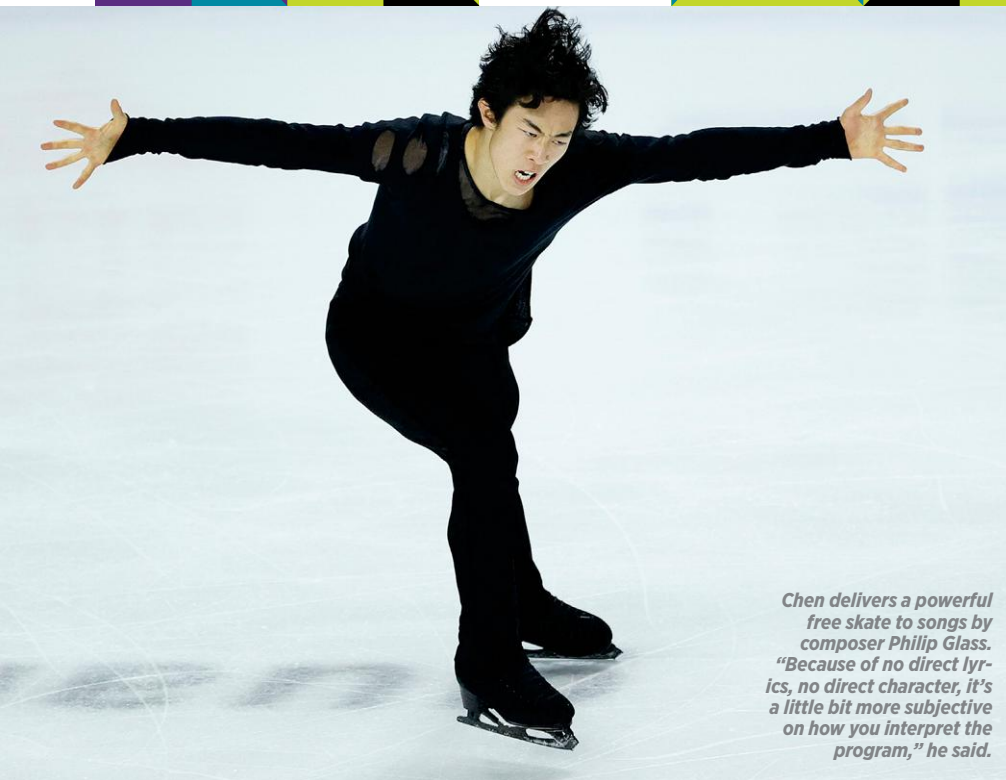
His short program to the Latin “Asturias” by Frida Lopez and “Cancion del Mariachi” by Los Lobos included a quadruple Lutz and triple Axel in the first half, plus a quad flip-triple toe loop combination in the second. All were cleanly landed to earn 113.92

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Nathan Chen displays his sheer athleticism in his winning short program. He, Vincent Zhou and Jason Brown all broke the 100-point mark for the segment.

SENIOR MEN



Chen delivers a powerful free skate to songs by composer Philip Glass. "Because of no direct lyrics, no direct character, it's a little bit more subjective on how you interpret the program," he said.

proach to my training so I could really get a solid block of uninterrupted hard work time in," he said.

The 20-year-old displayed superb ice coverage and flow — a result of his work with Ben Agosto and Josh Farris — in his short program to “Vincent” (Starry Starry Night) by Josh Groban, which landed a career-high 107.79 points. In his free skate to Muse’s “Algorithm” and “Algorithm (Alternate Reality Version),” Zhou fell on a quad Lutz and singled a planned quad flip, scoring 183.59 points.

Unhappy with the mistakes, he knows he is still on track for the ultimate goal.

“I’m really putting myself on the path to success at the 2022 Olympics,” Zhou said. “Every single week of training, I’m learning and growing; every single competition, I’m getting better; and I’m really starting to package myself in the right way; and everything is going in very much the right direction.”

Brown, 26, is also eager to make next year’s Olympic Team, especially after the 2014 Olympic Team Event bronze medalist missed out in 2018. This season he debuted a short program to Nina Simone’s “Sinnerman” that he and choreographer Rohene Ward intend to use in the Olympic season as well.

“This is not an easy program, and it’s not an easy program doing it without an audience,” Brown said after the skate that earned him 100.92 points. “I’m planning to keep this program for two years. That speaks to the difficulty of how hard this program is, but also that desire of getting this program out in front of an audience, taking their energy as well because it’s a taxing program. It takes a lot out of me and I give it my all when I do it.”

His free skate to “Slaughter on 10th Avenue” by Richard Rodgers and the New

points, though Chen, a perfectionistic, felt he could have improved his jump landings and noted his footwork was choppy in the first half.

A free skate to compositions by Philip Glass, whom Chen learned about in a Yale music course, was packed with five quads. He stepped out of the opening quad Lutz, putting both hands on the ice, but still had the top program score with 208.36 points.

“I was a little timid,” Chen said of his free skate performance. “I didn’t really tackle all my elements. I was focused on conserving energy, and that’s not the right approach. That’s what caused the first element to have an error. The rest of the program I was just trying to make sure I stayed on my feet. Wasn’t exactly the skate I’d like to have, but at least I was able to stand up on all the rest of the jumps.”

The win is Chen’s 13th in a row across all individual competitions. He has remained undefeated since winning the 2018 World title following his fifth-place finish at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018.

Zhou’s silver-medal performance was clear redemption for his 2020 pewter medal that came during his most tumultuous season.

“A year ago at this time, I was fresh out of college, had almost quit skating, I was off of three weeks of skating, could barely do a triple Axel in my program,” Zhou said, marveling at how much has changed.

The 2020–21 season has not been any less eventful for Zhou, who again changed coaches (to Christy Krall), training locations (to Colorado Springs, Colorado) and faced a couple of injuries that resulted in a month off the ice between Skate America and the U.S. Championships. Still, he found the silver lining.

“I think the lockdown and all of the subsequent training time without many competitions really gave me a lot of time to focus on myself, evaluate my specific goals, the methodologies I wanted to use to achieve those goals, and develop a week-to-week ap-

Senior men’s medalists (l-r) Vincent Zhou, Nathan Chen, Jason Brown, Yaroslav Paniot



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

SENIOR MEN



Vincent Zhou ramps up his free skate, which opened with a huge quad Lutz-triple toe combination, the highest scored element of the segment (20.30 points).



York Philharmonic earned 176.00 points.

The competition was Brown's first in-person event of the season, due to the cancellation of Skate Canada, which had him feeling like a "racehorse in the gate" and caused jitters in his short program he hopes to alleviate for his next competition.

"I just try my best to rely on 20 years of competing," the 2015 U.S. champion and now six-time U.S. Championships medalist said. "The three of us are all lucky that we're really seasoned; we've had a lot of experience in this sport, so even when we go through these unprecedented times, I think we're able to keep our head down, stay focused."

Paniot was the surprise medalist of the event after finishing 10th in his U.S. Championships debut one year prior. A 2012 Youth Olympian and 2018 Olympian for Ukraine, his short program to Michael Bublé's "Sway" tallied 83.74 points, while he had the third-highest free skate score of 183.23 points.

"Everything went very smooth because I was finally in the best shape in my life," Paniot, 23, explained. "I will not say anything too genius, because work, work, work, and you'll get this result."

Yaroslav Paniot rocks the podium following his short program to "Sway" by Michael Bublé and his free skate to a medley of Elvis songs.



Left, Jason Brown floats effortlessly in his free skate to "Slaughter on 10th Avenue" by Richard Rodgers and the New York Philharmonic. Brown posted the highest program component marks of the segment.



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SENIOR PAIRS

‘WE JUST DID OUR JOB’

Knierim/Frazier win first U.S. title; Calalang/Johnson, Cain-Gribble/LeDuc go silver-bronze

BY DARCI MILLER

One year ago, nobody truly knew the surprises that 2020 would have in store.

A global pandemic certainly ranks highly on that list.

In the U.S. figure skating world, so does the sudden dissolution of two top pairs teams and the formation of another.

One year ago, at the 2020 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Alexa Knierim and Chris Knierim won their third U.S. title, while 2017 U.S. champions Haven Denney and Brandon Frazier finished a disappointing fifth.

In February, Chris retired, and in March, Denney and Frazier went their separate ways.

Soon after, Alexa (DuPage FSC) and Frazier (All Year FSC) announced their partnership — and wasted no time in taking U.S. figure skating by storm.

Ten months later, Knierim and Frazier won the pairs title at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships in just their second live competition as a team. In the process, they set records across the board.

“I have so many emotions. I already cried when I got off the kiss and cry,” Knierim said after their short program. “I can’t even describe the work we put in to get here, and the programs we drilled. Even with all that work and positive training that we came here with, you still are a competitor and an athlete, and you do have doubts when you take that starting pose.

“I just looked at Brandon and was like, ‘I need you.’ And he’s like, ‘I need you, too.’ And we just did our job. And it just feels really good.”

Knierim and Frazier’s résumé as a team has just three entries: a second-place finish at U.S. Figure Skating’s virtually held ISP Points Challenge, a win at Guaranteed Rate Skate America in October, and their win at the U.S. Championships.

“This is our second live event, and we’re still learning, so this was a huge [step],” Frazier said. “We got the job done, and it always feels good when you can do that, but this is experience for us for the bigger picture.”

While both Skate America and the U.S. Championships were held at Orleans Arena in Las Vegas, Knierim and Frazier arrived at one with zero expectations.

They arrived at the other as the odds-on

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Pairs veterans Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier worked hard in a short time to develop their technical package as well as their on-ice chemistry.

SENIOR PAIRS



Knierim and Frazier sew up their first U.S. title together with a sterling free skate to the powerful song "Fall on Me" by Andrea Bocelli and Matteo Bocelli. The couple set U.S. records for their short program, free skate and overall.

earning a record 150.64 points to bring their overall total to 228.10. Calalang and Johnson finished second overall with 205.29 points, while 2019 U.S. champions Ashley Cain-Gribble (SC of New York) and Timothy LeDuc (Los Angeles FSC) secured bronze with a score of 200.52.

Knierim and Frazier's free skate included a huge throw triple loop, which they joke about now. Knierim credits Frazier with relearning 15 years of his previous technique to be similar to what she's comfortable with.

"If I sent you a video of our first throw double loop we tried, I think you would not believe what you're watching," Frazier said with a laugh. "That's why we're so excited when you see us out there right now. We put in so much work because, even though both of us came from long partnerships with solid pros, that doesn't necessarily guarantee it's going to be like that with another skater, another partner. And there's a huge, huge learning curve with that, and that's something Alexa and I have had to grind out over the past months."

They've done all that grinding alongside Calalang and Johnson at Great Park Ice in Irvine, California, under coaches Jenni Meno and Todd Sand.

"They both trained hard every single day, and our hope is that both teams skate the absolute best that they can," Meno said. "Today that didn't happen for Jessica and Brian, but I think that they'll go away from this and they'll definitely learn something, and it'll make them stronger in the future. But we got the result

favorites to win.

"Because of the hours we put in after Skate America up until this day, I did expect more out of myself because I feel like I've grown in those last two months," Knierim said. "So I actually did have more expectation today as an individual skater to bring to the team than I did before. And I think that's also why I started my program a little bit tight today, because I had a little bit more thought

process behind it all."

Any tightness was essentially a moot point, as Knierim and Frazier won the short program easily, heading into the free skate with a record 77.46 points. Training mates Jessica Calalang (DuPage FSC) and Brian Johnson (Detroit SC) finished second in the segment with 71.30 points.

In the free skate, Knierim and Frazier put out their fourth consecutive clean program,

Pairs medalists (l-r) Jessica Calalang and Brian Johnson, Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier, Ashley Cain-Gribble and Timothy LeDuc, Audrey Lu and Misha Mitrofanov



SENIOR PAIRS



Jessica Calalang and Brian Johnson execute a towering Level 4 triple twist to open their free skate to “Who Wants to Live Forever” by the Tenors, featuring Lindsey Stirling. They repeated as silver medalists.

we wanted for the teams — they finished first and second. We’re super proud of both teams. They’re both on a different journey, and they both accomplished something here.”

Indeed, Calalang and Johnson were unable to best their 2020 finish, settling for a second consecutive silver medal after mistakes on their side-by-side triple Salchows and triple toes.

“That performance wasn’t exactly what we had been training for,” Calalang said. “There were quite a few mistakes in the program, but we tried hard to put it aside and continue the performance strong all the way through. We do know what we need to work

on when we get back home for the upcoming season.”

“One good thing we took away from this is all the hard work we put in this year on the expression, the skating skills, the stamina — all that stuff was done really well,” Johnson added. “So even though we might not have been the happiest with it, we definitely, in our minds, also showed improvement in many ways. And we’re looking forward to adding on to that.”

Cain-Gribble and LeDuc, meanwhile, were thrilled with their free skate despite mistakes, as it showed significant improvement from recent performances.

“I know that we had two mistakes in there, but overall, I haven’t felt that way after a performance in a long time,” Cain-Gribble said. “Even if this is the end of our season, I think that this is a huge step forward in terms of our building blocks for the future.”

Audrey Lu and Misha Mitrofanov (SC of Boston) rounded out the podium with the pewter medal, posting an overall score of 197.97.

“We’re happy with the results overall,” Mitrofanov said. “This is definitely a big step up for us from last nationals. There’s always stuff we can work on.”

The U.S. pairs field might look drastically different than it did one year ago, but as they approach the one-year mark of their partnership, Knierim and Frazier are far from satisfied with where they are now — even if it’s at the top.

“We have so much work to do,” Knierim said. “We’re pleased to win, but by no means



Ashley Cain-Gribble and Timothy LeDuc display perfect unison in their short program to “Never Tear Us Apart” by Bishop Briggs, from the Fifty Shades Freed soundtrack. The 2019 U.S. champions posted the second-best free skate of the event and emerged with the bronze medal.

are we finished. We have a lot of cleaning up to do, and there’s a lot of things that we can do better. And we strive for more every day. We want to be among the best in the world, and we have a ways to go.”

Audrey Lu and Misha Mitrofanov display sheer joy in their free skate to a Charlie Chaplin medley. The team claimed the pewter medal, their best finish as a senior pairs team.



LADIES AND MEN'S OFFICIALS (l-r) Sam Auxier, Chief Referee of the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Gretchen Bonnie, Lorrie Parker, Joshua Fischel, Denise Williamson, Katie Specht, Hannah Katz, Alex Enzmann, Lynn Goldman, Alexandria Newman, Sharon Watson, Alison Duarte, Lori Dunn, Kathleen Krieger. Not pictured: Laurie Johnson, Lisa Erle



ROCK STARS!

U.S. Figure Skating thanks all of the officials who committed their time and talents to making the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships a major success.

PAIRS OFFICIALS (l-r) Joshua Fischel, Katie Specht, Hannah Katz, Hal Marron, Lisa Erle, Alexandria Newman, Doug Williams, Lori Dunn, Lorrie Parker, Wendy Enzmann, Jeff DiGregorio, Alison Duarte, Kathleen Krieger. Not pictured: Gale Tanger



Skater Vincent Zhou and technical controller Gale Tanger



ACCOUNTANTS AND TECHNICAL ACCOUNTANTS (l-r) Tom Tanger, Alan Heinold, Kathy Bosworth, Ed Mann, Colleen Newman, Sandy Westall, Mike Meyer, Robert Keene



MUSIC TEAM (l-r) Chip Rauth, Pam Dawson-LeMarr, Carla Golubski, Bill Goen



ANNOUNCERS (l-r) David Magill, Lexi Rohner, Mike McGuire



ICE DANCE OFFICIALS (l-r) Elyse Matsumoto, Colin McManus, Denise Williamson, Adrienne Doddy, Michael Ricigliano, Judy Blumberg, Bob Horen, Kathaleen Cutone, Jerry Miele, Sharon Rogers, John Millier, Kanae Tagawa, Carol Wooley, Hal Marron



SENIOR ICE DANCE

‘HALLELUJAH’

Hubbell, Donohue edge Chock and Bates to claim third U.S. crown; Hawayek and Baker secure bronze

BY LYNN RUTHERFORD

No U.S. figure skating rivalry is more vivid and long lasting than that of Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue, and Madison Chock and Evan Bates. For 10 years, the

skaters have battled for World and Olympic spots, World medals and U.S. crowns. Both couples arrived in Las Vegas as two-time U.S. champions and two-time World medalists.

Hubbell and Donohue showcase their renowned on-ice chemistry during their rhythm dance to music from Burlesque.



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

The skaters are all compelling storytellers, able to captivate audiences within seconds of taking the ice. Hubbell and Donohue’s greatest strengths, power and edge quality, are matched by Chock and Bates’ spectacular lifts and presentation skills. Often, supremacy comes down to music and choreographic choices: Who better fit their program? Which performance burned brightest?

At this U.S. Championships, a stumble by Bates on a twizzle sequence in the free dance may have made the difference.

“We all know it is tough to go back and forth, year after year,” Hubbell said. “We know every year when we come to nationals or any other event, it is going to be hard to beat one another. Last year we were there to give them a hug, and this year they were there to give us a hug. We know that competitiveness will continue until we retire.”

“We get to go home to Maddie and Evan, we push them, they push us on a daily basis,” Donohue said. “We’re both still pushing each other, we both want to win.”

Hubbell and Donohue (Lansing SC), and Chock (All Year FSC) and Bates (Ann Arbor FSC) all train in Montreal, Quebec, under Marie-France Dubreuil, Patrice Lauzon and Romain Haguenauer. They endured similar training challenges last spring, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced their rink to close, but they entered the new year in far different places.

Hubbell and Donohue were competition ready, having won their third consecutive Skate America title in October. After struggling with their material last season, they created two new routines for their 2020–21 campaign. Their rhythm dance, set to music from the 2015 film *Burlesque*, kept much of the sultry playfulness of last season’s Marilyn Monroe-inspired program, but added extra layers of sensuality.

“It’s interesting, the way the challenge evolved over the last two years,” Hubbell said. “A lot of ‘Burlesque’ is taken from the Marilyn Monroe pin-up inspiration, and it’s just the more modern version of that. We loved doing Marilyn Monroe, but this [program] kind of allowed me to really home into my own powerful feminine energy, my confident side.”

SENIOR ICE DANCE



Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue take their free dance to "Hallelujah" to new heights.

Showing great speed and ice coverage, the couple gained Level 4 for four of the five elements and earned 89.66 points.

"We had the goal of going full out and not getting tired, which is tough in this dry climate," Hubbell said. "We really wanted to go all out and show our power and speed."

This U.S. Championships was Chock and Bates' first competition since the 2020 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships in Seoul, Korea, last February, where they won gold and Hubbell and Donohue took bronze. Last July, Chock suffered a concussion in a fall while out walking with Bates.

The injury took her off ice for about a month and limited their training into the fall.

"We weren't where we would want to be to compete and show our programs," Bates said. "We switched our focus to the U.S. Championships."

The couple kept last season's rhythm dance, set to Cole Porter's "Too Darn Hot," but reworked the second half of the routine, including the step sequence and twizzles. Their sparkling performance scored a shade higher on both the technical and program components scores than Hubbell and Donohue's, earning 90.10 points, a new U.S. record. The couples entered the free dance in a virtual tie.

That segment, too, was a competition of inches. Hubbell and Donohue, dissatisfied with last season's "A Star is Born" program, reached back to their short dance of the 2015–16 season, set to "Hallelujah," collaborating with two-time Olympic champion Scott Moir to create a new routine to a medley including Jeff Buckley and k.d. lang's renditions of the classic ballad.

"This is one of those programs, everything felt comfortable right away," Hubbell said. "Very different than the last few seasons."

"Hallelujah" won rave reviews at Skate America; it was even more magical — polished, secure and emotional — this time out. It earned 134.90 points, a new U.S. record for a free dance. Hubbell and Donohue's total

Senior ice dance medalists (l-r) Madison Chock/Evan Bates, Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue, Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker, Caroline Green/Michael Parsons



SENIOR ICE DANCE



Madison Chock and Evan Bates slither their way to the silver medal.

score, 224.56, is also a new U.S. record.

“Third-time national champion has a really nice ring to it,” said Hubbell, who with Donohue also won the 2018 and 2019 titles.

“Some performances feel easy, some are a little bit tough,” she added. “That performance today was not an easy performance. We really stuck to our plan and kept connecting with each other.”

Reprising their “Snake and Snake Charmer” free dance of last season, Chock and Bates were also on top of their game. Their opening curve lift, with Chock slithering around her partner’s body as Bates snakes full speed around the ice, is a masterpiece. But Bates’ flawed twizzle likely cost them two or three points, and they scored 132.83 to end with 222.93 points.

“It’s just part of being an athlete for many years; you succeed sometimes and fail other times,” Bates said. “I wouldn’t say today is a failure by any means, but I certainly wish I had not made the mistake.”

Both of the top teams, and bronze medalists Kaitlin Hawayek (Detroit SC) and Jean-Luc Baker (Seattle SC), were named to the U.S. squad for the 2021 World Figure Skating Championships, scheduled for March 22–28 in Stockholm, Sweden. With four-time World champions Gabriella

Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron of France sitting out the competition, the two top U.S. couples are favored for medals, perhaps gold.

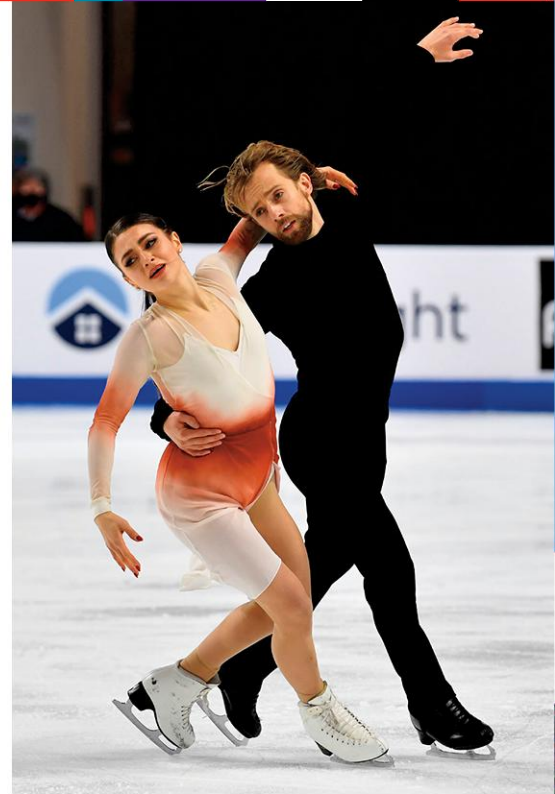
“For us, the main objective is toward winning the Olympics, to be frank,” Hubbell said. “The bigger question mark in my mind is when or if the Olympics will take place. Every competition until then is a chance to compete and push ourselves into giving the performance we would like at the pinnacle moment of our career.”

This U.S. Championships was a breakthrough for Hawayek and Baker, who achieved career-best performances in both their rhythm dance, a reprise of their popular “Saturday Night Fever” program, and their sophisticated, flowing free dance, set to a remix of Blondie’s “Heart of Glass” and contemporary composer Philip Glass’ “First Movement.”

The couple, who also train in Montreal, placed third in both segments and ended the event with 212.55 points to win their third consecutive U.S. bronze medal.

Baker credited their sterling free dance to performing freely, without the shackles of a specific story or characters.

“We are trying to allow the audience and the judges to go on a journey with us, as if you were to go into a museum,” he said. “You go into a museum, you see beautiful pieces of art, you react. Then, if you read [about] the artwork and know exactly what’s happening within the story, after you see the painting you might be confused. So something that Kaitlin and I are both latching on to is just allowing the [program] to speak to and for us.”



Kaitlin Hawayek and Jean-Luc Baker take their audience on a journey with their sophisticated and flowing free dance.

Fourth place and the pewter medal went to up-and-coming Caroline Green (Pavilion SC of Cleveland Heights) and Michael Parsons (Washington FSC), who teamed up in June 2019 after long, successful careers with their siblings. They placed fourth in both segments and finished with 192.39 points.

Caroline Green and Michael Parsons bring a fresh and lively style in their flapper-themed rhythm dance.





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BEHIND THE SCENES

STARR ANDREWS RECEIVES INAUGURAL FAIRBANKS AWARD

Team USA's Starr Andrews received the inaugural Mabel Fairbanks Skatingly Yours Fund award during the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

The Fund was established to support the training and development of promising figure skaters of color. Fairbanks was the first African American and Native American skater and coach inducted into the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame.

Andrews was told of the award a week earlier by one of Fairbanks' former students, World champion pairs skater Tai Babilonia. The Fund was made possible through a generous lead gift by the Lisa McGraw Figure Skating Foundation.

As the inaugural recipient, Andrews received the Fund's top award of \$25,000. This year, U.S. Figure Skating corporate partner Guaranteed Rate matched the award (for a total of \$50,000) as part of its commitment to identify opportunities to enhance U.S. Figure Skating's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Two additional awards, \$10,000 (up-and-coming athlete) and \$5,000 (developmental athlete), will be announced at a later date.

Atoy Wilson, the executor of Fairbanks' estate as well as a former student; Curtis Webster, the head of the Lisa McGraw Figure Skating Foundation, which endowed the fund; and Babilonia were all interviewed by NBC for a video package that aired during the ladies free skate and again during the Skating Spectacular.

"Words cannot describe how thankful I am to be the first recipient of the Mabel Fairbanks Skatingly Yours Fund," said Andrews, a member of the Los Angeles FSC. "She paved the way and made opportunities for all people by creating an environment in which we are all equal. Her love for skating transcends

Starr Andrews



Skating legend Peggy Fleming (front row, second seat from right) was one of the iconic faces in the crowd.

to the person I am today."

Andrews also recently signed an ambassador agreement with Guaranteed Rate and will be featured in its "Believe You Will" campaign, which showcases inspirational stories of athletes and adventurers who believed they could overcome challenges to accomplish their ultimate goals.

Those wishing to help support athletes of color through the Fund can make donations at SkatinglyYoursFund.com or by contacting Brent Diederich, manager, giving programs at bdiederich@usfigureskating.org.

CUTOUTS AGAIN A HUGE HIT IN LAS VEGAS

At 2020 Guaranteed Rate Skate America in October, the fan cutouts were the talk of the event. They were so popular that U.S. Figure Skating brought them back for the 2021 U.S. Championships. Faces from across the world were noticeable in the crowd, including athletes' family members, friends and furry companions.

Ashley Cain-Gribble had at least six supporters in the cutout crowd, including her husband, Dalton Gribble. Brian Johnson's father could be seen holding a cuddly friend affectionately known to *Star Wars* fans as "Baby Yoda."

Famous skaters like Peggy Fleming, Tara Lipinski, Johnny Weir, Tanith White and others also showed their faces.

The 2020 Get Up Ambassadors were also in the crowd, cheering on the skaters in cutout form.

MEDAL CEREMONIES DIFFERENT, BUT STILL SPECIAL

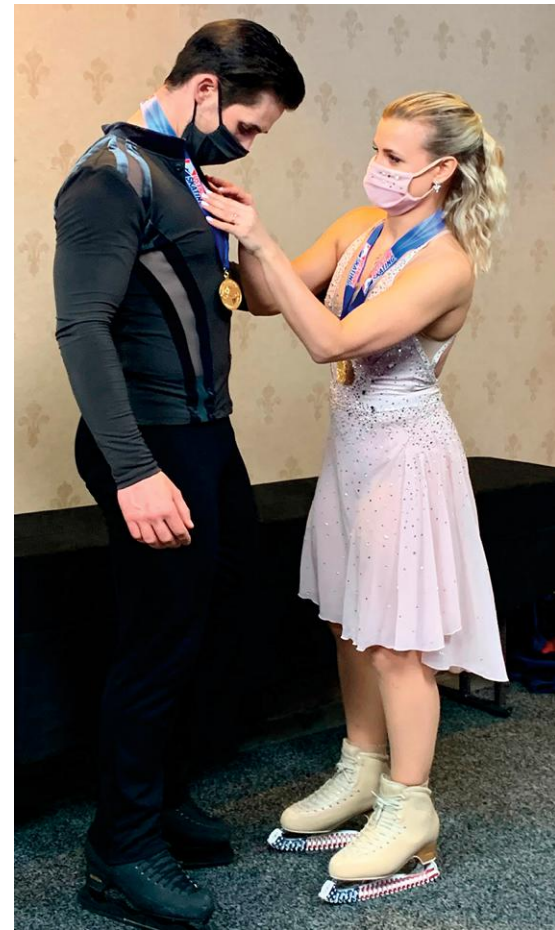
Every year at the U.S. Championships, skaters look forward to earning a spot on the podium and taking part in a memorable medal ceremony. Typically, skaters take the ice as their names are called and graciously receive a medal, pin and flowers from volunteers, officials and the U.S. Figure Skating

president.

Because of COVID-19, though, the 2021 U.S. Championships ceremonies went a little differently. Medals were laid out on a table backstage. Mia Corsini, the U.S. Figure Skating director of events, called each skater's name, starting with the pewter medalist and ending with the champion. Each athlete approached the table and put on his or her own medal. Pairs and ice dance teams presented the medals to their partners.

Once skaters put on their medals, they lined up and headed to the kiss and cry for socially distanced photos, while the announc-

Madison Hubbell places the gold medal around Zachary Donohue's neck before the medal ceremony.



BEHIND THE SCENES

er called each medalist's name.

While it didn't have the pomp and circumstance of a typical medal ceremony, athletes took in the moment as they received their coveted hardware.

**EXTRA, EXTRA!
 KISS AND CRY LIVE DEBUTS**

The wonders of technology connected family, friends and fans to athletes like never before through a giant video board in the kiss and cry. Skaters were greeted as they came off the ice with fist pumps, waving and signs from family and fans.

Many skaters, including Alysa Liu and Jason Brown, grinned from ear to ear as they saw their parents, friends and fans from across the globe only feet away. Using Zoom, family, friends and Friends of Figure Skating logged in and were given directions. Many fans put together specific signs for each skater. Family members showed pets, including

Chris Knierim (in the photograph) holding up wife Alexa's cat, and special items, like the plush Grogu from the series *The Mandalorian* that Brian Johnson's family held prominently.

Many skaters invited coaches, friends and members of their local club. Several alumni joined the Zoom rooms as well, including Mirai Nagasu, who shared a moment on the Kiss and Cry Live video board with Gracie Gold.

Leading up to the event, the Friends of Figure Skating Zoom room was hosted by Rusty Kath, U.S. Figure Skating's in-arena host for the last decade. Kath invited several of his friends, including Olympic champions Scott Hamilton and Brian Boitano, to join and even played trivia with guests. Bradie Tennell and Amber Glenn both joined the Zoom room as well after their events, sharing how they felt on the ice.

FRIENDS OF FIGURE SKATING TREATED TO VIRTUAL HAPPENINGS

While the Friends of Figure Skating (FOFS) couldn't be at the event, that didn't stop Brent Diederich, U.S. Figure Skating's manager of giving programs, from providing them with an unforgettable experience.

FOFS members were treated to various virtual events over the course of the event, including the invitation to be a part of Kiss and Cry Live.

On the Sunday following the championship events, FOFS took over the virtual press conference setup to hold a virtual breakfast via Zoom. While FOFS members made their own breakfast, they were still treated to appearances and chats with their favorite Team USA members.

Alex Krasnozhan hosted a backstage tour via Zoom for FOFS members as well. He was seen walking around with an iPad, showing fans around the Orleans Arena bubble.



Friends, family and pets of Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier cheer on their favorite skaters.

JUNIOR LADIES

READY AND STEADY

Levito overcomes nerves, long competitive layoff to secure title

BY TAYLOR DEAN

When Isabeau Levito (SC of Southern New Jersey) arrived at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships, she had nearly forgotten what it was like to compete. She was at her first in-person competition since the 2020 U.S. Championships, and nerves almost got the best of her.

"I didn't think it would be so difficult as it was," the 13-year-old said. "I believe it was difficult for everybody being back under the

bright lights and in the big stadium."

Despite the nerves, Levito skated her way to the junior ladies title. She placed second in the event last year.

In her "Malaguena" free skate, Levito landed a triple flip-triple toe combination and received Level 4 on all three spins to score 121.82 points and 187.48 overall. While satisfied with the placement, she wasn't as happy with her performance.

"I definitely feel like I could've done a

lot better," she said. "I'm mainly proud with getting to handle the nerves again."

Now that she's back home, Levito is looking forward to next season, when she will compete as a senior domestically and skate alongside those she looks up to, including Alysya Liu, Bradie Tennell and Mariah Bell. She plans to continue to work hard and persevere, traits her coach, Yulia Kuznetsova, said the young skater has always possessed.

"She loved the sport so much from the beginning," Kuznetsova said. "When she was little and her mom would pick her up from the rink, she would start crying because she wanted to go back on the ice and continue skating."

That natural dedication to skating has kept Levito coming back for more and improving from competition to competition. Because of her strength and perseverance, Levito and her support team look forward to where the young athlete goes from here.

The last time Kanon Smith (All Year FSC) was at the U.S. Championships, in 2019, she won the juvenile event. In just two years, the 12-year-old moved up three levels to become the junior silver medalist.

Everyone who watched the junior ladies event noticed Smith's spunky personality; she always sported a smile and exuded joy for skating. She noted that she chose the music for both of her programs this year: *Mary Poppins* for her short program, and "A Million Dreams" from *The Greatest Showman* for her free skate.

"I choose music that I can interpret and really perform — I just go for feeling," she said. "I was happy that I could do *Mary Poppins*, because it really relates to my personality and energy."

Despite a bloody nose from the dry desert air in practice before taking the ice for the short program, Smith rallied to skate a clean program that included two Level 4 elements. Still, the California native was especially proud of her clean free skate. Opening with a triple flip-triple toe loop, she earned Level 4 on two spins and scored 123.26 points and 185.88 overall.

"I did what I wanted to do and I accomplished my goal to skate a clean program," she said. "I'm pretty proud of myself."

Her coach, Tammy Gambill, was equal-

Isabeau Levito



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Junior ladies medalists (l-r) Kanon Smith, Isabeau Levito, Clare Seo, Ava Ziegler

ly as proud. Having worked with Smith for six years now, she was happy to see the skater she has grown up to be, but Gambill said there's still some growing to do.

Kanon Smith



"She's very young, so I want to make sure she develops smart and has a good foundation," Gambill said.

Gambill also works with bronze medalist Clare Seo (Broadmoor SC), who made her U.S. Championships debut after moving to the U.S. from South Korea. Since it was her first U.S. Championships, the 14-year-old arrived in Las Vegas looking to simply skate her best.

Seo put out two solid programs. In her free skate, set to music from *Manon of the Spring*, she earned Level 4 on all three spins and her step sequence. Her 113.24-point program helped her earn 173.51 points to earn the bronze medal.

"I was nervous but it was so exciting," Seo said of her first U.S. Championships experience.

Gambill has worked with the young skater since June and complimented Seo's dedication and optimism.

"She's a hard worker, and she's a lot of fun," Gambill said. "She has a bubbly personality, and I really enjoy working with her."

Ava Ziegler (SC of New York) collected the pewter medal with a score of 160.77.



Clare Seo



Ava Ziegler

JUNIOR LADIES

JUNIOR MEN

'IT'S AMAZING'

Prober makes most of difficult situation, wins title

BY TAYLOR DEAN

The journey to the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships has not been an easy road for any competitor. From rink closures to lack of ice time, every roadblock imaginable was in the way of these skaters looking to achieve their dreams.

For Eric Prober (Panthers FSC), the title of U.S. junior men's champion means more than anything else. The 18-year-old Floridian made his last U.S. Championships appearance in 2019, when he placed 12th in the

novice event. To qualify for this year's competition, he had to perform his program at the 2021 U.S. Championship Series presented by Toyota — during a public session.

"With school online, I couldn't skip classes, and I was only able to do it on a public session, and that was a challenge," he said. "I did a triple Salchow combination and there were people lined up, so I had to jump into the boards."

Despite maneuvering around beginner

skaters, Prober landed all of his jumps and earned third place in the series, qualifying him for the U.S. Championships. Since that day, he has worked with his coach, Laura Pizzelanti, to improve his skating skills and spin quality. Scoring nearly 20 points higher this time around, Prober displayed superior jump quality and transitional steps in his near-flawless free skate.

The program, set to "You Are the Reason" by Calum Scott, featured two triple Axels (one in combination) and a Level 4 change-foot combination spin. He scored 127.79 points and 192.83 overall to best his closest competitor by nearly five points.

As he received his score in the kiss and cry, viewers could hear him clapping and whooping, knowing full well he was going to make the podium.

"It's amazing," Pizzelanti said. "He's trained very hard for this, and I was crying at the end a little bit."

Pizzelanti was Prober's childhood coach before she moved to California. It was only a few months ago that she moved back to Florida, where Prober trains, and began working

Eric Prober



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Joseph Klein





Junior men's medalists (l-r) Joseph Klein, Eric Prober, Samuel Mindra, Jacob Sanchez



Samuel Mindra



Jacob Sanchez

with him again. In that short time, Prober learned to focus on his goals and improve every aspect of his skating.

With the U.S. Championships behind him, Prober has returned to Florida with new goals in mind: move up to the senior level, make his quad toe loop consistent, and potentially land a new quad jump.

Silver medalist Joseph Klein (Skokie Valley SC) also recently switched coaches — and training locations. The Illinois native moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado, in early October to train with Damon Allen. After a two-week quarantine, they began preparing for the U.S. Championships.

Skating to music by Audiomachine for his free skate, Klein popped his opening combination jump. But he kept his cool, landing the rest of his jumps and earning Level 4 on all three spins. He finished with a free skate score of 123.70 and an overall score of 187.30.

While Klein didn't skate perfectly, he was proud of what he put out on championship ice.

"I proved to myself that there are going to be hard points in my career, but as long as I persevere through I can come back and be stronger than before," the 16-year-old said. "As long as you can be yourself on the ice, there's nothing you can be more proud of."

Now that the 2020–21 season is over for

him, Klein will be working on triple Axel and quad jumps so that he can be ready for when international events return. He's also looking forward to continuing to enjoy the training environment at the Broadmoor World Arena, where he trains with some of the top coaches and skaters in the country.

"It's like a community-type aspect where you're all pushing each other to do better," he said. "Even though you're competing against each other, you all want the best for each other, and I think that community is important, especially in the skating world."

Unlike Klein, bronze medalist Samuel Mindra (Portland ISC) wasn't expecting to make the podium. He skated in the first group of the free skate, took his skates off and was about to leave the arena when he found out he had earned a medal.

As the men put on their medals and took photos, the smile across his face was unforgettable, as his path to the U.S. Championships was not easy.

When the 17-year-old's home rink raised its prices exponentially and ultimately closed, he set off to find cheaper ice. Mindra spent most of the season traveling across five states, training at various rinks in Oregon, Washington, Utah, California and Colorado, leaving his family behind.

Despite the hardships and homesickness, Mindra stayed motivated to train. In

Las Vegas, he scored 181.49 points, achieving his goal to break the 180 mark.

"It was a lot of sacrificing," he said. "But it was worth it for this day."

Jacob Sanchez (Hudson Valley FSC) secured the pewter medal with 177.55 points.

JUNIOR PAIRS

'WOO-HOO'

Smirnova/Siianytsia breeze to title

BY ELVIN WALKER

Anastasiia Smirnova (Yarmouth Ice Club) and Danil Siianytsia (All Year FSC) arrived in Las Vegas as the favorites to win the junior pairs title. As reigning silver medalists and the top qualifiers from the U.S. Figure Skating Championship Series presented by Toyota, expectations were high. The duo

easily won both portions of the competition and ran away with the title by more than 21 points. They finished with an overall score of 169.85 points.

"We're pretty excited about winning," Siianytsia said. "It's a beginning, and I hope that it won't be our last one. We're pretty

happy for what we got and how we ended up."

It was not an easy path to the title, however, as coach Trudy Oltmanns revealed after the competition.

"In the second practice on Tuesday, [Smirnova] was a bit outside on a throw triple loop," Oltmanns explained. "She has a fairly good high ankle sprain on her right leg. We are certainly happy with the outcome, but they didn't have the skates that they were hoping for."

Despite the injury, Smirnova, 16, and Siianytsia, 20, performed their free skate, to "The Prayer," with confidence, demonstrating a high level of sophistication in their choreography. They opened with a towering Level 3 triple twist lift and earned Level 4 on both of their lifts, a back outside death spiral and the closing pair combination spin.

"We are pretty excited," Smirnova said. "Woo-hoo!"

With their season complete, the champions plan to take advantage of the extra time in the offseason to visit their respective families in the Ukraine.

"(Smirnova) is going to visit her family about a week after we get back, and if I can get all of the paperwork done with my visas and stuff, hopefully I will be able to go home, too," Siianytsia said. "I don't know how long that is going to take to get the paperwork finished. If it takes more than two months, she will just come back and focus on the next season."

Second after the short program, 2019 junior bronze medalists Isabelle Martins (Chicago FSC) and Ryan Bedard (Northern Ice SC) clinched the silver medal with a hard-fought free skate to music from *Beauty and the Beast*.

"It feels good to be the silver medalists," Bedard said. "The program definitely was a struggle. We had to fight the whole way, but it feels good now that we are done."

Martins, 14, and Bedard, 20, had the most technically ambitious program in the competition, but performed their elements with mixed results. The opening triple Salchows were downgraded, and their triple twist lift only received a base level. The duo was, however, the only team to attempt two throw triples — a loop and a Salchow; the

Anastasiia Smirnova and Danil Siianytsia

JAY ADEFFUS/FIGURE SKATING





JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Junior pairs medalists (l-r) Isabelle Martins/Ryan Bedard, Anastasiia Smirnova/Danil Siianytsia, Valentina Plazas/Maximiliano Fernandez, Catherine Rivers/Timmy Chapman

latter elicited an impromptu celebration by Martins after she landed it.

"It's one of my favorite throws, and it was just a big moment to land it," Martins said. "Especially at the end of the program, because I was tired then."

Valentina Plazas (Panthers FSC) and Maximiliano Fernandez (Arctic FSC) moved up from fourth after the short program to

snag the bronze medal with an overall score of 137.26.

Fernandez, 25, made his return to the U.S. Championships after finishing in ninth place in the senior pairs competition in 2017. He and Plazas, 20, teamed up in January but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, could not begin training until May.

"I used to do singles and Max was com-

Isabelle Martins/Ryan Bedard



JUNIOR PAIRS



Valentina Plazas/Maximiliano Fernandez

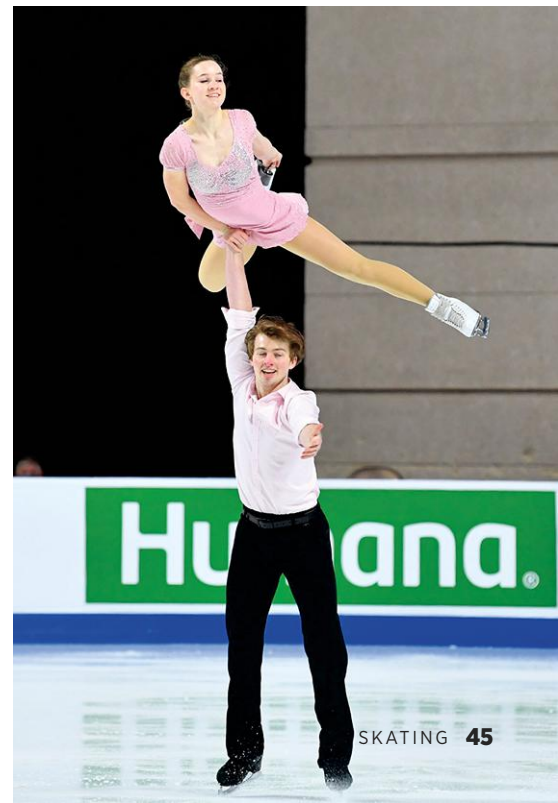
ing back into skating because he wanted to do what he loves most, and he convinced me to try out," Plazas said. "I actually really enjoyed pairs, so I said yes to the partnership."

Plazas and Fernandez opened their *Aladdin* free skate with a Level 3 triple twist lift and earned high grades of execution for both of their lifts.

"It's rewarding for all of the hard work we are doing, and although we didn't skate our best, we were still able to do what we could do," Plazas said. "It paid off."

Catherine Rivers (Knoxville SFC) and Timmy Chapman (Central Florida FSC) earned the pewter medal with 134.01 points.

Catherine Rivers/Timmy Chapman



JUNIOR ICE DANCE

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

Wolfkostin, Chen persevere to claim title

Junior ice dancers Katarina Wolfkostin and Jeffrey Chen (Peninsula SC) had resigned themselves to the fact that their season was over following a doctor's diagnosis of a torn ACL for Chen. He had twisted his knee during practice earlier in January, leaving him on the couch just days before the competition, knee elevated and wrapped in ice.

Their thoughts had turned to next season and building upon the foundation that led them to the silver medal at the 2020 U.S. Championships in Greensboro, North Carolina. The team, based in Novi, Michigan, officially notified U.S. Figure Skating of their decision to pull out of the event.

But at the midnight hour, things changed.

After receiving other medical opinions that differed from the original diagnosis, Chen was cleared to compete. They rebooked hotel rooms, made sure they were back in the

competition and were on a plane soon after.

Chen and Wolfkostin arrived in Las Vegas feeling like they had nothing to lose, producing two sterling programs that earned them the 2021 junior ice dance title.

"It's shocking to me because three or four days ago I was lying on my couch just icing my knee and hoping for the best and then all of a sudden I'm here, and just doing my best trying to put out everything we worked so hard for," Chen said.

"Having the abrupt change of plans, it's shocking but it's also amazing that we can have a second chance at competing," Wolfkostin added. "It was super incredible that we could even be here today."

Chen admitted that his knee was hurting during their warm-up for the free dance, but he received pain medicine and pushed through.

Leading by 2.61 points after the rhythm

dance, they delivered an inspired program to the contemporary classic "Exogenesis: Symphony Part III: Redemption" by Muse. Their clean and seamless program started with a combination spin that they've put a lot of work into this season.

"We took parts from what we are already good at, like a couple of our positions," Wolfkostin said of the opening spin. "We took some new ideas and incorporated them into the element, such as a new transition and a new exit. We also experimented with the changing of arm positions."

Their midline step sequence also was a highlight, earning 10.60 points. They finished with an overall score of 167.22.

Chen's sister, Karen, who earned the ladies bronze medal, was impressed with the team's efforts.

"They've really improved together," Karen said. "Their fluidity and speed across the ice made it so enticing to watch. I also loved the expressions they had on their faces; it truly looked like they were having fun performing their programs."

Seventh at the 2020 World Junior Championships, Wolfkostin and Chen admitted they are disappointed that the 2021 World Junior Championships has been canceled because of the pandemic.

"It was a huge letdown, but all we can do is keep practicing so we will be ready," Wolfkostin said. "There's always next year."

Second in both segments of the dance event, Oona Brown and Gage Brown (SC of New York) secured the silver medal with 162.91 points.

Their free dance to "Nothing Else Matters," an original of Metallica, was a piece of music that the siblings knew about but hadn't considered putting on the ice until this season. They helped their coaches with the choreography.

"I love skating to it," Gage said. "We really enjoyed creating it."

"I felt strong out there," Oona added. "There were little spots here and there, but it was a strong run-through."

Their opening twizzles and midline step sequence were their top-scored elements.

Choosing music hasn't been overly difficult, each of the siblings said.

"We try to make every day as fun as possible," Gage said. "We know each other so



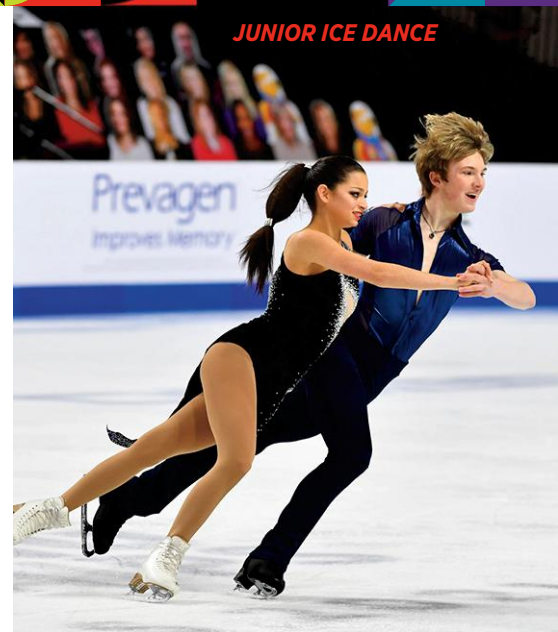
Katarina Wolfkostin and Jeffrey Chen

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Junior ice dance medalists (l-r) Oona Brown/Gage Brown, Katarina Wolfkostin/Jeffrey Chen, Katarina DelCamp/Ian Somerville, Isabella Flores/Dimitry Tsarevski



JUNIOR ICE DANCE

Katarina DelCamp and Ian Somerville

well. We, of course, stay away from romantic music, but there are so many options.”

The Browns finished first in the qualifying U.S. Figure Skating Championship Series presented by Toyota in November, ahead of second-place Wolfkostin and Chen.

Katarina DelCamp (Dallas FSC) and Ian Somerville (Washington FSC) took a page from the disco era with their entertaining free dance to “Boogie Wonderland” by Earth, Wind & Fire and “How Can You Mend a Broken Heart” by KC and the Sun-

shine Band.

Third in both segments, DelCamp and Somerville finished with the bronze medal and a score of 147.30.

Finding inspiration for their free dance wasn’t hard, said Somerville, who, with DelCamp, trains in Leesburg, Virginia, and finished fifth at the 2020 U.S. Championships.

“We needed to show a difference in what we can do from last year,” Somerville said. “We were inspired by Kaitlin [Hawayek]

and Jean-Luc’s [Baker] rhythm dance from last year [selections from *Saturday Night Fever*]. I must say, though, that it was out of my comfort zone and challenging for me.

“... I see myself a lot in Jean-Luc. I feel like if I can implement his awesome energy, that would be a great addition to my skating.”

“Kaitlin is a beautiful woman who can do anything,” DelCamp added.

Isabella Flores (Broadmoor SC) and Dimitry Tsarevski (All Year FSC) claimed the pewter medal with 146.40 points.

Oona Brown and Gage Brown



Isabella Flores and Dimitry Tsarevski



AAC ELECTION PROCESS GETS UNDERWAY

The Athletes Advisory Committee will begin its annual election process this month for the upcoming season.

It will be electing athlete representatives to several positions, including chair, board of directors and other designated committees. Athletes can serve in these positions if they have competed at an ISU championship event in the past 10 years. Term lengths are one year.

There are a number of other U.S. Figure Skating committees that have athlete representative positions available, and one can find more information on those committees on Members Only.

If you are interested in serving on the AAC or as an athlete representative on another committee and have questions, contact AAC Chair Rachael Flatt at aac-usfs@usfigureskating.org.

The AAC has a few exciting projects planned that will continue into next year; stay tuned for more information in next month's column.

In this issue, three AAC members reveal their most meaningful skating experience.



JOELLE FORTE

(LADIES)

Skating club/current location: SC of New York/Great Neck, New York

What is your favorite rink to skate in? My home rink in Great Neck, New York. The building is made of all wood and has a very high ceiling. There's so much natural light from all of the windows around the building that it doesn't feel like you are closed in; it feels like you're in the middle of a mountaintop. It has such an earthy feel to it.

What's been the most meaningful skating experience for you and why? My second U.S. nationals in North Carolina in 2011. The entire experience felt like home. Everything from the traveling to my long program just felt different than every other competition I went to. There was a calm and steadiness that I felt throughout the competition that I have never felt anywhere else. I felt the whole layout and schedule worked out perfectly. I couldn't have asked for a better competition. Right before I started my long program, I remember thinking about something that wasn't about my program at all but then once the music started, I let my training take over and it was one of my most successful programs.



MARISSA CASTELLI

(PAIRS)

Skating club/current location: SC of Boston/Providence, Rhode Island

What is your favorite rink to skate in? The Skating Club of Boston at 1240 Soldiers Field Road. Now my new favorite rink is the SC of Boston in Norwood, Massachusetts.

What's been the most meaningful skating experience for you and why? Meeting all of the amazing athletes and coaches who are part of Team USA. I have been privileged to travel the world.

JORDAN ALEXANDER

(SYNCHRONIZED SKATING)

Skating club/current location: SC of New York/Norwalk, Connecticut

What is your favorite rink to skate in? The 1980 rink in Lake Placid, New York, because it always reminds me you can never dream too big.

What's been the most meaningful skating experience for you and why? Skating at my first World Synchronized Championships with my older sister and qualifying for my last World Synchronized Championships with my younger sister. These are my most meaningful skating experiences, because it was a dream all three of us had and to share it together was priceless.



COLLEGIATE SKATING COMMUNITY OFFERS A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

BY JOONSOO KIM

I am honored to serve in the Icemen program as a collegiate ambassador. Growing up with the notion that skating and school were mutually exclusive, I want to share my experiences to hopefully demystify the world of collegiate skating.

Like many of my friends, I planned to move on from competitive skating once I entered college. But in my senior year of high school, I withdrew from sectionals due to an injury, and my less-than-glamorous swan song definitely left something to be desired. With the support of my family, I decided to go to college where I could continue skating competitively.

When I look back at my skating career, I see that my competitive aspirations perhaps exceeded my wherewithal, and at the same time, my skating career often felt like a tether on my college experience. As one of the only boys in my rink at the time, it was easy to question why I was dedicating so much of my life to the sport.

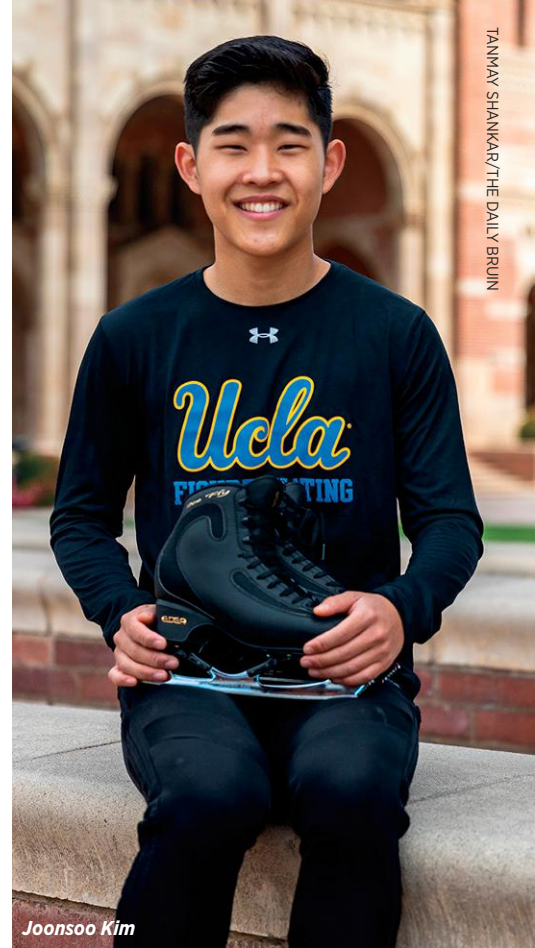
But through these critical self-reflections, I consistently found comfort in the collegiate

skating community, which valued everyone's participation, regardless of gender or skill. Moreover, being able to skate with my classmates on my team helped to integrate figure skating into my college experience.

With that said, the take-home message shouldn't be that collegiate skating is for those who couldn't make it competitively; several athletes have proven that you can be a collegiate skater and remain nationally competitive in other disciplines. However, as boys in a predominantly female sport, I think it's perfectly valid to feel alone at times, so know that an all-inclusive, diverse community of both Icemen and collegiate skaters will always be here to welcome you.

As I enter my final year in college, I'm grateful that my injury three years ago brought me to a place where I can continue my passion on the ice while pursuing an undergraduate degree. I hope my story can resonate with and motivate younger Icemen to look forward to a future in collegiate skating.

To learn more about the Icemen program, go to www.usfigureskating.org and click on Skate and Skating Opportunities.



Joonsoo Kim

TANMAY SHANKAR/THE DAILY BRUNN

SHOW YOUR STYLE

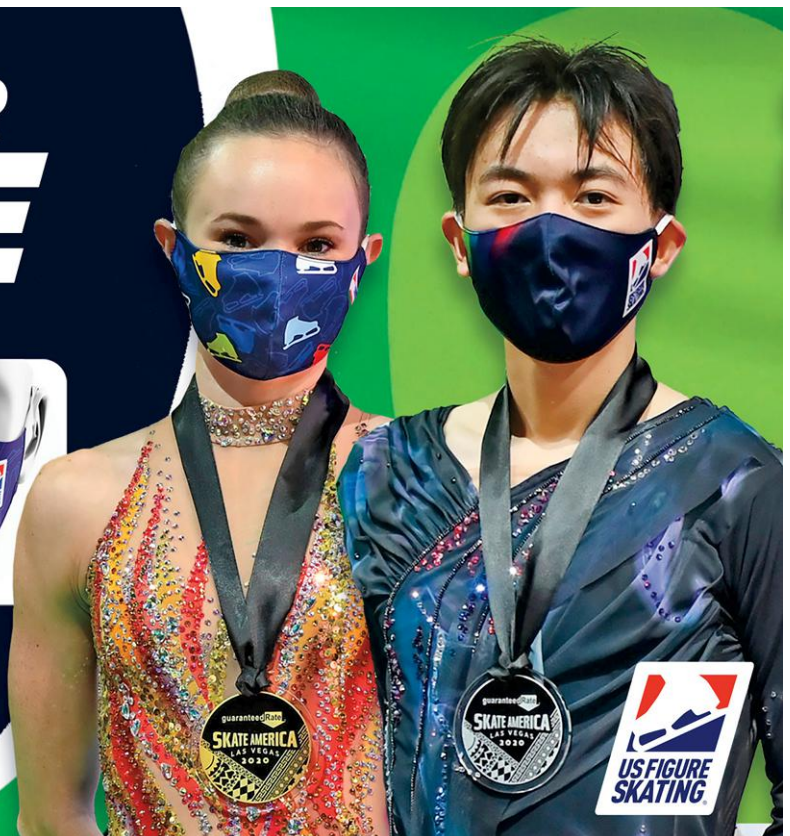
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GOLDEN AGE

Skaters achieve major milestones after the age of 50

BY AVIVA M. CANTOR

The test structure is considered the foundation of U.S. Figure Skating. When skaters pass the final test in a given pathway, they earn the designation of U.S. Figure Skating gold medalist.

There are three different routes to take tests: standard, adult 21+ and adult 50+. The path is different for every skater, and for some, the ultimate reward happens after 50. Meet five inspiring skaters who remind us that the ultimate success in adult figure skating is continuing to be able to skate for life.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A childhood skater for 10 years, Leticia McMahan said, “I fell short of my gold medal goal when I stepped away for career, marriage and family. Adult skating didn’t exist then.”

When her daughter, Ashley, took a group lesson and got hooked, McMahan returned, after a 24-year hiatus. “Relearning the basics was harder than learning them the first time. Ashley and I joked that we’d take our senior moves together some day.”

In 2019, that joke became a reality. At 57, McMahan passed senior moves in the field (50+), and her 20-year-old daughter passed the test standard. McMahan said, “We’re both currently working on pre-gold dances. I would not have predicted this journey, but feel blessed to have good health and to enjoy the ice with my daughter.”

CLIMBING THE LADDER

The Dutch Waltz is the first test for many, and David Tsai passed it at 42. Tsai said, “At that time, gold dances were not



David Tsai

even in my sight.”

With great diligence, Tsai surprised himself 17 years later when he completed the adult gold dance test (50+) at 59. Tsai cites his dance partner, Lisa Chisholm, as the one who “gives me the motivation to continue to work hard.” Though he is currently off the ice, Tsai aspires to return. “I’m fighting lymphoma. Once I’m cancer free, I’ll ‘get up’ and be back on the ice.”

PASSION AND PERSISTENCE

Passing a gold medal test requires time and dedication. With four gold medalist tests to her name, Mayumi Yamamoto knows a thing or two about longevity.

At 56, Yamamoto passed senior moves in the field (adult 21+). Less than a year later, she returned with a bigger goal. “I passed standard senior moves. So many people asked me why I was doing it. I was determined to do it!” Though she has accomplished a lot, Yamamoto said her work is not done. “I would like to pass the adult gold dance test. Ice dance is like a totally new sport, and very hard for me.”

Plenty of future gold medalists find themselves faced with the challenge of retrying a test. This was the case for Mary Saylor, who, at 52, passed the adult gold moves-in-the-field test (adult 21+). Saylor said, “I had taken the test almost a year earlier and got a retry. I worked on it hard until I tested again.” During her skating journey, Saylor has fought a rare disease called acromegaly and also had brain surgery for a pituitary tumor. Saylor said she is now in remission and much healthier, and her next goal is to pass her pre-silver dances.

Though the process can be frustrating and stressful, the ultimate reward is worth it in the end. “Perseverance is very important,” Saylor said.



Mayumi Yamamoto

TACKLING NERVES

Having the ice to yourself can be nerve-racking. Yamamoto said, “During my adult gold free skate test, I did a beautiful Axel, which I’d been struggling with. I missed the next jump—a Lutz—due to the excitement ... ha!”

For many, feeling prepared can help ease nerves.

Wayne Hundley is a national-level judge in singles, pairs and synchronized skating, but he also knows how it feels to be out there for a high-pressure test. At 54, Hundley passed adult gold moves in the field (adult 21+). He remembers the experience as “a major sense of accomplishment in achieving the highest level in a skating discipline, and a total relief as well.” Next, at 56, he passed adult gold solo dance (adult 50+). Hundley is working toward more goals and said that his “ultimate bucket list item would be to pass gold dances with a partner.”

His advice for others? “Video yourself. You can be your best and worst critic, and you learn a lot from watching your own skating. Watch from the viewpoint of, ‘if I were judging this test, do I think it’s worthy of passing?’ Work your strengths. Perfect the moves you do well to hopefully outweigh those that are less so.”

For more information on testing, visit usfigureskating.org/adultskating



Leticia and Ashley McMahan

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THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE

Skating in college can open minds and hearts

BY KAILYN GETER

Growing up, my eyes always looked for the ice skaters who looked like me. I was constantly in awe of their grace, expressions and body movements while competing, making everything look so effortless.

At my first U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships in 2015, I remember watching Moji Igun on the University of Michigan's collegiate team and thinking to myself that collegiate skating was something that was possible for me.

When I was accepted and started my collegiate skating journey, I was ecstatic to join a team that encourages inclusivity and cultural appreciation. And as I continued my path during my four-year collegiate skating experience, I began to realize that it wasn't just Michigan's team but collegiate skating nationally.

Collegiate skating is about embracing skaters at every level and allowing them to do something that they love: skate. For Black skaters especially, representation throughout collegiate skating has been an important aspect in promoting the continuation of skating during college for other Black skaters.

Victoria Clarke, a former Skyliners junior member and Cornell intercollegiate skater, said, "As a black figure skater it is undeniable that not many women look like me within the sport, and when I was younger that was difficult. But as a college athlete I understand how my differences give me power and allow me to bring something fresh

to the skating perspective. This perspective drives my desire to serve as a role model and foster new growth in figure skating, even as my time as a competitor ends."

While many Black collegiate skaters do not always get to have teammates who are the same skin color, there is an overall welcoming nature to the division. The camaraderie that is developed as a result of being college students striving toward amazing career paths allows us to share some of our interests.

As collegiate skaters, we are also provided opportunities to grow outside of the sport. For many Black skaters that could be in the form of sororities, academic clubs and community-based organizations that promote the success of Black college students. The culmination of these extracurricular opportunities allows collegiate skaters to increase the inclusivity and diversity of the sport as a whole.

Imani Rickerby and Jasmine Snead, both former University of Maryland collegiate synchronized skaters, created their company, Aurora Tights, after they experienced the lack of an adequate choice in costume designing, including tights and mesh. They have also been integral in leading topics on diversity and inclusion and continue to grow their brand.

Additionally, there are collegiate skating alumni who stay involved in the sport in other aspects. In the synchronized skating community, Blair Bryant, an alumna of Michigan State University, has continued in the sport as a community coordinator for

Aurora Tights company owners Imani Rickerby, bottom left, and Jasmine Snead, bottom right, with skaters and dancers of color who took part in their #performincolor campaign



Alexandra Lambert, left, and Kailyn Geter joined the same sorority on different college campuses and found a bond of sisterhood beyond their competitive spirits.

Get It Called, a social media platform that promotes synchronized skating, and has combined her degree in sports media with her passion for advocating on diversity.

After graduating, Scheherezade "Sherrri" Redmond, an alumna of Western Michigan University, became a judge and data/video operator for multiple disciplines in figure skating and noted that collegiate skating helped her with her organizational skills even as an official today.

As collegiate skating continues to grow and evolve, my hope is that younger Black skaters will continue their skating careers past high school. Just as I had once looked up to Moji on the University of Michigan team, I hope that younger skaters will look up to all of the other great Black collegiate skaters.

Increasing diversity in sports allows us to not only become better skaters but better people. It allows us to understand distinct perspectives, cultures and lifestyles through a different lens as we continue to grow as professionals in the world. And while my time as a collegiate skater is coming to an end, I will always use my power of perspective to advocate for diversity and inclusion for skaters everywhere.

Kailyn Geter is scheduled to graduate this spring with a Bachelor of Science in psychology. She's the treasurer of her sorority and a 2020 U.S. Figure Skating collegiate ambassador.





SKATING

KIDS ZONE

PUZZLES BY
TAYLOR DEAN

Answers on page 64

GO FIGURE

BY GENE BROWNING



L A E A N E R A S N A E L R O
 D E N L I S S L D E R V M S A
 B U T T O N N A F A W T J C N
 A E F S T P T N O I P M A H C
 G T S B R A D I E R I U E O O
 L L I A O O O M I D X N K L B
 Y A O B U M T L G B B T D A T
 A A Y E L B B U B C Y O L S C
 B R G B N A I K B S U S A T T
 H K A W A R P O E I Z C M I D
 A O U N V C C J H A R R L C U
 Z S R B B H K H S R T T O I E
 F I G U R E S K A T E T N H B
 C K R T S I L A D E M Q I O F
 Y E E X U Q C I C N O S P G C

WORD SEARCH

Hi skaters! Try to find and circle the listed words hidden in the box of letters. The words will appear in a straight line in any direction (up, down, forward, backward or diagonally), and some words may overlap and share letters. Find them all and you'll be on top of the medal podium!

- BRADIE
- BUBBLE
- BUTTON
- CHAMPION
- CONTRIBUTORS
- FIGURE SKATE
- LAYBACK
- MEDALIST
- ORLEANS ARENA
- SCHOLASTIC

KIDS SPOTLIGHT

MEGAN BORAWSKI

Age: 15

Hometown: St. Louis

Club: St. Louis SC

Level: Pre-juvenile moves in the field

Coach: Joy Elder

How I got started: When I was 13, I went to the rink with my friends and fell in love. Within a week, I signed up for Learn to Skate USA lessons and have been working hard at skating ever since.

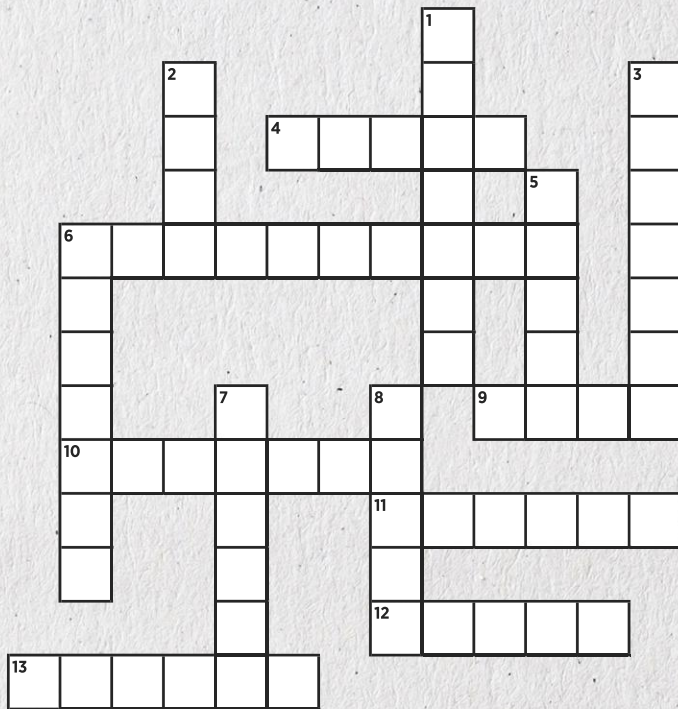
Favorite moves: Cannonball spin, double Salchow

Favorite skaters: Mariah Bell, Starr Andrews

Goals: To keep the passion alive and pass my novice free skate and senior moves in the field within the next few years.

Hobbies: Shopping, caring for my pets and watching movies with friends





ACROSS

4 2014 Hall of Fame inductee Al _____ put U.S. Figure Skating into the computer age.

6 In 2021, U.S. Figure Skating is celebrating its _____ anniversary.

9 The _____ Boom generation is defined as

people born from 1946 to 1964 (post World War II).

10 Zachary _____ and ice dance partner Madison Hubbell won their third U.S. title in Las Vegas.

11 The _____ Age of American Skating began around 1947 and lasted until the U.S. World Team plane crash in 1961.

12 _____ Andrews is the recipient of the inaugural Mabel Fairbanks Skatingly Yours award.

13 Karen Chen captured the _____ medal at the 2021 Toyota U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

his fifth consecutive U.S. title in dominating fashion.

3 Siblings Karol and Peter _____ won five U.S. pairs titles, a World title and a silver medal at the 1952 Olympics.

5 The new pairs team of _____ Knierim and Brandon Frazier earned the gold medal at the 2021 U.S. Championships.

6 The Ice _____ debuted in 1940 and became an institution with the Ice Follies for decades to come.

7 The 1948 Olympic Winter Games were held in St. _____, Switzerland.

8 The city of Las _____ was chosen to host the 2021 U.S. Championships because of COVID-19 considerations.

DOWN

1 Gretchen Van Zandt _____ won six consecutive U.S. titles in the 1940s.

2 Nathan _____ secured

If you would like to be featured in the KIDS Spotlight, email your information to tdcan@usfigureskating.org and include action and nonaction skating photographs of yourself. Include in your submission your name, address, home phone number (not for publication) and U.S. Figure Skating member number. Complete as many of the categories that you see printed in the KIDS Spotlight as you want, and we might feature you.

KIDS SPOTLIGHT

OLIVIA TROW

Age: 8

Hometown: North Charleston, South Carolina

Club: FSC of Charleston

Level: Pre-preliminary moves in the field

Coach: Andrea Waddell Dickerson, Katie Ross

How I got started: I started Snowplow Sam classes and fell in love with figure skating.

Favorite moves: Catch-foot spiral, camel spin

Favorite skaters: Mariah Bell, Yuzuru Hanyu

Goals: To land my Axel and raise awareness for Type 1 Diabetes (I was diagnosed November 2020).

Hobbies: Playing piano, singing, swimming and riding roller coasters





Emily and Alexander Dunford are enjoying life together with their children, daughter Hannah and her big brother, Nathaniel.

BUSY WORKING MOM

Former ice dance star thriving with family, career

BY LOIS ELFMAN

Life is sweet for Olympic and World competitor, U.S. and World Junior ice dance champion Emily Samuelson Dunford. On Jan. 11, she and husband Alexander Dunford welcomed daughter Hannah, joining older brother Nathaniel, born July 2019.

Dunford, 30, grew up in Michigan, but her parents were originally from New Hampshire. They returned about a decade ago and are now living in the home that her father helped his father build decades earlier.

She remained in Michigan for skating and to attend the University of Michigan. Although she missed her family, she had great friends and then met her future husband.

“Eventually, Alex and I realized that we

wanted to make the geographic change and come to New England,” Dunford said. “We knew we were getting married. We knew we wanted to start a family. It made sense.”

In 2018, she and Alexander, a writer, moved to Boston, living in the Back Bay area for about a year. They married in October 2018 in Newport, Rhode Island, and moved to New Hampshire in June 2019.

“New Hampshire is similar to Michigan in that there are a lot of outdoorsy things to do,” Dunford said. “We’re close to the ocean — only about an hour’s drive to get to a good beach. We’re in the mountains for hiking and skiing. It’s very beautiful; the nature is just incredible. We live in an area of New

Hampshire called the Lakes Region. ... It’s a gorgeous area to be on the lakes and live a peaceful life.”

Before the pandemic, Dunford spent a lot of time with her parents, who live about 30 minutes away from her. They were devoted grandparents and loyal babysitters, which allowed Dunford and her husband to get date nights and even take day trips. At the start of the pandemic, they didn’t see her parents for several months, but as Hannah’s birth approached, they shifted into bubble mode.

“We all started very seriously quarantining,” Dunford said. “My husband and I haven’t been inside a store since the beginning of October. We’ve just done grocery pickup and

deliveries. My parents did the same. Taking all the precautions we possibly could.

“Starting in the late fall, we did some practice runs with Nathaniel staying overnight at their house, since we knew that when I went into labor, they’d be watching him.”

Dunford is a wealth planner with Ballentine Partners, which has an office approximately seven minutes from her house. Like many Americans, she began working from home in March 2020. Her company provided support to successfully transition, including technology and personal support to make sure everyone was able to work productively.

Her experience as an elite athlete has helped her navigate the transition to working virtually while also caring for her son.

“It’s helped me stay calm and kind of constant and more levelheaded during this difficult time,” Dunford said. “With skating, you learn perseverance and the ability to adapt to any situation that might pop up, especially when they’re less than ideal.

“You go to competitions and you’re jetlagged. The rink is freezing cold and the ice is harder or softer than what you might be used to skating on at home. You keep going, hour by hour. You do the best you can, and you get through. It’s been a similar mentality, day by day, during the pandemic.”

Dunford’s interest in skating began at age 5 when her family traveled to Switzerland. She saw a little girl skating on an outdoor rink and asked to try. When the family returned to the U.S., her parents signed her

Emily Samuelson and Evan Bates earn the silver medal at the 2009 U.S. Championships in Cleveland.



up for skating lessons.

“I fell in love with it and never really stopped,” she said.

Her first try at ice dancing came when she was about 9. By the time she was 10, she’d teamed with Evan Bates. After incredible success on the junior circuit, they successfully transitioned to the senior level, earning three podium finishes at the U.S. Championships, a spot on the U.S. team at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and a top-10 finish at Worlds.

“I loved traveling and competing in new places,” Dunford said. “It was so much fun to see our hard work pay off year after year. It was really thrilling.”

They developed persistence. A terrible injury during the free dance at the 2007 World Junior Championships was followed by a spectacular comeback and victory at 2008 World Juniors.

Among her fondest skating memories are, of course, those from the Olympics. Also, competing in the charming environment of Oberstdorf, Germany, where she and Bates competed two or three times. She treasures her friendship with Rachael Flatt, her competition roommate. Dunford even appreciates training moments. One time, the power went out, but she and Bates ran their program under emergency lights with musical accompaniment from a coach’s phone.

Dunford had begun her studies at the University of Michigan while she was still training. When she decided to stop competing following the end of her partnership with Bates and a season with Todd Gilles, Dunford focused her attention on her studies.

“I missed skating, but I found a good rhythm with my classes in structuring my day, kind of similar to how it was structured when I would go to the rink and train. That helped me fill my time and move forward,” said Dunford, who stayed connected by coaching.

Her interest in personal finance, which her father cultivated, began in her teenage years. When she began earning prize money on the Junior Grand Prix circuit, her parents allowed her to keep 25 percent of what she received. After earning her bachelor’s degree in 2013 in international studies, she investigated how to get into the wealth management industry and joined a team at Merrill Lynch, where she learned the basics.

“I earned my certified financial planning designation, which really broadened my horizons in terms of what I could do in wealth management and wealth planning,” Dunford said. “When Alexander and I decided to make that geographic change to the East Coast, I made the decision that rather just being a financial advisor and helping people with their investments, I wanted to be a financial planner and look at all the aspects of



Samuelson and Bates take in the moment with coach Yaroslava “Yasa” Nechaeva at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver.

a person’s financial situation to give them the best advice.”

That led her to Ballentine Partners. Her position as a wealth planner includes working with clients on all the non-investment aspects of their financial lives. This includes thinking strategically about estate planning, tax planning, philanthropy and charitable giving, insurance and the family dynamics that come with wealth.

“I get to really see the impact that I’m making in our clients’ lives, and no two days are ever the same,” Dunford said.

She hopes to do a bit of coaching at a local rink near her home, but the pandemic and having two little children have put that on hold. At present, she serves on two U.S. Figure Skating committees: the dance development and technical committee and the finance committee. Moving forward, she could see herself becoming a technical specialist.

There are certainly aspects of being a competitive athlete that she’s applied to her career, such as discipline, hard work and perseverance. She also appreciates working in teams.

“Most important is the desire to continue to learn and to keep improving,” she said. “That was always an important part of being an athlete. You want to continue to do better and better. Not necessarily to take first place at every competition, but you want to see yourself improve year after year. That mentality and drive continues. I always find myself wanting to learn more.”

THE ROLE OF THE SPORTS DIETITIAN

BY CARRIE APRIK (MS, RDN, CSSD) AND DANA SIVAK (MS, RDN, CSSD, LDN)
(U.S. FIGURE SKATING CONSULTING DIETITIANS)

Coaching teams commonly comprise of different individuals with expertise in jump technique, skating skills and choreography. Similarly, an athlete's sports medicine team should consist of professionals who can properly support the athlete's physical and mental health and performance goals.

Athletic trainers, physical therapists, physicians, psychologists, registered dietitians and strength and conditioning coaches all have unique specialty training and are equipped to provide optimal, interdisciplinary care and identify and refer when specialty care is needed. Further, the medical team can advise and support the coaching staff. Finding the right sports medicine team, both from credential and personality standpoints, is critical for establishing a productive partnership.

Registered dietitians are the recommended nutrition practitioners used by U.S. Figure Skating. These professionals have *RD* or *RDN* after their name, having completed a four-year college degree and an accredited internship program, passed a national certification exam and participating in yearly continuing education. RDs are considered food and nutrition experts who provide research-based recommendations, while adhering to strict professional ethical standards. The term *nutritionist* is broader; it refers to anyone who self-identifies as having nutrition knowledge. Thus, there are no official requirements to use that title. RDs may call themselves nutritionists, but not all nutritionists can call themselves RDs.

RDs can further specialize in working with athletes. A board-certified specialization in sports dietetics (CSSD) is considered the premier professional sports nutrition credential in the United States. This indicates an RD who has completed a specific amount of sports-specific experience and passed an additional exam, which must be retaken every five years. An RD, CSSD can work with athletes to enhance performance, optimize body weight and composition, manage medical issues such as injuries, anemia, or disordered eating behaviors, and navigate the safety, legality and effectiveness of nutritional supplements. To find an RD, CSSD in your area, visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' website and use the "Find an RD" search tool (<https://findanrd.eatright.org/>).



In alignment with U.S. Figure Skating's mission and values, coaches should aim to create and cultivate opportunities for their athletes' participation and achievement in figure skating, all while inspiring a lifelong passion for skating. Hiring an RD, CSSD to educate skaters in a group setting or organizing an interactive cooking class are ways a coach can support these aims.

It is also the role of coaches to recognize when an athlete may be struggling with proper nutrition and needs referral to an RD for individualized care. By doing so, they can continue to develop strong relationships with health care providers in their area, while fostering a positive training environment.

Issues related to nutrition and body weight can be difficult, sensitive situations that must be handled with extreme care. U.S. Figure Skating's SafeSport Program has identified specific areas related to body weight and nutrition that skaters, coaches and parents should recognize. As stated in the current edition of the SafeSport Handbook, physical misconduct is defined as physical contact with a minor athlete or participant that intentionally causes or has the potential to cause the minor athlete or participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury.

Included in the examples of physical misconduct are non-contact offenses that may include "prescribed dieting or other weight-control shaming (e.g., public weigh-ins, caliper tests for humiliation purposes, encouraging disordered eating behaviors, or failure to act or intervene upon discovery of an eating disorder)." Both contact and non-contact offenses are strictly prohibited and considered to be reportable offenses.



U.S. Figure Skating registered dietitians Dana Sivak (above) prepares an example of a fueling smoothie at home, while Carrie Aprik (left) makes recovery snacks for athletes at the 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang.

Questions may be directed to safesport@usfigureskating.org.

Nutrition continues to be at the forefront of U.S. Figure Skating's education objectives. A two-year nutrition curriculum has been devised to share up-to-date information on nutrition and sports performance, and was launched at the inaugural 2020 High Performance Development Camp. Curriculum topics include fueling for optimal performance, coach and parent roles in supporting healthy fueling strategies, nutrition considerations during growth and development, nutritional periodization, and prevention and treatment of disordered eating.

Additionally, as part of this education curriculum, various athlete-inspired recipes and videos have been created. This content and additional nutrition-related resources can be viewed on the Members Only website. Click on the top left menu bar. Go to Skater Journey and click on Training, and then Sports Science and Medicine.

Lastly, the U.S. Figure Skating nutrition team has developed a new continuing education course through the Professional Skaters Association for coaches to complete as part of their yearly coach compliance requirements. Nutrition education for athletes, parents and coaches is continuously evolving, with the goal of effectively reaching all members of the U.S. Figure Skating community.

March is National Nutrition Month! Be on the lookout this month for more recipe videos on U.S. Figure Skating's social platforms. When you cook one of these recipes, be sure to tag [@usfigureskating](https://www.instagram.com/usfigureskating).



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60th ANNIVERSARY

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Joan Mickelson
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John LeFevre,
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Brenda Hicks
Sonya Dunfield
Denise Beaumont
Peggy Fleming
Beth Hubbell

Audrae Gillespie
Kansas City FSC
Gayle Glennon
Debby Putnam
Coach Ron Kravette
The Broussard Family
Kansas City FSC
Kansas City FSC members
Barb Gahager and Bob Mock
Bridgette Pfeufer
The Skating Club of Boston
The Annis Family
Jimmy Scholdan
Fran Diamant
Gale Tanger
Deveny Deck
Slave Uchitel
Ellen Thompson
Kristi Yamaguchi
Carol Guazzo

IN SUPPORT OF

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Dennis Eck
Sonia Bianchetti
Tony Tantillo
Jason Brown
Dawn Elmer
Mary Goldblatt
Tony Tantillo
**Caroline Green
and Michael Parsons**
Faith S. Kirk
Michelle Kwan
Cornelia Wu

**SYNCHRONIZED SKATING
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Betty Garvin
Kathy Gibson

IN MEMORY OF

Missy Dalgarn
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Adriana Dunn
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Tai Babilonia
Karen I. Raines
Margie Bell
Nadine and Margie Bell
**Inaugural U.S. Figure Skating
DEI Task Force**
The Baker Family

ACCARDO

Leighton Heming Accardo, a member of the Copper State SC in Gilbert, Arizona, passed away on Nov. 24, 2020, after a courageous battle with cancer. She was 9.

Leighton was a member of the club for the last four years. She loved being on the ice as both a figure skater and hockey player. The Arizona Coyotes of the NHL signed Leighton to a contract for Hockey Fights Cancer in 2019. She got to take part in the ceremonial face-off before one of the Coyotes' games.

She was an amazing friend, committed teammate, an exceptional student, a beloved granddaughter, a cherished niece, and one of the brightest stars the world has ever seen. Leighton fought her cancer with true grit and tenacity and she never let it keep her down or define her. She never wanted sympathy or for people to feel sorry for her. In her eyes, she was just like any other kid.

"She was such a natural and always skated from the heart and with a huge smile," Copper State SC said of Leighton in a Facebook post. "We will always remember her huge bright smile, her fierce competitive nature, and her sweet, kind heart. Our world has lost an amazing little person. We love you Leighton, and will miss you always."

She is survived by three siblings, Larson, Lee Anne and Locke; and her parents Carly and Jeremy Accardo.



CLOUTIER

Molly S. Cloutier, matriarch of a combined family of 16 children, a competitive synchronized skater and a hospital volunteer, died Nov. 13, 2020, in her home in Buffalo, New York. She was 97.

She was a longtime member of the Buffalo Skating Club, where her husband served as president from 1958 to 1959. Molly was a member of the Hot Fudge Sundaes, which won the bronze medal at the 1988 U.S. Precision Championships in Reno, Nevada.

Molly raised a large family of skaters, including Sara Burke Potter, a gold medalist and U.S. Figure Skating coach for more than 35 years; she currently teaches at the Amherst Skating Club in Amherst, New York.

Born Molly Scully in Boston, she came to



Buffalo with her family in 1939 and attended Bennett High School for her senior year. Following her first day of classes, she met F. Brendan Burke when he stopped at the home of a mutual friend to make a phone call. They began a correspondence after she and her family moved back to Boston, where she worked as a private secretary. They continued writing while he served in the Navy in World War II. When he returned, they were married in 1946.

Mr. Burke became vice president of Ferguson Electric Construction Co., oversaw the electrification of the Niagara Power Project and was a civic leader. After he died in 1968, Burke's Green, a small park with a fountain at Beard and Wesley avenues in Buffalo's Central Park neighborhood, was dedicated in his memory.

Molly was a single mother to her 11 children until 1972, when friends introduced her to Dr. Louis C. Cloutier, a widower and father of five. They merged their large households when they were married the next year.

She was a longtime volunteer with the Seton Guild and for many years worked in the gift shop at the former Sheehan Memorial Hospital. She also was a parishioner at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. She loved singing and birds, especially cardinals. Known for her hospitality and generosity, Molly often said that her blood type was "be positive."

Dr. Cloutier, a surgeon who served as Erie County medical examiner and president of the medical staff at Sheehan Hospital, died in 2012.

Survivors include six daughters, Mollie Burke, Sara Potter, Madeline Burke-Vigeland, Margaret Burke, Deirdre Goodrich and Mary Alyssa Burke; five sons, F. Brendan Burke Jr., Christopher Burke, John Burke, Edward Burke and T. Patrick Burke; three step-daughters, Anne Montgomery, Mary Jo O'Connell and Clare Cloutier; a step-son, Michael Cloutier; 30 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

COMBERGER

Jack Comberger, a national-level pairs competitor and professional coach, died of cancer on Oct. 9, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio. He was 73 years old.

Jack was born on Feb. 28, 1947, in Cincinnati, and attended the University of Cincinnati. He and his sister, Linda Comberger-Martens, competed in junior pairs at the U.S. Championships. Jack was the first U.S. Figure Skating college scholarship recipient for the



Midwestern Section in 1965. He was also a triple gold medalist in pairs, dance and figures.

After his competitive career, Jack coached professionally for more than 40 years at Queen City FSC, FSC of Cincinnati, Hershey FSC and Keystone FSC.

Jack helped many students pass gold medal tests. Throughout his career, his goal was to make skaters their best, and he made a difference in each life he touched.

KOZOL

Eleanor (Kenney) Kozol, 88, passed away on Dec. 9, 2020, in Raleigh, North Carolina. She was predeceased by her husband Eugene Kozol and is survived by her sons Michael and John Kozol.



Born and raised in Binghamton, New York, Eleanor learned to skate as a young girl on a local pond with her father who was proficient in basic figures. Weak ankles and a distaste for cold temperatures stopped her from skating, but did not diminish her love of the sport.

She attended numerous performances of Ice Follies and Ice Capades before attending her first U.S. Championships in 1989 in Baltimore with her son, Michael. She and Michael attended every U.S. Championships from 1991 in Minneapolis to 2015 in Greensboro. They also attended four World Championships, two Skate Americas, numerous performances of the World Professional Figure Skating Championships, the Tom Collins tour and Stars on Ice. The Stars on Ice cast dubbed her "The Bread Lady" after she gifted them with homemade banana bread following many of the performances she attended.

Eleanor was a charter member of Friends of Figure Skating and enjoyed attending events where she could meet and talk with skaters and coaches. She also loved collecting autographs. She started her autograph parchments in 1997 in Nashville and continued through the 2016 World Championships in Boston. Eleanor became known in the skating community as "The Parchment Lady" after a jumbotron interview with Rusty Kath at the 2011 U.S. Championships in Greensboro. In addition to autographs, she collected numerous friends over the years, including journalist Christine Brennan who said that "it wasn't officially nationals until I got to see Eleanor. There was no more loyal fan of the sport."

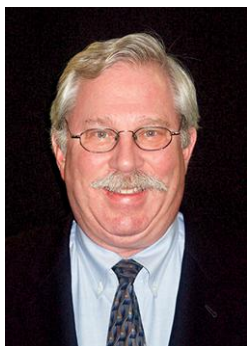
Outside of skating, she was an active member of her church and the Legion of Mary, and enjoyed reading cozy murder mysteries,

playing cards and watching Turner Classic Movies. She was as big a fan of the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame (her husband's and son John's alma mater) as she was of skating.

Contributions can be made in her memory to the U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund.

LEFEVRE

(obituary as appeared on Dec. 23, 2020, in the Colorado Springs Gazette)



John Frederick LeFevre, age 78, died on Dec. 19, 2020, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He was born in Troy, Ohio, on Jan. 16, 1942, to Virginia Forward LeFevre and Frederick Campbell LeFevre.

John studied piano from an early age, and it was the beginning of his lifelong love of music. When he entered high school, his parents became interested in figure skating as a result of the newly constructed Hobart Arena in Troy. John skated briefly until leaving for Williams College in 1960.

After graduating from Williams in 1964, he enrolled in George Washington School of law in Washington, D.C. He completed his studies, earning his J.D. in 1967. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1967, attended Officers Candidate School, and served on the USS Guam during the Vietnam War.

After serving for four years, he returned to Washington, D.C., where he passed the bar and began a 36-year career at the Federal Trade Commission.

Throughout his life, John's primary interests were music and figure skating. He sang in various church choirs and choral groups, both in Washington and Colorado.

Inspired by his parents, John pursued his love of figure skating, ultimately reaching world and Olympic-level judge. He was the president of the Washington Figure Skating Club, and later, after retiring from the Federal Trade Commission, he was asked to be the executive director of U.S. Figure Skating and moved to Colorado Springs in 1998. After retiring from U.S. Figure Skating, he became president of the Broadmoor Skating Club.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Linda J. LeFevre, and daughter, Sarah P. LeFevre.

RUSSELL

Ralph Gene "Butch" Russell, the founding president of Thoroughbred FSC and known to local skaters as "Mr. Butch," died on Dec. 6, 2020, of pancreatic cancer. He was 71.

Born in Georgetown, Kentucky, and

raised in the small town of Pineville, Kentucky, Butch achieved success as a football player in high school and at Morehead State University, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees.

When

Butch's daughter, Katie, began skating lessons at Lexington Ice Center in the 1980s, there was no skating club in Central Kentucky. He wanted to help his daughter reach the ultimate goal of becoming a gold medalist. In 1989 he founded the Thoroughbred FSC, aiming to create a supportive club that would sustain over time. Butch attended Governing Council as a club delegate and served as national chairman for Bluegrass State Games and vice president of the South Eastern Great Lakes Council, which he helped establish.

While leading the club, Butch discovered another void: judges. "This was a sport his daughter loved," said his wife of 48 years, Meloney Russell, also a judge. "He wanted to learn as much about it as he could." Butch began trial judging in 1991 and earned his gold singles and pairs appointment in 2004.

Though Butch never skated, he made a lasting impact on the sport. "He was critical in bringing the Eastern Great Lakes Regional Championships to Kentucky for the first time in 2007, in Louisville," fellow judge Sharon Carey said. "He was always ready to support other clubs, whether they needed an official or his instructions on building a judges' stand."

As an official, Butch's favorite role was referee. "It was probably his greatest enjoyment," Meloney said. "He wanted to run a smooth, well-organized competition."

Longtime Thoroughbred FSC member Jeff Buchanan recalled, "He was my favorite competition referee. He was tough and fair."

While the local community will miss Butch's sense of humor and thick Kentucky accent, he'll be remembered most for his dedication to his family and passion for skating.

"Butch's commitment didn't end when his daughter became a double gold medalist and retired from the sport," Thoroughbred FSC President Ben Logan said. "Right up until Butch's cancer diagnosis, he and Meloney were on the road at least one weekend a month judging tests and competitions. Even after his diagnosis, Butch insisted on completing his judging certifications for this season. He was a good man — one of the best — and there won't be another like him."

Butch is survived by Meloney; his daughter, Katie (Matt) Riley; and grandchildren Russell and Lillian Riley.



WEHRLI

Hazel Wehrli, a volunteer and former board member with the Skokie Valley SC, passed away on Jan. 13, 2021, in Arlington Heights, Illinois. She was 90 years old.

She was an ice dancer, participated on a synchronized skating team, taught learn to skate lessons, performed in the club's annual ice shows and helped run its test sessions. She skated twice a week until age 82. Hazel also sewed costumes for skaters and enjoyed trips to the U.S. Championships with her friends.

Hazel was born on Oct. 25, 1930, in Aberdeen, Scotland, to Christian "Teetsie" and Montague Forbes. The family emigrated to the greater Chicago area while she was an infant. Hazel attended New Trier High School, graduated with honors from Northwestern University as a registered nurse, and spent years training at Duke University.

Hazel took a crash-course in German and moved to Basel, Switzerland, to continue nursing. There, she fell in love with Ernst Wehrli. They lived in Switzerland for six years, and had their first child, Heidi. Hazel became homesick and moved the family to Wilmette, Illinois, where they had their second child, Monty. The couple also adopted two children, Peter and Susi.

She was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, had a passion for gardening, cooking, keeping a beautiful home, ice skating with family and traveling.

After a loving marriage of 28 years, the family lost Ernst to an untimely passing, prompting Hazel to return to nursing to provide for her family. After retiring, she worked at the before-school program at Romona Elementary School, taking care of children. She knitted more than 10,000 hats for Chicagoland newborns.

When her twin grandsons Alex and Zack were born, Hazel was a very involved "Grams." She taught them how to bake and cook, took them to Chicago's many museums and shows, and traveled with them to Idaho and Scotland. She tended daily to her garden.

After being diagnosed with dementia in 2013, Hazel moved from her home of 50 years to Hearstone Assisted Living at Lutheran Home.

Hazel is survived by her son Peter (Annette) Wehrli, daughter Susi Wehrli (Kevin) McLaughlin and grandsons Alex and Zack Thompson and Owen and Jack McLaughlin.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Chicago Botanic Garden <https://www.chicagobotanic.org/donate>.



STILLWELL



Morry Stillwell, president of U.S. Figure Skating from 1995 to 1998, passed away on Dec. 25, 2020. He was 93 years old. He resided in Fallbrook, California, with his wife, Elda, a national accountant; and daughter, Lisa, a national competitor in junior and senior dance.

He served as an official for U.S. Figure Skating since 1951. He was an active national singles, pairs and Showcase judge, national singles, pairs and Showcase referee, silver dance judge, novice dance competition judge and nonqualifying singles technical controller.

As president of U.S. Figure Skating, Stillwell helped the organization sign its most lucrative television contract — a 10-year, \$100 million extension with ABC in 1997. Under the contract, ABC purchased U.S. Figure Skating television and marketing rights to broadcast the U.S. Championships, Skate America, one fall event and one spring event every season from 1998 to 2007.

In 1995, Stillwell, as a U.S. Figure Skating ISU Management Committee member, along with federation members from Canada, France, Japan and Germany, united, in joint venture, as an international business group to develop and submit to the ISU Management

Commission a plan to combine five international, prestigious and existing events into an on-going series and further introduced the concept of a series final. This group became known as The Grand Prix Group.

The ISU Management Commission accepted the plan in 1996. The five-member Grand Prix Group increased to six with the addition of an international event from Russia. These six members were appointed to the ISU Management Commission.

The Series is known as the ISU Champions Series. Now in its 26th year, it is indeed a prestigious series with worldwide television exposure and an opportunity for individual skaters to earn prize money. In 1997 a junior series was launched. Morry served for five years, eager to develop international figure skating within the ISU community that envelops all federations.

Stillwell led U.S. Figure Skating into the Internet age, as it joined America Online, which at the time provided the “fastest- growing commercial bulletin board” in the United States.

Morry started his skating career as a roller skater in the late 1940s in his hometown of Everett, Washington, competing at three nationals and was appointed a gold dance roller judge.

In 1950, he switched to ice dancing and moved to Southern California to escape the rain. He met Elda on an ice dance session. His competitive skating was put on hold, however, as he was inducted into the U.S. Army-Korea conflict and sent to Redstone Arsenal Ordnance, Huntsville, Alabama; and Cape Canaveral, Florida, Missile Project as TDY (Temporary Duty Travel). Prior to discharge, he

and Elda married. She continued to compete in dance. Morry started the Rocket City Roller Club in Huntsville, as there were no ice rinks.

After discharge, Morry took the path to judging, refereeing and committee service. He chaired the Membership Committee, Eligibility Committee, Competitions Committee, Long Range Planning Committee and served as Pacific Coast vice president.

He was a team leader at the 1992 Albertville Winter Olympics in Albertville, France; for Special Olympics World Winter Games in PyeongChang, South Korea, in 2013; and at the 1982 World Junior Championships in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

Working for clubs and skaters was his passion. He served as president of the All Year FSC and the Los Angeles FSC. At the Los Angeles FSC, he introduced Showcase as a new skating discipline and held special competitions. Years later, U.S. Figure Skating got on board. Great decision!

His last official duty was as a member of the board of directors for the North County FSC in Escondido, California, having just completed a full term as club president.

May he never be forgotten. May his deeds live on and memories never lost.

Services were held at Miramar National Cemetery in San Diego on Jan. 14, 2021. Donations may be made to the Los Angeles FSC Morry Stillwell Memorial Fund on the Los Angeles FSC donation page (<https://www.lafsc.org/>), or the U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund, 20 First Street, Colorado Springs, CO, 80906.

TESTS PASSED

SENIOR MOVES IN THE FIELD

Lucas Appel — Panthers FSC
 Josie Buescher — Metro Edge FSC of Missouri
 Alana Cadoff — SC of Northern Virginia
 Kyra Chai — SC of San Francisco
 Sam Chen — Yale FSC
 Katerina Cristo — FSC of Cincinnati
 Isabel Dame — Wheaton FSC
 Dalila DeLaura — SC of New York
 Melania Delis — All Year FSC
 Samuel Devroye — Columbia FSC (Md.)
 Lillian Drenski — Cleveland Ice Storm
 Dawn Dupere — SC of Boston
 Holly Ebner — Pittsburgh FSC
 Mina Esfandiari — Washington FSC
 Taylor Ferguson — Colonial FSC
 Caroline Figaro — Gardens FSC of Maryland
 Paige Greenstein — SC of New York
 Rebecka Hakansson — Ann Arbor FSC
 Kendall Harman — All Year FSC
 Rayhana Hashemi — Peninsula SC
 Abygale Howard — Cleveland Ice Storm
 Kimberly Huckabee — Colorado SC
 Giana Jung — SC of New York
 Katrina Kallas — Wisconsin FSC
 Runa Kamiya — Washington FSC
 Nina Kang — Richmond FSC
 Ashley Kao — Vaca Valley FSC

Isabelle Kirkman — Murray Silver Blades FSC
 Claire Kroell — Colorado SC
 Amanda Langer — St. Louis SC
 Ethan Le — Colorado SC
 Garrett Lee — Highland SC
 Lauren Lee — Panthers FSC
 Angelina Luttieri — SC of New York
 Berlin Mossak — St. Paul FSC
 Sophia Mascialino — SC of New York
 Hadley Miles — FSC of Park City
 Emmerson Old — Panthers FSC
 Isabella Olson — St. Joseph FSC
 Gianna Pauly — Chicago FSC
 Claire Qu — ISC of Indianapolis
 David Race — Tidewater FSC
 Eliza Rhodehamel — FSC of Madison
 Alexandra Rudnitsky — Wisconsin FSC
 Annaliese Schultz — Pittsburgh FSC
 Valerie Shen — Hershey FSC
 Jenna Shilts — Great Lakes FSC
 Katerina Sicard — Essex SC of NJ
 Lily Sorensen — Onyx-Suburban SA
 Lauren Spilker — Peaks FSC
 Evie Stuckey — Chicago FSC
 Jodi Tang — Essex SC of NJ
 Julianna Taylor — Onyx-Suburban SA
 Isabella Thompson — Connecticut SA
 Skylar Urfrigg — FSC of Southern California

Alexandra Walsh — Northern Ice SC
 Alicia Wang — Central Carolina SC
 Olivia Wang — Los Angeles FSC
 Victor Williams — Pittsburgh FSC
 Ada Wu — Hudson-Mohawk FSC
 Jocelyn Zhang — All Year FSC
 Melinda Zhang — Coyotes SC of Arizona
 Ava Zubik — Panthers FSC

ADULT GOLD MOVES IN THE FIELD - ADULT 21+

Janelle Anderson — North Shore SC
 Kristin Barber — Florida Everblades FSC
 Tatyana Clark — Wasatch FSC
 Jodi Culver — Winterhurst FSC
 Krista Fish — Colorado Springs SC
 Ann Marie Miller — Pittsburgh FSC
 Megan Rowe — Charlottesville FSC

SENIOR FREE SKATE

Mariia Alieva — ION FSC
 Lisa Borzilleri — Los Angeles FSC
 Danielle D'Amours — SC of Boston
 Victoria Gustafson — St. Joseph FSC
 Fiona Junger — Kansas City FSC
 Sarah Lachenmeyer — Bolton FSC
 Celeste Lee — Murray Silver Blades FSC
 Nicole Madden — Individual

TESTS PASSED

Danielle Mazo — Lake Minnetonka FSC
Jaedyn Oren — Pines FSC
Isabelle Phillips — Cottonwood Heights FSC
Alexandra Smith — Washington FSC
Jordan Talty — North Shore SC
Grace Walton — SC of Wilmington
Amy Yang — Illinois Valley FSC

GOLD DANCE

Maya Devkota — Central Virginia SC
Callie Drozd — Washington FSC
Emily Johnson — Wisconsin FSC
Amy Li — St. Peters FSA

Jennifer Menikotz — Thomas Creek FSC
Dakota Rogers-Myers — SC of New York
Ryleigh Roman — Wisconsin FSC

SOLO GOLD DANCE

Cheri Donnelly — SC of Morris NJ
Carolyn Fei — SC of Morris NJ

SENIOR FREE DANCE

Catherine Gooch — Dallas FSC

SENIOR SOLO FREE DANCE

Jaclyn Cartwright — Coyotes SC of Arizona
Katie Champion — Los Angeles FSC

Jacqueline Conant — Broadmoor SC
Kayluh Derzy — Coyotes SC of Arizona
Aunika Hoch — Cottonwood Heights FSC
Lisa Hoshijima — Cottonwood Heights FSC
Hailey Hultberg — FSC Of Park City
Jessica Jasie — Thomas Creek FSC
Mara Miller — Metro Edge FSC of Missouri
Grace Moyer — Penguin FSC
Justice Petry-Lebo — SC of Northern Virginia
Courtney Phillips — All Year FSC
Madeleine Shaw — Lincoln Center Skate Club
Ava Thompson — Philadelphia SC & HS

RESULTS

2021 TOYOTA U.S. FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS THE ORLEANS ARENA, LAS VEGAS NV, JAN.9-21

Competition officials: Samuel Auxier, Judy Blumberg, Gretchen Bonnie, Kathaleen Cutone, Jeffrey DiGregorio, Allison Duarte, Lori Dunn, Alexander Enzmann, Wendy Enzmann, Lisa Erle, Joshua Fischel, Lynn Goldman, Robert Horen, Laurie Johnson, Hannah Katz, Adrienne Koob-Doddy, Kathleen Krieger, Hal Marron, Elyse Matsumoto, Colin McManus, Gerald Miele, John Millier, Alexandria Newman, Lorrie Parker, Michael Ricigliano, Sharon Rogers, Katherine Specht, Kanae Tagawa, Gale Tanger, Thomas Tanger, Sharon Watson, Doug Williams, Denise Williamson, Carol Wooley

Championship Ladies

Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Bradie Tennell, 232.61, 1, 1
2. Amber Glenn, 215.33, 5, 2
3. Karen Chen, 214.98, 4, 3
4. Alysa Liu, 213.39, 2, 4
5. Mariah Bell, 199.95, 3, 5
6. Lindsay Thorngren, 178.89, 6, 7
7. Audrey Shin, 176.82, 10, 6
8. Gabriella Izzo, 171.76, 7, 9
9. Rena Ikenishi, 169.89, 8, 8
10. Pooja Kalyan, 157.46, 9, 12
11. Finley Hawk, 152.84, 14, 11
12. Starr Andrews, 152.13, 17, 10
13. Gracie Gold, 149.05, 12, 13
14. Emilia Murdock, 138.80, 15, 14
15. Violeta Ushakova, 136.26, 16, 15
16. Heidi Munger, 136.05, 13, 16
17. Hanna Harrell, 130.72, 11, 17

Championship Men

Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Nathan Chen, 322.28, 1, 1
2. Vincent Zhou, 291.38, 2, 2
3. Jason Brown, 276.92, 3, 4
4. Yaroslav Paniot, 266.97, 4, 3
5. Maxim Naumov, 244.20, 5, 5
6. Jimmy Ma, 230.78, 6, 8

7. Tomoki Hiwatashi, 230.14, 9, 6
8. Camden Pulkinen, 220.10, 7, 9
9. Eric Sjoberg, 213.39, 11, 10
10. Dinh Tran, 210.79, 10, 11
11. Aleksei Krasnozhan, 206.76, 16, 7
12. Joseph Kang, 203.45, 8, 14
13. Joonsoo Kim, 197.12, 13, 12
14. Ryan Dunk, 192.66, 14, 13
15. Jordan Moeller, 191.33, 12, 15
16. Peter Liu, 171.18, 15, 16
17. Mitchell Friess, 163.07, 17, 17

Championship Pairs

Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Alexa Knierim/Brandon Frazier, 228.10, 1, 1
2. Jessica Calalang/Brian Johnson, 205.29, 2, 3
3. Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy LeDuc, 200.52, 4, 2
4. Audrey Lu/Misha Mitrofanov, 197.97, 3, 4
5. Emily Chan/Spencer Howe, 177.06, 5, 5
6. Olivia Serafini/Mervin Tran, 169.88, 6, 6
7. Katie McBeath/Nathan Bartholomay, 163.73, 7, 7
8. Laiken Lockley/Keenan Prochnow, 145.24, 9, 8
9. Evelyn Grace Hanns/Jim Garbutt, 140.93, 8, 9

Championship Ice Dance

Pl. Name, TS, RD, FD

1. Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue, 224.56, 2, 1
2. Madison Chock/Evan Bates, 222.93, 1, 2
3. Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker, 212.55, 3, 3
4. Caroline Green/Michael Parsons, 192.39, 4, 4
5. Molly Cesanek/Yehor Yehorov, 177.40, 5, 5
6. Lorraine McNamara/Anton Spiridonov, 162.86, 6, 6
7. Eva Pate/Logan Bye, 154.93, 7, 7
8. Livvy Shilling/Alexander Petrov, 131.10, 8, 8
9. Hilary Asher/Ryan ODonnell, 122.68, 9, 9
10. Breele Taylor/Tyler Vollmer, 100.76, 10, 10
11. Cara Murphy/Joshua Levitt, 96.91, 11, 11

Junior Ladies

Pl. Name, TS, FS, SP

1. Isabeau Levito, 187.48, 2, 1
2. Kanon Smith, 185.88, 1, 2
3. Clare Seo, 173.51, 3, 3
4. Ava Ziegler, 160.77, 4, 8
5. Elsa Cheng, 158.85, 5, 7
6. Kate Wang, 158.01, 6, 4
7. Adele Zheng, 149.89, 10, 6

8. Mia Kalin, 148.17, 8, 10
9. Jessica Lin, 147.57, 9, 11
10. Abigail Ross, 143.89, 11, 9
11. Tamnhi Huynh, 140.17, 12, 5
12. Maryn Pierce, 138.92, 7, 12

Junior Men

Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Eric Prober, 192.83, 3, 1
2. Joseph Klein, 187.30, 4, 2
3. Samuel Mindra, 181.49, 8, 3
4. Jacob Sanchez, 177.55, 1, 6
5. Daniel Martynov, 176.45, 6, 5
6. Lucas Broussard, 175.49, 12, 4
7. Matthew Nielsen, 172.30, 5, 7
8. Michael Xie, 163.84, 11, 8
9. Liam Kapeikis, 162.89, 9, 9
10. Robert Yampolsky, 160.85, 7, 10
11. Nicholas Hsieh, 152.99, 10, 11
12. Maxim Zharkov, 141.27, 2, 12

Junior Pairs

Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Anastasiia Smirnova/Danil Siianytsia, 169.85, 1, 1
2. Isabelle Martins/Ryan Bedard, 148.02, 2, 2
3. Valentina Plazas/Maximiliano Fernandez, 137.26, 4, 3
4. Catherine Rivers/Timmy Chapman, 134.01, 5, 4
5. Sydney Cooke/Keyton Beringer, 131.39, 3, 5
6. Aleksandra Prudsky/Daniel Tioumentsev, 119.38, 6, 6
7. Haley Conrad/Kristofer Ogren, 97.32, 8, 7
8. Juliette Reed/Jordan Gillette, 94.74, 7, 8

Junior Ice Dance

Pl. Name, TS, RD, FD

1. Katarina Wolfkoston/Jeffrey Chen, 167.22, 1, 1
2. Oona Brown/Gage Brown, 162.91, 2, 2
3. Katarina DelCamp/Ian Somerville, 147.30, 3, 3
4. Isabella Flores/Dimitry Tsarevski, 146.40, 4, 4
5. Angela Ling/Caleb Wein, 140.47, 5, 5
6. Leah Neset/Artem Markelov, 128.02, 6, 6
7. Elizabeth Tkachenko/Alexei Kiliakov, 124.55, 7, 7
8. Elliana Peal/Ethan Peal, 109.73, 9, 8
9. Vanessa Pham/Jonathan Rogers, 109.66, 8, 9
10. Gracie Vainik/Daniel Brykalov, 104.07, 10, 10

APPOINTMENTS

Bronze Singles Test Judge

Michelle Marvin, Haverford, Pa.; Jill Plough, Evansville, Ind.

Silver Singles Test Judge

Sonia Avila, Irving, Texas; Suzanne Lee-Trejo, Rochester, Minn.; Jessica Wolenc, Madison, Wis.

Gold Singles Test Judge

Olivia Molina, Chicago, Ill.

Nonqualifying Announcer

Janice Cantor, Charlotte, N.C.; Moira Colquhoun, Morristown, N.J.; Lynn Stone, USAF Academy, Colo.; Alan Williams, Beaver Dam, Wis.

THANK YOU

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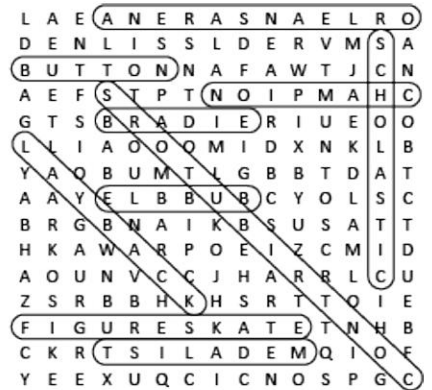
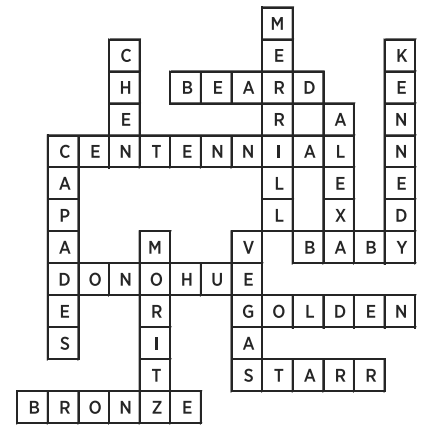
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