



MARIA & EVGUENI BOROUNOV
2007 SENIOR ICE DANCE NATIONAL
CHAMPIONS OF AUSTRALIA

MIRIAM MANZANO
6-TIME SENIOR LADIES
NATIONAL CHAMPION
OF AUSTRALIA

FOCUS ON

ACT • SOUTH AUSTRALIA • WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PART TWO ON OUR HISTORY OF FIGURE SKATING IN AUSTRALIA

aussie SKATES

FIGURE SKATING DOWNUNDER

FEATURING

FOUR CONTINENTS • WORLD JUNIORS
• RESULTS & TEAM PROFILES • THE
HALL OF FAME • CATCHING UP WITH
MARIA & EVGENI BOROUNOV • MIRIAM
MANZANO: SKATING'S COMEBACK
QUEEN • PERRY MEEK: FASHION ON ICE
• ICE CASTLES TURNS 30 • THE IMPERIAL
ICE STARS: CINDERELLA WITH A TWIST
• FRANCES McMAHON: ARTISTRY ON ICE

Winter 2008



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Welcome

In this issue, **aussieSKATES** continues its look at the history of figure skating in Australia. Part two will focus on the sport's impact and influence in the Australian Capital Territory, South and Western Australia.

Skaters to emerge from here include former national men's champion and world team member, Perry Meek, five time national junior men's champion, Sean Abram, six time national senior ladies' champion, Miriam Manzano, the 2007 national dance champions, Maria and Evgeni Borounov, and many others.

As part of the lead-up to the World Championships in Gothenberg, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand sent four men, three ladies and two dance couples to the ISU Four Continents Championships in Goyang City, Korea.

This event was used by both associations as the official qualifying competition, where the top team members in each category, ladies, men and dance, would continue on to Europe in March.

The World Junior Championships in Sophia, Bulgaria would also be exciting for our team members, as all four (two singles men and women) are making their championship debut. This competition could very well be the start of a journey that sends them to Vancouver in 2010 and beyond.

We review the DVD, Ice Castles, a skating favourite celebrating it's 30th anniversary, the Imperial Ice Stars' dazzling new production of Cinderella on Ice, and catch up with masters skater, and talented illustrator / graphic designer, Frances McMahon.

Last but not least, **aussieSKATES** joins the youtube family where you can watch recent and past skating performances from Australia and New Zealand. Check out our new website at:

www.youtube.com/aussieskates

aussieSKATES welcomes your feedback.

So why not contact us at:

aussieskates@yahoo.com.au



In this candid interview with **aussieSKATES**, the husband and wife team talk about their drive, determination and love for the sport.

Catching Up With MARIA & EVGENI BOROUNOV

When did the two of you first discover skating?

EVGUENI: When I was 4 my parents took me to the ice rink like every other parent in Russia would do, and from then on I developed my love for skating. Of course when the kids start skating they don't really realise whether they want to do it as a career or just for fun, but with "consistent help" of coaches and parents, children soon enough realise that figure skating is not just fun, it is a lot of tears and sweat and more tears. Unfortunately, not many survive this school and quit before they even know it.

MARIA: When I was about 10 I found myself extremely bored. I was determined to be good at something, so I made a list of all the things I wanted to try. I had things like Ballroom Dancing, Ice Skating, Horse Riding etc. Then when I turned 11 I went skating for my Birthday and that was the end of my list. I didn't need to try anything else. I enrolled that day into the next term of Aussie Skate and things just progressed from there.

How old were you when you began taking lessons?

EVGUENI: As soon as I stepped on the ice. The Russian Soviet system of figure skating is

based on the group lessons from the very young age, so out of, let's say, 30 kids in the first year 20 will be kindly asked to try something else, the other 10 will move on and in the end out of 100 we might get 5 (if we're lucky). The will to achieve and stand out of the crowd is the main motivation in Russia, since if you are boring and not progressing fast enough, the coach will simply ignore you.

MARIA: I had just turned 11. Pretty old by anyone's standards but I just didn't care. I knew it was too late to start, so I tried to make up for all the lost time by working as hard as possible.

When I was 12 I convinced my mum to let me have one day of school off every week, so I could have an extra skating session. From the very beginning I skated every session possible: private or public.

Who are your coaches / trainers?

EVGUENI AND MARIA: In Russia we are being coached by Evgueni's old coach Svetlana

Alekseeva and her daughter Elena Kustarova, but when we are skating in Perth we have to rely on ourselves, our video camera and a lot of determination to continue.

Did you have any idols growing up?

EVGUENI: As a kid, I guess, everybody's trying to look up to someone. I think I

would call it more "admiration" instead of "having an idol" and hoping "to be like that person". I was always tried to stay true to myself and find my own way of skating. Nevertheless, it was always a pleasure to watch other

famous skaters on TV and dreaming of becoming like them.

MARIA: When I was growing up I looked anywhere for inspiration. I tried deliberately seek out people who had overcome adversity, poverty and criticism to become a success. I had many disadvantages, so I needed more than one person to remind

me that success is always possible, even in the most unlikely circumstances. I tried not only to remind myself of their result, but also of all the hard work, determination and sacrifice they put in to get there. Therefore, whenever I was feeling lazy, tired or weak I could push myself.

What made you choose ice dance over singles or pair skating?

EVGUENI: I was skating as a free skater until I was 11, doing all doubles, double axel and occasional triple, but my major enemy was inconsistency. In Russia it's quite simple: if you don't do a few triples by the time you're 11 or 12 you're a lost cause and you might as well try pair skating (if the girl is midget enough and the guy can take down a kitten from the tree without a ladder) or ice dancing. But in the past few years ice dancing changed radically, and now is completely different from what it was in 80s or even 90s. Now there are more couples, more competition, more qualifying rounds in comparison to old times. The new judging system is pushing ice dancing to the new heights by introducing levels for the elements, making ice dancing much harder than it was before.

MARIA: When I started skating with a private coach she gave me some video's

"In Russia it's quite simple: if you don't do a few triples by the time you're 11 or 12 you're a lost cause and you might as well try pair skating . . . or ice dancing. But in the past few years ice dancing changed radically, and now is completely different from what it was in 80s or even 90s."

Evgueni Borounov

of skating. One of the video's was World's '94 and on there was Grishuk and Platonov's Free Program. After seeing that I loved Ice Dancing, but because there were no coaches and no partners I never pursued it. More than anything I wanted to skate and if free skating was the only way I could do it, I was prepared to go that way. When I was 16 I badly injured my knee. I dislocated the patella and seriously damaged all the tissue behind the patella and the meniscus. We went to a lot of physios, doctors etc. Anything you can think of, we did it. However, no matter what I tried it wouldn't heal. Clearly, if I wanted to skate again I had to take my chances with surgery. I went to one highly regarded sports doctor who told me I wouldn't be able to skate competitively again because the damage was too great. I didn't like him very much, so I kept searching for a doctor who would do the surgery but that was hopeful I could recover to my pre-injury condition. Finally, I found someone. I came back after one year off the ice. It was a hard road back, especially since my knee never came back to the way it was. Nevertheless, against the odds I made it back to skate competitively

again. However, in 2002 about three weeks before Evgeni and I got married I was in a collision with a boy on the ice and I hurt it again. Another surgery wasn't an option because there wasn't any tissue left to remove. I came back again slowly but when I tried to jump my knee just couldn't hold me. The only choice if I wanted to keep skating was to change to Ice Dancing. Luckily, I just happen to have a spare Ice Dancing husband.

How did the two of you meet?

EVGENI: Once upon a time a little boy Evgeni came to Australia and was brought to Perth to train for the upcoming Nationals with a Russian coach Andrei Filippov. At the ice rink he met a girl named Maria. They soon became a couple and from then on they lived happily ever after.

MARIA: At skating of course. Evgeni came to Perth to have lessons with Andrei Fillipov.

"My mental preparation for a competition really only consists of me visualising our programs in my mind. I try to do this as often as possible in the hope of gaining some confidence and comfort with what I have to do."

Maria Borounov

When I walked into the rink my friend came up to me and said, 'the Russian guy is here'. Evgeni had just come off the ice and was sitting in the corner of the rink, I turned around to see what my friend was talking about, and just like skating straight away I knew I was interested. Two years later we were married.

How different is training and skating in Russia from Australia?

EVGENI: The Australian laidback attitude is killing a lot of talented kids. Unfortunately, they'd rather go to a birthday party than come and skate an

extra session to perfect some element and work on something else. I've seen some talented kids who were taking this sport as a weekend "fun" (the word I truly hate in this context). Not everyone understands that skating is like any other job, hard and painful and many kids quit before the real work begins. In Russia, the aim to achieve

and rise above the average people, to stand out in the crowd is the driving force in the sport. The opportunity to make something out of yourself and your life is the main key to determination. Once you are ready to put in 10 times more than you expect to get back, then you can have a chance to make it somewhere. Of course not everyone is destined to be an Olympic Champion but to look back and say "I achieved this much" is quite a pleasure when you're old and understand: you seized the moment.

MARIA: The biggest difference is the number of other ice dance couples we get to train with. You'll be surprised how much your own skating improves simply because your training with other ice dancers. Also, the sessions are structured a bit differently. If you're an ice dancer your training sessions only contain ice dancers and because you're all working on similar dances the training sessions run more smoothly and effectively.

How many hours a week on and off the ice did you train preparing for competition?

EVGENI AND MARIA: In order to prepare for the competition we're trying to get as much practice as possible. Unfortunately,

Catching Up With Maria & Evgeni Borounov

the competition season in Australia is upside down, after coming back from an international competition we must compete locally in order to qualify for Nationals, so basically we're skating as much as we can and at anytime we can. And of course we must remember that on the top of that we are working 7 days a week to support our endeavour. Tough love.

What sort of mental preparation do you do, if any?

EVGUENI: Well I guess every sports person have its quirks and I guess I'm not an exclusion. Therefore, in order not to look like a mental patient, I'll keep my mental preparation to myself, hahaha...

MARIA: My mental preparation for a competition really only consists of me visualising our programs in my mind. I try to do this as often as possible in the hope of gaining some confidence and comfort with what I have to do.

Have you ever skated in character? If so, could you tell us about it?

EVGUENI: Every program I'm trying to portray some character, to show the emotions that I think are suitable to the

particular piece of music.

MARIA: No not really.

What is your favourite kind of music to skate to?

EVGUENI: I like to skate to the very powerful music that can attract everybody's attention and make them want to watch. And of course I must like the music myself, because I have to skate to it for the whole year, day in day out (hahaha). I don't see much of the point to skate to some forgettable melody that with the same success can be played at the pub as a background-peanut-consuming music.

MARIA: My favourite kind of music to skate to is music that is powerful and captivating.

What is your proudest competitive achievement?

EVGUENI: I can only hope it didn't happen yet.

MARIA: My proudest competitive achievement so far is Four Continents 2006. Four Continents in 2006 was my first international competition. I'd never skated in such a big arena, with television camera's everywhere and against the best couples in the world.

It's an understatement to say that I was scared. However, I'm proud because Evgueni and I rose to the challenge and without a coach we got out there and skated close to our best.

What are your ultimate skating goals?

EVGUENI: I guess everybody would use the most popular answer and say in one voice "Go to the Olympics.... and the World Peace (hahaha)", but in reality it is quite hard to achieve and a bit silly to think this far ahead, because you never know what's around the corner. I think about one competition at the time.

MARIA: I think it's bad luck to look too far ahead. I also think that you never know what's going to happen tomorrow, so I always try and stay focused on what I want to achieve in the immediate future. Therefore, right now my skating goals are to skate to the best of my ability at Four Continents 2008.

Team Profiles

Ice Dance

Maria Borounov &
Evgueni Borounov
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Jay Adell

Maria Borounov & Evgueni Borounov

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Date of birth: | May 14 th , 1982 / June 10 th , 1979 |
| Home town: | Perth |
| Profession: | Full-time athletes |
| Hobbies: | reading, movies / music, computers |
| Coaches: | Elena Kustarova, Svetlana Alexeeva |
| Started Skating: | 1993 / 1984 |
| Club: | Cockburn Ice Arena |
| Choreographers: | Elena Kustarova |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 107.52 |
| Compulsory Dance: | |
| 2006 Four Continents | 18.18 |
| Original Dance: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 34.93 |
| Free Dance: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 54.81 |

2008 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships

Team Profiles

Ladies' Singles
Phoebe Di Tommaso
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Jay Adelf

Men's Singles
Nicholas Fernandez
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Jay Adelf

Ladies' Singles
Morgan Figgins
(New Zealand)



Photo Credit: NZSA

Men's Singles
Robert McNamara
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Jay Adelf

Phoebe Di Tommaso

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Date of birth: | July 26 th , 1990 |
| Home town: | Brisbane |
| Profession: | Student |
| Hobbies: | shopping, cooking, running |
| Coach: | Liz Cain, Gloria Pracey |
| Started Skating: | 1995 |
| Club: | Macquarie Ice Skating Club Sydney |
| Choreographers: | Liz Cain, Chris Hall |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2007 Four Continents | 92.92 |
| Short Program: | |
| 2007 Four Continents | 34.05 |
| Free Skating: | |
| 2007 Four Continents | 58.87 |

Nicholas Fernandez

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Date of birth: | May 8 th , 1990 |
| Home town: | Sydney |
| Profession: | Student |
| Hobbies: | Figure skating |
| Coach: | Sharryn Hollins |
| Started Skating: | 1998 |
| Club: | PVFSC Sydney |
| Choreographers: | Slav Baboshyn |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 109.77 |
| Short Program: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 41.14 |
| Free Skating: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 68.63 |

Morgan Figgins

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Date of birth: | March 29 th , 1992 |
| Home town: | Dunedin |
| Profession: | Student |
| Hobbies: | Swimming, beach |
| Coach: | Fanis Shakirizianu |
| Started Skating: | 1998 |
| Club: | Dunedin SC |
| Choreographer: | Fanis Shakirizianu |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2007 JGP Sofia Cup | 74.98 |
| Short Program: | |
| 2007 World Juniors | 34.69 |
| Free Skating: | |
| 2007 JGP Sofia Cup | 48.23 |

Robert McNamara

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Date of birth: | August 18 th , 1987 |
| Home town: | Willow Vale |
| Profession: | Student |
| Hobbies: | Figure skating |
| Coach: | Collin Jackson, Anthony Liu Ekaterina Borodotova |
| Started Skating: | 1993 |
| Club: | Iceworld FSC |
| Choreographer: | Ekaterina Borodotova |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 102.23 |
| Short Program: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 32.42 |
| Free Skating: | |
| 2008 Four Continents | 69.81 |

2008 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships

Team Profiles

Ice Dance

Danielle O'Brien & Gregory Merriman
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Susan D. Russell

Men's Singles

Tristan Thode
(New Zealand)



Photo Credit: Iry Adefi

Ladies' Singles

Tina Wang
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Iry Adefi

Men's Singles

Joel Watson
(New Zealand)



Photo Credit: Iry Adefi

Danielle O'Brien & Gregory Merriman

Dates of birth: February 2nd, 1990 / October 3rd, 1988
Home town: Sydney
Profession: Students
Hobbies: swimming, scuba diving, music, being with friends / sport, motor sport, drifting, beach
Coach: Monica McDonald
Started Skating: 1997 / 1992
Club: Sydney FSC
Choreographers: Monica McDonald
Personal Best Total Score: 121.86
2008 Four Continents
Compulsory Dance: 21.73
2006 JGP Chinese Taipei Cup
Original Dance: 37.82
2006 JGP Chinese Taipei Cup
Free Dance: 63.16
2008 Four Continents

Tristan Thode

Date of birth: Christmas Day, 1983
Home town: Auckland
Profession: Student
Hobbies: pool, computer games, reading
Coach: Viacheslav Kuznetsov
Started Skating: 1991
Club: Auckland Figure Skating Club
Choreographers: Marina Kudriavtseva
Personal Best Total Score: 115.99
2008 Four Continents
Short Program: 42.16
2008 Four Continents
Free Skating: 74.50
2006 Four Continents

Tina Wang

Date of birth: December 13th, 1991
Home town: Brisbane
Profession: Student
Hobbies: reading, being with friends, travelling
Coach: Chang Yuan Wang, Hui Ma
Started Skating: 1998
Club: Iceworld Figure Skating Club
Choreographers: Hui Ma, Tina Wang
Personal Best Total Score: 94.28
2008 Four Continents
Short Program: 35.77
2007 World Juniors
Free Skating: 63.71
2008 Four Continents

Joel Watson

Date of birth: March 5th, 1986
Home town: Baltimore, USA
Profession: Full time athlete
Hobbies: car restoration, pool, friends
Coach: Tracey Poletis
Started Skating: 1995
Club: Auckland Figure Skating Club
Choreographers: Alexander Kirsanov
Personal Best Total Score: 112.04
2007 Four Continents
Short Program: 40.56
2007 Four Continents
Free Skating: 74.01
2008 Four Continents

2008 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships

Event Overview



Now in its tenth year, the Four Continents Championships is an annual figure skating competition. Developed by the International Skating Union, the event benefits skaters from non-European countries with a competition comparative in rank and structure to the European Figure Skating Championships. Skating for prize money in men's and ladies singles, pairs and dance, nations making up the four continents include the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia.

Skaters such as the 2006 World Pairs' Champions, China's Qin Pang & Jian Tong, along with their compatriot, Chenjiang Li, the 2001 Four Continents Men's winner, have competed in the event since its inception exactly one decade ago.

97 athletes took part in 2008.

This year, Team Australia fielded two ladies, two men, and two dance couples. New Zealand was represented by two men and one lady. Neither country entered a pair team.

Australia's National Ladies' Champion for 2008, Joanne Carter, who was scheduled to compete, accepted a 12 month contract to skate with **Holiday On Ice** in Europe instead. Sean Carlow, the current Men's Champion of Australia, withdrew due to injury, but won a medical bye to the World Championships based on previous results.

The Dance Championship

Dance was divided into three parts; the Yankee Polka was drawn as the compulsory pattern. After round one, the 2008 National Champions, Danielle O'Brien and Greg Merriman were 11th, and the 2007 Champions, Maria and Evgeni Borounov, stood in 13th.

A folk or national dance was chosen for round two. O'Brien and Merriman took an innovative route. Reminiscent of Isabelle and Paul Duchesney's famous African Savage Rites which they skated at the 1988 Olympic Games, the young couple used Koori Tribal Music and costuming as their theme. With that, they moved up one place to tenth. Maria and Evgeni also skated well, placing 11th in this section.

For the free dance, O'Brien and Merriman took advantage of the current ABBA craze, performing to selections from **Mamma Mia**. They finished the championship in 10th, a very promising international debut for the young couple. The Borounovs, placing 11th in the free dance, also

skated a personal best to Edvin Marton's violin interpretation of Romeo and Juliet.

The Men's Championship

The men's event was a tense battle for a spot on the world team between Joel Watson and Simon Thode. In 2006, Thode won New Zealand's lone spot to skate at the World Championships. Last year, Watson defeated Thode at this event for a place in Tokyo at the 2007 World titles.

Following the short program, Thode stood 14th to Watson's 19th. Over seven points separated the two skaters. In the free program and skating to the film soundtrack, **300**, Watson defeated Thode by one place. Thode skated to Haendel's Suite in D Minor. However, both skater's combined totals meant that Tristan Thode, finishing in 14th would be heading to the World Championships in Malmo, Sweden.

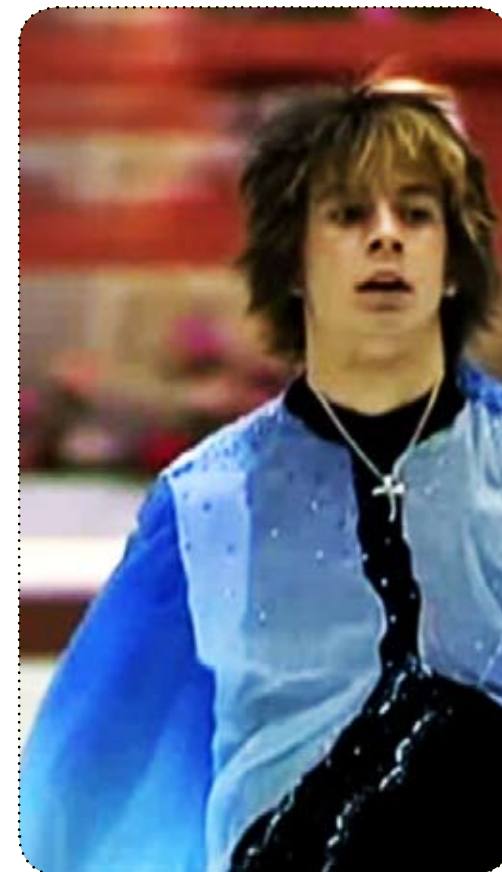
Team Australia's Robert McNamara (performing a lively routine to **West Side Story**) and Nicholas Fernandez (skating to **Exotica** from Cirque Du Soleil), both earned personal best scores at this event.

The Ladies' Championship

Australia's Ladies' representative at the World Championships in March would be determined by the outcome of this event. With Joanne Carter no longer a factor, the National runner-up, Tina Wang, faced off against third place finisher, Phoebe Di Tommaso. New Zealand was represented by the National silver medallist, Morgan Figgins.

In the short program, Di Tommaso immediately put herself out of contention, missing several key jump elements. Both she and Figgins did not make the final.

Other than flipping out of a triple salchow, Wang skated a good free program. Performing to Vanessa Mae's **Turandot**, the young athlete skated with confidence, fluidity and grace. Popular with the capacity crowd, she finished the event in 19th.



2008 Four Continents Figure Skating Championships

Results

Pairs' Champions
Qing Pang &
Jian Tong
(China)



Photo Credit: Reuters

Ladies' Champion
Mao Asada
(Japan)



Photo Credit: Reuters

Men's Champion
Daisuke Takahashi
(Japan)

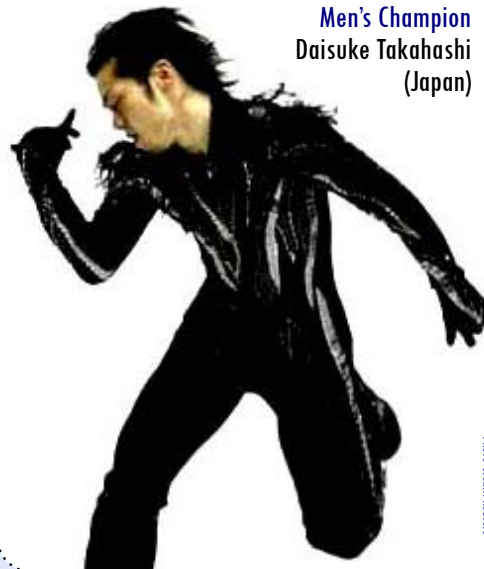


Photo Credit: Reuters

Dance Champions
Tessa Virtue &
Scott Moir
(Canada)

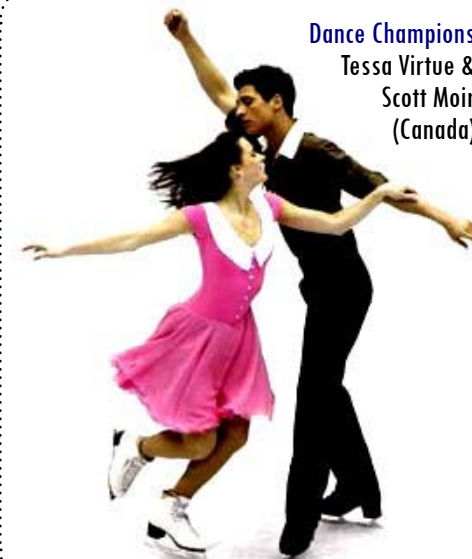


Photo Credit: Reuters

| Pairs' Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Qing Pang & Jian Tong | CHN | 67.70 | 119.63 | 187.33 |
| 02 Dan Zhang & Hao Zhang | CHN | 70.45 | 111.39 | 181.84 |
| 03 Brooke Castile & Benjamin Okolski | USA | 56.44 | 103.55 | 159.99 |
| 04 Rene Inoue & John Baldwin | USA | 57.40 | 98.60 | 156.00 |
| 05 Jessica Miller & Ian Moram | CAN | 54.88 | 94.36 | 149.24 |
| 06 Jiaqi Li & Jiankun Xu | CHN | 53.26 | 91.27 | 144.53 |
| 07 Mylene Brodeur & John Mattatall | CAN | 52.50 | 88.96 | 141.46 |
| 08 Derick Trent & Tiffany Vise | USA | 45.82 | 88.59 | 134.41 |
| 09 Marina Aganina & Dmitri Zdobin | UZB | 36.82 | 56.95 | 93.77 |

| Ladies' Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Mao Asada | JPN | 60.94 | 132.31 | 193.25 |
| 02 Joannie Rochette | CAN | 60.07 | 119.50 | 179.54 |
| 03 Miki Ando | JPN | 60.04 | 117.59 | 177.66 |
| 04 Na-Young Kim | KOR | 53.08 | 105.41 | 158.49 |
| 05 Mira Leung | CAN | 53.01 | 104.35 | 157.36 |
| 06 Katrina Hacker | USA | 49.86 | 104.00 | 153.86 |
| 07 Cynthia Phaneuf | CAN | 50.63 | 102.04 | 152.67 |
| 08 Ashley Wagner | USA | 47.29 | 105.17 | 152.46 |
| 09 Anastasia Gimazetdinova | UZB | 55.49 | 94.58 | 150.07 |
| 10 Fumie Suguri | JPN | 50.24 | 94.82 | 145.06 |
| 11 Beatrisa Liang | USA | 54.05 | 90.20 | 144.25 |
| 12 Yueren Wang | CHN | 44.69 | 85.19 | 129.88 |
| 13 Binshu Xu | CHN | 49.62 | 78.77 | 128.39 |
| 14 Yan Liu | CHN | 37.33 | 86.76 | 124.09 |
| 15 Melinda Sherilyn Wang | TPE | 45.95 | 73.63 | 119.58 |
| 16 Chae-Hwa Kim | KOR | 46.76 | 69.09 | 115.85 |
| 17 Lorette Hamui | MEX | 34.87 | 65.02 | 99.89 |
| 18 Ana Cecilia Cantu | MEX | 37.10 | 57.66 | 94.76 |
| 19 Tina Wang | AUS | 30.57 | 63.71 | 94.28 |
| 20 Lejeanne Marais | RSA | 29.38 | 65.02 | 90.52 |
| 21 Tamami Ono | HKG | 31.97 | 56.99 | 88.96 |
| 22 Gracielle Jeanne Tan | PHI | 28.50 | 52.38 | 80.88 |
| 23 Charissa Tansomboon | THA | 32.31 | 46.97 | 79.28 |
| 24 Corenne Bruhns | MEX | 28.63 | 48.26 | 76.89 |
| 25 Crystal Wynwynne Kiang | TPE | 28.12 | | |
| 26 Abigail Pietersen | RSA | 27.44 | | |
| 27 Morgan Figgins | NZL | 26.92 | | |
| 28 Phoebe Di Tommaso | AUS | 25.76 | | |
| 29 Siobhan McCall | RSA | 23.40 | | |
| 30 Stacy Perfeti | BRA | 21.97 | | |
| 31 Kristine Y.Lee | HKG | 20.53 | | |
| 32 Tiffany Ting-Ye | TPE | 18.64 | | |

| Men's Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|-----------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Daisuke Takahashi | JPN | 88.57 | 175.84 | 264.41 |
| 02 Jeffrey Buttle | CAN | 83.85 | 150.17 | 234.02 |
| 03 Evan Lysacek | USA | 84.06 | 149.05 | 233.11 |
| 04 Stephen Carriere | USA | 74.08 | 144.22 | 218.30 |
| 05 Jeremy Abbott | USA | 60.87 | 145.53 | 206.40 |
| 06 Chengjiang Li | CHN | 72.25 | 125.73 | 197.98 |
| 07 Vaughn Chipeur | CAN | 70.83 | 125.74 | 196.57 |
| 08 Takahiko Kozuka | JPN | 67.48 | 128.90 | 196.38 |
| 09 Shawn Sawyer | CAN | 60.79 | 126.39 | 187.18 |
| 10 Jialiang Wu | CHN | 64.35 | 118.59 | 182.94 |
| 11 Ming Xu | CHN | 49.08 | 120.09 | 169.17 |
| 12 Kensuke Nakaniwa | JPN | 55.82 | 111.55 | 167.37 |
| 13 Abzal Rakimgaliev | KAZ | 43.17 | 95.71 | 138.88 |
| 14 Tristan Thode | NZL | 42.16 | 73.83 | 115.99 |
| 15 Luis Hernandez | MEX | 39.39 | 72.66 | 112.05 |
| 16 Justin Pietersen | RSA | 36.39 | 74.77 | 111.16 |
| 17 Nicholas Fernandez | AUS | 41.14 | 68.63 | 109.77 |
| 18 Joel Watson | NZL | 35.02 | 74.01 | 109.03 |
| 19 Kevin Alves | BRA | 37.05 | 71.07 | 108.12 |
| 20 Robert McNamara | AUS | 32.42 | 69.81 | 102.23 |
| 21 Humberto Contreras | MEX | 34.20 | 61.30 | 95.50 |

| Dance Event | Nation | CD | OD | FD | Final |
|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Tessa Virtue & Scott Moir | CAN | 38.22 | 65.02 | 104.08 | 207.32 |
| 02 Meryl Davis & Charlie White | USA | 37.36 | 61.93 | 100.16 | 199.45 |
| 03 Kimberly Navarro & Brent Bommembre | USA | 34.36 | 56.67 | 89.62 | 180.65 |
| 04 Jennifer Wester & Daniil Barantsev | USA | 30.95 | 55.44 | 87.98 | 174.37 |
| 05 Kaitlyn Weaver & Andrew Poje | CAN | 30.94 | 54.95 | 88.47 | 174.36 |
| 06 Allie Hann-McCurdy & Michael Coreno | CAN | 29.73 | 50.53 | 83.76 | 164.02 |
| 07 Cathy Reed & Chris Reed | JPN | 27.06 | 49.64 | 81.77 | 158.47 |
| 08 Xiayang Yu & Chen Wang | CHN | 25.61 | 45.60 | 81.77 | 148.19 |
| 09 Xintong Huang & Xun Zheng | CHN | 25.22 | 45.35 | 76.45 | 147.02 |
| 10 Danielle O'Brien & Gregory Herrmann | AUS | 21.26 | 37.44 | 63.16 | 121.86 |
| 11 Jiameimei Guo & Fei Meng | CHN | 20.96 | 36.80 | 54.53 | 112.29 |
| 12 Sun Hye Yu & Ramil Sarkulov | UZB | 22.46 | 33.78 | 53.32 | 109.56 |
| 13 Maria Borounov & Evgenii Borounov | AUS | 17.78 | 34.93 | 54.81 | 107.52 |

Perry (centre) backstage on their
World tour with the Spicegirls

PERRY MEEK

Fashion On Ice

He is often remembered as the athlete who caused one of the biggest upsets in Australian senior men's figure skating. At the 1983 National Championships in Perth, Western Australia, and part of the the 1984 Olympic Winter Games trials, Perry Meek did what many thought the impossible.

Third heading into the free program, the event was also peppered with eager young stars like Stephen Carr and Mark Basto, determined to make their own mark. The hot favourite and defending champion was Cameron Medhurst. But, with nothing to lose, Meek whipped off five easy triple jumps. Medhurst, taken by complete surprise, stumbled, giving Perry the title.

In a controversy similar to Miriam Manzano's non-selection 22 years later for the Torino Olympic team, Meek was overlooked for the more experienced Medhurst. However, when critics cite that golden moment a flash in the pan, as you are about to read, this young man proves he was anything but.

Perry's first memory of the sport was at the (now demolished) ice skating rink on Hindley Street in Adelaide, which the skater declares, was about as big as a shoebox. It is not surprising, that proper training was awkward until the city had a full size ice surface. Then, Perry's involvement in the sport became a lot more fun, the skater adding, however, it got a lot more serious as well. His coaches at this stage were Margaret Harding and Julie Williams. It wasn't long before Meek started competing, specifically on the national level, in 1978.

Soon, he was approached by champion skater and coach, Belinda Coulthard

(now Noonan), with an offer to check out Sydney's skating scene. Once Perry saw that was where all the major talent was concentrated, he knew he had to move there for any chance of success. Therefore, that short visit became a relationship lasting until Meek turned professional.

With a style balancing a mix between solid technical skills & sensitive artistic interpretation, Perry had many idols growing up. These included the 1980 Olympic Champion, Robin Cousins, and the three Brians: Pockar, (the 1982 World Bronze medallist) Orser, (the 1987 World champion) and Boitano (the 1988 Olympic gold medallist).



Perry (wearing a pink bow tie) with fellow competitors at a Pre-Olympic test event dinner in Sarejevo. To his right are Rosalyn Sumners and Scott Hamilton from the USA.

Meek's involvement in his selection of music and choreography, nonetheless, used to drive Coulthard crazy. "I would get bored with music very quickly and want to change it every five minutes," he laughs.

As an amateur, Perry's proudest moments were making the 1984 World Team and in the same year, skating a personal best at the Ennia Challenge in Holland. It was at the latter event that he beat Cameron Medhurst for a second time, but now on an international stage.

Once turning pro, Meek enjoyed the thrill of touring with many different shows in Europe, Canada and the United States. Because, as Meek points out, (they) are certainly the centre of ice entertainment. Also, there were always new cities and

countries to look forward to, and the audiences were always fresh. This, he adds, is very different and a lot more fun than skating in a theme park or casino - based show, where it is very easy to fall into a rut.

In 2002, when the Gay Games were held in Sydney, Perry couldn't resist the challenge of competing; not only in front of an Australian audience, but fun because he remembered performing at the grand opening of the Macquarie Centre. So, the athlete points out, it was like coming full circle.

Perry's advice for skaters starting out in the sport, or considering it as a career, is simple. Work as hard as you can and focus on the job at hand. Block out all of the surrounding negativity and realise that you control the outcome.

When aussieSKATES asked his views on the current Code of Points judging system, Meek said, "It seems like a natural progression, given skating's emphasis on style and presentation."

Learning this, it is not surprising that Perry took many of the elements he learned in skating and took it into a very successful career in costume design.

Going to '84 worlds in Canada, Perry was given a 'whopping' one hundred dollars from the association for his expenses. This not only taught the skater to be resourceful, it inspired Meek to sew his own outfits for the championships (with his interest in design developing from there).

Perry has seen his designs worn by many top skaters, costuming for Elvis Stojko's tour three years running, as well as Champions on Ice. Meek has also designed for Cher, Janet Jackson, Mariah Carey, and most recently, the Spice Girls' world tour. He has also developed his own label.

If you would like to learn more about Perry's clothing line, check out www.aussiegearclothing.com and see what the coming year has in store.

2008 World Junior Figure Skating Championships

Team Profiles

Men's Singles

Cameron Hems
(New Zealand)



Photo Credit: NZSA

Cameron Hems

Date of birth: October 4th, 1990
Home town: Auckland
Profession: Student
Hobbies: speed skating, soccer
Coach: Viacheslav Kuznetsov
 Liudmila Timofeeva
Started Skating: 2002
Club: Glenbain FSC
Personal Best Total Score:
 2008 World Juniors 27.88
Short Program:
 2008 World Juniors 27.88
Free Skating:
 N/A N/A

Ladies' Singles

Cheltzie Lee
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Reuters

Cheltzie Lee

Date of birth: April 21st 1993
Home town: Campbelltown, NSW
Profession: Student
Hobbies: shopping, meeting friends
Coach: Kylie Fennell, Gloria Pracey
 Andrei Filipov
Started Skating:
Club: Sydney FSC
Choreographer: Cameron Medhurst
Personal Best Total Score:
 2007 JGP Vienna Cup 121.21
Short Program:
 2007 JGP Vienna Cup 43.74
Free Skating:
 2007 JGP Vienna Cup 77.47

Men's Singles

Matthew Precious
(Australia)

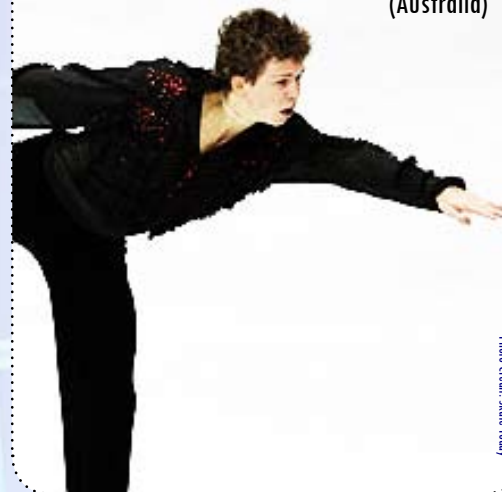


Photo Credit: Skate Today

Matthew Precious

Date of birth: September 14th, 1992
Home town: Perth, WA
Profession: Student
Hobbies: playing the guitar, music
Coaches: Irina Stavrovskaja
 Valentin Kadzoevitch
Started Skating: 1998
Choreographers: Irina Stavrovskaja
 Valentin Kadzoevitch
Personal Best Total Score:
 2007 JGP Vienna Cup 93.96
Short Program:
 2008 World Junior Championships 39.78
Free Skating:
 2007 JGP Vienna Cup 58.65

Ladies' Singles

Alexandra Rout
(New Zealand)



Photo Credit: NZSA

Alexandra Rout

Date of birth: August 6th, 1993
Home town: Auckland
Profession: Student
Hobbies: reading, fishing, shopping
Coaches: Viacheslav Kuznetsov
 Irina Zemanova
Started Skating: 1998
Club: Auckland FSC
Choreographers: Viacheslav Kuznetsov
 Irina Zemanova
Personal Best Total Score:
 2007 JGP Croatia Cup 115.17
Short Program:
 2007 JGP Croatia Cup 43.05
Free Skating:
 2007 JGP Croatia Cup 72.12

The World Junior Figure Skating Championships were launched by the International Skating Union in 1976. Created not only as stepping stone to the rigours and intensity of senior competition, the ISU's aim was to give elite junior skaters an important global championship of their own.

Past winners include World and Olympic Champions, Ekaterina Gordeeva & Sergei Grinkov, Kristi Yamaguchi, Alexei Yagudin, and Evgeni Plushenko. At the very first competition in 1976, the Australian brother and sister pairing of Elizabeth and Peter Cain won bronze in the pairs' event. Also, Stephanie Zhang won a silver medal for her performance in the 2002 ladies' short program behind the eventual winner, Anne Patrice McDonough of the USA.

In 2008, 20 pair teams, 32 dance couples, 47 men and a record 56 ladies skated in Bulgaria.

The Men's Championship

As the new national junior men's champion of Australia, Matthew Precious was skating in his first world junior championship. Performing to music from Bizet's **Carmen**, he had a command of the ice similar to the USA's, Evan Lysacek. Skating a clean short program that included a strong triple toe - loop

/ double toe - loop, Precious earned 39.78 points for his effort. Cameron Hems from New Zealand, skated to Edvin Marton's violin interpretation of **Tosca**. Making his junior championship debut as well, Hems scored 27.88 points.

The Ladies' Championship

Following their encouraging debut seasons on the Junior Grand Prix (JGP) circuit, expectations in Sophia were high for Australia's Cheltzie Lee and Alexandra Rout from New Zealand.

For the second year in a row since 2006 (and key to each skater's success at this event), ISU championships no longer included qualification days. Instead, the singles' events began with the short program.

Thanks to the large number of ladies' entered, judging this round was divided into two parts.

Skaters who had done well on the international circuit, were positioned in the latter group. Both Lee (who was 5th in the JGP Vienna Cup) and Rout (7th in the JGP Croatia Cup) qualified on that basis.

Skating to a popular selection of big band music including **Sing, Sing, Sing** and **Summertime Blues**, Lee attacked all eight required elements with style, speed and confidence. Her jump combination (a triple toe - loop/double toe - loop) and the flying jump sit spin were particularly strong. Getting a score close to her personal best, Lee earned 42.77 points.

Rout, performing to the **War of the Worlds** soundtrack, also skated well. Though choosing the slightly more difficult triple salchow/double toe loop as her combination, the New Zealander had a slight deduction on the second jump. Rout earned 40.70 points for her skate.

Both skaters made the cut for the free program.

The following day, choosing exciting music from the animated film, **Madagascar**, Lee was first of the two skaters to perform. Starting well, Cheltzie landed a strong series of double and triple jumps. Later in her program, however, she caught an edge

preparing for a triple salchow, taking a nasty fall. Sapping her confidence, she continued to push through the program to the finish, earning a score of 64.12 points.

Rout, also performing to powerful music (Grieg's Piano Concerto No. 4), skated with precision and speed. Even a stumble on the triple toe - loop didn't phase the young skater. Scoring 67.02 points, Alexandra finished the event in 22nd with Lee in 23rd.

All four skaters will be ones to watch in the future, particularly on the road to Vancouver and beyond.



Photo Credit: Corbis

2008 World Junior Figure Skating Championships

Results

Pairs' Champions
Ksenia
Krasilnikova
& Konstantin
Bezmaternikh
(Russia)



Photo Credit: Steve Today

Ladies' Champion
Rachel Flatt
(U.S.A)

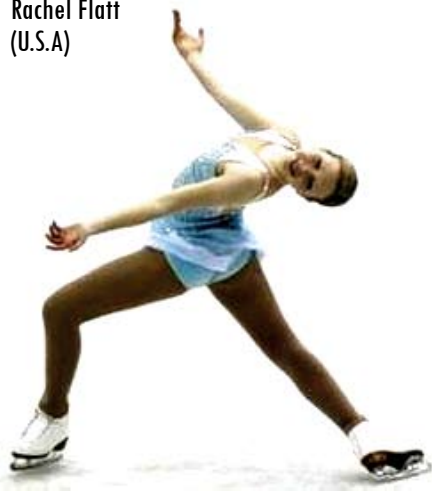


Photo Credit: Reuters

Men's Champion
Adam Rippon
(U.S.A)

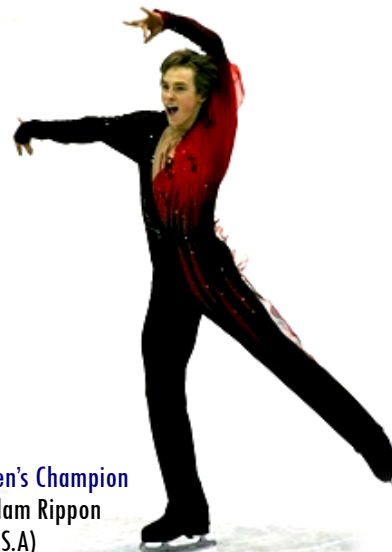


Photo Credit: Reuters

Dance Champions
Emily Samuelson
& Evan Bates
(U.S.A)



Photo Credit: Reuters

| Pairs' Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| 01 Ksenia Krasilnikova & Konstantin Bezmaternikh | RUS | 56.30 | 91.82 | 148.12 |
| 02 Lobov Ilushechkina & Nodari Maisradze | RUS | 52.05 | 92.81 | 144.86 |
| 03 Huiibo Dong & Yiming Wu | CHN | 51.16 | 90.17 | 141.33 |
| 04 Ekaterina Sheremetieva & Mikhail Kuznetsov | RUS | 51.94 | 84.20 | 136.14 |
| 05 Jessica Rose Paetsch & Jon Nuss | USA | 48.01 | 85.11 | 133.12 |
| 06 Maria Sergejeva & Ilja Glebov | EST | 46.92 | 84.10 | 131.02 |
| 07 Yue Zhang & Lei Wang | CHN | 51.22 | 79.70 | 130.92 |
| 08 Monica Pisotta & Michael Stewart | CAN | 48.29 | 78.94 | 127.23 |
| 09 Amanda Velenosi & Mark Fernandez | CAN | 46.88 | 78.58 | 125.46 |
| 10 Chelsi Guillen & Danny Curzon | USA | 49.37 | 74.56 | 123.93 |
| 11 Bianca Butler & Joseph Jacobsen | USA | 45.92 | 74.89 | 120.81 |
| 12 Anais Morand & Antoine Dorsaz | SUI | 46.27 | 72.65 | 118.92 |
| 13 Amanda Sunyoto-Yang & Darryl Sulindro-Yang | TPE | 41.95 | 76.95 | 118.90 |
| 14 Nicole Della Monica & Yannick Kocou | ITA | 40.21 | 73.14 | 113.35 |
| 15 Narumi Takahashi & Mervin Tran | JPN | 42.97 | 70.26 | 113.23 |

Top 15 results. 20 teams skated the event. 20 teams made the final.

| Ladies' Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|-------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Rachel Flatt | USA | 60.16 | 112.03 | 172.19 |
| 02 Caroline Zhang | USA | 62.60 | 109.24 | 171.84 |
| 03 Mirai Nagasu | USA | 65.07 | 97.82 | 162.89 |
| 04 Jenni Vahamaa | FIN | 50.30 | 92.24 | 142.54 |
| 05 Yuki Nishino | JPN | 54.15 | 85.29 | 139.44 |
| 06 Alena Leonova | RUS | 49.76 | 88.30 | 138.06 |
| 07 Joshi Helgesson | SWE | 49.10 | 81.36 | 130.46 |
| 08 Sarah Hecken | GER | 46.12 | 82.33 | 128.45 |
| 09 Katarina Gerboldt | RUS | 43.09 | 83.28 | 126.37 |
| 10 Myriane Samson | CAN | 44.73 | 81.18 | 125.91 |
| 11 Elena Glebova | EST | 53.05 | 72.51 | 125.56 |
| 12 Sania Lafuente | ESP | 46.36 | 73.63 | 119.99 |
| 13 Stefania Bertan | ITA | 44.62 | 70.59 | 115.21 |
| 14 Hyeon-Jeong Kim | KOR | 45.19 | 69.90 | 115.09 |
| 15 Ivana Reitmayerova | SVK | 42.53 | 70.53 | 113.06 |
| 16 Rumi Suizu | JPN | 46.25 | 65.94 | 112.19 |
| 17 Na-Hee Sin | KOR | 45.30 | 66.17 | 111.47 |
| 18 Eleonora Vinnichenko | UKR | 42.28 | 68.64 | 110.92 |
| 19 Miriam Ziegler | AUT | 43.78 | 66.82 | 110.60 |
| 20 Sofia Otala | FIN | 43.61 | 65.03 | 108.64 |
| 21 Bingwa Geng | CHN | 39.82 | 68.15 | 107.97 |
| 22 Alexandra Rout | NZL | 40.70 | 67.02 | 107.72 |
| 23 Cheltzie Lee | AUS | 42.77 | 64.12 | 106.89 |
| 24 Katherine Hadford | HUN | 41.04 | 63.02 | 104.06 |
| 25 Manuela Stanukova | BUL | 29.60 | 54.92 | 84.52 |

Top 25 results (including Australia & New Zealand).
56 ladies skated the event.
25 ladies (including host nation Bulgaria) made the final.

| Men's Event | Nation | Short | Free | Final |
|-------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 01 Adam Rippon | USA | 69.35 | 130.55 | 199.90 |
| 02 Artem Borodulin | RUS | 66.16 | 128.61 | 194.77 |
| 03 Jinlin Guan | CHN | 62.47 | 127.13 | 189.60 |
| 04 Brandon Mroz | USA | 63.36 | 122.84 | 186.20 |
| 05 Michael Brezina | CZE | 62.11 | 122.29 | 184.40 |
| 06 Kevin Reynolds | CAN | 55.77 | 125.01 | 180.78 |
| 07 Ivan Bariev | RUS | 58.39 | 116.67 | 175.06 |
| 08 Jeremy Ten | CAN | 58.29 | 115.05 | 173.34 |
| 09 Tommy Steenberg | USA | 61.33 | 105.31 | 166.64 |
| 10 Florent Amodio | FRA | 58.50 | 106.29 | 164.79 |
| 11 Kim Lucine | FRA | 60.01 | 104.60 | 164.61 |
| 12 Moris Pfeifferhofer | SUI | 51.23 | 111.65 | 162.88 |
| 13 Javier Fernandez | ESP | 52.25 | 108.76 | 161.01 |
| 14 Nikolai Bondar | UKR | 56.68 | 102.93 | 159.61 |
| 15 Ivana Reitmayerova | CHN | 45.82 | 112.66 | 158.48 |
| 16 Denis Ten | KAZ | 60.00 | 95.70 | 155.70 |
| 17 Akio Sasaki | JPN | 50.05 | 105.09 | 155.14 |
| 18 Adrian Schultheiss | SWI | 49.15 | 104.97 | 154.12 |
| 19 Takahito Mura | JPN | 47.66 | 98.16 | 145.82 |
| 20 Nikita Mikhailov | RUS | 46.40 | 93.96 | 140.36 |
| 21 Elladj Balde | CAN | 46.98 | 93.36 | 140.34 |
| 22 Denis Wiczorek | GER | 50.37 | 86.80 | 137.17 |
| 23 Jakub Strobl | SVK | 48.59 | 85.86 | 134.45 |
| 24 Maciej Cieplucha | POL | 50.70 | 82.99 | 133.69 |
| 25 Pavel Petrov Savinov | BUL | 24.70 | 52.81 | 77.51 |

32 Matthew Precious
41 Cameron Hems
NZL 39.78
NZL 28.88
Top 25 results (including Australia & New Zealand).
47 men skated the event.
25 men (including host nation Bulgaria) made the final.

| Dance Event | Nation | CD | OD | FD | Final |
|---|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 01 Emily Samuelson & Evan Bates | USA | 35.11 | 57.84 | 88.71 | 181.66 |
| 02 Vanessa Crone & Paul Poirier | CAN | 33.71 | 57.52 | 86.86 | 178.09 |
| 03 Kristina Goshkova & Vitali Butikov | RUS | 33.52 | 55.46 | 83.87 | 172.85 |
| 04 Maria Monko & Ilia Tkachenko | RUS | 34.99 | 53.70 | 77.32 | 166.01 |
| 05 Madison Hubbell & Keiffer Hubbell | USA | 30.52 | 51.30 | 75.65 | 157.47 |
| 06 Ekaterina Riazanova & Jonathan Guerreiro | RUS | 28.69 | 50.96 | 73.64 | 153.29 |
| 07 Alisa Agafanova & Dmitri Dun | UKR | 28.28 | 49.52 | 72.77 | 150.57 |
| 08 Kharis Ralph & Asher Hill | CAN | 27.36 | 47.50 | 69.43 | 144.29 |
| 09 Isabella Pajardi & Stefano Caruso | ITA | 24.96 | 47.59 | 71.58 | 144.13 |
| 10 Karen Routhier & Eric Saucke-Lacelle | CAN | 27.46 | 46.01 | 65.14 | 138.61 |
| 11 Maureen Ibanez & Neil Brown | FRA | 26.40 | 46.05 | 65.65 | 138.10 |
| 12 Lucie Mysliveckova & Matej Novak | CZE | 30.43 | 43.86 | 63.27 | 137.56 |
| 13 Ashley Foy & Benjamin Blum | GER | 25.91 | 44.34 | 64.59 | 134.84 |
| 14 Isabella Tobias & Otar Japaridze | GEO | 24.92 | 44.23 | 65.11 | 134.26 |
| 15 Natalia Mitushina & Mateo Zanni | ITA | 25.06 | 41.05 | 63.58 | 129.69 |

Top 15 results. 32 teams skated the event. 24 teams made the final.

In a career lasting almost two decades, **aussieSKATES** reveals why this dedicated athlete was an inspiration to skaters and spectators alike.

MIRIAM MANZANO

Skating's Comeback Queen

Living proof that a female elite skater's athletic potential doesn't peak at sixteen, she is Australia's answer to Maria Butyrskaja, Elena Liashenko and Anastasia Gimazetdinova.

To return to any sport is difficult. Particularly in skating, where each season, new faces emerge on the scene offering a greater level of technical and artistic ability. Miriam Manzano not only came back after a two year break, she reappeared with a happy, more positive attitude. In a career spanning twenty years, Miriam Manzano can hold her head high. She was the first skater from the Australian Capital Territory to win a national title: the intermediate crown in 1989. The following year, Miriam became the national junior champion, and in 1993, she won the coveted senior ladies' event, beating Queensland's Tamara Heggen, the defending title holder. We look at the journey which ultimately took her to seven world championship appearances and six national crowns

Born on St. Valentine's Day in 1975, Miriam Manzano started serious training late as a skater. Entering the competitive arena at eleven, by that time many of her team mates had three to six years more experience. In 1990, however, the International Skating Union made a significant change to the sport.

Phasing out school or compulsory figures, these figure eights took years to master. For superior freestyle skaters like Japan's Midori Ito and Kristi Yamaguchi from the USA, both of whom struggled with tracing these intricate patterns and circles, the figures' removal had an

immediate effect and catapulted both skaters to the top of the sport. Now athletes were free to concentrate on the big jumps, spins and linking elements that solidifies the exciting spectator appeal skating has today.

Dabbling in gymnastics before the skating bug took hold, Miriam's first off-ice trainer was her father.

Eventually, after working with Magda Mayer and Wojciech Bankowski, Miriam teamed up with former professional champion, Reg Park. Though she didn't land her first triple until the age of eighteen, both Miriam's drive and work ethic were the keys to her success.

Having successfully fought through the puberty monster, Manzano's petite build coupled with a strong back, allowed her the time necessary to further her craft. In the same year, she went to Colorado Springs, U.S.A, training for 12 months with the renowned coach, jump and spin specialist, Kathy Casey.

Hot on the heels of her victory, by 1994, a new skater emerged on the national scene. With a hunger matched by her talent, Manzano lost her national crown to Joanne Carter. Soon, a back-and-forth rivalry developed between the two skaters. This was not only good for the sport, it made them better skaters. For example, skating in qualification at the 1996 World Championships, Miriam attempted

an unplanned triple lutz, a jump she had just learned.

The next year, a fourth place at the Karl Shaefer Memorial Trophy qualified Australia a skater for the Nagano Olympics. Officials, however, based on her 11th placing at the 1997 World Championships, decided to send Joanne Carter from NSW instead.

The choice left Manzano sad and confused.

Though skating had dominated her young life, Miriam took a step back, not knowing which direction to head.

After a two year break, and persuaded by her friend and longtime coach, Reg Park, to give it one more try, Miriam returned to the rigours of training.

Entering the 2000 National Championships, Manzano competed with a fresh perspective and finished second to the young phenom, Stephanie Zhang. What made Miriam's achievement all the more remarkable, is that the skater originally from China was almost half her age.

'When things become really intense and you're not quite cracking the number one position, it can get really disheartening,' she said. 'When



Miriam Manzano: Skating's Comeback Queen

Profile

that happens you can lose track of why you started skating in the first place and that is the love that you have for it. 'I needed time to do something different and now that I've got back on the ice I'm really enjoying it.'

The next season, 2001 - 2002, however, was her breakthrough year.

At 26, Miriam was landing triple jumps in competition she hadn't even tried as a teenager. With the salchow, toe-loop, loop, flip and lutz under her belt, Manzano was a very serious contender for the Salt Lake City Olympic team.

The Karl Shaefer Memorial Trophy, again the official qualifying competition in Vienna, would be the decider. Other than herself, two other skaters were sent to Austria vying for a single berth.

Stephanie Zhang was the two-time National title holder. Former Aussie champ, Joanne Carter, returning from a serious knee injury, was also invited. The decision was agonisingly close, with Zhang placing 5th to Manzano's 6th. Carter finished 9th.

Later that year, a question mark hung over Stephanie's selection.

At the National Championships in December, Manzano defeated local NSW favourites, Carter and Zhang for the title.

Showing delicate artistry and superior athletic prowess (landing five triple jumps including two lutzes), some of the judges on the panel that day said they would have ranked her performance among the top five in the world.

In February 2002, Zhang went to the Olympics.

She struggled in the short program, normally her forte, and failed to qualify for the free. (To Zhang's credit, a month later at the World Junior Championships, she skated a clean short and placed second in that part of the competition.)

As the national champion, Miriam was chosen to skate at the World titles in Japan. Ironically, it was the same venue used to host the Olympics four years earlier. Free from the pressure of expectation, Miriam skated with the same winning abandon she showed in Sydney.

After Miriam finished, she and her coach, Reg Park, watched the leader board in amazement. As her nearest rivals skated and she passed them one by one, both Manzano and Park joked that she was the figure skating equivalent of Stephen Bradbury.

Off her performance she said, 'I took a break from the sport, but now I've come back and somehow I'm starting to be that skater I always wanted to be. Before I used to be so

tough on myself and I saw everything as a huge obstacle. Now I'm enjoying my skating a lot more and it's coming a lot easier.'

Later that year, Miriam was thrilled to be invited to her first Grand Prix International, Skate America.

Then in 2003, Manzano skated a personal best performance, landing six triple jumps in the free skate at the Finlandia Trophy. To top off her achievement, she shared the podium with two veteran Finnish skaters, Suzanna Poykio and Alisa Drei.

Ladies' Singles
Miriam Manzano
(Australia)



Photo Credit: Jay Adell

Miriam Manzano

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Date of birth: | February 14 th , 1975 |
| Home town: | Canberra |
| Profession: | Full time athlete |
| Hobbies: | pilates, shopping |
| Coach: | Reg Park |
| Started Skating: | 1986 |
| Club: | Canberra Ice Skating Club |
| Choreographer: | Slav Baboshyn |
| Personal Best Total Score: | |
| 2004 NHK Trophy | 128.42 |
| Short Program: | |
| 2004 Skate America | 44.06 |
| Free Skating: | |
| 2005 Four Continents | 85.06 |

Focus on The A.C.T., South & Western Australia

Hall of Fame



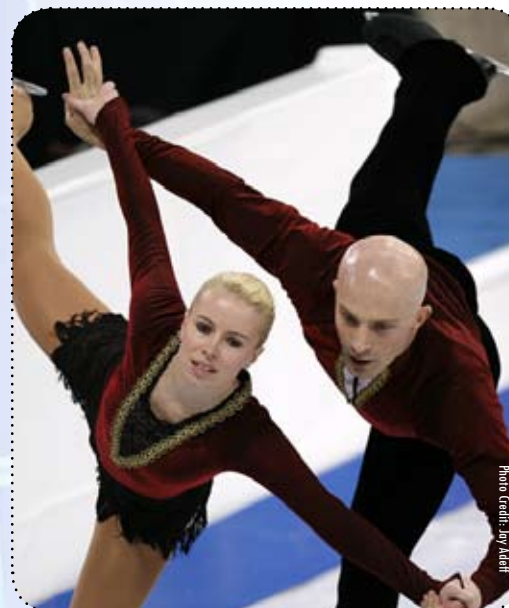
Bourne & Pavlov (WA)

As a teenager, Alexander “Sasha” Pavlov skated for Russia with his twin sister, Elena (before she turned professional). Danika Bourne was a free skater, having also been in two world synchronised championships. Bourne & Pavlov, were paired up after their internationally respected coaches, Andrei and Maria Filippov, studied separate video tapes of the skaters and saw that their dance styles matched. Success came quickly, and as the two time National Ice Dance silver medallists, these results allowed them entry to the Four Continents Championships in both 2004 & 2005.



Sean Abram (SA)

Dominating the men's junior scene in the mid 1980s, Sean Abram blended strong athleticism with musical artistry. His eligible career highlights include a win at the Miner's Lamp International in Poland, and at the 1986 World Junior Championships in Sarejevo, Yugoslavia, Sean placed an impressive sixth. Upon turning professional, Abram travelled the world, touring with shows such as Holiday On ice, Disney's World On Ice, The Nutcracker On Ice, and Torvill & Dean and The Russian All Stars. Sean has also choreographed programs for international champions, Gregorz Filipowski, & Tracey Wainman.



Stuart Beckingham (ACT)

A strong singles' skater, Beckingham finished as high as third (twice) at the National Senior Men's event. Following multiple appearances both internationally and at the Four Continents Championships, Stuart made a successful transition to pairs' skating with Emma Brien. Together, trained by former champions, Stephen Carr and Danielle McGrath, Brien and Beckingham won the 2005 National Senior Pairs' title. Later, they competed at the 2006 Four Continents event in Colorado Springs, U.S.A., and the World Championships in Calgary, Canada.



Laura Downing (WA)

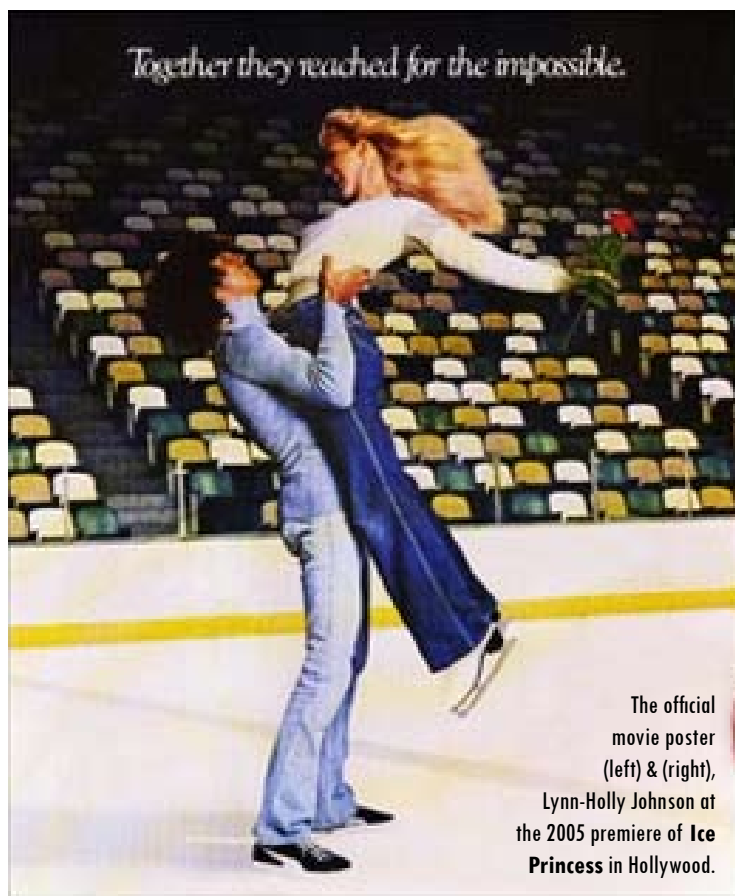
Russian-trained, Laura Downing was a champion with Irina Slutskaja's flair and Michelle Kwan's grace, one of those rare skaters who made difficult double and triple jumps look spectacular and effortless at the same time. Controversy struck her short career, however, when the omission of an 'axel-type' jump in her long program at the 2006 National Junior Ladies' Championship, cost her the title. Interestingly, having never competed at the senior level, Downing was nevertheless awarded a coveted spot with Team Australia at the 2006 Four Continents Championship.

- 1981** Perry Meek from South Australia (S.A.) wins the national junior men's championship.
- 1983** In a surprise upset, Perry Meek takes the national men's crown from the defending champion, Cameron Medhurst.
Sean Abram (S.A.) wins the national junior men's crown. He also competes at the Grand Prize SNP in Slovakia.
Perry Meek skates in the Golden Spin of Zagreb. He also competes at the Ennia Cup Challenge in Holland, Prague Skate in Czechoslovakia.
- 1984** Perry Meek competes at the World Championships in Ottawa, Canada.
Sean Abram skates at the World Junior Championships in Sapporo, Japan.
Abram also wins his second national junior men's title.
- 1985** After winning his third national junior men's crown, Sean Abram goes on to win the Miner's Lamp Invitational in Poland.
- 1986** Sean Abram places 6th at the World Junior Championships in Sarejevo, Yugoslavia.
- 1987** Sean Abram wins his fifth consecutive junior men's title. He also represents Australia at the World Junior Championships in Brisbane.
After her strong performance at the national senior ladies championship, Sabrina Moreth (S.A.) competes at the Prague Skate in Czechoslovakia.

- 1988** George Galanis (S.A.) wins the national junior men's championship.
Galanis goes on to skate at the World Junior Championships in Sarejevo, Yugoslavia.
Sabrina Moreth wins bronze at the national senior ladies championship. Based on her placement, she is chosen to skate at the Budapest Trophy in Hungary and the Karl Shafer Memorial in Austria.
- 1989** George Galanis defends the national junior men's title.
Jackie Bird from the Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T.) skates at the Winter Universiade in Bulgaria.
- 1990** After claiming the intermediate title in 1989, Miriam Manzano (A.C.T.) wins the national junior ladies' championship.
Ashley Wilson wins silver at the Miner's Lamp Invitational in Poland.
- 1991** Ashley Wilson wins the national junior men's championship. He goes on to compete at the Blue Swords in Germany.
- 1992** Ashley Wilson wins a second national junior men's championship. He also skates at the World Junior Championships in Hull, Canada.
Miriam Manzano wins back the national junior ladies' championship.
Later, both skaters compete at the World Junior Championships in Seoul, South Korea.
- 1993** Miriam Manzano wins the national ladies' championship. She also competes at the Grand Prix de St. Gervais and Nebelhorn Trophy.

- 1994** Miriam Manzano skates at the World Championships in Chiba, Japan. She also competes at the Grand Prix de St. Gervais and Nebelhorn Trophy.
- 1995** George Galanis wins the national men's senior championship.
Miriam Manzano wins the Summer Trophy International. This title earns her a place on the 1996 World Championship team.
- 1997** Miriam Manzano places 2nd to Joanne Carter at the national ladies' championships.
- 2001** In a stunning comeback to competition, Miriam Manzano wins her second national ladies' championship. Taking the title over the defending champion, Stephanie Zhang, and former champion, Joanne Carter, it is her first major title in eight years.
Miriam Manzano skates at the Four Continents Championships in Salt Lake City, U.S.A.
- 2002** Stuart Beckingham (A.C.T.) skates at the Four Continents Championships in Jeonju City, Korea.
Manzano places 16th at the World Championships in Nagano, Japan.
Against strong competition, she wins silver at the Karl Shafer Memorial in Vienna, Austria.
- 2003** Manzano skates at the World Championships in Washington D.C, U.S.A. She also earns her fourth national title.
Emilia Ahsan from Western Australia (W.A.) skates at the World Junior Championships in Ostrava, in the Czech Republic.
Ahsan also wins the national junior ladies' title.

- 2004** Stuart Beckingham and Manzano skate at the Four Continents Championship in Hamilton, Ontario Canada.
Emilia Ahsan skates at the World Junior Championships in the Hague, Netherlands.
Miriam Manzano competes in Dortmund, Germany at the World Championships.
Miriam Manzano wins her fifth national ladies' championship.
Laura Downing (W.A.) and Andrew Bassi (S.A.) skate at the JGP of Long Beach, U.S.A.
Downing also contends the JGP of Kiev.
Janna Kupec (S.A.) skates at the JGP Blue Swords in Chemnitz, Germany.
- 2005** Laura Downing initially wins the junior ladies crown, but in a code of points judging error, the title is awarded to Tina Wang.
Miriam Manzano wins her sixth and final championship national championship.
In a controversial decision, Joanne Carter is chosen over her to represent Australia at the Olympic Winter Games in Torino Italy.
Teaming up with Emma Brien, Stuart Beckingham wins the national pairs' title.
Together, they skate at the Karl Shafer Memorial Trophy, the Four Continents Championships in Salt Lake City, U.S.A. and the 2006 World Championships in Calgary, Canada.
- 2006** Western Australia's Maria and Evgeni Borounov dance at the Four Continents Championships.
- 2007** Maria and Evgeni Borounov win the national dance title.



The official movie poster (left) & (right), Lynn-Holly Johnson at the 2005 premiere of *Ice Princess* in Hollywood.

Photo Credit: Walt Disney Co.



In 1978 a movie called *Ice Castles* was released. Now 30 years later, it's time to revisit one of the best ice skating movies ever made.

The story revolves around Alexis 'Lexi' Winston (played by Lynn-Holly Johnson, who also happened to be a figure skater in real life). She is 16 years old and lives in Waverly, Iowa, with her father. Lexi skates at a local rink and is coached by her aunt, Beulah (played by the late Colleen Dewhurst).

Lexi and Beulah convince her father Marcus (played by Tom Skerritt) to let her compete in the local regional competition. While there, she impresses Coach Deborah Mackalind (played by Jennifer Warren.). Coach Mackalind speaks with Beulah and finds out that Alexis is 16, too old to be trained to become a champion.

Beulah tells Coach Mackalind that Alexis is a quick learner and picks up moves that she sees the skaters do on television. Alexis wants to go and become a champion.

Her father is against it.

Her boyfriend Nick (played by Robbie Benson) and Beulah help Alexis convince Marcus to let her go and train in Colorado with Coach Mackalind at the Broadmoor World Arena. Nick tells her that she needs to reach for the big O...the Olympics.

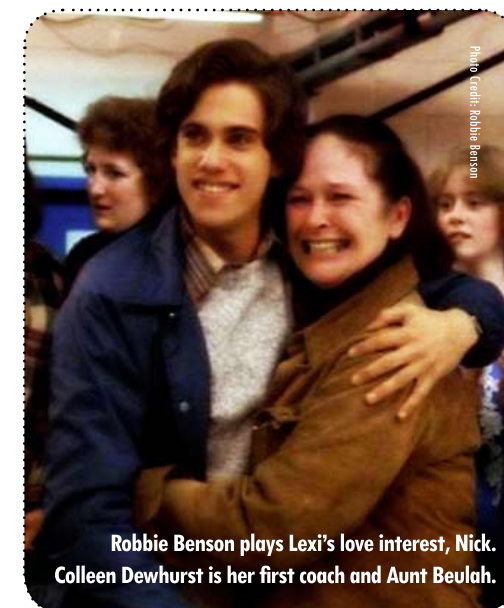
Alexis begins to train with some of the best skaters in the United States. Alexis finds it hard to make friends as Coach Mackalind asks her friend and sport reporter Brian Dockett (played by David Huffman) to follow Alexis and this creates a media frenzy.

One time when Alexis goes to the rink, one other skater asks her where her camera crew is. Another skater tells her that they are just jealous that someone else is getting all the attention.

Alexis becomes a media darling and skates in a Christmas show with some of the best skaters in the world, even landing the cover of a sports magazine. Alexis begins to have problems with Nick and starts a relationship with Brian.

However, this is all about to change.

During a party, Alexis decides that she wants to skate on the rink that is outside the building. It's not really clear why she wants to skate at this particular time but you are given the impression that she is sad or missing the fun she used to have while skating.



Robbie Benson plays Lexi's love interest, Nick. Colleen Dewhurst is her first coach and Aunt Beulah.

A Look Back: Ice Castles Turns 30

It's a small rink and there are table and chairs on the rink. They are however, locked up on the side of the rink with chains since it is night time. She puts on her skates and heads out to the rink.

She skates around the rink and eventually everyone at the party starts to watch her. Alexis skates a few times around the rink and prepares to do a jump. She begins the jump and then falls and bangs her head. It was a freak accident and as a result she loses her eyesight.

Alexis return to Iowa where she hides away in the attic of her home in despair. Eventually her father and Beulah are able to talk her out of the attic, and her father takes her to the frozen pond by her home to skate despite not being able to see.

She falls and falls again.

She falls one time and out comes of the hand of Nick to help her up. Nick and Beulah convince her to skate again and she begins to train. She decides to enter the sectional competition. But, no one must know she is blind or they will just feel sorry for her.

At this competition she does really well. She receives a standing ovation and skates around the rink as an encore.

There is just one problem,
no one told her
about



the flowers. That would be the flowers that are thrown on the ice by the fans. Alexis can't see them and falls. She doesn't get up.

The crown is silent and Nick goes out and gets her and brings her to center ice. Nick laughs and says we forget about the flowers. They then look at each other and the movie ends.

Looking back 30 years later at this movie, it's amazing how relevant this movie is. While training in Colorado, Alexis goes out to the rink and does a triple jump. This makes her coach very mad and she tells Alexis that triples are just show off moves for the judges an that she is not good enough for a triple. In 2008, skating fans now discuss are skaters good enough for quad jumps? Are they necessary? Another part of the movie that is relevant to today is Alexis becoming a media darling. This is quite common today with many skaters becoming superstars in the home countries, being followed by the media constantly, in addition to being on television and in advertisements. It's amazing that issues in figure skating 30 years ago still exist today. I still love watching this

move and it will always be one of my favorites. To this day, it still makes me wish I had a pond in my backyard to skate on while the song by Melissa Manchester "Through the Eyes of Love" plays in the background.

Cathy Williams grew up in New York, but now lives in New Jersey with her husband where she is a social worker. A fan of figure skating since Dorothy Hamill won Olympic Gold in 1976, Cathy saw the Ice Capades as a young girl. For the past 11 years, she has attended Stars on Ice. Recently, Cathy discovered the excitement of watching competition live. Skate America in Atlantic City and Reading, Pennsylvania are two of the events she has seen in person.

Cathy has many favourite skaters, two being Hamill (whom she would like to meet) and Scott Hamilton (whom she has). While she never did learn to skate, after revisiting this movie, maybe it's time, Cathy exclaims, she got around to taking those lessons.

Ice Castles can be found on DVD through Columbia Tri - Star.

DVD Review



Fun Facts From The Film

- Many of the skating scenes were filmed at the Broadmoor World Arena in Colorado Springs. Now demolished, this building hosted numerous U.S., Junior World and World Championships. It was also the training base for such champions as Dorothy Hamill, Robin Cousins, John Curry, Peggy Fleming, Caryn Kadavy and Jill Trenary.
- 'Through The Eyes Of Love', sung by Melissa Manchester was nominated for Best Song at the 1979 Academy Awards.
- While she played Lexi's skating coach, the actress, Jennifer Warren is never actually shown skating. The reason being, she couldn't skate a step. Jennifer also appeared in another figure skating related tv movie, Champions: A Love Story, where she starred as one of the athlete's parents.



Now in its tenth year, the Masters' Cup in Melbourne is a multi-level championship specifically created for skaters over 20. With increasing interest from adults around Australia, events are popping up in Sydney and Canberra with other states soon to follow.

We caught up with one of the competitors, Frances McMahon, from the A.C.T. A talented graphic artist and illustrator, she is also the recent winner of the Olympic Figure Skating Club's logo design competition.

What first interested you in skating?

Truth be told, I have never really had a prior interest in skating, other than watching the Winter Olympic games on TV.

What competitions have you seen live?

My daughter is a Primary level skater, so naturally we have seen her skate in most of the local technical and artistic competitions, as well as Hollins Trophy (2006, 2007) and Nationals (2007).

For a special treat, we drove to Sydney to see the World Junior Olympics. (Didn't the Aussies do well!)

What inspired you to start skating yourself?

After the 2002 Olympics, my son expressed an interest in learning to skate. Rather than face many hours sitting on the cold, hard rink seats, waiting for his lesson to finish, I decided to give skating a go. I hated it!

The hired boots hurt and cramped my feet. It was cold, slippery and incredibly difficult to do anything other than cling to the barrier and wish I was back home doing anything other than this!

However, after a few weeks of not enjoying myself, I decided to have some private lessons, and from that point onwards, I started to quickly fall totally in love with skating.

Do you have any idols within the sport?

Plenty!

My all time favourite would have to be Kurt Browning. As well as being a superb technician, his artistry is brilliant.

(Others include) Lucinda Ruh, for getting judges and audiences to look at something other than the jumps!

(I also admire) John Curry, for overcoming terrible hardships and adversity and then performing brilliantly in the 1976 Olympics.

(Finally) Chen Lu, for her beautiful and unforgettable performance in Nagano. It reduced me to tears!

There are so many others, but it would take hours to mention them all.

How many hours a week do you train?

If not preparing for a competition, usually about 6-7 hours per week. If gearing up to compete, then it's about 8-9 hours per week.

Do you do any off-ice preparation?

Absolutely! I think it's imperative to do a proper warm-up before skating, especially at my age. It helps prevent injury, keeps muscles loose and increases cardio fitness.

I'll start by doing 50 jumps with a skipping rope, followed by a minute of stretching the achilles tendons. Then it's 75 jumps, followed by a minute of stretching the quad muscles. After 100 jumps, I'll do a minute of side stretches, then after 125 jumps, another minute of held spiral positions. Then I'll try to do about 200 jumps, and a few lunges and squat jumps.



Photo Credit: Frances McMahon



Photo Credit: Frances McMahon



Photo Credit: Frances McMahon

What level are you skating at now?

I enter the "adult" division in competition. This can be a fairly broad division. The skater must be over 20 years of age, and not currently skating at National level. So (in theory) I may be in a group of 20 year olds who are Pre-Primary level skaters!

However, there is a competition in Melbourne geared just for adult skaters. Due to the larger number of entries, you enter a division best suited to your technical level and age group. (They have under and over 40 years divisions.) I'll be entering Masters Silver 40+ this year.

I've also enjoyed the "Aussie Skate" badge system. I've got a few to go to get them all, and in a few years I'd like to try to pass the Preliminary test.

What sort of music have you skated to? How did you interpret them?

One of the most enjoyable aspects of skating is choosing a favourite piece of music and interpreting it to the best of your ability.

I've skated to quite a diverse range: from Mozart, Schumann, Kylie Minogue, Hayley Westenra, Nicole Kidman and Robbie Williams, and The Who! My most recent music is a wonderful piece from "Passion: The Last Temptation of Christ." It's called "The Feeling Begins" and is my first non-vocal piece.

Choosing the music is the easy part. It's interpreting it that's a little more difficult! I have a wonderful coach who understands this, and works with me to get the most out of the music.

Tell us a little about your background as a graphic designer and illustrator?

I graduated from Charles Sturt University with a Diploma of Arts (in graphic design) in 1986. Since then, I have worked in both employed and freelance positions. My first love, though, is watercolour bird painting! I've been doing this since the age of five, and my work has been sold to collectors as far away as the USA.

Frances has a site at youtube.com where you can watch some of her skating performances.

The address is:
www.youtube.com/GlitteringGirl65

Also, more of her stunning watercolour illustrations can be found at:
www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/francesmcmahon.html

THE IMPERIAL ICE STARS

Cinderella With A Twist

Returning to Australia with a refreshing take on the timeless fairy tale, Tony Mercer's skating company is dazzling local audiences both young and young at heart.



Andrei Penkine (as the prince),
here as Benno in *Swan Lake*.



A Cinderella trio.
Shown here in *Swan Lake*
are Vadim Yarkov, with Olga
Sharutenko (in white) and
Olena Pyatash (in black).

Following their triumphant 2006 tour of *Swan Lake*, Tony Mercer brings his troupe of international champion skaters back to Australia with *Cinderella on Ice*. Performing the big tricks skating fans will recognise and love, a cast of 23 weave intricate patterns, meanwhile skating on a tiny piece of ice measuring only 15 x 15 metres.

Unlike the Imperial Ice Stars' previous shows which exclusively used the music of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Cinderella on Ice* is skated to a lush and moving original score composed by Tim Duncan. (A music CD and DVD of the show will be made available from the company's website very soon.)

As time is a recurrent theme, setting the tone, a giant clock projected on the stage curtain opens the show.

Taking somewhat artistic licence with the story, in this production Cinderella's father is a watchmaker. She is a dancer, and her school is run by the wicked stepmother (with two prima donna ballerina daughters in tow.) When the prince, portrayed here as the town mayor's son, makes a spontaneous visit to the class, this is the impetus for he and Cinderella to meet, then slowly fall in love.

Another fascinating touch is making the fairy godmother a gypsy. Complete with a magic crystal ball, she predicts Cinderella's fate.

Setting them apart from traditional ice show stars, the skaters in *Cinderella on Ice* are also gifted actors.

Cast in the title role, special mention must be made to Olga Sharutenko. Having played Clara in *The Nutcracker* and Odile in *Swan Lake*, Sharutenko gives Cinderella both realistic sincerity and heartfelt depth.

Andrei Penkine, fresh from his comic turn as Benno in *Swan Lake*, has romantic charm to spare as the prince. He can also fling off difficult double axel jumps with confident ease.

As the wicked stepmother, Olena Pyatash (who was *Swan Lake's* spell-binding Odette) commands the space with an intimidating vanity, perfectly realised.

Cinderella's father, Vadim Yarkov, skates with dramatic anguish and frustration, torn between both daughter and his new wife.

Strong ensemble work includes six pair teams decked in gold to represent the ticking clock. Also, the sequence where various townswomen try on the golden slipper (or in this instance, a skating boot), demonstrates their mastery of true one-foot skating.

One final star is the staging. Breathtaking in its dream-like and (apparently) seamless simplicity, the overall design is topped with a rich art deco flair.

Cinderella on Ice is currently touring major capital cities.

Check the website, www.imperialicestars.com for tour dates and details.