

Basingstoke Ice Skating Club

A PARENTS GUIDE

TO

ICE SKATING

(INCLUDING TEST AND COMPETITIVE SKATING)

Adapted from the NISA guide published in 2004

CONTENTS

Introduction

Partners in Performance

Your child has now completed a “learn to skate” course- What next ?

Helpful Hints for a skating parent

Equipment – what will your Skater need and when?

Selection of a Coach

NISA Test Competition Structure

What to expect on Test Day

About Competitions

National Squads

Child Protection

Appendix

1 Introduction

Raising a child is a challenge.

Parenting a child who participates and perhaps excels in figure skating, brings with it new and additional challenges

- What do I know about figure skating?
- Where is this road leading?
- How do I give my child the opportunity to be their best in skating?

These are all real questions a skating parent will face

This short guide is intended to be of assistance to parents with children who are aspiring young skaters. Entering the world of skating beyond the “Skate UK” level can often seem confusing and complicated.

As your child becomes more involved, many things will become clearer to you. It may be comforting to have at your fingertips a guide that can help answer your questions along the way. We hope this booklet will serve this purpose.

Good luck to you and your skater!

1.1 A message to all aspiring athletes:

Only you can give yourself the chances to achieve your goals. It does require personal dedication and a good work ethic – always maintaining a high level of fitness and flexibility. Complete your programmes regularly even if the jumps are not working. Not all of us will go on to be National Champions, but we can all have a successful and rewarding career. Work with your local coach to set out a plan to reach your goals – whatever they may be. Life is a journey and what we learn early in our career helps us to set that road map.

Haig Oundjian

Former Chairman NISA, former British Olympic, World and European competitor

2 Partners in Performance

Sport should always be athlete centred and provide the opportunity for the athlete to learn and have fun. This requires an array of partners working together for the athlete. Some of the key partners working together to provide that opportunity to your child and their respective roles are: -

2.1 The Skater

The development of the skater is the whole purpose for the existence of NISA, its Coaches and any Club to which the skater may belong.

Your skater's responsibility is to make the most of the resources put before them. The best way for them to do this is to adhere to the necessary basic rules of courtesy during all on-ice activities. Every skater has a duty to show respect for other skaters, parents, volunteers, coaches, club members and judges, both on and off the ice. In a harmonious atmosphere, everyone is in a position to gain maximum results from their valuable practice time.

2.2 The Parent

The skating parent's role is to provide physical, emotional and, of course, financial support.

Your skater will need you to show an interest in their progress, as well as giving encouragement and understanding when times are difficult. Your help to shape your child's attitudes, how they cope with success and failure, how they relate to other skaters and how they react to criticism. Set a good example, as your child will be watching and learning from you.

Even young skaters need to have some input into skating decisions. Do not impose your goals on your child. Assist your child in establishing his or her skating goals with your chosen Coach. Most importantly, enjoy being involved in skating.

Skating can become expensive if you allow it to. Ultimately, the decision of how much money from the family budget should go to skating is up to the parent. Try not to put added pressure on the skater about financial matters. Money spent is your concern, not theirs.

3 Your Skater has finished Learn To Skate – what next?

What comes next for your skater depends greatly on their aspirations, determination and natural ability. There is a discipline to suit everyone, whether he or she wants to be an Olympic Champion or wants to skate for sheer enjoyment. It's all up to you and your skater

3.1 Figure skating

Historically figure skating had tested a skater's control and balance but demands lots of practice and time: figure eights, three-circle figures and loops had to be traced on the ice in perfect patterns. In the very early days it remained the sport of the aristocracy for only they – being short of neither time nor money – could afford the very expensive lessons!

Today in the 21st century ice skating is far more accessible and affordable to a great number of individuals. However, as with any sport there will be a financial cost to reach the very top of the sport.

The “English” style of figure skating began towards the end of the 18th century. Unlike the International style seen today, where the skater is continually moving position, the English style involved holding graceful positions until a turn or change of direction. Skaters kept an upright posture with arms often held at their sides. Great concentration was on the figures being traced on the ice. **Figure Skating is now the International style:** very few people in the UK today practice the art of English Style.

3.2 Figure Skating – sport or art?

International figure skating today, with its graceful beauty and creativity, could be described by its audiences as a performing art. However, figure skating has been a competitive sport for over a hundred years. Today competition skaters aim to:

- Perform as difficult a routine as possible
- Present the routine so that it looks its best

Figure skating is forever making sporting leaps because it constantly offers new challenges, such as higher jumps and more rotations. With their amazing levels of fitness, agility and artistic talent, top skaters strive to be the world's best.

Under the general term of ‘figure skating’ there are five separate disciplines that are used in competitions:

- 1 Men's figure skating
- 2 Ladies' figure skating
- 3 Ice Dancing
- 4 Pairs skating
- 5 Synchronized skating

3.3 Singles skating

A very exciting and athletic part of figure skating and is choreographed to music. It consists of different jumps, spins and step sequences with interconnecting footwork, “tricks” and choreography performed on an individual basis by both men and women. This is the most common form of skating participated in across the UK once Learn to Skate is completed.

3.4 Pair skating

If you combine the elements of ice dancing, and free skating; include overhead lifts, throws and spins; add greater speed and danger... there you have the basics of pairs skating! Pairs skating is spectacular to watch, but is no sport for the faint-hearted! Two single skaters skating as one unit in unison. As well as needing the thorough training of a specialist coach, you'll need to be an excellent free skater to try it! Training is very rigorous.

It is important for pairs partners to be of a similar standard and age. The man in particular needs to be very strong to lift and spin his partner. Like ice dancing, skating in unison in time with each other is essential – otherwise it can be disastrous.

3.5 Ice Dance

Has similarities to free skating in that it incorporates spins, single rotation jumps, lifts and technical footwork choreographed to music. Ice dancing, however has its roots in Ballroom dancing and involves set pattern dances which follow sequences of steps performed to set tempo music. Different dances are skated to various dance rhythms such as Blues, Tango, Foxtrot, Rhumba, and Quickstep etc. As well as these set pattern dances, skaters are also required to perform original dances and free dances. These consist of the spins, step sequences of the skaters' choice, small hops and jumps and allow for a lot more choreographical freedom with vocal music permitted.

Ice dancing is a popular recreational sport as well as a major focal point of international competitions. There are also opportunities to skate and compete in Solo Dance without needing a partner

3.6 Synchronised skating

Is a team sport involving groups of 12-20 skaters performing choreographed routines in unison and is usually Club or Rink based with discipline specific coaching. Teams are categorised as juvenile, novice, junior, senior and adult. Many rinks now have synchronized skating teams. If you would like to join one you will need to have:

- Ambition to be an excellent team member
- Lots of time to practise regularly with the team
- A similar skating ability to the other team members
- A good sense of rhythm and timing to music
- An ability to learn steps and sequences quickly
- The same height as the other team members

3.7 Speed Skating

- **Long track speed skating** – takes place on large indoor and outdoor tracks with skaters racing against the clock. However, there are no Long track Speed Skating facilities in the UK.
- **Short track speed skating** – skaters race against each other around a very tight indoor track. There are separate events for men's women's and junior competitions, as well as for relays.

Speed skaters wear skin-tight suits made from lightweight, stretchy fabric. They also wear specially designed speed skates. The speed skate blade is longer than the figure skate blade, thinner, single edged and straight. It is compulsory for speed skaters to wear hard-shell helmets. Knee and shin pads and gloves also provide extra protection from accidents.

Top speed skaters can reach speeds of over 45 kilometres per hour as they skate around the oval in a race.

4 Some helpful hints about being a skating parent

4.1 Looking at parental expectations

The first major question, which you have to ask yourself, is, “why is my child involved in skating”? The answer should be for enjoyment, for a sense of sportsmanship and accomplishment and to socialise with other children.

Often we give children mixed messages. We insist that they are participating for the joy and the love of the sport and yet we are the first to ask how well they have done or to look at the result board.

We must recognise that our children will be the same sons and daughters before and after an event, whether they pass or fail the test or whether they place first, third or fifteenth.

As parents we typically provide challenges and goals for our children to attain. The parent moulds a passion for excellence and rewards dedication, commitment, and hard work.

Skaters soon learn that by displaying their commitment to skating and fulfilling parental expectations, they reap many rewards.

However, be aware that your skater’s own ambitions may begin to conflict with yours. Watch for these changes and be prepared to step back, giving the skater autonomy. Your lofty expectations and encouragement may bring the skater to a relatively high level of achievement, but when it no longer proves to be an incentive or when these expectations prove to be unrealistic, parents must rethink their intentions.

Parents must not try to live their own dreams and aspirations through their children.

Skaters perceive the expectations of their parents to be greater than they are able to achieve, therefore, placing unacceptable demands on their abilities.

When we push skaters to excel they may think that we are asking them to prove their commitment. Parents should learn to accept and honour the devotions skaters give to their sport. It is the parents’ responsibility to accept the skater’s goals and help foster and guide the athlete in achieving their dreams.

Trusting the skater to make their own decisions throughout their skating career enhances a sense of independence and self-confidence, creating a basis upon which a “dream unfolds”.

4.2 Keeping Skaters Motivated

Every skater is different and will respond to different motivators.

Here are some tips: -

- Help your child in goal-setting
- Choose a Coach who is positive
- Be positive yourself
- Avoid finding faults
- Be honest when your child asks your opinion
- Give praise when due
- Build their confidence and self-esteem
- Encourage persistent effort
- Believe in their abilities
- Foster self-responsibility
- Discourage excuses
- Remind your child that they skate because they want to
- Work with both skater and Coach to encourage mini-goals
- Define winning in terms other than a passed test or medal
- Do not use fear “I will stop you skating if you don’t do well”
- Don’t use bribes to motivate, they take away the focus of hard work and having fun
- Don’t nag, badger or use sarcasm
- Encourage the Coach
- Be a good role model
- Allow experimentation and creativity as part of their development

4.3 Costs

There is no question that as your child enters the competitive domain and demonstrates significant talent, you will likely be faced with the questions, “How much support or how many sacrifices can we or should we make “? Skating affects the lives of parents and other family members.

Skating is not a sport that a child can enter into alone. Parents become an integral part of the experience. The financial aspect of the sport can take its toll on all members of the skating family. Many parents take on two jobs to meet the expenses. Other siblings find that less money is available for them and family vacations centre around skating competitions.

Parents must be careful not to impose the financial burden of the sport on their skater. Constant reminds of how much the family is sacrificing in order to maintain the expenses of skating can be a dysfunctional pressure for a child. It is your decision to spend the money. Try to separate the emotional investment from the financial investment. When you begin to question the desired results in the sport or “payroll” for all that money spent on lessons and travel, remind yourself of your commitment to the child, not simply to the champion.

There is no prescribed budget for the various levels of skating. It is more a case of how to best spend the money you wish to spend.

The recommendation is to develop a skating budget at the start of each skating season. This budgeting process will help you balance the total amount you are prepared to spend with the skating activities your child may want to pursue. Through this process you will likely make many decisions regarding what is best/most affordable for your child's upcoming season.

Included, as Appendix 1 of this guide is a sample itemised skating budget form. It will help you identify possible skating expenses while also accounting for some possible income sources. Ask your child's Coach for some advice as appropriate, such as the prescribed equipment, number of lessons, tests and competitions for the year and prioritise. You are then in a position to control the spending decisions and not deal with bills after the fact.

4.4 Parents at a Competition or Test Day

Your role at a competition can be a major ingredient to your child's performance. You are an important support system! Determining how and when you provide support is the challenge.

Every child is different and has its own needs, which change over time. Their needs at a competition or test day may be affected by the level of competition or test being taken, demands of coaches, amount of free time, accreditation or access to your child, media presence and their own confidence in their ability.

The most important thing to do before hand is to work out a pre-competition routine with your skater and coach. He or she should be allowed to determine where they want you to be while they dress, practice, stretch, wait to perform and perform. This is often best arrived at away from the competitive site by asking "what do you want from me at the rink"? Adhering to a routine gives a skater security and structure to a period of time that is totally unpredictable.

Typically, an athlete may prefer to be alone, to walk through the programme or test but needs to know you are not too far away, just in case they want to talk. Multiple instructions, trying to psych them up or calm them down, sometimes only adds to the problem.

The most important thing is that they feel confident and that they are at an excitation level they can handle. You can facilitate this by presenting a calm, confident front and letting them do their thing. Often we express how we feel, more in the way we act and behave, than in what we say. If we are excited, tense, nervous, or anxious prior to a competition, the skater will pick up on this. They will feel our anxiety in spite of our constant reassurances. Overt parental anxiety only adds to the degree of difficulty of the task they have to undertake.

Above all, ensure that your child feels loved and valued no matter how they skate.

4.5 After the Outcome

The most important thing about feedback is to go inside and feel what you would need at this moment. Try to be honest. Prior to the test or competition, replay in your mind how you are going to act if your child performs very well, average or poorly. At that time, you can get in touch with what you would need at those moments.

Certainly one requirement is that you be honest. There is no use pretending. A youngster who has made a crucial mistake costing him the achievement of his or her goal does not need to hear “it really isn’t that important”. At that moment it is important to the athlete and he or she should be permitted the dignity of their unhappiness. It is important that the blame for any failure should not be attributed to any official (judge, coach etc).

We often mean well in trying to cheer up our children following some failure but it is important that we are truthful. Young athletes can quickly pick up on “phoney” attitudes. They can resent them deeply and later on when praise is well deserved, they may get less satisfaction from it. An acknowledgment of the problem “boy that was really tough, but there will be other days” and an arm around the shoulder is ideal. Listening is also important. Give your child a decent interval for feeling despondent and then move on to discuss more cheerful affairs of the day. Teach them not to be afraid to fail, but that in trying they have won.

Sincere and well-meant praise should not be held back. Often when children do perform well, parents are afraid that they will get a “big head” and so don’t give them the praise they deserve.

Most importantly, in the eyes of your child, you would be teaching them to project responsibility for their performance on someone else rather than taking responsibility for it.

A skater who skates a personal best and graciously wins as well as graciously loses, is a winning skater.

On the few occasions that skaters have the opportunity to skate in competitions or take tests, be lavish with your praise. There just are not enough opportunities in a year for us to worry about them getting a big head. Use sport to build your child’s self-esteem.

It is also important to realise that in your feedback you are attempting to shape your child’s behaviour. You are being a parent at that time. So be aware of what you are rewarding. If a child has fallen repeatedly, displayed a temper tantrum and you walk out and say, “good effort, you’ll get it next time”, you are rewarding the misbehaviour. We must be careful to separate exactly what behaviours we are directing our rewards towards.

We must also be aware of our own bias. Often athletes are trying very hard, but because they do not show the same gritting teeth and clenched fist that we would show if we were trying hard, we assume they are not working. A study involving

physical education classes showed that the children running to the back of the pack, because they may be slightly over weight or not as gifted as the runners at the front, actually have higher heart rates than those who re much further up in the ranks. These children are trying, but by our athletic standards it may not appear to be so.

When the results come out, you and your skater must be objective and accept the results as they are. Audibly criticising judges because of a poor placement is simply not productive. It is embarrassing for the skater and other people. Judges are human. They have been trained to do a job and anything you say will not change their decision.

4.6 Skating and Schooling

As your child rises through the system, he or she is likely to require more and more intense training. The amount of training they do often affects their and your social lives. It is likely to impact also upon schooling but need not be detrimental.

NISA strongly supports educational ideals. Many skaters have proven time and time again that an elite skater can pursue their educational and skating goals equally well. To do so requires many of the attributes that are reinforced in skating

- Goal setting
- Discipline
- Commitment

Advanced skating is an activity that should be integrated with schooling, not at the expense of schooling. As your child continues to excel, it may become important that you communicate with his or her school.

The intent should not be to get them out of schoolwork but to discuss alternate ways and timelines when projects, papers and exams may be completed if and when their skating might result in absences

Some schools are more understanding and supportive than others. Usually, support can be facilitated through contacting the Headteacher. Touch base with the school at the beginning of the school year so surprises are not sprung upon them.

5 Equipment – what will my child need and when?

5.1 Selecting Boots and Blades

Boots and blades are the most important pieces of equipment and purchasing appropriate skates to suit the level, discipline and budget is of utmost importance.

Basic boots purchased from rink retail outlets are adequate for the beginner if correctly fitted.

As the skater progresses into the NISA test system it may be advisable to consult a specialist boot and blade supplier. Luckily, most rink shops are experienced in this too.

Boots and blades can start from £60 for a boot/blade combo reaching to many hundreds for just the blade or boot.

Choose carefully! Badly fitting boots can cause discomfort and even permanent damage. Remember the most expensive is not always the best. Fit and support are more important.

The best skates are the ones that work for your skater: your child is different so may need stiffer or weaker boots than their friends.

Don't dismiss second hand boots or blades: often skaters grow out of boots before they "break down". Many boots can be heat moulded to fit a new skater and you can stretch your budget further. Blades are even more valid as a second hand purchase. However, exercise caution and seek advice from your coach regarding the condition of second hand skates.

Mounting blades is very critical and should be carried out, preferably, by someone experienced in this task.

5.2 Caring for Skates

Boots and blades can be expensive. Proper care of the skates can help your investment last.

Hard skate guards must be worn whenever the skater is walking on any surface, except the ice. Concrete floors or other gritty surfaces quickly damage blade edges. The blades and boot soles must be dried before putting on the guards and the inside of the guards must be cleaned out regularly. Microfibre car drying towels are a good value choice, compared to using a chamois leather, to dry off.

Guards must be removed when the skates are put away. Cold blades get wet from condensation and will rust if the guards are left on. Soft terry-towel covers are available to protect blades in a skate bag. Ensure that boots are removed from the

skate bag and the leather allowed to dry out at normal house temperature. If this is not done, soles may get soft (rotting) and the screws will become loose.

Sharp blades are key: edges are the most important part of a skater's blade. Regular sharpening is mandatory: how often depends on how often you skate. Seek your coach's advice and remember: after a sharpen, the blades will feel odd and you may struggle to stop initially. Many skaters need to blunt the blades a bit on first wear.

Specialist boot polish may be obtained from boot manufacturers over the Internet or from specialist stockists. Liquiproof Leather Spray is also a great solution to protect leather soles and uppers. Clear hockey tape can be applied to boots to protect from damage from drags as a "sacrificial layer": a few pounds to protect the appearance of a multiple hundred pounds investment is a smart call.

5.3 Clothing

The young skater should take to the ice comfortably and warmly dressed without restriction of movement.

Leggings/tracksuit trousers with layered tops (base layers, t shirts, jacket) are ideal so that layers can be adapted as the skater warms up or cools down. Jeans would be inappropriate as they restrict movement and, once wet, will be very uncomfortable

Test costumes are usually kept quite plain, with understated styling and decoration.

There are strict rules covering clothing for NISA/ISU/IJS competitions.

At NISA/ISU/IJS Championships/competitions, the clothing of the competitors must be modest, dignified and appropriate for athletic competition – not garnish or theatrical in design, Clothing may, however, reflect the character of the music chosen.

- a) Ladies must wear a skirt. The ladies' dress must not give the effect of excessive nudity for an athletic sport. Men must wear full-length trousers; no tights are permitted and the costume must not be sleeveless. Accessories and props are not permitted.
- b) The Judges must penalize clothing not meeting the foregoing requirements by a deduction on their score.

This rule maybe subject to change and it is always best to check with a NISA official to ensure that you have the most accurate up to date information.

"Off the peg" skating clothing, if required, is available from rink retail outlets, specialist suppliers and the Internet. Dancewear shops may also be able to provide you with basic clothing for practice, such as leotards, training trousers, practice skirts, tights and leggings etc. They may also produce or know of a dressmaker who would provide

“one-off” costumes for competitions. These specialist dressmakers can also be found on the Internet.

Your local rink or club may also have a second hand system, where cheaper second hand clothes and costumes may be purchased.

5.4 Skate Camps and Skate Schools

Throughout the year a wide range of organisations will run skating camps, which will be based on discipline specific lines, and often overseas guest coaches will be used for the duration of the camp.

Individual ice rinks will also organise their own Summer schools or camps.

These can be numerous and may vary in the quality of content of the camp. As a parent you will need to discuss with your skater and coach which of these camp(s) will be beneficial for the development of your skater.

6 Selecting a coach

Some Coaches choose to teach more than one discipline, while others specialize in any one or a combination of disciplines (free skating, dance, pairs, synchronized, speed, choreography etc)

NISA coaches are registered under our National Coaching Certification Programme (NCCP) Coaches work to various levels, which reflect, ability, experience and achievement with the Level 1 being the entry level for coaches. Coaches are not allowed to receive remuneration for their services or teach without supervision until they reach Level 2. The higher the grade of the coach, the more they will charge.

- Level 1 Coach
- Level 2 Coach
- Level 3 Coach
- Level 4 Coach
- Level 5 Coach

Coaching is carried out on a professional basis and Coaches make their services available for a fee. NISA member professional coaches normally coach as their vocation, either on a full or part time basis.

When hiring a coach, your club or rink should be able to provide information about the coaches' ability to teach your child.

The Coach should be one with whom the skater feels comfortable as well as being one you both respect as an individual as well as a teacher.

The coach should treat your child with respect and should be one who is interested in your child's development as a person as well as a skater.

Regular meetings are important. Your coach should be approachable and never be afraid as parent to ask questions about your skater's development and progress. (Keep your Coach informed about educational commitments, financial constraints or other matters which impact on your skater's training.)

The best coach is the coach that is best for your skater as a person and helps them achieve their goals. The level of a coach does not mean that they will automatically be better for your child.

6.1 Lessons

The number of lessons your child will need depends on many factors including

- How fast your child progresses with new material
- How much the parent is willing to spend
- How much time the Coach has available
- How much ice time is available at the chosen rink
- How much practice is carried out by your child

Coaches give separate lessons for each discipline and each lesson lasts approximately 15 minutes. The cost per lesson varies with each coach due to qualifications and experience.

Group teaching is gaining acceptance and is used throughout the Skate UK programme for beginners through to the highest levels. Many coaches are now giving group lessons where appropriate and private lessons where needed. This makes optimum use of the coach's time and reduces costs to the skater's parents.

It is quite unusual for a skater to remain with the same Coach throughout his/her career.

Generally speaking, skaters seek specialised attention at different times for different reasons. **When, and if, the decision to change Coaches has been made**, certain common sense and ethical procedures should be followed:

- Notify the Coach of your decision privately
- Pay any outstanding account
- Seek a new Coach (informal and discrete enquiries in this area may start earlier)
- Be discrete and courteous throughout

Some Coaches have higher qualifications than others. **Ask about their qualifications** as well as other **related qualifications** such as their competitive record or Sport related qualifications.

Parents should ensure that their coach is a NISA qualified and currently affiliated coach and they have public liability insurance and a valid first aid certificate. NISA also has a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check for all our NISA registered coaches within the UK to help ensure your child's safety.

7.1 How the test structure works

A skater cannot progress into the Standard Test Structure until they have completed the relevant sections of the Skate UK Star Programme (Passport).

When a skater advances from Skate UK into the NISA Test Structure, he or she will be advised by their Coach of the intention to forward a test application to NISA. A completed application, signed by the Coach, together with the appropriate test fee, is forwarded by the applicant to NISA and a test date advised by the NISA Test Organiser is set.

A panel of between one and three judges, dependent on the test standard, mark the performance to a set of benchmark standards. Those skaters performing to the set standard are issued a Certificate by NISA and may then progress to the next test level. Those skaters who do not reach the set standard on the day may re-take the test with a waiting period of one month between the date of failure and the date of the re-test.

Your coach will have details of what your skater needs to achieve at each level of both the Standard and Competitive tests. Booklets are available to purchase from the NISA office.

Test application forms and requirements can be found on the NISA website.

8 What to expect on Test Day

The number of Judges depends on the standard of the test being undertaken:

- Up to Level 6 1 Judge
- Over Level 6: Must be 2 Judges
- Competitive Test
Must be 3 Judges

Probationary Judges may be present at any test, as part of their training.

Skaters will be advised a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of their test time and date.

Skaters should be at the rink in good time to allow for off-ice warm-up exercises to be completed and be appropriately dressed.

Most test days involve more than one test. Each skater will be allowed to “warm up” before taking his or her test.

Tests are observed by the Judges from the barrier and skaters should approach the Judges, following a test, only when requested to do so by the Judges.

Judges will announce their decision to the Skater and Coach at the time of completion of the test.

The order of skating, if more than one test is to be taken, will be available to the Coach and skater prior to the test.

Usually, only one discipline is chosen for each test day, as each discipline requires a specific Judging panel.

9 About Competitions

9.1 How a competition Runs

If and when your child chooses to enter competition, you will be exposed to a whole different aspect of skating.

Within the category your child enters, there will probably be several other skaters also competing. There will be a draw to fairly determine the order that the skaters will compete. If there are many skaters competing in the same category, a “draw” will take place and skaters be divided into groups of 4 to 6 so that warm-up groups do not become too large for safety. Programmes are also performed in the order of the draw.

Each group of skaters has a warm-up followed by each skater performing their programme in the order of the draw.

A panel of judges will mark each performance and an appropriate computer marking system calculates the marks and overall placing of each skater.

9.1 The International Judging System (IJS)

The 6.0 marking system had been used to judge skating competitions from the very beginning of ice-skating. For many parents, it is how they remember the scoring at events they watched as a child. However, times change and during the last few years there have been criticisms of the 6.0 system. This all came to a ‘head’ at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games when the controversy surrounding the result of the Pairs Competition raged a storm of protest at the very highest level of sport (IOC) resulting in a letter from the President of the IOC demanding change to the 6.0 marking system.

As a result the IJS was developed and approved for use for the past 15 years. The new system is a mere modern, statistically relevant, computer based system that not only has built in protection to assure proper results, but one that also generates **objectively auditable data to provide proof of anomalies in the judging.**

In addition, skaters and their coaches would also be made aware of how their individual performance has been marked. Following each segment a printout “Judges details for each skater” which indicates the base values of all the elements and the Grade of Execution (GOE) and the Points for the Programme Components from every judge in a random sequence without any reference to the specific judge’s names, will be issued.

In every programme judges award a point score for each element the skater or couple performs, according to a published scale of values. Points are added or subtracted by the judge depending on the quality of the execution of the element. These points are combined to form the Total Element Score. At the end of the programme skaters are awarded additional points for presentational aspects of their performance

(Programme Components). The Total Element Score and Programme Component Score are added to create a total. Totals for the two programmes (three in ice dance) are added together to arrive at the Final Score and the highest score wins.

9.2 The qualifying Process for Championships

Qualification criteria may occasionally change from year to year. It is important that you check all of the up to date information which is always included on our website or in the official Ice Link publication. Please ensure that you have the correct information before your child commences any programme of work towards a British Championship.

9.3 Championships

Championships are held each year Competition is offered in singles, pairs and ice dance at the Novice, Advanced Novice, junior, and senior levels. Solo ice dance is competed at novice, primary, junior, intermediate and senior. Synchronised Championships are also held each year

10 National Squads

NISA operate a national squad structure consisting of

- British Squad
- Development Squad
- Junior Development Squad
- Regional Development Squad

Membership of National Squad follows a selection criteria and is based on competition performance and an on-going monitoring process.

NISA organise: -

- Specialist training camps
- Coaching
- International, competitive opportunities
- Monitoring
- Funding assistance
- Medical and sports science services

In partnership with: -

- British Olympic Association,
- Sport England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Sports Aid
- World Class Performance Funding

11 Child Protection

NISA takes the issue of Child Protection extremely seriously. The welfare of the Child is paramount at all times.

NISA has a Child Protection Policy and Procedures for each of the Home Countries.

If you are at all concerned about the welfare of your child, please contact NISA for a copy of our procedures or alternatively visit our website www.iceskating.org.uk

Never be afraid of raising concerns no matter how trivial they may seem at the time.

SAMPLE SKATING BUDGET FORM

Name of skater

Budget period

INCOME SOURCES	ACTUAL FOR PRIOR YEAR £	CURRENT BUDGET £
Parents/Family		
Skater part-time employment		
Donations		
Sponsorships		
Performance/Appearance fees		
Loans		
Others		
TOTAL INCOME		
EXPENSES – On-Ice Training		
Club/Academy Membership Fee		
Ice Costs		
Coaching/lessons		
Skates		
Blade sharpening		
Costumes (training and competitive)		
Music (consultation and production)		
Test Fees		

EXPENSES – Off-Ice Training		
Gym Membership fees		
Training Gear (shoes, clothing etc)		
Lessons/classes (dance, ballet etc)		
EXPENSES – Competition		
Entry fees for competitions		
Travel to competitions		
Meals during competitions		
Accommodation during competitions		
Coach expenses at competitions		
EXPENSES – Medical/Sport Science		
Physiotherapy		
Chiropractor fees		
Massage fees		
Nutrition consultation		
Fitness consultation		
Sport psychology consultation		
EXPENSES – Transportation		
Fuel, bus fare etc		
Any Other Expenses		
TOTAL EXPENSES		
TOTAL INCOME		
DIFFERENCE	£	£