

## FIGURE SKATING PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

Skaters may choose the STARSkate Program, learning core figure skating skills and taking tests at organized test sessions. STARSkaters may also choose to enter competitions (known as non-qualifying events). Other skaters may wish to enter the Skate Canada Competitive Program, try their hand at synchronized skating or participate as an adult figure skating member.

### (1) STARSKATE PROGRAM:

The Skate Canada STARSkate Program offers opportunities for skaters to develop basic to advanced skating skills in four different areas: Interpretive, Dance, Free Skating, and Skating Skills which are then grouped into the following levels:

#### PRIMARY LEVEL TESTS

- Skating Skills: Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- Free Skating: Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- Dance: Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- Interpretive: Introductory

#### INTERMEDIATE LEVEL TESTS

- Skating Skills: Senior Bronze, Junior Silver
- Free Skating: Senior Bronze, Junior Silver
- Dance: Senior Bronze, Junior Silver
- Interpretive: Bronze

#### SENIOR LEVEL TESTS

- Skating Skills: Senior Silver, Gold
- Free Skating: Senior Silver, Gold
- Dance: Senior Silver, Gold, Diamond
- Interpretive: Silver, Gold

**ORDER OF TESTS** - A candidate for a test must have passed all of the preceding tests in the same category in each of the disciplines. For example, a skater must pass the Preliminary Skating Skills test prior to attempting the Junior Bronze Skating Skills test. There are two exceptions. Free Skate tests can be taken in parts (elements and program). For example, a skater must pass Junior Bronze elements part in order to progress to the Senior Bronze elements. This skater is not required to pass

the equivalent program portion to progress. Also, in the Competitive Test Program, skaters can begin testing at any level.

**EVALUATION OF TESTS** - A single evaluator assesses all the tests in the Skate Canada STARSkate Program. Evaluators are trained to apply set standards to the Skate Canada test being taken and assess if the candidate has mastered the required skills in order to progress to the next level. All Skate Canada STARSkate tests are evaluated on a scale that includes needs improvement, satisfactory, good and excellent. Each test has its own specifications as to what must be performed at a satisfactory or better level in order to pass the test.

**COMPOSITION OF TESTS** - The following section outlines the composition of each of the Skate Canada tests. For detailed information (e.g. listing of elements for free skate tests or dance patterns) please refer to Section 4000 of the Skate Canada Rulebook.

**SKATING SKILLS TESTS** - The Skating Skills program consists of six levels beginning with the Preliminary Skating Skills Test and ending with the Gold Skating Skills Test. A Skating Skills exercise is a combination of fundamental skating movements, executed on a pattern and skated solo. The movements are derived from compulsory figures, free skating and ice dancing. Each exercise is unique and focuses on various technical abilities, in a logical progression from Preliminary to Gold.

**FREE SKATING TESTS** - There are six free skating test levels in the Skate Canada STARSkate Program: Preliminary, Junior Bronze, Senior Bronze, Junior Silver, Senior Silver and Gold. Each test level consists of Elements in Isolation and a Free Program, which can be tested separately.

**Elements** - The Elements in Isolation part of the Free Skate tests consists of stroking exercises, jump and spin elements, field movements and step sequences. At the request of the evaluator, a maximum of four elements in isolation in Free Skating tests may be reskated once if necessary to pass. In all cases, the better attempt shall be counted. The candidate may elect to reskate an unsuccessful element immediately or at the end of that portion of the test.

On each of the six free skate tests, all stroking exercises must be assessed as Satisfactory or better in order to pass that portion of the test.

A skater must pass the previous Elements test part in order to progress to the next Elements test part, but does not require the equivalent Free Program test part to proceed to the next Elements test part.

**Free Program** - The Free Program portion of the test is a program of specified length, set to music of the candidate's choice. The program must contain certain elements (successfully completed) in order to pass

the test. For a detailed listing of the requirements for each test level, please refer to the Skate Canada Technical Handbook.

A skater must pass the previous Free Program test part in order to progress to the next Free Program test part, but does not require the equivalent Elements test part to proceed to the next Free Program test part.

**DANCE TESTS** - Consisting of seven levels of tests, the Dance Test Program teaches timing, musicality, rhythm interpretation, structure as well as basic skating skills such as edges, flow, control and unison.

The dances in the STARSkate Program can be tried in any order but a candidate must pass the required number of dances in a dance test before proceeding to the next level. In addition to the compulsory dances, there are also Creative Dance tests, which can be taken in place of compulsory dances at certain levels. Creative Dances were introduced into the testing program on July 1, 2003, and replaced the Dance Variation, Bronze Rhythm, and Silver and Gold Interpretive Dance tests.

For tests, a couple shall be comprised of a male and a female, each skating their own steps. In the event that a female candidate is unable to secure a male partner, another female skating the male's steps may partner her. This is also allowed in the Creative Dance tests. If, however, both skaters are candidates for one of these tests (i.e. Creative Dance), the applicable test needs to be skated twice, once for each partner to be assessed (or, if two evaluators are used, the dance may be performed once with each skater being assessed by a different evaluator). A female can skate the man's steps and receive credit for a dance test apart from the credit received for performing the female steps (i.e. dance tests may be taken more than once). If the skater elects to take a dance doing the partners steps, this must be noted on the test sheet.

The American Waltz and Keats Foxtrot (Junior Silver), Blues and Kilian (Senior Silver), Quickstep and Silver Samba (Gold) may be performed solo or with a partner. No dances are designated to have a mandatory solo. An evaluator may request a solo in order to determine if the candidate was relying on the assistance of the partner to a great extent, to verify knowledge of steps, pattern or timing or to assess basic dance skills. When an evaluator requests a solo, it does not mean that a skater is automatically going to fail that particular test – it provides an additional opportunity for the skater to prove his/her readiness for the next level. It is important to note that an evaluator may not request a solo for the Preliminary and Diamond dance tests or a candidate who is 25 years of age or older.

For detailed information on patterns and dance steps, please refer to Skate Canada Technical Handbook.

INTERPRETIVE TESTS - Interpretive skating was introduced into the Skate Canada STARSkate program in order to encourage creativity and movement to music, and to provide an opportunity for those skaters wishing to explore the performance aspect of skating without focusing on technical elements.

Skaters can take tests as individuals or as a couple (male/female, female/female, male/male) at the following levels: Introductory, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

There is no age requirement to try Interpretive tests and vocal music is permitted.

## (2) COMPETITIONS FOR SKATE CANADA STARSKATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

Although a skater may choose not to participate in the Skate Canada Competitive Program, they still want the opportunity to test their skills in a competition situation. Skate Canada offers several opportunities to do this.

Club Competitions - Clubs offer competitions for their members to compete against each other. The club determines the categories which generally follow Skate Canada STARSkate Test Program guidelines (e.g. length of program, category name, type of event offered etc.) The club may also offer other creative events such as longest shoot-the-duck, theater events, similar pairs etc.

Interclub/STARSkate Competitions - These are organized events involving a number of clubs in the same region or area. Categories offered generally fall in line with applicable Skate Canada Section specifications so that all Interclubs within the Section are standardized (this allows for a Section final which most Sections offer). For further information regarding these events, refer to the Section to which you belong. The STARSkate Championship Program was developed to provide opportunities for skaters who wish to remain in the STARSkate program but want to have the challenge of competing potentially to a sectional or provincial level in a credible, nationally standardized program. For more information on this program go on-line at [www.skatecanada.ca](http://www.skatecanada.ca) or contact the Skating Programs Department at the National Office 1.888.747.2372.

Invitational Competitions – These events are coordinated and offered by a Section or Club(s) generally to test and competitive skaters (separate events offered). Most events fall within Skate Canada specifications (e.g. program length, eligibility etc.), but you should always check the competition announcement (the listing of specific information published for that particular event) to verify requirements.

### (3) COMPETITIVE PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

GENERAL INFORMATION - The Skate Canada Competitive Program can be fun and challenging for athletes seeking to hone their skills in a competitive environment. From the Juvenile to Senior level, there are several opportunities throughout the season to participate in competitive events. While progression to higher levels of competition, and increased proficiencies are the ultimate goal, skaters, parents and coaches alike should never lose sight of what is truly important – the personal growth and development of the athlete.

The Skate Canada Competitive Program is comprised of the following:

- Qualifying Event Structure (Singles, Pairs and Ice Dance)

### (4) CANADIAN QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS:

The Skate Canada Competitive Program offers nationally standardized competitions to competitive skaters. These competitions are the stepping stones to other Skate Canada programs such as the National Teams and the World and Olympic teams. Skaters competing in Canadian qualifying competitions do so at Pre-Novice, Novice, Junior and Senior events in Singles, Pairs and Dance disciplines.

ELIGIBILITY – Skaters competing in Canadian qualifying competitions must meet specific eligibility requirements. Each event and each discipline requires that skaters have passed specific test(s) in order to be eligible to compete. Entry level to Learn to Compete is the Junior Bronze test. Entry level for train to compete is Gold test.

SUB-SECTIONALS – These competitions are the first of the Skate Canada qualifying competitions and championships. In some Sections, these competitions are called “Regionals”. Sub-Sectionals are held in various areas of a Section. Skaters placing at the top of each Sub-Sectional event advances to the next Canadian qualifying competition; the Skate Canada Sectional Championships (the number of skaters/teams qualifying for Sectionals is under the jurisdiction of each Section).

SECTIONALS – Sections hold Sectional Championships in the fall of each year. For those Sections who do not have Sub-Sectionals, skaters/teams may enter their respective Sectional Championship directly. Skaters/teams placing in the top four (top eight in Quebec) of each Pre-Novice, Novice, Junior, and Senior Sectional Championship event are named to compete in the Skate Canada Challenge competition.

CHALLENGE EVENTS – The Skate Canada Challenge event is held in late November-early December. Pre-Novice, Novice, Junior and Senior are grouped together into one division. A Pre-Novice National Champion is declared at the combined Challenge event for each discipline. In the Novice, Junior and Senior categories, the top 18 Singles, 12 Pairs and 15 Dance couples progress on to Canadians.

The selection of skaters/teams advancing to the Canadian Figure Skating Championships is based on the maximum number of competitors allotted for the relevant event with priority given to those competitors who have received an automatic or individual bye.

CANADIANS – This is the final event in the qualifying event structure. Novice, Junior and Senior skaters/teams may advance to Canadians. Based on performances at the Canadian Figure Skating Championships, skaters may be selected to be on the National, World, Junior World and/or Olympic teams. This Championship is held in January of each year and is the most prestigious competition of the Canadian qualifying event structure.

For more information on the qualifying competitions and championships, please contact your section Office or the Skate Canada National Office 1.888.747.2372.