

Hello again!

Well, what a busy time it has been since our last newsletter.

It seems an age ago now that we had our second annual awards ceremony, which was a very glamorous affair again. With everyone who attended having a great time. Well done to all those who were nominated or won a category (the results of which can be seen on our website).

We have also had our first in house field moves competition on 11th February. It was really good to see so many new faces being brave enough to give it a go, and we hope you enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to your next chance. That will be on March 11th, when we will be having a free dance competition. Details and entry forms will be coming out shortly so watch at the Club night Desk!

It was also nice to see so many skaters make the effort to follow competition dress code (if you're not sure what that is we have a short article in this newsletter that should help).

A group from the club recently when on a trip to see the latest Holiday on Ice production 'Spirit', which was a truly magical show, we have a short review by one of our skaters.

We also have some interesting information about two of our club skaters, past and present, so read on and enjoy.



"What shall I wear?"

A guide to competition dress code

Those skaters who are now experienced enough to be starting their NISA testing will already know that it is always handy to have a 'little back dress' in your skating wardrobe. Why? Because all NISA tests are required to be completed in a plain black dress.

In order to get our skaters used to this, we encourage all skaters entering our test style competitions (Field and Element) to dress accordingly wherever possible. If you

are unable to obtain a dress then it is preferred that you wear a black t-shirt and black leggings (no shorts please). Obviously boys should wear black trousers and a black top.

Free competitions are a little bit more colourful. As with a real free competition, skaters are allowed to wear a dress (for girls) and trousers/top (for boys) that are appropriate to the theme/style of their music. These should be skating outfits NOT fancy dress (that's for hot ice).

So now you know, we hope that those wardrobe dilemmas will be a thing of the past and you will be able to step out on the ice in style and confidence!

Dress Sales

Remember that we will try to have both new and second hand dress sales on a regular basis (check our ice rink notice board and the website for the next date). This will hopefully help all our skaters find a suitable outfit at a sensible price.

Dress Sale - Thursday 25th February

during club times



Bev Leahy (Love2Skate) is a local dress maker who also has a daughter who skates. She makes many of Swindon skaters' dresses and will make a dress to your own design or will design one for you. All outfits are individually made to order.

Lots of skating accessories will be available to buy.

www.love2skate.co.uk




Diary Dates:

11 th March	Club Free Dance Competition
8 th April	Fun Night
13 th May	Club Elements Competition

Isabella Larkin - British Ladies Novice Champion 2009/2010

Bella is SIFC's top skater who beat over 30 other skaters to win the title of British Ladies Novice Champion last November. I put some questions to her to give everyone an idea of how at the age of 13 she managed to get to this stage.

 **How old were you when you first went on the ice and can you remember what it was like?**

I was nine months when I first went on the ice so I don't really remember anything.

 **When and where did you start competing?**

I was four when I did my first competition and it was in Hull. I remember having to get up really early because it was so far away.

 **What do you like most and hate most about ice skating?**


I can't say I really hate anything about skating. I love jumping on the ice and also competing.

 **What have you had to give up to skate?**


I think I'm lucky because I don't have to give up much apart from sleepovers and going to bed late before a competition.

 **Do you get nervous before you compete and how do you cope with it?**

I don't often get that nervous at competitions apart from big ones like the championships. I always try and think back to my best performance and how I felt after.

 **What off ice activities do you do to help your skating?**


I go to the gym once a week with my personal trainer, Les, and do a lot of stretching at home to improve my flexibility. Also I go to a group class on a Friday to do off ice jumping, flexibility and circuits.

 **What do you do to relax?**

I love to go shopping at the weekend with friends, the cinema or just watching TV at home.

 **What is your favourite jump?**

I love the double flip and double loop.

 **How many hours do you train on ice each week?**


I train around ten hours on ice in a week, sometimes more before a competition.

 **How did you feel when you realised you were the British Ladies Novice Champion?**

It kind of took weeks to sink in because it was my goal for so long. I was really pleased that all my work had paid off.

 **What was it like doing your first international competition?**

It was quite scary because you don't know anybody and nobody knows you. You have to make the judges know who you are because they are marking you.

 **What would you like to do in the future, what is your dream?**

I would love to win the Olympics one day. I would also like to be in skating shows.

Interview by Vicky Jackson

Holiday on Ice gives a 'Spirited Show!

On Saturday 13th February 2010, a group of SIFC skaters and their parents went to Cardiff to see the new Holiday on Ice show.

Called Spirit of the World, it is a dazzling whirlwind journey from Ireland, across to the east and further around again to the USA.

We saw some amazing costumes (my favourites were the Chinese lions)

and props including some brilliant floating Chinese kites, and group numbers in the dark where the skaters costumes glowed! The skaters included single free skaters (with amazing jumps), pairs (with wonderful lifts) and even some great syncro group moves! One male skater even did the daring back flip at the end - wow!

The show did not just stay on the ice! The skaters were hoping on and off around the edge of the ice and into the audience, as well as doing amazing aerial wire work. We even had a man doing a gymnastic aerial ribbon display, wrapping himself in and out and around the two large ribbons that draped down to the ice.

Coach Lesley said she thought it was even better than last year... and I think I have to agree! It was a brilliant day out and I'm already looking forward to next year's.

By Carlin Bowles

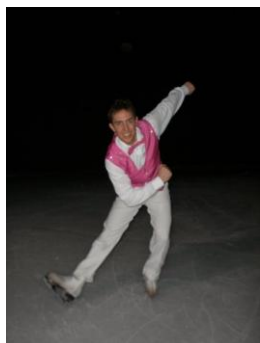
Spirit
OF THE WORLD



Guest Coach Profile -

David Ings

We hope that you all enjoyed working with your guest coach David Ings on the 3rd February, but we realise that some of our newer members might not actually know who this lovely man is, so I spent a little time with him on an interview and here's his skating story so far...



David was originally born in Ely, Cambridge on the 28th December 1973 and a while after moved with his family to Bristol. His love of skating actually surfaced at the age of 8½, when he went to a friend's ice skating birthday party. "I was actually no good then" he laughed "but thought that it was fun and decided to have lessons to get better."

So David started having lessons at the Bristol rink and was soon working with Sue Edwards who originally gave David his "love of skating". David was soon improving well and thoroughly enjoyed his new sport (although to this point had not taken any skating tests!).

During this time David's father was working in the RAF and was commuting from Bristol to Lyneham every day, eventually this become too much for all so the family moved to live on the Lyneham Campus and David started school at Wootton Bassett. About the same time his coach Sue had decided that she had taken David as far as she could on his skating journey and suggested to him that he should work with our very own Lesley Norfolk-Pearce at the Link Centre rink. As his sister Kay was already skating there this seemed like a plan, so David approached Lesley and a new partnership was formed.

By this time David was 10½ years old, so Lesley pointed out that some serious decisions needed to be made with regards to training and tests. A lot of hard work was ahead if they were to get David ready for future British Championships in time. Lesley asked him "what do you want to do?" The decision was made to "go for it"! So training went into top gear, 5 days a week, 6am-8am each morning, and the tests and competitions came thick and fast.

1990 was David's big turning point as this was when he placed 3rd in the Junior British Championships, and was invited to join the Junior GB Team. This was an education

in many ways, including a trip to Poland where the snow and freezing temperatures of -10 to -15 left David and coach Lesley sleeping in their jackets as it was so cold. It was also a time where people were still seen queuing for even basics like bread, and eye opener for David.

In 1991 Lesley introduced a new discipline into David's life by pairing him with another skater called Zoe Jones. Both talented single skaters this new approach, for just one season, helped to strengthen both their skating abilities and brought them 3rd in the pairs Junior Championships.

Whilst skating in Swindon David was involved with many of the Christmas shows and pantos that used to be put on at the Link every year in those days. It was a great time and fun as well working with skaters of all ages! (I hear on the grape vine that David made a lovely Prince Charming!) On a more serious note these shows were a great help in building David's showmanship which was put to good use later in his career.

David's most memorable programme that he skated in competition was to Bizet's Carmen, "Even now people remember and recall it as one of my best" he said.

Although ironically he skated this programme in his Senior Men's competition and placed 3rd, "Had I landed all my triples, I could of won" he remembered "but never be disappointed with a result in life as long you know you put the work in".

Whilst still an amateur, David became good friends with his strongest competitors Steven Cousins and John Martin. This led to some work in Charity Galas and Skating Schools in Aberdeen. "The schools were great" David smiled "as I enjoy passing on my knowledge to younger skaters".

For various reasons, David's last season as a competitive skater was actually with Karen Barber and her husband Stephen Pickavance up in Blackburn - once again David took the Bronze medal in the 1995 British Championships, and won the Scottish Championships in 1996. He narrowly missed out on the World Championships.

Whilst busy training, David had also been busy working in various shops and at the Link Centre itself to help pay his way. Once his competitive era was coming to an end, David was offered a coaching job at the then brand new Planet Ice in Birmingham. He again enjoyed passing on his

knowledge to new skaters and busied himself in between with more Galas and Exhibitions.

It was only the news that NISA was to bring back its special 'Gold Star' free skating test that enticed David back to Swindon. He couldn't resist the idea of taking this top test and got in touch with Lesley again, the decision was... "Let's do it!".

David then travelled back and forth between Birmingham and Swindon in order to train with Lesley, once ready he passed a flawless Gold Star test back again at the Swindon Link Centre.



Beyond the competitions and tests, David went on to star in many wonderful ice shows around the world. From Blackpool to Hong Kong (and several cruise liners

in between). From the outside he had what looks to be a glamorous life, but this can be far from the truth. "It's a lot of hard work" he wants young skaters to know, "in Hong Kong we had a contract for 16 days with no time off" he remembered. "We started at 10am in the morning and worked solidly until 11.30 at night, then home for food and bed before starting the same again the next day. It was just like the film 'Ground Hog Day' where every day was the same. It's definitely not glamorous behind the scenes."

On the plus side whilst David was working hard on the tiny ice pads on the Caribbean cruise liners, he did get to see all the beautiful islands and enjoy some wonderful sun and sea.

During his show days David's hardest trick that he did was the notorious Back Flip! "This took 6 months of hard work, with coach Peter Moreland running up and down the ice with me in harness" David smiled. Whilst this was a spectacular sight in a show it took its toll on David's body, he fell during a Holiday on Ice performance, "once was enough" he winced, but eventually he fell again whilst performing this daring back flip and damaged his knee. After 4 months off the ice he decided to be a "smart man" and gave up this difficult and dangerous move.

As well as seeing some interesting places and working hard, David also made some good friends during these times.

Some of those he still keeps in touch with we will recognise from Dancing on Ice! Fred, Mel, Daniel, Andre and Suzie! Even the new boy Matthew (currently dancing with Danielle) was a roommate of David's.

As well as good friends, David also met his lovely future wife Ashley. She is a trained dancer and was actually tap dancing (on a special island) in the middle of the ice during a number that David was skating in. This was in Phantasialand in Germany.

What's in the future? David and Ashley will soon be moving to New York where they plan to work together coaching new skaters both on and off the ice in the sport and art of skating and dancing on ice. "Once a performer, always a performer" David smiles.

During my time interviewing David, it became clear to me that he is not only very keen to pass on his love of skating and performing to the new generation of skaters, but that he is also very keen for them to know that "hard work is the key" and that you should "never be disappointed with a result in life as long you know you put the work in".

David would also like to thank Lesley for all her hard work and effort on his behalf, along with the Link and its staff, the council for their sponsorship and of course his wonderful parents and sister Kay.

David and Ashley are about to start their new life in New York by first getting married here in England on 1st March 2010, and I'm sure you will join us in wishing them all the very best on their special day and for their life together. We'd also like to thank him for his invaluable visits as a guest coach, and hope that he will be able to come visit us again in the future.

