



Building life skills & friendship, creating confidence & achievement  
through the skating experience for a lifetime.

**CanSkate**

## HANDBOOK 2015-2016

This Handbook is your introduction to the people and programs at Owen Sound Skating Club for the 2015-2016 Season – our 77<sup>th</sup> season!

You'll find useful information here whether you're a skater or a parent, and whether you're a newcomer or already involved with the OSSC.

We've also provided some of the basics for those who may be new to figure skating.

Stay Connected! We have many different ways you can stay connected with the OSSC. You can visit our web site at [www.skateowensound.com](http://www.skateowensound.com), you can follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/skateowensound](http://www.facebook.com/skateowensound)) and Twitter @skateowensound for the latest news and information about Club activities and events, as well as news highlights from the skating world in Canada and Internationally.

Information in this Handbook is subject to change and is not an official statement of Club policy. Any one of our Board of Directors will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Welcome to the Owen Sound Skating Club!

Updated September 2015.

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# President's Welcome

On behalf of the Owen Sound Skating Club Board of Directors and Coaches, I wish to extend a warm welcome back to our existing members, and a huge welcome to our new members!

We are looking forward to a great season of skating in 2015/2016. A few seasons ago The Board took some time to consider its' many responsibilities to skaters, coaches and parents. One request that came out of discussions was a request for information. This is what we have developed as a result of those discussions. This handbook was created from input from many different sources such as coaches, skaters, parents, and the Board of Directors. We know that we cannot possibly give all the information for every situation in this handbook, but we feel it is a well- rounded guide to the most frequently asked questions that parents and skaters have when starting out in figure skating.

In this handbook you will find information pertaining to programs that we offer, how to select a coach, how the STARSkate program works, competitions, test days, ice etiquette, and codes of conduct, just to name a few. This will be a document that will be constantly evolving and updated at least once a year, prior to the beginning of each new season. If there is information that you feel would be beneficial to the handbook that is currently missing, please contact any Board Member, or email us at [owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com](mailto:owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com).

For information regarding Club activities, ice time changes, cancellations and upcoming events watch for our newsletters, regular updates on our bulletin board in the lobby and visit our \*NEW\* website [www.skateowensound.com](http://www.skateowensound.com)

Feel free to contact myself, a board member, or email us at [owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com](mailto:owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com) if you have any concerns or questions. Thank you for choosing the Owen Sound Skating Club.

Wishing you a very successful skating year,

Natalie Murray

President, OSSC

## Owen Sound Skating Club Board of Directors 2015-2016

The Owen Sound Skating Club is run by a group of dedicated volunteers. We are always looking for new members to help out in any capacity. If you are interested in joining the Board of Directors, please contact a Board member, or email us at [owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com](mailto:owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com)

### Executive Members

President: Natalie Murray	519-372-7774
Past President: Kim Burns	519-372-2946
Vice President: Vacant	
Treasurer: Trish Watson	trish.watson@gmail.com
Secretary: Vacant	
Test Chair: Pam Morton	519.372.1389
Coaches Representative: Shari Wright	519.377.0515
Membership Services Coordinator: Peggy Pratt	519.372.1126
Director at Large: Georgina Dimakos	416.953.2641

### Committee Chairs

Canskate Liason: Peggy Pratt	
Shooting Stars Liaison: Vacant	
Ice Captain: Kim Burns	
Dance Partnering: Debbie Hargrave	
Social/Publicity: Vacant	
Fundraising: Kathy Cameron	519-371-7961
Website Coordinator: Natalie Murray	

# Owen Sound Skating Club Programs

OSSC has a variety of skating programs to suit all skill levels.

We have an extensive Learn to Skate Program (Pre CanSkate, CanSkate, & Shooting Stars) which transitions easily into the STARSkate Program, which skaters test and compete both inside and outside the Club.

We also offer CanPowerSkate programs for those skaters who are wish to improve their hockey/ringette skills.

Below you will find a more detailed description of what each program offers and how best to choose the right program for your skater.

## **Pre CanSkate & CanSkate**

CanSkate is Skate Canada's flagship learn-to-skate program for beginners of any age and teaches fundamental movement and basic skills. The skills are arranged in progressions, from very simple to more complex. Each stage has a primary focus. Once the skills on each stage are mastered, a badge is awarded.

Lessons are given in a group format and led by an NCCP certified professional coach. Professional Coaches are assisted by trained Program Assistants (P.A.'s), which are usually the Senior Skaters in our club. The coach to student ratio is a maximum of 1 : 10. Skaters progress at their own rate and coaches make session active using teaching aids, music and a wide variety of activities that create a fun environment and promote learning.

Should you require further details, please contact the CanSkate Director, Shari Wright, and she will be happy to explain the CanSkate program in more detail, or you can go our website [www.skateowensound.com](http://www.skateowensound.com) or Skate Canada's website [www.skatecanada.ca](http://www.skatecanada.ca) for more details.

A CSA approved skating helmet is **mandatory** for entry onto the ice. We strongly recommend cages for the helmet. **Bicycle helmets are not permitted.**

For the full explanation of each level in the CanSkate program, please refer to our website, under the CanSkate link.

Pre CanSkate Program: Tuesday: 6:00-6:30, Saturday: 10:55-11:25am

CanSkate Program: Tuesday: 6:30-7:20pm; Saturday: 11:25am-12:20pm

At the first few sessions of CanSkate there will be a newsletter available that will include a welcome from our CanSkate Director, Shari Wright, some reminders, and a calendar. Throughout the season we will have some "fun" sessions with the kids. Please check on the calendar for those special session dates. Reminders will be sent out via email to parents/guardians.

Our CanSkate Director will also hold a parent meeting within the first three weeks of the session starting. Shari will go over general housekeeping items, explain any upcoming events (i.e. local competitions that the skaters can participate in), talk about report cards/testing and field questions that parents may have.

We also have two Family & Friend Skates during our season. Our first one usually takes place the last Saturday prior to Christmas break, and we always have a very special elf in a red suit join us on the ice! The second one is generally scheduled for the last Saturday of our season, either at the end of February or beginning of March. We welcome parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, relatives to join us on these sessions, however please note that **all participants**, regardless of age or skating ability, must wear a CSA approved helmet (i.e. a hockey helmet), as per Skate Canada rules. **No bicycle helmets will be permitted.** Prior to stepping on the ice, any person who is not a registered member of the OSSC will be required to sign an attendance sheet. This is required by Skate Canada for insurance purposes.

### **CanPowerSkate Program**

CanPowerSkate Program is an action-packed, high energy instructional power skating program geared to hockey and ringette skaters that focuses on balance, power agility, speed and endurance. Skills, techniques and conditioning drills are taught in a progressive format that emphasizes how the skills apply to game situations. CanPowerSkate provides an alternative to figure skating and is an excellent complement for those athletes playing on hockey or ringette teams. Its unique skill award program provides incentives and motivation for skaters to continue to achieve. The CanPowerSkate Coach, Denise Reid, will be able to explain the CanPowerSkate Program in more detail.

Wednesday: Junior Session 6:00-6:50pm; Intermediate 7:00-7:50pm Senior Session 8:00-8:50pm

### **Shooting Stars**

The Shooting Stars program is designed to transition CanSkaters from the learn-to-skate session into the figure skating, STARSkate program. Skaters are still taught CanSkate skills, but are also introduced at this level to ice dance, free skate, skating skills and stroking. Typically these skaters are working on Stage 5 of the CanSkate program. These skaters are identified by the CanSkate Director as ones who have a keen interest in furthering their skating ability in the sport of figure skating .

Skaters are encouraged at this level to being working independently when not in group lesson to develop stronger concentration skills and improve on the skills learned in group lessons.

This session provides 30 minutes of group instruction with two qualified Skate Canada Coaches, plus a 15 minute stroking session with the Preliminary/Intermediate Skaters. The remaining time is spent working independently. Skater's who wish to have more one-on-one instruction, can hire a private coach for a 15 minute lesson. Parents must arrange private lesson directly with the coach. The OSSC is not involved with the coach selection for private lessons. The parents are responsible for payment of fees directly to coach for any private lessons.

There are two Shooting Stars sessions per week. Monday 4:30-5:30pm; Saturday 9:50am-10:50am .

## **STARSkate Program**

STARSkate stands for **S**kills, **T**ests, **A**chievement, **R**ecognition – this is what STARSkate is all about! STARSkate offers opportunities for skaters of all ages to develop fundamental figure skating skills in the areas of ice dance, skating skills, freeskate and interpretive skating. Unique in Canada, this program teaches figure skating skills in a group and/or private lesson format in a progressive and sequential manner and includes specifically designed awards and incentives. Skaters have the opportunity to take Skate Canada Tests through a nationally standardized testing system.

The STARSkate program offers an opportunity for skaters to compete at local invitational competitions (Ice Dreams) and also at the annual Central Ontario Section competition.

There are three levels for STARSkate participants in our Club. Preliminary, Intermediate and Senior. They are divided by the tests that have been passed in the STARSkate program.

# Clothing & Equipment

## Clothing

No matter what the weather is outside, it's always cool inside the rink. Young skaters should dress for warmth – a sweater and gloves will make practicing more comfortable and enjoyable. Skaters may like to have an outer shell or jacket that they can take off once they're warmed up.

Hair should be tied back and off the face. Please refrain from using bobby pins, as they may fall on the ice and cause an accident.

## Helmets

All Skate Canada member clubs and skating schools who offer a CanSkate program must ensure that all CanSkate participants up to and including Stage 5 must wear a CSA approved hockey helmet while on the ice, **bicycle helmets are not permitted.**

The following are some guidelines when purchasing a new CSA approved hockey helmet.

- ✓ Should fit snugly without constricting the head
- ✓ The front of the helmet should cover about half the forehead and come down over the sideburns even with the cheekbones
- ✓ Top of the head should be completely covered with protection extending to the back of the head, just above the hairline where the neck and head meet
- ✓ Manufacturers have specific sizing measurements for each helmet model, so check sizing charts for correct fit

## Skates

### Buying New Skates

Buying proper skates for your child is very important. Even at the CanSkate level, improperly fitted skates can cause blisters, bunions, ankle and knee problems. When your child is getting fitted for skates, remember these basic guidelines:

- ✓ Never buy skates more than ½ size larger than the foot measures. Make sure that you can squeeze no more than one finger down the back of the boot when it is on the child's foot. If the boot is slightly too big, a thick insole will make the boot comfortable and decrease the chance of blistering.
- ✓ Make sure your skater can stand securely in the boot. If the ankle is tilting to the one side, the boot is too big or too small or there is not enough support for their weight. We

recommend that you do not “shim” the skate. This involves placing a riser in the boot so the skater’s ankle does not tilt to one side.

- ✓ Molded plastic skates should be avoided because the plastic ends up controlling the foot. These skates are so inflexible that skaters will have problems bending their knees and hanging flexion of the ankles. In addition the plastic gets very cold and stiff on the ice, making the skater’s feet cold.
- ✓ Skates should fit snugly around the ankle and heel with some room to wiggle the toes. The tongue should be well padded and wide enough to cover the front of the ankle and stay in place.
- ✓ Have your child walk around in the skates off the ice; they should feel comfortable. If not, those skates are not the ones for your child
- ✓ Remember to get the skates sharpened before coming to the rink!

### **Buying used skates and blades:**

Good used skates can be okay for your child, especially in the beginning stages. If you do buy used skates, you may have to know a bit about the brand and model of the boot and blades you purchase. If unsure, contact Shari Wright (CanSkate Director) about suggestions on what to look for. Sometimes skaters within the OSSC have skates that they are willing to sell that they have outgrown. Frequently a good used boot and blade set is better than an inexpensive, lower quality new skate. Many skate companies have a website that describes an appropriate boot/blade combo for a particular level of skating.

Whether you are purchasing a new pair of skates, or a good used pair, the OSSC recommends the following reputable businesses who specialize in skates.

- 1 Garb & Gear - Downtown Owen Sound (hockey and entry level figure skates)
- 2 Edee’s Skates Plus Dancewear – 1180 Wallace Ave North, Listowel, ON. (figure skates)
- 3 The Figure Skating Boutique – 6174 Young Street, Toronto, ON (figure skates)
- 4 RIM Park Pro Shop – 2001 University Avenue, Waterloo, ON

The businesses listed above have well trained staff, who are experts in fitting skates properly, as well as carrying a selection of good used skates for purchase.

### **Sharpening of Figure Skates**

The sharpening of skates is very important. A dull blade can dramatically impact the quality of skating for your child. Be very careful where you go to get your skates sharpened. A hockey grind is very different than a figure skating grind, and the stone used to sharpen is also very different. A figure skating blade has various rockers (curves of the blade), depending on the level of the skater. The bottom pick should NOT be removed – the pick is a part of the design of the figure skates and is essential to proper balance.

It is suggested that you see a professional skate sharpener that will be the proper grind level for your skater. Skates should be sharpened after 15-20 hours of skating. The OSSC recommends you take your child's figure skates to be sharpened to Gord Lamont. He is located in Port Elgin at the Plex arena.

## **Sharpening of Hockey Skates**

The OSSC recommends you take your child's hockey skates to be sharpened at a reputable business who specializes in sharpening of hockey skates. We do not recommend you get your child's skates sharpened in a sharpening machine found in an arena.

There are numerous reputable businesses that can sharpen hockey skates. Two of these businesses are Garb & Gear and Bayshore Skating Sharpening. Both are located on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave East in Owen Sound.

No matter if your child wears figures skates or hockey skates, make sure that they are sharpened BEFORE they step on the ice. Skates right out of the box that have not been sharpened will not work on the ice, as there are no edges on the blades to grip the ice.

## **Care of Skates**

Always walk in hard guards, but never store your skates in those same guards, as they will rust. Use a soft cloth to dry your blades after skating. Fabric blade covers absorb the moisture from the blade and prevent the blade from rusting or getting chipped as you transport your skates.

# Competitions

Skaters at all levels of the CanSkate & STARSkate programs have the opportunity to participate in Ice Dreams with other skaters of similar skill level. This competition is eagerly anticipated by many skaters as an opportunity to show off their skating skills for audiences that usually include their families and friends, and as another venue for practicing the life skills that skating encourages them to develop.

Ice Dreams is not mandatory, however it is a fun day for skaters to come together in a fun environment where they can cheer on their friends and fellow skaters from the OSSC, as well as other clubs.

Ice Dreams is our area's annual Fun Competition. Please watch for details in early on our website at [www.skateowensound.com](http://www.skateowensound.com). This season, Ice Dreams will be hosted by the Meaford Skating Club January 23/24, 2016. Shari Wright, CanSkate Director, will discuss Ice Dreams at further length at the Parent Meeting in November.

## Ice Etiquette

The following rules and regulations have been made to make skating more enjoyable for not just yourself, but for other skaters you share the ice with. They were developed with safety and courtesy for everyone in mind.

- Respectful behaviour towards all coaches (Professional and Program Assistants) at all times
- Glass containers, food, candy or gum are not permitted on the ice at any time
- Get up immediately after a fall
- No sitting on the boards
- Dressing rooms are to be kept clean. Garbage and recycling are to be placed in the appropriate containers
- Parents are not permitted on the ice any time during the CanSkate Session due to insurance reasons

If you have concerns regarding any part of the CanSkate program, please speak with a Board Member during the session, or the CanSkate Director after the session.

# Fundraising

We are pleased to announce that OSSC has frozen the prices in CanSkate programs for a fifth straight year! We know of no other minor sports organization in the area that can make that claim. In order to keep our fees competitive, and frozen at 2010 prices, we must rely on fundraising to offset the increased operating costs and facility rental charges. There are various ways that you can help fundraise. We certainly don't expect parents to participate in every fundraising activity, however we hope that you will support the Club where you can.

## **Skater's Dream Draw**

These are the booklets that you receive at registration. For each child registered, you pay \$50.00 per booklet. These tickets are yours to sell to friends, co-workers, family. The money that you receive is yours to keep. This year the four cash prizes are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Prize \$1000.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize \$500.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize \$250.00, The draw will take place in February 2016, please watch for the ticket box that will be placed on the CanSkate table. This fundraising is mandatory for every skater registered with the OSSC.

We are always brainstorming different ways to raise money for our club. Please stay tuned for upcoming fundraising events throughout the skating season.

Do you have any suggestions on fundraising opportunities? The Board would love to hear them! Please speak to any Board Member, or email [owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com](mailto:owensoundskatingclub@gmail.com) with your suggestions.