

Athlete Development Chair – ISA Board Report

Dear ISA Board Members,

I am pleased to present this report detailing the recent Athlete Development & High Performance Camp with Javier Fernandez held 2- 6th April at Liverpool Catholic Club Ice Rink. This camp was a significant event in our commitment to athlete development and the first time a comprehensive camp had been run over a 5 day period in Australia. This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the camp's structure, activities, outcomes, and its impact on athlete development for the Australian ice skating community.

As the Head of Athlete Development, it is my privilege to share with you the achievements, challenges, and lessons learned during this event. Your support and investment have been instrumental in making this camp a reality, and we look forward to leveraging these experiences for future endeavours in advancing ice skating excellence in Australia.

Thank you for your attention and continued support.

Jonathan Guerreiro

Head of Athlete Development Ice Skating Australia

Background

The organization of Athlete Development & High Performance Camp stemmed from a strategic vision to elevate the capabilities of Australian skaters and foster a culture of excellence within the national ice skating community. As the Head of Athlete Development, the primary aim was to design and implement a comprehensive program that would empower Australian skaters with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to transition into high-performing athletes on both national and international stages.

Objectives and Goals

1. **Skill Development:** The camp aimed to enhance participants' technical proficiency in various aspects of ice skating, including but not limited to jumps, spins, footwork, and artistic expression.
2. **Physical Conditioning:** Emphasis was placed on improving skaters' physical fitness, strength, flexibility, and endurance through specialised off-ice training sessions tailored to their individual needs.
3. **Mental Resilience:** The camp sessions on mindset and psychology to equip skaters with the mental resilience required for elite-level performance.
4. **Nutritional Education:** Participants received guidance on proper nutrition, hydration, and recovery strategies to support their training and optimise their overall health and well-being.

5. **Performance Analysis:** Skaters had the opportunity to engage with judges and technical panellists for constructive feedback and insights
6. **Clean sport education:** For the first time Australian skaters were provided an authoritative anti-doping briefing, addressing what has become a high-profile topic in the international ice skating community.
7. **Team Building and Camaraderie:** The camp fostered a sense of camaraderie and teamwork among participants through team-building activities, group challenges, and shared experiences on and off the ice.
8. **Networking and Mentorship:** Skaters interacted with Olympic skaters, guest coaches, judges, officials and mentors who shared valuable insights, advice, and career guidance to inspire and guide their athletic journey.

By aligning these objectives with the overarching goal of nurturing high-performing skaters, the camp aimed to create a transformative experience that would leave a lasting impact on the development trajectory of Australian ice skating talent.

Special Guest: Javier Fernandez

The undoubted highlight of the Camp was the invaluable contribution of world champion skater Javier Fernandez.

Javier's expertise, coupled with his personal journey as a skater from a small federation, made him an ideal mentor to share insights and learnings with the participants. His willingness to travel to Australia and dedicate his time to the camp underscored his commitment to supporting the development of ice skating beyond traditional powerhouse nations.

Javier's attendance was able to be secured through our existing personal and professional relationship, which has been developed through participating in elite ice international ice shows together. Javier participated in the camp on the understanding that it would be a joint exercise between himself and me and that we would equally share the coaching load as we have an established effective working relationship. This collaborative approach not only enriched the camp's curriculum but also provided participants with a combination of international expertise and understanding of the local context.

Javier's sessions focused on technical mastery and artistic expression, aligning perfectly with the camp's objectives of holistic athlete development. His presence not only inspired the participants but also fostered a sense of international camaraderie and shared passion for the sport.

The inclusion of Javier Fernandez as a special guest coach elevated the camp's profile, attracted participants' interest, and significantly contributed to the overall success and positive feedback received from both participants and stakeholders.

Coaching and Support Staff

In addition to Javier Fernandez and myself, Camp participants benefited from insights and expertise shared by:

- Add details of experts and what they shared

Off-Ice Coaches: Barbora Pradeaux & Pavel Aubrecht(LCCISC)

Dance: Svetlana Guerreiro, Anna McCulla

Zumba: Rosina Mastroieni

Pilates: Courtney Mansour

The work of Fiona Kusilek (LCCISC President) and Leslie Amaker (ISA High Performance) deserves special acknowledgement. The Camp simply would not have been possible without their time and expertise in organising and co-ordinating the event.

Camp Structure and Activities

The Camp ran for 5 days commencing Tuesday 2nd April and finishing on Saturday 6 April 2024 from 6am to 12pm daily.

Participants were divided into groups aligned with their competitive level and participated in a program that moved between on-ice and off-ice training and a range of different seminars which were each adapted to be appropriate to the level of the skaters involved.

The daily timetables can be found in the Appendix session at the back of the report.

Additionally, due to a high level of interest and additional 3 hour session for Preliminary, Elementary and Adult skaters was added on the evening of Thursday 5th April which was a great success. The level of attendance and engagement was a clear indication that opportunities for this group should be a consideration when creating future athlete development and high performance programs.

Participants

A total of 67 Basic Novice and above skaters attended the High Performance & Athlete Development Camp across the 5 days, and 35 coaches.

In addition, 56 prelim, Elementary and Adult skaters attended the Thursday evening session.

Breakdown of attendees was as follows:

- 2 Senior Level

- 15 Junior Level
 - 13 Advanced Novice
 - 37 Novices
 - 5 Elementary
 - 21 Preliminary
 - 30 Adult divisions
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- 26 skaters attended all 5 days
 - 18 skaters attended 3 or more days
 - 23 skaters attended 1-2 days.
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- X were from NSW
 - X were from VIC
 - X were from QLD
 - X were from SA
 - X were from WA
 - X were from TAS

Facilities and Resources

Liverpool Catholic Club Ice Skating Club generously provided facilities for the camp over all 5 days including ice time, off ice training facilities and seminar rooms, and catering for participants each day.

Funding

ISA generously allocated \$17000 towards this camp. The remaining funding was generated through participant entry fees, and after paying LCC for Ice and Mezzanine hire and catering costs, coaches, dance teachers and judges' travel, we finished with a small but positive profit margin.

Budget Allocation

Budget allocation details for the camp, detailing the various expenses covered such as venue rental, coaching fees, equipment, accommodation, meals, transportation, and administrative costs can all be found in the attached pdf.

We were careful to make effective use of all ice and mezzanine time available. Catering was carefully worked out for optimal nutritional at the appropriate time with minimal waste. The schedule was organised in a way to make effective use of

all spaces hired and time available. Coaches were all paid at a flat rate of \$100/hour. Javier's coaching rate was a pre-agreed amount.

Impact of Funding

The funding was adequate for the Camp, and allowed for us to utilize coaches and teachers with different skills and specialities for the benefit of all skaters. Ticket prices were fair. We could have increased the entry cost slightly, but weren't sure what the response would be like. Without ISA funding, we would have been in a large deficit.

Financial Reporting

A summary of financial transactions, including income and expenses related to the camp is attached.

Outcomes and Achievements

I feel that all our Key Objectives were met. Feedback forms were filled out by all skaters and some coaches on the last day, with an overwhelmingly positive response from all skaters. The most common response was that this was a well-organised camp, the best they have ever attended! A skater who also attended one of Javier's camp in Italy said that ours was better!

The most negative feedback was that (2) skaters didn't receive enough one-on-one time with Javier.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

There were no major challenges or obstacles faced during the camp, it was well organised and run.

Impact and Future Plans

This style 5-day training camp is something that we would like to make an annual event for Australian Skaters, and bring influential people in the skating world here to Australia so all our skaters and coaches can have the opportunity to work with them, instead of having to travel overseas. The success of this camp has proven that this is an unmissable opportunity that all can benefit greatly from, while also forming strong bonds within our skating community.

Conclusion

This was an incredible high-level training opportunity that we were able to provide for Australian skaters, and bring to our shores, instead of having to travel overseas.

We were able to cover a large range of relevant training opportunities, all for the benefit of our skaters.

I would like to thank the Board of Ice Skating Australia for their support and investment in the camp.

Kind Regards,
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