

2024 Annual Report
Chair of Synchronized Skating Committee
Ice Skating Australia Incorporated



1 Team Registrations

Forty-two teams registered with ISA for the 2023-2024 Season with the following numbers:

Senior	4	previous year 3
Senior Elite 12	2	new
Junior	7	previous year 3
Advanced Novice	3	previous year 2
Basic Novice	6	previous year 6
Juvenile	1	new
Adult	7	previous year 8
Advanced Adult	6	previous year 4
Mixed Age	6	previous year 9

The introduction of Senior Elite 12 resulted in only two teams and the uptake internationally has also been low. There is a 2024 ISU Congress proposal for it to be combined in competition with Senior and if passed, will be implemented in our By-Laws. The Juvenile team which registered, competed in Basic Novice at the 2023 AFSC. Junior increased significantly while Mixed Age decreased, demonstrating a greater fluctuation than usual between these two categories.

2 International Competition

This season we had nine teams enter in eight competitions. Once again, the ORS was used for most of the events (Challengers and Championships) and although easier, remains quite an involved process for entering teams. The others all differed in their entry process and the World Wide Masters Games entry was particularly annoying as it could only be done by individuals with a short window to complete and had to be done several months before the actual competition. Another competition closed its entries 11 days earlier than the announcement which caused a small panic and although the entry process is very clear in the ISA policy, it did not stop two entries being done directly by the teams without my knowledge which put me in an awkward position. Should this very clear breach occur in the future, I will be recommending that either the entry is withdrawn by ISA or the coach/team management is denied accreditation at the event.

Congratulations to all the teams named below on their performances at international competitions, some of which resulted in personal best scores.

Shanghai Trophy, Shanghai, CHN **3 – 5 October 2023**

Team Unity (NSW) FS Placing 3 from 3
Coaches: Madonna Randall and Georgina Reilly

World Wide Masters Games, Lombardy, ITA

Evolution (Qld) FS Placing 7 from 8
Coach: Sally Hecke

Trophy D'Ecosse, Dumfries, GBR 26-28 January 2024

Nova (Qld), Senior Elite 12 SP Placing
FS Placing
Coach: Natalie Bartlett
Team Leader: Margaret Bartlett substituting for Beverley Donaghey

French Cup, Rouen, FRA 1 to 3 February 2024

Ice Storm Lightning (Qld), Senior SP Placing 3 from 3
FS Placing 3 from 3
Final Placing 3 from 3

Coach: Hayley Marcovich

Ice Storm Thunder (Qld), Senior Elite 12 SP Placing 4 from 5
FS Placing 4 from 5
Final Placing 4 from 5

Coach: Hayley Marcovich

Nova (Qld), Senior Elite 12 SP Placing 5 from 5
FS Placing 5 from 5
Final Placing 5 from 5

Coach: Natalie Bartlett

Southern Sky Synchronized Junior SP Placing 14 from 14
FS Placing 13 from 14
Final Placing 13 from 14

Coach: Adele Leghorn

Judge: Tara O'Connor
Team Leader: Peter Marcovich

ANZAS, Dunedin, NZL 3 – 4 February 2024

Adelaide Ice Magic Adult (SA) FS Placing 1 from 2
Adelaide Ice Magic Advanced Adult (SA) FS Placing 1 from 1 (Open Division)
Coach: Bernadette Mercurio

Marie Lundmark Trophy, Helsinki, FIN 10 -11 February 2024

Ice Storm Lightning (Qld) Senior SP Placing 9 from 9
FS Placing 9 from 9
Final Placing 9 from 9

Coach: Hayley Marcovich
Judge: Rebecca Andrew
Team Leader: Peter Marcovich

World Junior Synchronized Skating Championships, Neuchatel, SUI 15 – 16 March 2024

Majestic Ice Junior (NSW)	SP Placing:	18 from 24
	FS Placing:	20 from 24
	Final Placing:	19 from 24
Coaches:	Elizabeth Mayers and Eeva Sunnari	
Judge:	Angelique Clyde-Smith	
Team Leader:	Susanna Jin	

World Synchronized Skating Championships, Zagreb, CRO 5 - 6 April 2024

Team Unity (NSW)	SP Placing:	18 from 21
	FS Placing:	20 from 21
	Final Placing:	20 from 21
Coaches:	Madonna Randall and Georgina Reilly	
Judge:	Elizabeth Alexandre	
Team Leader:	Lana Scahill	

All the teams worked and trained hard for their competitions but particular mention needs to be made of Majestic Ice Junior and Team Unity. Their usual training rink, Canterbury remains closed and they travelled far and wide between Newcastle and Canberra to get what training ice they could. It is not always possible to get a suitable competition (due to finances and scheduling) in the lead up to either of the World Championships which is always a disadvantage to preparation for these major events.

In addition, NSWISA official, Rebecca Andrew was successful in being appointed as ISU Referee for Synchronized Skating, the first Australian to do so. Congratulations Rebecca!

3 Forms and Policies

These are updated for the season as usual and being uploaded on the ISA website beginning May 2024 with most now available. It is critical that ISA Members, teams, coaches and their management read, understand and follow all SyS policies and procedures.

4 International Teams

Six clearances for Australian were issued for this season; after having been accepted into teams in Canada, Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland, with one clearance a release back to New Zealand.

5 Non-Australian Citizens

There were 24 requests by non-Australian citizens from 9 Federations seeking clearance to skate in teams here. To reduce the workload in future, applications for clearances will only be made for skaters who would be skating in AUS teams in international competitions however, applications must still be made to ISA for all non-Australian citizens.

6 2023 Sydney Synch Festival and 2023 Australian Figure Skating Championships

Once again, SSF was an international on the ISU Calendar and held at Erina Ice Arena as was the 2023 AFSC. As always, the rink is the perfect venue with excellent service and facilities. Huge thanks to Erina Ice Arena staff and NSWISA staff and volunteers for their time and efforts which resulted in two smoothly run events.

7 Development Seminars

Four coaches and two mini teams (4 skaters each team) attended the SyS Development Seminar in Bangkok, Thailand from 18 to 21 April 2024 and as always, it was a great learning experience for everyone. We only had two mini teams apply and were fortunate that both were accepted. The organisers had hoped for more interest in the Asia/Oceania area if the seminar was held in Asia. Regardless of the location, it is a very worthwhile seminar for our SyS skaters and coaches to attend.

8 Other Tasks

A Letters

59 letters for SyS competitors and team officials
9 clearance applications to other Federations
6 letters to clear skaters from AUS to other Federations

B Solo Ice Dance

After months of waiting, everyone was glad when the ISU finally released all the Solo Ice Dance documentation as a late Easter gift which arrived at Christmas. Monica McDonald (Coaches Chair) spent considerable time working with the ISU Solo Ice Dance group and then on the documents AUS would need for the categories not covered in the ISU guidelines. Disappointingly, there was a lot of impatience and complaining to get this done fast but to do it properly is not a quick job as anyone who has done this kind of work will confirm. I spent the best part of my January “break” drawing up the ISA By-Laws for Solo Ice Dance tests (Section 2D) and competition (Section 4), including updating all the ice dance test papers. Solo Ice Dance in Australia is not new, having been in our Regulations for some 20 years. It was not just a matter of copying and pasting a few pages to look pretty, publishing with a brush of hands and hoping for the best. Any changes/additions/deletions have a “cause and effect” on other regulations, rules and by-laws which are not always obvious, so it was important to cross check and recheck everything. I would like to thank Sharon Mellema very much for her detailed assistance with this. There were a lot of emails and phone calls well into the night as we combed through the detail and discussed the various options for wording things for clarity, consistency and unambiguity. We both worked extensively on Section 2 – Tests to reformat what had become a large and messy document into the more user friendly four parts you see now. The updated Sections 2 and 4 were presented to the Board for approval in early February. Now they have been published all has gone quiet – not even a word of thanks or appreciation which is very disappointing.

C Website and Social Media

The SyS and Ice Dance page updates continue to keep me busy especially at this time of year with all the new ISU communications still coming out. The new website went live in early February and while different in the backend to what I got used to, is proving to be quite easy to manage and update.

Together with Kim, I assist with admin duties on the Adult Skating and TOI Facebook pages as required as well as relevant posts to the Ice Skating Australia Facebook page.

D POA

The ISA Proof of Age Register now has a total of nearly 7300 names. There were a number of updates through the year for name changes. These are reflected in the database which shows previous and current names.

E Theatre on Ice

Like when Synchronized Skating was barely even tolerated as a valid discipline, TOI seems to be now regarded by many as of little consequence and just a bit of fluff. There are many locations where the formation of a SyS team is not possible – either due to skater numbers/ages or ice time or coach unwillingness/experience. Theatre on Ice can fill a void and keep people enjoying to skate and is as important to the sport as any other discipline. The USA has around 100 TOI teams registered, and France almost as many, so the interest from skaters and coaches is clearly there. While it is certainly not for everyone, it is important that ISA, its Members and Clubs all encourage and support TOI by offering competitions or at least skating to be marked and that judges and officials learn more about it so that the marking is meaningful and informative. It is not just about throwing out three components marks because it’s easier to use the FSM. In the ISA By-Laws there

are five components for TOI for very good reason. It is simple to use the old Ice Calc for this and enter the marks manually with the small effort worth the feedback it gives to teams. How are they supposed to stay enthusiastic, creative and improve if they feel unsupported and not validated?

Over the last year, at the invitation of Jan Gardner, I have been working with an international group on unifying the marking criteria for TOI and this has made great progress. Last month, I attended my first Nations Cup to do a test run and enjoyed the performances and creativity very much. The atmosphere at the event was one of good spirited competition, learning and inclusion. The International TOI Working Group is progressing towards TOI coming under the umbrella of the ISU rather like Adult Skating has done. We should not have to wait till that happens before TOI is taken more seriously and is more supported here in Australia. It is wonderful skating with fewer boundaries which broadens everyone's creative experience and assessment ability. That can only be good for the skaters, coaches, judges and the sport as a whole. Congratulations to all our TOI teams and coaches and keep up the good work!

9 Follow Up

Juvenile was added as a competition category with requirements to allow these teams to compete in Basic Novice as well. I now received some early EOI for Juvenile teams to compete at interclub events overseas.

With so many other tasks taking priority in the last year, the SyS part of Aussie Skate was not reviewed so this is still to be done.

I have received an offer of assistance for anti-doping education so will be following this up and still see that a compulsory exercise prior to approval being given to compete overseas is the best option. There are existing resources to tap into here and I understand that some ISA members already have some education for their skaters.

Research on the history of the trophies and shields awarded to the National Champions commenced last year and needs to be completed.

10 In Conclusion

My gratitude as always to my committee - Allie Flack, Liz Alexandre, Rebecca Andrew and Tara O'Connor for your assistance and time throughout the year.

Thank you to the other Committee Chairs – Jonathan, Kim, Leslie, Monica, Sharon and Susan – all of whom devote many volunteer hours for the benefit of our skaters. Thank you to the ISA Board for the time you individually and collectively give. I'm not sure that the amount of energy and effort involved is truly appreciated by many but a read of the new job description documents gives some insight to this.

Lastly, thank you to all the Australian SyS teams who are my whole reason for doing this job, and all the very best of success for 2024-2025!

Angelique Clyde-Smith

Chair, Synchronized Skating Committee

Ice Skating Australia Inc.

May 2024