CALGARY SPEED SKATING ASSOCIATION

Member Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Speed, agility, strength, endurance, and determination - these are the hallmarks of speed skating.

The Calgary Speed Skating Association (CSSA) has programs at all levels – from the very young (ages 6+) to the young at heart (seniors/masters).

This Skater & Parent Guide is an introductory resource to be used by parents and/or skaters. This guide is meant to supplement other information provided by Calgary Speed Skating Association.

Calgary Speed Skating Association designs its programs to follow Speed Skating Canada’s Long-Term Participant Athlete Development Program.
The Core Values of Long-Term Participant Athlete Development
- LTPAD CANADA 2007

- Long term athlete development is anchored in the belief that each child, player, and athlete is different, with individual needs and rates of development.
- Long term athlete development provides a framework for planning and decision-making on athlete development, NOT a rigid template.
- Long term athlete development is concerned with the holistic development of children, players, and athletes. Long term athlete development stages overlap and are unique to each individual.
- Long term athlete development recognizes the significance of transitions in the development of children, players, and athletes.
- Long term athlete development recognizes that the accumulation of deliberate practice and training age is linear and that the development of key capacities is non-linear and individualized.
COACHING PHILOSOPHY OF THE CALGARY SPEED SKATING ASSOCIATION

It is the coach’s responsibility to see that all members of the association are taught to skate in such a way that values learned are values that can be applied to everyday living.

A skater may not always win and cannot be expected to always win; however, it is their responsibility to always do their best. It is the duty of the coach and parent to see that these skaters feel their skating is improving. We can achieve this, by keeping good records of skater’s times. If each race shows improvement in times or personal bests (PB’s), then the skater will feel encouraged to keep trying.

Communication between parents and coaches is very important. We both want to do what is best for the skater.

**Coach’s Responsibilities:**

- Plan and conduct practices.
- Ensure practices are safe and fun.
- Age and skill appropriate drills are utilized to improve the skater’s skill.
- Schedule parent/coach meetings as required.
- Emergency response on ice during practice – copies of skater medical profiles will be at CSSA Office.

**What skaters expect from coaches:**

- Organized practices.
- Information about meets and rules.
- Communication.
- Competency.
- Realistic goals and expectations.
- Enthusiastic, committed, and willing to develop skaters and their love for the sport by making their practices and competitions FUN FOR ALL.

**What coaches expect from skaters:**

- Show up to all or as many practices as possible, and to be on time.
- If the skater is late, please wait until the coach OKs entry onto the Short Track ice surface, to ensure safety and minimize impact on ongoing drills.
- Listen and to try their best.
- Encourage each other.
- Respect coaches, other skaters, and officials.
- Communicate with the coaches.
• Honest effort to set new realistic personal goals.
• Always show sportsmanship (practice, competitions, travel).
• Most important - HAVE FUN!

What coaches expect from parents:
• Be positive and supportive of all skaters.
• Have your children ready to go on the ice at the proper time with proper equipment.
• Sharpen skates.
• Communicate problems/conflicts re: practice times, program, etc. and encourage coaches in their efforts to develop skaters.
• Social involvement within the association to help develop skater friendships.
SKATER’S CODE OF ETHICS

As a member of the Calgary Speed Skating Association, I promise:

- To carry out my speed skating activities in a spirit of goodwill towards all, and in particular
  - To my coaches and trainers whose greatest reward is the respectful cooperation I will always show to them.
  - To my fellow skaters and competitors, who will find me a good sport on every occasion. One who loses and wins with grace and dignity.
  - To parents, officials and volunteers whose efforts provide me with opportunities to train and compete.
- To be appreciative of my sponsors whose generosity has provided me with the facilities and equipment I will care for as my own.
- To attend skating practices regularly and on time.
- To respond to instruction with enthusiasm and respect.
- To be loyal to my association - at home and away from home.
- To strive to do my best.
SKATER’S CODE OF CONDUCT

- Skaters will comply with instructions from the coaches who, in consultation with the parents, have the final authority at all competitions and practices.
- Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco or illegal drugs will not be tolerated. Use of any of these will result in immediate suspension.
- A curfew may be set for each trip by the assigned coach(es). Skaters are expected to abide by the curfew.
- No minor skater, travelling without their parent(s), will leave the rink or accommodation without permission from the coach, manager, or chaperone. No adult skater will leave the rink without informing the coach.
- Absolutely no foul language will be tolerated at competitions or practices.
- The use of hotel rooms, private rooms, skating facilities, buses and private vehicles is a privilege. Skaters will be held responsible for any damage they cause.
- Respect of all officials and fellow competitors is expected - on and off the ice.
- Any use of banned performance enhancing substances is prohibited.
- Skaters will conduct themselves with decency and modesty while changing.
- Skater conduct will comply with standards set by Speed Skating Alberta and Speed Skating Canada.
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As a Calgary Speed Skating Association athlete, you are encouraged to use social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, to help promote speed skating, our organization, and yourself as an athlete. The following are guidelines that you should take into consideration when using these and other social media sites:

- Post as yourself and about yourself. People are following you because they are interested in YOU. Take that opportunity to talk about yourself. Tell your friends, family, and followers how hard you have been training, how excited you are to get on the ice and how it felt to train and race.
- Remember that you are representing the CSSA, AASSA (Alberta Amateur Speed Skating Association), SSC (Speed Skating Canada) and most importantly, yourself. What you publish online is permanent, so consider the content carefully.
- Post meaningful, respectful comments. Do not post spam or remarks that are off topic or offensive. This includes ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc. Remember: is the image you are projecting by your communications and photos the one you want your parents, friends, teammates, coaches, and fans to remember you by?
- Be respectful to fellow athletes. Social media can be a great tool to congratulate competitors and discuss the sport, but it should never be used to speak poorly of a fellow athlete or an official.
- Protect yourself and your privacy. Be cautious about disclosing personal details. Do not post information that you would not want the public to see. This may include names, photos, email addresses, phone numbers, etc. Don’t post photos or videos of other athletes.
OLYMPIC OVAL INFORMATION

Oval Access

- You will be provided with an Oval Access Card – you must have this card with you EVERY time you require entry into the Olympic Oval.
- Your card will only work 45 minutes before your ice training session. If you are here early, your access card will not work.

Olympic Oval Card Access Policies

- Three strike policy: If you forget your card 3 times, you must pay $10 for a new card before you will be re-granted entry.
- Lost card: if you happen to lose your Oval access card, it is a $10 fee for a replacement card.
- Your access card only grants you access to CSSA Short track times, and C ice times on the Oval (Long Track) ice.
- Access is granted for parents or spectators upon request to the Front Desk.
- If you would like to participate in public skating or running, you must pay for this separately. You can pay for public skating and/or running at the Front Desk.
- Stationary Bike Usage:
  - Stationary bikes on 3rd level observation deck are accessible to Teen, Junior, and Adult CSSA athletes only.
  - Stationary bikes on track level are not accessible to any CSSA athletes.

Long Track Ice Rules

To reduce injury and address safety concerns for long track speed skaters, the outer lane cannot be used as a rest area during training sessions. The inner most lane of the Oval 400m track shall be the ONLY lane used for resting purposes. The two racing lanes will be used for training purposes only. Below is a detailed explanation for each of the lanes and the rules regarding each lane.

- **RESTING LANE**: The inner most lane will be used for resting, standing, and gliding only. Absolutely no skating allowed of any kind in this lane. Winding up and winding down after an interval should take place in the outer lane as usual.
• **INNER RACE LANE**: The inner race lane (solid blue line) will be used for all skating and interval training as usual. If you are travelling faster than other skaters in front of you, you must pass them on their right-hand side.

• **OUTER RACE LANE**: The far outer race lane is for coasting in preparation for intervals, technical drills and starts only. Winding up and winding down before and after intervals will still occur in this outer most lane.

• **STARTS**: Practice starts should take place at the 1000m start line. Starts will not be permitted at the 500m start line, 1000m finish or 1500m start line. Further, cones must be placed on the ice when doing practice starts. These cones are kept at the Zamboni entrance.

• **BUMPERS**: A few sections of bumpers will be placed on the inside of the track near the 500m finish line for the athletes to rest on. This is also where coaches should go to talk with their athletes. Please do not have your team meet on the outer race lanes.

• **TRAINS**: Trains should not consist of more than 10 skaters.

• **ZAMBONI**: All skaters must be off the ice when the Zamboni is doing maintenance.

• **COACHING**: No congregating as a group on the outer lane to speak with your coach. The coach must go to the inner lane to speak with groups of skaters.

• **INJURIES**: In case of a serious injury, radios are located at the North Bay and the Short Track timing deck. Please radio the Oval Operations staff who are trained to properly assess and to injuries. DO NOT call an ambulance, Oval Operations staff will take care of this if required. I.e. “CSSA coach to maintenance. There is an injury on the north corner of the oval ice and we need assistance.”

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**Short Track Ice Rules**

• Skaters are not allowed to be on the ice unless a coach is present on the ice or by the mats.

• A cart with buckets and supplies (squeegee and pucks) is located at the Zamboni entrance. The hose to fill up the big water bucket is on the south side of the rink.

• A radio is located on the timing deck should you need to contact the Oval Operations team.

• In case of an injury, please follow the following steps:
  
  o Radio our operations team; all Oval Operations staff have been trained to properly respond/assess injuries such as concussions, lacerations (cuts), broken bones etc.

  o Inform them that there has been an injury and that their help is required I.e. “Short Track to Operations, there is an injury on the North Rink and we need assistance."

  o Operations will assess the injury and inform you if further treatment is required.

  o If an ambulance is required, Operations will contact Campus Security who will then arrange for an ambulance to come to the Oval. Please DO NOT call an ambulance yourself.
VOLUNTEER POLICY

Policy Statement

Calgary Speed Skating Association is committed to fostering a climate that values people who voluntarily offer their services in the activities of the Association. (Adopted from Speed Skating Canada Volunteer Policy).

Requirements

Like all sports organizations, speed skating relies heavily on volunteers to successfully meet the demands of the sport. Members of the Calgary Speed Skating Association are required to volunteer each season.

Each skating member is required to provide 20 hours of volunteer service during the season. For a family with more than one skating member, each additional skating member adds 10 volunteer hours to a maximum of 40 volunteer hours.

Skating members are required to commit at least 5 hours of their volunteer requirement to one of CSSA’s two sanctioned meets – ABLT and RUFast.

Most volunteer hours are to be completed by an associate member (parent or guardian for skating members under 18) or the skating member. Casino volunteer hours can be completed by any adult representative of the skating member.

Exceptions:

- CSSA members who skate with other programs, such as the Oval Pathway, and do not use any CSSA ice times are encouraged to volunteer.
- L2SS skaters (or their parents) are required to complete 10 hours of volunteering.
- Uncoached adult skaters are required to complete 10 hours of volunteering.

Tracking Hours

Members are responsible for completion and recording of their own volunteer hours. They are responsible for having their time verified by a meet coordinator, CSSA board member, or any coach they may have assisted. Volunteers are encouraged to track their hours using our CSSA Volunteer Tracking Form.
• Submissions must be submitted for verification to the Vice Chair of Volunteers.
• Submit your completed volunteer hours as soon as possible after completing to assist us in our season-end calculations.
• **Some volunteer positions are tracked using the online sign-up, but not all, so please be sure to record and verify all your volunteer hours on your Tracking Form.**

**Deposit Cheque**

Members are required to provide a $500 volunteer cheque for one skater or a $700 volunteer cheque for 2 or more skaters in a CSSA program. L2SS skating members and uncoached adult skating members are required to provide a $350 volunteer cheque.

• Volunteer cheques must be post-dated for April 30th of the following year.
• Volunteer cheques must be submitted upon registration.
• Volunteer cheques must be submitted to our office prior to on-ice activities.
• NO VOLUNTEER CHEQUES, NO PARTICIPATION IN ON-ICE ACTIVITIES! NO EXCEPTIONS!
• If volunteer requirements have been completed, deposit cheque(s) will be returned or destroyed.
• If volunteer requirements have not been completed by the end of the season, deposit cheque(s) will be cashed.

Members now have the option of splitting their volunteer cheques:

• $500 = cheque #1 = $375 and cheque #2 = $125 or
• $700 = cheque #1 = $525 and cheque #2 = $175
• Members that have submitted “split cheques” and complete only 75% of their volunteer hours will have cheque #1 returned or destroyed. Cheque #2 will be cashed.
• Members that have submitted “split cheques” and complete 100% of their required volunteer hours will have both cheques returned or destroyed.
• Members that have NOT submitted “split cheques” must complete 100% of their volunteer requirements or the cheque will be cashed.
• Members may choose to opt out of their volunteer hours upon registration and “pay out” their volunteer requirement. This cheque must be current dated and will be cashed immediately.

Examples:

• 1 skater in L2SS and 1 skater in teen program = 30 hours volunteer commitment, deposit cheque of $700 or split deposit cheques for $525 and $175, totalling $700
• 1 skater in youth program and 1 skater in adult program, coached = 40 hours volunteer commitment, deposit cheque of $700 or split deposit cheques for $525 and $175, totalling $700
• 1 skater in adult program, uncoached = 10 hours volunteer commitment, deposit cheque of $500 or split deposit cheques for $375 and $125, totalling $500
• 1 skater in Oval Pathway program and 1 skater in CSSA teen program = 20 hours volunteer commitment, deposit cheque of $500 or split deposit cheques for $375 and $125, totalling $500

Volunteer Opportunities

A variety of volunteer opportunities will be offered throughout the season. These opportunities will be communicated to our members via email notification and/or updates to our volunteer website pages.

If you are looking for hours, do not leave it to the last month! Contact our Vice Chair of Volunteers for assistance.

Calgary Speed Skating Association hosts two major sanctioned competition events each season. The Alberta Open Long Track (ABLT) is hosted in January, and RUFast (short track) event is hosted in March. Each event requires approximately 80 to 100 volunteers PER DAY. Members are asked to volunteer at least one day at each of these scheduled events. Please be sure that you have signed up to volunteer through a CSSA representative, volunteering at Olympic Oval sponsored meets does not count towards your CSSA volunteer hours.

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend a Level One Officials Clinic prior to working at a sanctioned meet. Time spent at the clinic will count towards your total volunteer requirement.

Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Sanctioned competitions: ABLT and RUFast (your volunteer commitments can easily be completed at one meet!)
- Mini meets (this is an excellent opportunity to train for working at a larger meet)
- Casino (run approximately every 2 years)
- Skate rental (assisting with skate rental distribution in August)
- Coaching (parents and skaters interested in coaching will be paired with a trained coach)
  - Remember to have the coach sign off on your volunteer hours regularly
- Skater recruitment (events and/or information kiosks for the public)
- Committee member (become a committee member: committees are set up throughout the season to assist with key tasks for the association, for example: fundraising and grant writing)
- Equipment maintenance (work with our VC of Equipment)
- Administration (helping office staff and/or Meet Coordinator with various tasks prior to a competition)
- All Sport One Day (June event)
- Special Event assistant (purchase food, set up, clean up, etc. for association events such as Officials’ Clinics, the AGM, the Awards Gala, walk-in registration, and other events as needed)
Provisions
(Adopted from SSC Volunteer Policy)

Recruitment: CSSA will ensure a positive environment for volunteer involvement in our sport through distribution and implementation of its policies. CSSA will promote its principles and values in order that interested people know and understand the process to which they have committed.

Recognition: CSSA will ensure that its volunteers understand the importance of their contribution to the Association through the implementation of its recognition and awards policy. CSSA must ensure that future volunteers develop positively from their experiences with the Association by informing them of the importance of their actions with annual evaluation.

Retention: CSSA will ensure the development of knowledgeable volunteers for continued involvement and leadership throughout the Association. CSSA will take the necessary measures to develop a membership feeling within the Association. CSSA will protect its volunteers by contracting necessary insurance.

FAQs

Q: What happens if I can only accomplish 10 of my 20 required hours?
A: The cheque(s) will be cashed. No pro-ration is possible. With 180+members, the work to prorate negates the volunteer hours completed.

Q: What happens if I get to the end of the season and there are no longer adequate hours available for volunteering?
A: There are more volunteer requirements than members to fulfil them at the minimum level, so there should always be an opportunity to complete your hours. If you are unable to do that, your cheque will be cashed.

Q: Are volunteer hours at non-CSSA meets eligible for the 20-hour minimum, such as volunteering at Olympic Oval meets?
A: NO. Only CSSA sponsored events are eligible for CSSA volunteer hours. Ask a CSSA representative, (office staff or board member) if the event is eligible.
Volunteer Position Definitions

Summaries available below. For a full description, see this supplementary document from Speed Skating Canada.

- **Referee**: The referee, as the “Chief Executive Officer”, is responsible for all aspects of the meet. Their main requirement is a thorough knowledge of the rules and a sincere intention to apply them firmly but fairly. A novice referee has probably had some experience as another official or has been a former skater and has a fair idea of the rules.

- **Starter**: The starter is in complete control of the start and decides all disputes relating to the start. They ensure that all competitors have a fair and equal opportunity at the start of the race.

- **Recorder**: The recorders (in coordination with, and under the direction of, the Meet Coordinator) prepare and distribute all paper associated with the running of the meet. Accuracy, speed and remaining calm under pressure are the prime assets of recorders. Computer skills are an asset.

- **Timers**: The role of the timers is to accurately time the skaters participating in the race. Timing is very important since skater advancement to semis or finals may be determined by times.

- **Electronic Timer**: Assist with timing and placement of the skaters via the Finish Lynx timing system. Previous experience as a manual timer or place judge is an asset.

- **Place Judge**: The role of the Finish Line Judges is to determine the order of finish of the participants in the race. This task is often quite demanding, particularly when the skaters are closely bunched at the finish line. In this respect, Finish Line Judges should have the ability to "hold" a mental picture of the moment of the skater's skate crosses the finish line.

- **Clerk of the Course**: The Clerk of the Course and the assistant(s), known as heat box stewards, whips or marshals must make sure that the skaters are ready for their upcoming races although, in theory, the ultimate responsibility to be ready is that of the skaters. This also includes on ice marshals for Long Track.

- **Runner**: After each race or series of races, a Runner is responsible for taking the complete race forms from the Chief Timer and Chief Finish Line Judge (or Trackside Recorder if used) and delivering them as quickly as possible back to the recording office.

- **Lap Counter**: The duty of the Lap Recorder is to inform the skaters (and officials) of the number of laps left to be skated in a race. A second Lap Recorder provides a check for the first Lap Recorder and looks after the lapped skater(s) if required.

- **Track Steward**: Track Stewards are responsible for replacing missing blocks on the corners and other duties as directed by the referee. They must wear speed skates and a helmet, and have previous experience helping on ice during a short track practice.

- **Announcer**: All information which can help the audience to better understand the course of the meet should be given by the Announcer. The Announcer needs to be knowledgeable about the skaters and the sport to be able to convey to the crowd the
points of interest. Above all, he/she should be enthusiastic about the sport and ready to sell it to the audience, whether indoors or outdoors.

- **Office Assistant:** Coordinate and/or assist with the paper flow in the recording office and to the other officials.
- **Hosting:** Coordinate and/or assist with hosting duties such as food purchase, lunch and coffee room set up, take down and monitoring. Ensuring officials and volunteers who cannot make it to the lunchroom are fed.
- **Water (Short Track):** Fill the buckets used for ice maintenance throughout the competition. Lifting of full 20L buckets is required.
EQUIPMENT

Required Equipment

Helmet
Why: To prevent major and minor head trauma and traumatic brain injury due to impacts with ice, boots, blades, bodies, boards, and crash pads.

A helmet must be worn for all on-ice activities. It must be securely fastened under the chin at all times. A skate blade should not be able to penetrate any ventilation holes in the helmet.

For Learn to Speed Skate and Introduction to Speed Skating Programs, as well as training for Active Start and FUNdamentals aged participants, helmets must be ASTM F 1849 certified or CSA approved (hockey, snowboard/ski skateboarding helmets only). For all other competitions and activities, helmets must be ASTM F 1849 certified. For all speed skating, a helmet must have been manufactured within the past 5 years – any older and it may not be as safe as when it was new (this can usually be found on a sticker inside the helmet).

Cut-Proof Gloves
Why: To prevent cuts and puncture wounds on the hands from blades.

Full cut-resistant material gloves with a cuff must be worn at all times when skating. All the surfaces of the glove must be made from cut-resistance material, including the palms, sides, tops, fingers, and cuffs.

Appropriate cut-resistant materials include:
- Kevlar mixed (minimum 12%) Nylon and/or spandex or similar material. Kevlar lined leather gloves provide the most protection.
- Dyneema mixed Nylon and/or spandex or similar materials
- Medium to thick leather
- Other cut-resistant material approved by Speed Skate Canada

Example of gloves that are not cut-resistant (enough) are:
- wool gloves
- cotton gloves
- nylon only gloves
- baseball batting gloves
• golf gloves
• thin leather ski/winter gloves
• non-leather ski/winter gloves
• non-leather soccer goalie gloves

**Cut-Proof Neck Guard**

*Why:* To prevent cut and puncture wounds to the neck area, especially in the areas of the major arteries.

All skaters are required to wear bib-type neck protection which must be fastened securely. It must be made of Kevlar, Dyneema, or ballistic nylon. Any integrated protection built into the design of a skater’s skin suit is not sufficient.

**Shatter-Proof Glasses & Strap**

*Why:* To prevent eye injuries resulting from ice chips or a collision with a blade or other object.

Shatter-resistant protective sport glasses or a complete visor are required for all skaters. Glasses must be held securely in place by a strap. Lenses must be transparent. Hockey helmets with cages are **NOT** an acceptable alternative as the gaps in the cage would allow a skate blade through.

**Cut-Proof Ankle Guards**

*Why:* To prevent cut and puncture wounds of the Achilles tendon from blades during the thrust phase of the stride.

No skin can be visible between the skater’s boot and skin suit. Puncture resistant anklet made of Kevlar or Dyneema must be worn on both legs, covering the legs from the tops of the boots to 10 cm above the tops of the boots.

**Full Body Cut-Proof Skin Suit & Racing Suit (Only required for racing over 11 years old)**

*Why:* To prevent cut and puncture wounds on any other part of the body not already covered by other protective equipment.

No skin below the mid-line of the neck can be visible (bare).

Skaters aged 11+ (L2T) participating in events sanctioned SSC Championships and/or as Selection/International competitions must wear cut resistant clothing meeting or exceeding the minimum standards established by the ISU.
Several times a year, the association will place an order for Calgary Speed Skating Association branded skin suits. Communication will be sent out as to when samples are available to try on, and to place an order. It typically takes 8 – 10 weeks for our supplier to fulfill an order.

**Knee Pads (Soft)**  
**Why:** To prevent puncture and blunt force impact wounds to the knees.

Full frontal knee coverage providing complete coverage of the patella. Made of puncture resistant (e.g. Kevlar or Dyneema) and impact absorbing (e.g. high density foam) material. Protection may be worn over a skater’s skin suit or it can be integrated in the suit.

**Shin Guards (Hard)**  
**Why:** To prevent cut and puncture wounds along the shin from blades, as well as some measure of blunt impact protection from hitting hard objects/bodies.

Skaters must wear hard plastic or built-in cut and puncture resistant material with some impact energy absorption. Full frontal shin coverage is from within 2.5 cm of the top of the boot to within 2.5 cm of the bottom of the knee protection. Protection may be worn over/under a skater’s skin suit, or it can be integrated in the suit.

**Hard Skate Guards**  
**Why:** To prevent damaging the blades.

Skate guards must always be worn when not on the ice. Put your hard guards on before putting your skates on and until you step onto the ice. Put your hard guards back on as you are getting off the ice and while you are removing your skates. Make sure to take off your hard guards and switch to soft guards after removing your skates for storage.

**Soft Skate Guards**  
**Why:** To prevent blades from rusting.

Use soft skate guards while storing your skates.
Equipment Maintenance

It is important to properly maintain your equipment during the season. Regular maintenance helps keep the skater performing optimally and ensures a longer life for the gear.

Short Track skates can be rented through the Calgary Speed Skating Association. Equipment can be purchased through the Olympic Oval Skate Shop or ilovespeedskating.com.

We also occasionally have used equipment swaps and the Sale Board by the Olympic Oval Skate Shop frequently has fresh deals from other skaters.

Boots
Of particular importance when choosing equipment for speed skating is the fit of the equipment. Speed skating is about feeling the ice; therefore, it is important that all equipment fits properly. Avoid boots or blades to grow into as this will negatively influence the capacity of the participant to acquire skills. It is also important to properly dry out all equipment between each practice and wash it regularly. Calgary Speed Skating Association offers skate rentals for beginning skaters, while safety equipment is the responsibility of the participant.

When selecting a speed skating boot be sure:

- The boot provides support for the foot and the ankle.
- The boot allows the skater to move their knee as far forward as possible.
- The boot needs to be tight but comfortable without cutting off the skaters’ circulation. If the boot does not fit snugly, or is not properly tied, the skater’s foot will slide around inside the boot and decrease control of the blades.
- Purchase boots that can be heat moulded. This will improve the fit and increase comfort for the participant.
- To keep spare laces available as they can break at any time. Laces should be kept relatively short to avoid tripping over them.
- Clean skates after each use by wiping dry with cloth.
- Tuck in the tongue and laces, close all velcros and buckles.
- If you find that the skates are very uncomfortable then consider heat molding the boots to your feet.
- Checking skate hardware: Before you put on your skates check that all nuts and bolts are tight and that there are no visible signs of deterioration.

Take good care of your skates. They are expensive.
**Blades**

Speed skating blades are quite different than those used for hockey or figure skating. Not only are they longer, but they are also completely flat on the bottom. This allows the skater to glide more effectively, but also requires that speed skating blades be sharpened by hand. If speed skates are sharpened using a machine designed for hockey or figure skates it will permanently damage the blades. Calgary Speed Skating Association holds a skate sharpening clinic several times a year. Please drop into the office to find out more information.

The set-up of the blades for a speed skater is just as important as the boot. For developing skaters maintaining sharp blades with a proper rocker and bend will have the most significant influence on a blade’s performance, far more than the actual quality of the blade. Improper blade set up often limits a participant’s ability to perform a skill, making the sport less enjoyable. Improper blade set-up is the equivalent of not properly inflating the tires on a bicycle.

To properly maintain blades:
- Be sure to fully dry the blades after each use to prevent rust from developing.
- Hard skate guards are to be used when you are walking from the dressing room to the ice surface and return to the dressing room. **DO NOT STORE THE SKATES IN THE HARD GAURDS.** If you keep the plastic skate guards on the blades while they are damp, rust will form and damage the skate blade.
- Store the blades in a soft skate guard any time you are not using them, such as between practices.
- Sharpen the blades regularly. It is best to sharpen quickly on a regular basis rather than an occasional long sharpening job. This can be done by using association sharpening jig or at the Oval Skate Shop. Ask your coach how to get this done.
- Check the edge of the blade with a fingernail to check for sharpness and burr. If you are able to scrape some of your nail, the blade does not need to be sharpened. When checking for burr, you want to be able to scrape your fingernail upwards on the side of the blade without catching it on a piece metal.
- Have the rocker and bend on skates checked at least twice (beginning and mid-season) per season by an association coach or equipment person.
- The tips of the blades must be rounded to the radius of a nickel to reduce their possibility of puncturing an object.

*Speed skates are intended for use only on indoor short tracks at practice and sanctioned competitions. Any damage to association blades when used on outdoor ice will be the financial responsibility of the skater.*
Skin Suit

Putting On Your Skin Suit:
- Begin by holding each leg of the suit near the bottom of the leg and work each foot, one at a time, into the suit
- We realize it’s much easier to hold the suit by the waist and just jump in with both feet, but we don’t advise it
- Don’t rely on the zipper-pull alone to close suit. Use one hand to close the suit above the zipper-pull so it closes easier when you pull the zipper up
- In the long run, this will prevent stretching of zipper teeth and prolong life of zipper
- Hold the bottom of the zipper when you remove the skinsuit to prevent stretching
- TAKE YOUR TIME

Washing Instructions:
Keeping your skinsuits looking good and functioning at their best requires specific care and maintenance.
- Do not wash with any other garment, except another skin suit
- Use the gentlest cycle available on your machine
- Turn suit inside out
- Zip up suit
- Use fabric bag
- Do not use fabric softener
- Hang to dry ONLY – skin suits cannot go in the dryer!

Sharpening
Speed skates are sharpened by hand, using a jig, a sharpening stone, and a deburring stone. Instructional sessions on how to sharpen your skates are held during the skating season. If you rent association skates you are responsible for sharpening them throughout the season. The association has jigs available for members to use. Please ask your coach how to go about this.
COMPETITIONS

The Calgary Speed Skating Association encourages all members to participate in competitions, otherwise known as meets. We believe competitions are a fun and educational aspect of speed skating. Competitions allow members to meet and race with skaters from across the province. Meets also allow skaters to put their practice drills to use and apply what they’ve learned to a racing situation.

If you are a parent or skater new to racing, this information will be valuable to keep. Remember for your first few meets to ask lots of questions and seek out other parents in the association for guidance. We are all here to help!

*Types of Competitions*

Speed skating meets can best be broken up into four categories: inter-club, provincial, regional, and national. Determining which meets to attend can be a bit overwhelming; however, below are some general guidelines. Remember, if you are interested in competing, but are unsure as to what meets to attend, your coach is your best resource.

**Age Class**
Age class meets are competitions where the skaters are grouped based on age and gender. Age is calculated as on June 30 prior to the meet.

**Ability**
Ability meets are competitions where skaters are grouped by ability, not age. Ability is based on designated distance (seed) times for that competition. In this type of meet, your skater may be racing against skaters several years younger or older.

**Inter-Club**
Inter-Club meets are hosted by speed skating clubs around the province and are generally for skaters of all ages and abilities. At inter-club meets skaters are usually grouped so that those with similar ability skate together.

**Provincial**
Provincial meets are championship meets hosted once a year for short track and long track speed skating. These meets are based upon the categories outlined in Speed Skating Canada's LTPAD model. These meets are very competitive and offer a great chance to skate with athletes from across the province.
Regional
Regional meets are short track and long track competitions held in western Canada and are part of Speed Skating Canada's national competitions program. Regional meets have a qualification standard attached to them and offer a very high level of competition.

National
National meets are high level and championships meets as designated by Speed Skating Canada. Skaters from across the country compete in various age groups based upon the LTPAD. These meets are very competitive and require specific performance standards for entry. There are National championships for skaters in the T2T (Train to Train) and above category.

What to Bring to a Competition

Mandatory Equipment
- All equipment you would wear at practice
  - Helmet
  - Cut-proof gloves
  - Cut-proof neck guard
  - Shatter-proof glasses and strap
  - Cut-proof ankle guards
  - Full body cut-proof skin suit and racing suit
  - Knee pads
  - Shin guards
  - Hard skate guards
  - Soft skate guards
  - SKATES!

Additional Items
- Extra skating clothes if skater falls (they will likely get wet)
- Blankets for sitting on and using to keep warm
- Items to keep skaters busy between races (e.g., homework, books)
- A note pad or smart phone to record your skater's times and accomplishments
- Camera (No flashes in the arena - skaters WILL get distracted and accidents can occur)
- A small cooler filled with nutritious and appropriate snacks and lunches
- Skate sharpening equipment

Good Foods to Bring
- Proteins
- Whole grains
- Fruit
- Veggies
- Carbohydrates
• Fluids (water is best)
• Homemade snacks (e.g., muffins, breads)

**Foods to Avoid**
• Nuts (due to allergies with skaters around you)
• Junk food (e.g., chips, pop, candy)
• Concession stand fast food (e.g., French fries, hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza)

If you are not sure of a particular food, ask your coach before you bring it to the meet.

Skaters will have a lunch hour assigned, but they should be eating soon after racing, and far enough ahead of the next race so their food has time to digest. Grazing is better than waiting for a full meal. Always hydrate immediately after a race.

Parents, please note you will not have time to leave the arena once racing starts, so make sure you prepare and pack food and items prior to arriving at the rink!

**What to Expect at a Competition**

**When You Arrive**
• Plan to arrive 30 minutes before warm-ups start. If you are unsure, please talk to your coach at least a day prior to the competition.
• Follow the posted signs to the change rooms – our change room will have either CSSA or Calgary posted on the door. Look for fellow CSSA skaters and coaches to guide you if you need help.
• Change rooms are shared among clubs, so find the CSSA coaches in the change room.
• Say hello to the coach and let them know you are present. Pick up your helmet cover with your assigned number from the coaches. Please return the helmet cover at the end of the meet.
• Confirm either, by the coach or on the posted race sheets outside of the change room, what group your skater is in. Schedules are posted around the change room area outside.
• Confirm the warm-up group your skater is in.
• Listen carefully to the coach. They will tell you where they want to meet your skater after each race. Sometimes it’s at the edge of the coach’s box after a race, sometimes the change room at a designated time.
• Leave skate bags and equipment in the change room. Coolers and other items should be kept at your seats to keep food colder and save space in the change room.
• Please be quick to get skates on and off for warm up – this is the busiest time of the meet with the maximum number of skaters in the change room at once. It’s important to be calm and prepared so skaters have a great start to the day.
• Grab a schedule for the day if you can find one!
For Warm-Up

- Skaters usually get 10 minutes of warm-up time on the ice in their designated racing groups. It's important to get the warm-up in before racing to make sure skaters are loose and confident on the ice they will be racing on.
- Skaters should be ready a few minutes early prior to warm-up. They must have helmet covers on and all equipment to be allowed on the ice.
- If skaters are practising starts, remind them ahead of time for warm-up they need to do this in the centre of the rink and not at a start line.
- After warm-up, be sure to put skate guards back on to walk to the change room. Once in the change room, dry the blades and store skates with blade socks instead.
- Skaters also need to warm-up on land before each race. Practising starts, running, doing stairs are all good examples of dry land warm-up. Do active warm-ups before racing rather than stretches. Get muscles doing what they will do in a race!

Race Structure

Races occur in order of groups as they are posted on the walls. Each race is a specific distance, and for each distance the groups are divided further into heats. The racing schedules on the walls are important to get familiar with. Please Note that the time of race may change due to delays or lack off. Always listen/watch for any changes to the posted schedule.

Late skaters may not be allowed on the ice and the skater could be disqualified. Ensure that you have enough time to get your skater ready. This keeps both you and your skater from feeling stressed before the race.

Points

In short track speed skating, points are earned in final races (not the heats). The heats determine the final grouping a skater will race: A, B, C or D. Primary, or A finals, award the highest number of points, then B and so on. Ask a coach or experienced parent how this works.

A skaters accumulated total points from all distances raced determines overall placing for the meet.

Personal Best (PB’s)

A skater’s primary goal at a meet is to earn PBs or personal best times. A personal best time is earned when a skater races a distance faster than he or she has ever raced that distance before. Regardless of how they place in a race, the PBs are the goals worth really celebrating!

At Race Time

Before races, skaters are called into a specific area by the Clerk of the Course. This area is called a heat box or marshalling area, where they are organized into their racing groups.

The Clerk will want them there at least 20 minutes before their race time to make sure they are in order of racing. They will be checked for equipment and will not be allowed on the ice if they are missing anything. This would be a forfeit of the race as the skater would be disqualified for
improper equipment. It is the parents’ job to make sure skaters have all mandatory equipment on and ready to race.

Once your skater is in the heat box area, find a place to watch the race. Parents are not allowed in the heat box or the Clerk of the Course area.

Have fun racers! This is your time to use the techniques you’ve learned and compete with other skaters on the ice. Listen for your coaches while you skate – they are giving you information to help you perform your best in the race. **Go for personal bests, skate hard, and turn left!** Don’t forget to smile at the end of your races – you did it!

**After a Race**

- Put on skate guards to walk to the change room.
- Dry blades thoroughly with a clean towel and put on your blade socks.
- Knock snow or dirt out of the guards.
- Have skaters talk to coaches after each race in the designated format discussed before warm-ups. This talk is valuable to recap how the race went and get coaching suggestions for the next race. Please make sure your skater has time to debrief with the coach.
- Questions about race results must go through your coach. Parents and skaters are NOT allowed to challenge referees or enter the recorder’s office. Only coaches can interact with these groups. Violation of this rule could result removal of the skater and parent from the rink at the discretion of the official.
- At the end of a meet, awards may be awarded in each group. Your coach will advise you if your skater is eligible for an award and let you know where the ceremony is being held at the end of the meet.