



June 16, 2009

Dear Skating Family,

Skate Canada has enjoyed a long history of conducting a complete series of qualifying competitions, championships and invitational events to service the needs of our skaters at many levels. This communication is to provide some context around the Board of Director's decision to discontinue the national STARSkate event, give you all the facts you will need as you begin the 2009/2010 season and demonstrate the new opportunities we have created for skaters like you.

Background - National STARSkate

In 2003, a national competitive event for test skaters was introduced to provide additional opportunities for recognition of these skaters and to provide incentive for skaters to continue advancing in the test program. The system was also developed to allow the test program to stand alone from the competitive program, to increase interest in taking tests and ultimately to keep skaters in the sport. In analyzing these original goals over the past seven years, several of those objectives have not been met.

The event attracts 60-70 entries annually, but has the potential to host 126 entries. These numbers suggest that event support is low. STARSkate member registration numbers have decreased about 15% over the last five years. Tests taken have decreased 20% in the same time period. Although the goal of the national event was to recognize test skaters, we have found that former competitive skaters switching into STARSkate tend to make up a large percentage of the entries in the event each year which changes the dynamic of the competition.

Event Review

Over the past few seasons, Skate Canada has had to conduct a full review of all events to understand and measure current and future opportunities for our skaters. This, in addition to the process of assembling the first-ever Canadian figure skating Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) have led to some difficult decisions, but ones that will ultimately benefit everyone.

The National STARSkate Championships has come under particular inspection due to its size and cost. This event results in an annual loss to Skate Canada of approximately \$50,000. For the LTAD initiative, we are ready to enter phase 2: implementation of the LTAD philosophies and principles, which is the adoption of a more systematic approach to athlete development. Part of phase 2 is reviewing our current programming and competition structures to ensure all of our members benefit regardless of their level or ability at their level of skill development.

Some aspects of the National STARSkate system no longer fit with the principles of LTAD and we are addressing this across the association. The LTAD model outlines seven stages of development, the second being "Learn to Train" which is where most STARSkaters fit in. The third stage "Learn to Compete" would include the current Junior Silver to Gold skaters who participate in the National STARSkate event. This season, we are eliminating a national level of competition for Juvenile skaters (same developmental level as National STARSkate) in order to provide them with a longer development period. The sport science philosophies within the



June 16, 2009

LTAD model encourage this increased development over competition for this category, which is one reason why we are removing the Juvenile skaters and the STARSkaters from their respective national level events.

New Directions - CPC for Section STARSkate Championships

Not having a National STARSkate Championship allows for new opportunities for this program which will continue to provide enjoyment to skaters.

- We intend to make improvements to the STARSkate program as we continue to implement the LTAD principles.
- With LTAD-based program and competition improvements, new and exciting event categories and options are being considered which will appeal to all ages and levels of skaters in the STARSkate test program.
- The 2010 Sectional STARSkate Championships and the Trillium STARSkate Championships will be able to use the Cumulative Point Calculation judging system (CPC), for Interpretive, Junior Bronze and higher free skate and Junior Bronze and higher compulsory dance events for STARSkate. This further roll-out of the CPC system will benefit a much larger number of STARSkaters.
- It will be less costly for skaters, parents and sections as there will no longer be an obligation to travel far distances to compete at a national event.

We believe these changes will allow Skate Canada to grow its programs, meet the needs of more athletes and benefit all our skating family. While these decisions were not easy, they are in the best interest of the development of our skaters and more financial responsibility. We look forward to the exciting opportunities that will be available to our skaters in the future.

Thank you for your continued support of our programs and events. If you have any questions on the above please do not hesitate to e-mail memberservices@skatecanada.ca or call to speak to one of our Member Services team at 1.888.747.2372

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Partrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff Partrick
Director Coaching and Skating Programs