



Inside Edge

A Newsletter for the
Cambridge Skating Club
November 2008

Editor: Annette LaMond

Two New Events in December

Cookie Swap on Saturday, December 20. Bring two dozen homemade cookies (with recipe) to the clubhouse and take home an assortment contributed by other members. Containers will be provided. Time: 11am-12pm.

Family Movie Night on Monday, December 29. Come enjoy a movie at the clubhouse. Pizza, beverages and cookies (\$5 per person, sign-up in advance) will be served at 6:30pm. Screen time will be 7:15pm. This event will be held ice or no ice.



Cooking Classes Return

Back by popular demand, cooking classes with Nonna Gale. Plan your schedule to take advantage of the following delicious offerings (which will come with lots of tasting opportunities).

February 26 – Savories
(Nibbles to Side Dishes)

March 6 – Desserts

March 17 – Cooking for Kids

Longer Season at Daly Rink

Daly Rink will open on Wednesday, November 12, and close on Saturday, March 28. Take advantage of the terrific ice at this great rink.

Dear Members,

Welcome to the 2008–2009 season of the Cambridge Skating Club. Enclosed you will find:

- *Skate tags* (One for each active member: Please attach to skate laces.)
- *Member directory* (with a calendar of the season's events and ice times)
- *Group lessons packet* (Lessons begin at BB&N on December 7.)
- *Hockey information for juniors and adults*

Once again, the season information will be available on the club's Website, www.cambridgeskatingclub.org. Throughout the season, we will send updates and reminders by email. The first email – concerning volunteer opportunities for helping with potluck suppers and children's parties – has already been sent. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Board of Managers

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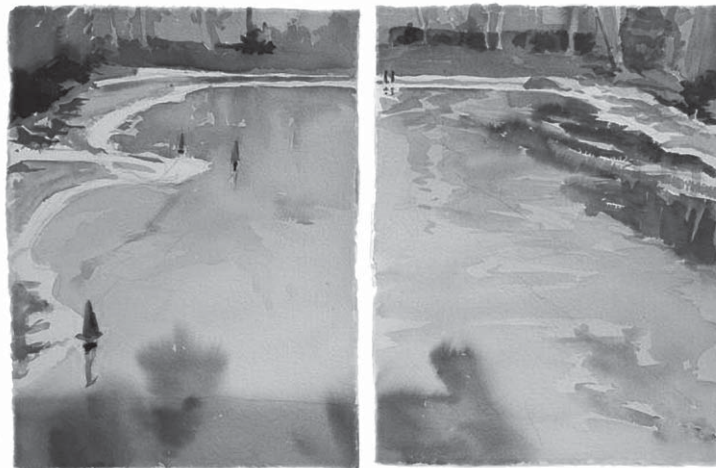
From the Manager



One year into the job, I feel very fortunate to have discovered the Cambridge Skating Club. My interests and previous work experience had been based in the recreation traditions of New England. The CSC offers its members a connection to historical outdoor traditions in the midst of densely populated Cambridge. I love hearing from lifelong members about the joys of growing up at the club, and how it remains the same year after year. (Although, depending on whom you ask, the ice has never been better, used to always be better, or has always been exactly the same!) What I have enjoyed the most about the club has been meeting the members, and being included in an instant community of people who love the winter outdoors.

I appreciate so much the members, volunteers, staff, and the board of managers for their vision, effort and devotion to the club. Each year we make improvements to the facility that will benefit skaters for generations to come. This year we have some new ideas for improving ice maintenance. We are also offering members more opportunities to use the clubhouse for nonskating activities. The clubhouse is a special space that the Skating Club community should be able to enjoy all season long. It is a pleasure to take care of this place, and we do hope you will all come take advantage of this wonderful venue. See you on the ice!

Nick Trautz
Club Manager



CSC member Diane Norris's paintings capture reflections on the Willard Street ice, viewed through the windows of the clubhouse balcony, February 2007. An architect as well as a painter, Diane is inspired by landscape, light, and water.

Spotlight on Diane Brancazio

The club's Sunday morning regulars at BB&N may have noticed a woman with an engaging smile and distinctive curls, practicing spins and jumps. She is CSC skater Diane Brancazio.

Diane may skate as if she started taking figure skating lessons when she was three feet tall, but not so. She comes from the warmer climate of New York City, where she skated on ice only occasionally during the winters. Although her childhood ice time may have been limited, she was a roller skating enthusiast in high school. (Diane's teenage years coincided with the golden age of roller disco, and she didn't live far from the rink on the old World's Fair grounds in Flushing.) It was only as a graduate student at MIT that Diane took up figure skating. Thrilled by the sensation of gliding on the ice, she joined the MIT Figure Skating Club, taking lessons and absorbing figure skating moves. Soon Diane was translating the jumps and spins that she had learned on the concrete floor of her home roller rink to ice. The hardest part was stylistic. Even before hip hop, roller skating had a loose, urban feel, while the figure-skating aesthetic is balletic.

A regular participant in the MIT Figure Skating Club's annual spring exhibition, Diane is now a solid Adult Bronze skater, moving on to the Silver level. (See Diane's article below.) Diane entered her first adult figure skating competition earlier this year, and plans to enter one or two more this season. Be inspired by Diane's example.

Adult figure skating can be a serious and rewarding hobby. Here is some encouragement from Diane.

Figure skating isn't just for kids! Adults also have opportunities to spend countless hours at cold rinks at odd hours of the day challenging themselves to perfect jumps, spins, and dance moves, then perform them together in a two-minute program in front of a panel of stony-faced, parka-clad judges. Facetiousness aside, adult skaters find rich rewards in the sport and can be heard to say things like, "Any time on the ice is a blessing." There is fabulous camaraderie between skaters, during competitions as well as at practices.



Diane Brancazio

Some definitions: Adult figure skating has a progression ladder (similar to the United States Figure Skating Association track followed by young Olympic hopefuls) where skaters test and compete at a series of levels in freestyle, dance and pairs. Youth skaters test at eight levels with names, ranging from Pre-Preliminary to Senior, passing Juvenile about halfway through. Adult skaters (21 and over) have their own levels called Pre-Bronze, Bronze, Silver and Gold – names that can lead to confusion with competition medals. These adult levels are fairly close to the first four youth levels. Pass them and you qualify for Adult Masters and competition at the four upper USFSA levels.

The skating backgrounds of adult skaters vary. Some skated as kids and return to the rink as adults. But in my experience, most began skating as adults in their 20s and 30s. Some begin later, around age 40, after their children have become accomplished figure skaters or hockey players. A few start in their 50s or even 60s! Adult skating competitions divide skaters into five age groups, with the majority of the skaters over 40 and lots over 50.

Learning to skate after adolescence makes skating a bit harder, but it can be done. Spinning and jumping is exhilarating; fun just doesn't quite capture it! I began figure skating on ice at age 24, after spending my teen years on roller skates with a brief foray into competition on wheels. Like many adults, I can do the single jumps. With more training and practice, I hope to progress into axels and

possibly double jumps. (Triple jumps are out of range for most of us.) Limited flexibility in adults may reduce the number of attainable spin positions, but there are ways to do an interesting spin that do not require bending over backward or holding a foot over one's head. (Ice dancers do not have as many limits as freestyle skaters since their art keeps them closer to the ice surface.) When performing, adult skaters can make up for any lack of flexibility and physical strength with style, grace and attitude.

The love of skating is apparent at an adult figure skating competition. (I went to my first in March 2008.) Skaters competing in the same level/age group seek each other out and share about their lives on and off skates. "Where do you skate?" "How do you fit skating in with work and family?" "Does your husband/wife think you are nuts?" "I love your music/outfit!" Adult free-skating programs are often comical or whimsical. There is a special division for "interpretive" or "showcase" programs where skaters follow a looser set of requirements and can use props to express their music/accompaniment. One of my favorites was a retired doctor skating to "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun."

I love skating – whether it is figure skating on my own, trying to keep up with my kids at hockey, or enjoying a gorgeous winter night with friends at Willard Street. If the spirit moves you, look into some adult skating lessons, challenge yourself, and enjoy!

Editor's Note: Diane Brancazio and her family joined the club three seasons ago. Her husband, David, learned to skate on hockey skates, but added figure skating to his repertoire after meeting Diane. In fact, he is one of the few men in the club who can ice dance as well as play hockey. The Brancazios have three sons, ages 13 to almost 8, all on hockey skates for the moment. Diane teaches technology and engineering in the Belmont middle and high schools.

USFSA Skill Levels

Pre-Preliminary	Waltz, toeloop, salchow, ½ flip, ½ lutz
Preliminary	Waltz, salchow, loop, flip, waltz/toeloop
Pre-Juvenile	Loop, flip, lutz, single/single combination including a loop plus one of the three other required jumps.
Juvenile	Three single jumps, one of which must be an axel; choice of split, stag, falling leaf or halfloop; single/single combination
Intermediate	Loop, flip, lutz, axel, double toeloop or double salchow, single/single, single/double (or double/double)
Novice	Axel, double salchow, double toeloop, double loop, single/double, double/double
Junior	Axel, double salchow, double toeloop, double loop, double flip, double/double (or axel/double), one combination of an axel plus some small jumps followed by a double jump
Senior	Axel, doubles of toeloop, salchow, loop, flip, lutz, two double double or axel/double

A Look Back at the Winter Past

December 2007 arrived with the promise of a good skating winter. November's temperatures had been more than one degree cooler than average, and temperatures continued colder than average during the first half of December. The pond was full by December 11, and thoughts turned to an early first ice day. Then, horrifyingly, the surprise snowstorm of December 13 (remember the traffic gridlock that Thursday afternoon?) dropped over 10 inches of snow on ice that was still thickening. Two more storms – on the 16th and the 20th – each produced seven inches of snow that could not be removed from a weak surface.

With the three major storms and dustings of snow on 16 additional days, snowfall in December came within one inch of setting a record – just what skaters do not want to see. (As ice aficionados know, snow is bad for ice if not cleared immediately.) Following the third December snowstorm, a frustrating warming trend raised temperatures above average for the last nine days of the month. December turned out to be a



January 27, 2008

disappointing month – no ice days – for Cambridge skaters. (There were consolations for the skiers among us.)

A cold air mass dropped straight down from the North Pole on January 2, lowering the temperature from nearly 40°F to 10°F by the evening and to below zero by the next morning. The frigid air mass stayed with us, and the ice firmed to the required three-inch minimum thickness. Nick and Joe

were able to welcome skaters after school on January 3. Skating was excellent the next day, too. And Ice Day No. 3, being a Friday, brought many skaters to the first potluck supper of the season. There was disappointment when temperatures rose again the next day, ending skating after only four days.

The January thaw was warmer (with one record high temperature on January 8) and longer than

average. With the advent of cold air from western Canada, skating resumed on January 20. This time skating continued for 10 days, permitting two more well attended potlucks on the 25th and 26th. (One ice day during this stretch was partial due to rain, but the liquid precipitation improved the ice.) Rain and high temperatures on January 30 closed the pond, but skaters were back on the ice the next day, the surface once again improved. The final number of ice days for the month: 15 – not bad considering the number of unseasonably warm January days.

February provided only five more ice days (two partial) and two impromptu potlucks. There were a number of additional days when cold temperatures produced ice that was thick, but it was too rough for safe skating. Above average snowfall, sleet and rain were the culprits. Some cold weather at the end of the month gave us a rare leap-year ice day on February 29.

Unlike the previous two years, there were no ice days in March. The ice day total for winter of 2007–2008 thus stood at 20. And so our thoughts turned to spring...



CSC Instructor, Barb Fritz, winning the Silver Ladies' artistic event at the International Skating Union Adult Competition in Oberstdorf, Germany, May 2008

Forecasts for the Winter of 2008–2009

The *Old Farmer's Almanac* of New Hampshire (established 1792) predicts a colder than normal winter for the Boston area with above-normal snowfall. (The *OFA* forecast is predicated on current solar activity compared with solar patterns and historical weather conditions and observations for particular locales.) The *OFA's* slightly younger rival, the *Farmer's Almanac* of Maine (established 1818) is predicting a “numbingly cold and snowy” winter for the Northeast.

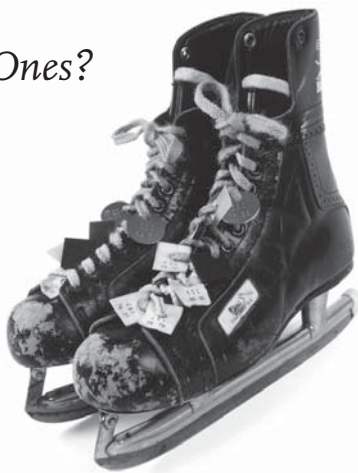
In contrast to the promise of the old-time forecasters, the National Weather Service is once again noncommittal about the upcoming winter – with forecasts for December-January-February that

have equal probabilities of above, normal and below normal temperatures and precipitation.

What to do? As we advise each year, be prepared to seize any ice day. Call the club to check on ice conditions and read the club's emails. And don't make any assumptions. Even if it has rained the day before, there may be surprisingly good ice if temperatures later drop below freezing. Temperatures in the upper 30° range do not necessarily indicate there is no skating. In the meantime, on those days when Willard Street is closed, plan to take advantage of our ice times at BB&N (Sunday and Wednesday) and Daly Rink (Wednesday and Saturday).

Need New Skates? Want to Recycle Old Ones?

Check out the club's Skate Exchange on November 15 and 16. Drop off old skates (in good condition) on Saturday between 9am and noon. Enjoy coffee and breakfast pastries from 10:30 to 11:30am. Come back on Sunday from 2 to 3:30pm. Members who dropped off skates on Saturday will be given first choice at the exchange, from 2 to 2:30pm.



Skate Sharpening Tips

- Skates should be sharpened approximately once every 25 to 30 hours on the ice.
- Wipe your blades with a soft cloth after skating and put soakers on the blades or store them in the open.
- Do not store skates in plastic hard guards. Moisture collects in the plastic grooves and causes blades to rust.

Skaters Landing (the skate shop at the Skating Club of Boston), 1240 Soldiers Field Road, will give CSC skaters \$1 off each pair of skates sharpened. Hours: Monday (3–8pm); Tuesday (4–6pm); Wednesday and Thursday (closed); Friday (3–7pm); Saturday (9am–5pm); and Sunday (11am–1pm).



First Ice Day, January 3, 2008



Races & Games Day, 2008. Photo courtesy of CSC member Romana Vysatova Ingersoll.

*Does the club
have your latest
email address?*

Email changes and additions to cambridgeskatingclub@comcast.net.

Clubhouse Rental

Looking for a party venue for a children's birthday party, an anniversary, a family reunion? Consider renting the Willard Street clubhouse. The club's board would like to increase rental income as way of compensating for increases in utility costs and indoor ice time charges. Rent the clubhouse and you will have a terrific space for a party and help the club at the same time. Please email for information about dates and prices.

Events

Daley Rink Opening	November 12
Skate Exchange	November 15 & 16
BB&N Rink Opening	November 30
"Ice or No Ice" Potlucks	December 6 March 7
Cookie Swap	December 20
Family Movie Night	December 29
"Ice Only" Potlucks...	are scheduled every Friday and Saturday, January 2 through February 14.
Grade 1 & 2 Party	January 3
Grade 3 & 4 Party	January 10
Grade 5 & 6 Party	January 17
Pre-K & K Party	January 21
Grade 7 & 8 Party	January 25
Races & Games	February 8