

Team Manager Guide for Synchronized Skating



Getting Started and Managing a Team

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Team Manager Responsibilities – An Overview	2
Specific Tasks.....	3
Coach Selection.....	4
On and Off-Ice Support Team Selection	4
Chaperone Selection and Responsibilities	5
Budget Preparation	6
Financial Management.....	6
Sponsorship.....	7
Team Rules	8
Policies for Alternates	8
Synchronized Skating Season – Model Calendar.....	9
Synchronized Skating Resources	13

Appendix:

- A – Sample Medical and Travel Permission Form
- B – Qualifying Competition Medical History Form
- C – Pre-Competition Checklist
- D – Coach Contract Checklist
- E – Sample Budget Worksheet
- F – Sample Team Rules and Code of Conduct

Introduction

Synchronized skating is one of the most popular and fastest growing disciplines in the modern era of figure skating. Canada has long been regarded as a world leader in the discipline and in 2008, the sport held its milestone 25th National Championships.

Synchronized skating teams are present across the country and they help clubs retain skaters as they become adults. The discipline of synchronized skating provides opportunities for skaters of every age, ability, budget and objective, from the beginner team looking for a fun opportunity to compete, to high-performance skaters looking for national or even international success, to adults seeking to remain active and involved in the sport of figure skating. Synchronized skating teams help to foster pride for one's club and region while promoting team spirit and loyalty within their team. It allows more skaters the opportunity to train and compete. Skate Canada encourages and supports the efforts and initiatives of clubs in the creation and retention of synchronized skating teams of every age and skill level.

This guide will provide an introduction to creating and managing a synchronized skating team in your club. For those entering the discipline for the first time and facing the sometimes daunting task of learning the basics, this guide provides important starting information on management, administration and general overview of the coach and team during a regular season. Current team managers may also find guidance on how to handle more complex situations they may be facing for the first time.

The information presented in this document is meant strictly as a guideline and the suggestions made herein should not be considered as set rules for how a team should be managed. The conditions under which each club operates vary greatly and the management of any synchronized skating team must be put into place according to the needs and resources of those clubs. Even neighbouring clubs in the same city or region may have completely different management systems for their teams. Team managers should expect to adapt the information in this guide to the club, team and organization with which they will be working.

A team manager's responsibilities will vary greatly depending on the size and number of teams they will manage and their objectives. A team manager might be the team's only resource and may be required to manage the budget and act as chaperone in addition to his/her management duties; conversely, in a larger club the team manager delegates certain tasks and responsibilities to other volunteers or committee members, such as the treasurer or chaperones. When working with older skaters, the skaters themselves may become involved with the management of the team. In the largest of Canada's synchronized skating organizations, the role of the team manager can easily become a full-time job.

The needs and yearly plans of each team will be quite different and tailored according to the nature of the team and its goals. This guide will provide an outline that will aid in the creation and management of new or expanding teams.

Team Manager Responsibilities – An Overview

The team manager is the engine behind a team's existence and success. Their oversight is necessary in order to run a safe and structured program that offers the most fulfilling experience possible to the skaters and, by extension, their families. The following is an outline of the most common tasks and responsibilities that a team manager may be called upon to fulfill.

1. General management and oversight
 - Participation in the hiring process for the coach, coaching staff and contract management. This process, in part or in whole, may be under the responsibility of the club's Board of Directors.
 - Primary contact for the team, internal and external; management of all incoming and outgoing communication.
 - Link between coaching staff and parents.
 - Management of schedule, calendar and agenda.
 - Ice reservations and ice contract management (as needed).
 - Participation in meetings between coach, parents and skaters. All meetings between parents and skaters and the coach take place with the team manager present.
 - Arrange ice shows and other appearances.
 - Organization of social functions (team parties, team-building activities).
 - Coordination of chaperones and other volunteers.
 - Coordination of team auditions or open house events with coach.
 - Oversight of the selection of support professionals (dressmaker, music technician, others).
 - Supervision of the drafting and enforcement of team rules and policies, including a policy for alternates, as defined and established by the coach.
 - Monitoring of all matters of discipline and conflict resolution.
2. Team administration
 - Create and maintain up-to-date team roster with e-mail and phone lists.
 - Create and distribute calendars to parents and skaters (monthly).
 - Create and maintain up-to-date medical forms and emergency contact lists (Appendix A).
 - Submit team registration to Skate Canada before November 1st deadline.
 - Collect skater team registration, copies of proof-of-age documents and copies of Skate Canada membership cards.
3. Team financial management
 - Create budget and maintain financing and accounting for the team.
 - Allocate money for expenses as per budget; pay team invoices.
 - Collect fees and payments.
 - Prepare financial statements and present to board and parents.
 - Organize fundraisers and solicit sponsors.

4. Competition logistics

- Submit all required competition registration forms and complete entire online registration process (if part of event registration) before the set deadline, including: attending coach, chaperone, skaters, planned program(s), music information, onsite contact information, etc. (Appendix B).
- Arrange travel and accommodations (air, bus, train and hotel).
- Oversee the team's daily schedule during the event as discussed with coach.
- Book reservations with restaurants, off-ice spaces or conference rooms as needed.
- Check that team and skaters have all necessary travel documents (passports, insurance cards, medical documentation, etc.) and competition equipment and attire (Appendix C).

5. Other

- Assist with team promotion and skater recruiting.
- Oversee public relations, publicity and media relations.
- Select supporting volunteers.

A team manager may delegate specific tasks and responsibilities to older team skaters, team captains and other parents. This strategy is recommended especially if the team manager has more than one team to work with. A good team manager should also be mindful of training a replacement while ensuring the continued success in the management of the team or teams.

Many successful organizations choose to operate with a committee structure whereby specific responsibilities such as finances, competition logistics, fundraising or other tasks are assigned to capable lead volunteers. The team manager is then responsible for the leadership and management of this Synchronized Skating Team Committee. In addition, the team manager will often be required to work concurrently with the club's Board of Directors and provide feedback and progress reports to them; some of the tasks and responsibilities described in this guide may be shared between the team manager and the board.

In areas and clubs where the team manager is working inside a sizable organization their responsibilities may expand towards more elite and high-performance goals. The team manager will have more ice times and practices to oversee, more skaters, teams, volunteers and professionals to manage as the additional administrative and clerical load will increase proportionately with the size of the organization. Additional tasks and responsibilities may include the development of long-term goals and strategies, recruiting highly qualified coaches from other areas or countries and assisting with their relocation, coordinating parent information seminars, creating alumna and athlete development programs, overseeing decisions on nutrition or physical fitness resources and much more.

Specific Tasks

Team managers take on many important responsibilities and the decisions they make impact the team. Those responsibilities are explained in greater detail in the following pages.

Coach Selection

The coach selection process can be complex depending on location, budget, lead time for selection and coaches' availability. The appropriate remuneration must be available according to the coach's skill level and experience. Advertisements may be placed in local newspapers, club or section newsletters and/or by using online resources. Ideally, a successful coaching candidate should have prior experience in synchronized skating either as a skater, coach or assistant coach. Hiring the right coach is an important decision; it is the coach's hard work, creativity, expertise and enthusiasm that will make the difference between a team with unity and spirit and a group of people who just skate together.

It is recommended that a contract be signed between the organization and the coach once the terms of employment have been agreed upon. The contract may be short-term or long-term, but the terms of employment, remuneration and payment options can all be negotiated and agreed upon between the team manager and the coach according to each parties needs. A checklist of items to be considered when creating an employment contract is included in Appendix D.

Coaches must fulfill the following basic criteria:

- Registered professional coach with Skate Canada (includes insurance).
- Certified in first aid/CPR.
- Possession of the correct level of certification for the team from the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).
 - o Must have the appropriate level of coaching certifications required for the level their team will enter at the Synchronized Skating Championships and all qualifying events leading up to it.
- Knowledge of Skate Canada technical requirements and applicable ISU communications.
 - o The coach must be willing and have the capacity to learn the rules governing synchronized skating and stay up-to-date on any changes that may occur.
- Demonstration of behaviour, communication and presentation befitting a professional coach.
- Possession of the technical knowledge appropriate for the team's level.
- Ability to manage basic synchronized skating responsibilities: music selection, costume selection, choreography, basic discipline, skater safety, strong organizational skills and ability to work with a group.
- Willingness to consult with outside resources (officials or other coaches) and participate in continuing education and professional development opportunities.
- Demonstration of good sportsmanship and leadership abilities.
- Adherence to all club rules and policies and all Skate Canada rules and policies.

On and Off-Ice Support Team Selection

As with the team of volunteers working with a team manager, the size of the coaching staff may be as basic as having one coach and grow to include a multitude of supporting professionals. This team may include an assistant coach, a choreographer, a stroking/skills coach, specialty coaches (dance, ballet), physical trainers, nutritional consultants, etc. The team manager and coach should determine the team's needs and set budgets. In most cases, a new or beginning team requires only coaching staff and not additional outside professional resources. Allowing the coach to work with an assistant is an excellent way to train and retain new resources within your club or region.

Chaperone Selection and Responsibilities

When a team manager oversees more than one team it is best to work with team chaperones. Teams often work with one or two chaperones each and choose them from among the skaters' parents. Given that most synchronized skating teams are composed of young girls and women, sometimes the team prefers to have a woman as the chaperone. Chaperones are selected with the help of the coach, according to their relationship with the team, sociability, availability and ability to work with a team.

The chaperone's main responsibilities revolve around the well-being of the team and are generally as follows:

- Acts as liaison between skaters and team manager.
- Attends all practices and assists with music play-back and equipment as needed.
- Possesses first aid certification (not required, but preferred).
- Ensures team is aware of the schedule and follows it as set by the team manager and/or coach; informs team members of any changes to the set schedule.
- Communicates information to skaters as prepared by team manager.
- Manages competition costumes during event and assures their maintenance, repair and storage between events.
- Attends all competitions:
 - o Coordinates meals.
 - o Works on schedule with coach and team manager.
 - o Prepares changing room for practice, official practice and competition; makes sure it is left clean.
 - o Helps oversee discipline, including how team presents itself in public and their behaviour at the rink, hotel and restaurants.
 - o Assists with team curfews and wake-ups.
- Coordinates team events with coach and team.
- Coordinates additional wardrobe requirements with team captain(s).
- Monitors and collects team members' medical information; updates this information regularly when changes occur.
- Assists in the collection of all team members' necessary documentation for submission to Skate Canada, as required.
- Assists team members' fundraising campaigns.
- Acts as the communication liaison among the team members, coach and team manager.
- Manages the team's "Rescue Bag" during practice and competition. This is usually a bag or carry-on-sized suitcase containing the following:
 - o Basic first aid, feminine supplies and box of tissues.
 - o Spare skate guards and skate laces.
 - o Screwdrivers for every type of screw used on blades; extra screws.
 - o Hair supplies: bands, bobby pins, gel, hairspray.
 - o Clear hockey tape (to tape laces and keep them from coming undone) and duct tape.
 - o Extra pairs of clean and undamaged tights in correct colour.
 - o Sewing supplies, safety pins and scissors.
 - o Competition make-up (carry only to competitions) and mirrors.

Budget Preparation

The size of a team's operating budget will vary greatly from team to team, according to the length of the season and the complexity of the training program, staff members, ice costs, locations of competitions attended and other variables. A team budget must always consider and include the following (as applicable):

- Coaching costs.
 - o Should include fees for choreography and music production.
- Assistant coaching costs.
- Ice costs.
- Off-ice costs.
 - o Room rental if applicable.
 - o Professional fees for any hired resources (ballet, Pilates, dance, etc.).
- Planned seminars and physical evaluations.
- Dresses and other wardrobe needs (track suits, team jackets, practice dresses, etc.).
- Planned competitions:
 - o Hotel
 - o Bus, airfare or carpool cost
 - o Coaching costs (on and off-ice)
 - o Ice cost (if purchasing additional practices)
 - o Off-ice room cost (if renting off-ice space)
 - o Competition cost (registration and other fees)
- Management costs, if applicable (copy paper, internet access, basic supplies, space rental, etc.).

Please see Appendix E for a sample team budgeting worksheet.

Financial Management

How the budget is written and in which manner the skaters will be charged is entirely at the discretion of the organization. Some clubs put all expenses into one budget and charge the skaters for everything up front in one inclusive number. Others only initially invoice basic costs and budget and collect for each competition or event separately. Many accept payments over time and have clear policies on the quantity and frequency of payments that they require from members.

The most important thing about financial management is keeping open and clear communication with those who are paying for the skaters' dues. Using monthly statements and updating parents and/or skaters at team meetings will help everyone feel confident about where their money is being spent.

Though not the most pleasant part of a manager's job, collection of fees does fall under the team manager's responsibilities. Many teams have drafted clear policies about when payments are due and which consequences will be applied (if any) to skaters that become delinquent in their payments. Managers often solicit the assistance of their chaperones to help collect payments or fundraiser money generated by the skaters.

Managing the team's finances will also include some of the following tasks:

- Preparation of operating budgets
- Skater invoices and statements
- Tabulation of income (bursary, donations, etc.)
- Tabulation and payment of invoices
- Managing cash flow
- Producing team accounting statements and providing information to parents/skaters
- Liaising with sponsors or organizations who are making donations
- Developing fundraising strategies and implementation plans

Sponsorship

Securing sponsorships and donations can help offset some of the costs associated with travel, competitions, and costumes that skaters face throughout the season. There are two types of sponsorships that team managers may pursue; private and corporate.

Private sponsorship is monetary support received from businesses or individuals who are interested in making a philanthropic contribution to the team and do not expect anything in return.

Corporate sponsorship is financial support received from a business or organization that will expect some type of return on their investment. Increased visibility through the use of a company logo on skater apparel or signage is a benefit that may appeal to potential sponsors.

No matter what type of sponsorship a team may be interested in pursuing, there are a number of steps that should be followed to garner the best possible outcome for the team:

1. Assess current team contacts. These include businesses, relatives or friends that may be interested in having their business name associated with the team or the sport of synchronized skating.
2. Prepare a sponsorship proposal letter to send all contacts. This letter should include information such as:
 - Brief description of the sport, team background, competitive history, team goals and objectives for the upcoming season, skater bios, etc.
 - Explain the financial needs of the team. Outline yearly costs per skater and specify the area the proposed sponsorship funding would go towards (ex. event registration, travel, training, ice rental, etc.)
 - Summarize the type and amount of exposure your team will generate throughout the season at events and ice shows, media, etc
 - Explain why the team is interested in creating a partnership with the prospective sponsor.
 - Outline the benefits a sponsorship may bring to the business such as:
 - o Increased visibility for the company through advertisements, event programs, logo recognition on clothing, etc.
 - o Positive brand assimilation and improved corporate image
 - o Increased brand awareness
 - o Website exposure
 - o Local or National media exposure
 - Team contact information

3. Follow up with either a call or an e-mail approximately 3-4 days after initial contact has been made. Ask the potential sponsor if they have had an opportunity to review the letter and arrange a time to meet face to face to discuss further details.
4. Always send a thank you card after meeting with a potential sponsor. Even if they have declined sponsorship, this shows thoughtfulness on the team's behalf and may help foster sponsorship opportunities in the future.

As an added reference, please refer to the Skate Canada Marketing Guidelines document posted under "Clubs and Schools" in the Members Only section of the Skate Canada website.

Team Rules

Establishing a set of team rules should be a priority when creating a new team. Clear rules on issues such as behaviour, attendance, or payment of fees helps define what is expected of skaters and the consequences they will face if they do not adhere to rules set for all members. Having a clear set of rules and communicating them to the skaters and parents at the beginning of the season will help settle conflicts as they arise during the season.

Many team managers create a document (often referred to as a Skater's Contract or Team Agreement) that can be distributed to parents and skaters and signed by all as proof of their knowledge and acceptance of the team's rules. Rules and the behaviour they require should be set in a manner that encourages healthy participation and respect for the basic principles of sportsmanship and safety. They should include requirements for skater behaviour during practices and when representing the team at outside events, rules on attendance and tardiness for practice, specify what attire is required during practice, rules on basic safety (long hair tied back, no gum, no jewellery, etc.) and rules for behaviour during travel. A sample Code of Conduct and Team Rules document is included in Appendix F.

Policies for Alternates

As part of the team rules, a policy for the naming or selection of alternates at competitions should be defined by the coach and approved by the team manager.

Alternate selection is entirely at the discretion of the coach and no parent or manager should have an influence on this selection. The coach's decision is made according to the goals set for the team at the start of the season and is based on many factors that may include technical ability, skating skills, knowledge of the program, improvement, attitude, attendance, dedication and illness or injuries. In some cases, two skaters will be placed for practice in the same spot so that they may continue to train and progress with the team during the season. When a competition approaches, one of the two skaters sharing the spot is named as an alternate. In teams that are more participatory or recreational in nature, coaches will try to allow each skater to skate at a minimum of one event in the season, unless his or her skating skills are too weak and the skater presents a safety concern by skating with the team. For recreational teams it is always preferable to try to have everyone skate at events as much as possible and not have any alternates at competition. The goal for teams at the Beginner I & II level is to encourage participation for all and avoid alternates entirely.

Synchronized Skating Season – Model Calendar

Not all organizations can or will follow the same calendar in a season. High-performance teams often schedule auditions in early spring, set their rosters by May, and begin practices soon after. Other teams choose to hold skills sessions in the spring, break for summer and set auditions for the fall and others may not have ice available to them before the fall and have all of their activities cease by March. In some regions, competitions begin in late November and early December, while in other areas the first competition does not take place until January. Team managers must create a calendar in consultation with the coach according to the size and level of the team using the resources available to them.

The following is an example of a synchronized skating calendar and the activities that need to take place in order for the team to arrive at their first event as prepared as possible. It is based on an average season and will not reflect the accelerated pace of high-performance programs.

Spring and summer – Basic planning and setting goals

- Coach recruitment and selection; signature of contract.
- Selection of team name (if a new team).
 - o A name should provide a unique identity and should be researched in order to be sure that no other team carries the same name in the region and at that level. Names of established synchronized skating programs are to be avoided entirely. While some skaters and teams do not mind having their name adopted by other teams, in general it is considered bad form to do so.
- Establishment of team goals and objectives according to age and ability.
- Choosing the team's level should be done as soon as the coach and team manager have an idea of the group of skaters they might be working with.
 - o The categories and criteria for each level are established by Skate Canada. Please contact your section office and consult all relevant Skate Canada rules and other technical documents for more information.
 - o At the preliminary stages of planning you may be able to pre-select one or two different categories that the coach feels will be suitable for the team. The final decision can only be made once the group of skaters has been selected, their ages are known and the coach has evaluated their skills.
- Establish venue, ice times and practice schedules and conclude necessary contracts.
 - o The Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) makes recommendations on the amount of time athletes should be spending on the ice at the different stages of athlete development. Clubs are strongly encouraged to try to provide their skaters with the ice time recommended in the LTAD model. Nevertheless, practice times vary greatly across the country and not every club can provide ice times as recommended. Off-ice practices can compensate for some ice time, during which the team can learn new steps and transitions and perfect their synchronization and unison. This is highly effective and should be done regardless of how much time the team spends on the ice.
- Plan skater recruiting activities and advertisements.
 - o Many teams hold "Open House" activities that invite all who are interested in trying synchronized skating to skate with the coach and previous year's skaters. This no-pressure activity allows those who are curious about the discipline to try a session and decide if they wish to join the team.

- o Advertisements can be placed in local newspapers, arena bulletin boards and club or section newsletters or on the applicable club or team websites.
- o If the club is offering a team for the first time it may choose to invite a knowledgeable speaker, such as a coach, official or Section Synchronized Skating Chair, to speak to parents and create interest in synchronized skating.
- Hold a skater and parent meeting; communicate as much information as possible.
 - o Parents and skaters should be made aware of the team's objectives and made to understand the importance of a strong commitment to the team, the commitment to attend practice and competitions and the importance of following team rules.
 - o Team rules will be used to manage conflicts. A copy of the team's rules should be handed out as a reference so that the skaters and parents are aware of them before committing to the team for the season.
 - o A basic calendar of practices and, if known, competitions the team may be attending, should be distributed to parents as soon as possible.
 - o A basic outline of anticipated fees and financial commitments should be made known at this time.
- Hold auditions, evaluations, clinics, open house events or camps as needed.
 - o Auditions or evaluations are held even if the team is not full. A structured assessment helps the coach establish the skaters' skill set and develop a training plan and strategies. Progress can later be assessed from this starting point.
 - o Some teams invite judges to help provide an objective assessment. This also lends credibility to the process and can avoid any possible problems of having the coach being suspected of bias later in the year, especially if/when choosing alternates.
- Confirmation of team roster.
- Recruit volunteers and delegate tasks.
- Hold a meeting with confirmed team members and their parents to communicate team objectives, rules and policies; if using a Team Contract for rules, distribute the document and collect signed copies from parent, guardian or skater, as applicable.
- Collect medical forms and emergency contact forms.

Coaches should:

- Keep up-to-date with rule changes through frequent consultation of the Members Only section of the Skate Canada website and the International Skating Union (ISU) website.
 - o Any new communications or clarifications from the ISU should be read in order to determine if the changes apply to the team. Any technical document published by Skate Canada should be read and kept as reference.
- Attend any clinics or seminars offered (including online sessions) and communicate and consult with necessary resources on any rule changes.
- Plan any auditions, clinics or evaluations.
- Collaborate with team manager to create team rules and present a policy for alternates.
- Begin music selection and plan choreography.
 - o Music selected should reflect the age and ability of the skaters on the team.
- Create a yearly training plan with specific goals and objectives.

Late summer and early fall – Regular season begins

- Verify skaters and coaches are registered with Skate Canada for the current season and collect copies of all membership cards and official proof-of-age documents.
- Register team with Skate Canada by November 1st deadline.
- Oversee the selection of team clothing and competition costumes with the coach, including the selection and oversight of the dressmaker; team may decide to have other optional gear such as official practice outfits, warm-up outfits, skate bags, skate guards, etc.
 - o Competition costumes need not be expensive or elaborate as long as they allow the team to have a uniform appearance on the ice. Simple patterns and fabrics are perfectly acceptable and embellishments are to the discretion of the team. Costumes can also be purchased pre-owned or rented for a season from another club in order to keep costs low.
 - o Costumes should be athletic in nature and appropriate for the age group. Skirts or trousers are allowed for women but skirts must not be longer than the bend at the back of the knee (top of the calf).
 - o Any other clothing, such as track suits or practice dresses, are entirely optional and should be selected according to the budget of the skaters; however, most teams try to dress the skaters in a uniform colour off-ice in order to encourage team identity and a sense of belonging, as well as helping chaperones keep visual track of their skaters while on-the-move.
- Continue to hold regular meetings and/or information sessions with parents and skaters.
- Ensure practices are run according to established objectives.
- Plan fundraising activities.

Coaches should:

- Order and obtain official program music from a qualified sound/music professional (or equivalent) for practice and competition according to rules (usually at least one CD for practices and at least two original copies submitted when team registers for event).
 - o Competition CDs should be played back and tested before every event. They should also be inspected visually for any scratches or damage.
 - o Many coaches also carry a back-up copy on a memory stick or MP3 player (iPod) in case the CDs prove to be incompatible with the competition's equipment.
- Establish needs for competition costumes and begin working with dressmaker (if applicable) or proceed to research clubs with pre-owned dresses for sale or rent.
- Continue basic skills training and begin choreography.
- Establish clear communication with skaters and parents on individual progress.
- Begin planning alternate selection according to established policies.
- Plan and hold team-building activities and exercises, as needed.
- Guide the team through their selection of a team captain.

October and November – Competitions approach

- Make final decision on which competitions the team will attend and obtain competition announcements and registration forms.
 - o Invitational events are announced on club and/or section websites and qualifying events will be announced on section websites and/or on Skate Canada's site. Registration requirements and process will be detailed in the announcement.
 - o Section offices will be able to provide information on qualifying events.
- Decide whether or not to attend regional qualifying events and if the team will attend synchronized skating nationals should they qualify for that event.

- Oversee the coach in planning for possible alternates at competition as per policies for alternates established at the beginning of the season. The skater and his/her parents should be informed of the skater's weak areas as soon as possible and be told if the coach expects to name her as alternate for any competition approximately two weeks in advance.
- Present a final competition schedule to parents.
- Draft a letter to use at school or in the workplace on team letterhead, explaining the nature of the activity the athlete will participate in and to request the institution's support and understanding for any absences. Distribute to skaters as required.
- Ensure that dressmaker will deliver costumes by promised date; make certain team clothing is delivered and fitted.
- Hold fundraising activities as planned/needed.
- Make reservations and travel plans for upcoming events; reserve tickets, reserve buses, check transfers, plan meals, etc.
- Plan and schedule exhibitions (often held in December or during Christmas season).
 - o Exhibitions help the team become accustomed to skating in front of an audience. They also act as a dress rehearsal for volunteers so they can learn how to prepare and manage the team, costumes and make-up through a performance.
 - o If an exhibition is not possible it is important for the team to test the hair, make-up and costumes at least once during practice before presenting at competition. This will help confirm there will be no wardrobe malfunctions in competition and that all embellishments stay in place, hairpieces stay on securely, dress seams are secure, zippers are not faulty, and so on.

Coaches should:

- Complete basic choreography and begin run-throughs by late November or December (according to when team was formed and practices began).
- Inform skaters at least two weeks prior to an event whether she will be named as alternate, barring any changes due to sudden illness or injury.
- Schedule an evaluation or monitoring with a technical specialist, technical controller or judge. If local resources are limited, coaches can arrange to send video to an official and obtain an evaluation in that manner. Contact your section office for help in contacting the officials closest to your team.
- Have all competition make-up and hair styles planned and ready, along with the competition costume.
 - o Hair should be as similar as possible, but styles may be simple and quick to achieve. Long hair must be tied back or in a bun. The time and number of volunteers needed to get all the skaters' hair done should be considered when choosing a style.
 - o Make-up is completely optional, but if the team chooses to use make-up it cannot be theatrical in manner.
- Plan exhibitions or other public events to simulate a competition environment and give team experience in performing in front of an audience. These events can also be used for fundraising. Many teams will invite officials to monitor this performance and give feedback, thus creating a more realistic simulation of the competitive experience.
- Be ready to compete (music in hand, dresses ready, choreograph how team enters and leaves the ice, choreograph one-minute competition warm-up, have off-ice warm-up planned and choreographed, etc.).

- Prepare the team captain on his/her responsibilities during the performance and how to speak with the referee in case of music malfunction or program interruption.

December to March – Competitive season

- Confirm receipt of competition registrations, obtain competition schedules as they become available and plan daily schedule for each event.
 - o Managers must plan meal arrangements and reservations according to the schedule and according to which restaurants are available and able to handle your group.
 - o Remember to schedule enough time for each activity (hair preparation, make-up, team warm-up, meals and travel time to and from the arena).
 - o Teams usually receive a set curfew and wake-up time.
- Finalize and confirm all travel arrangements as required.
- Support coach in the communication between coach and skaters/parents, especially with skaters who may be named as alternates.
- Supervise team chaperones and ensure that they have everything they need to support the team through a competition weekend.
- Plan end of season activities such as exhibitions, carnivals or team dinners.

At the end of the season some team managers may want to survey the skaters, coaches and parents, either informally or formally, through a team meeting or written survey, on what improvements they feel could be made in order to make the team's next season a better one.

Synchronized Skating Resources

Skate Canada Rulebook – Available in Members Only at www.skatecanada.ca.

Technical Requirements Package – Updated and distributed yearly to all sections and available in Members Only of the Skate Canada website.

Synchronized Skating Officials – Please contact your section for recommendations on qualified officials in your area.

Section Synchronized Skating Coordinators – Please contact your section for the most up-to-date contact information.

ISU Communications – www.isu.org for rule clarifications at the junior and senior levels.

INSERT SKATING CLUB NAME
Synchronized Skating Program
2009/2010

MEDICAL & TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM
'SAMPLE'

Skater's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Health Card # _____

I hereby give permission to the _____ Skating Club to take my child, _____, by bus or private car to all competitions and exhibitions that the team participates in. It is understood that the _____ Skating Club is not held responsible for any accidents, incidents or loss of personal property, which might occur, on these trips.

Date: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

We are requesting the following information as safeguards against any unforeseen problems. This information will remain confidential.

Does the skater suffer any motion sickness, etc. when travelling? _____

If yes, what does he/she require? _____

Does the skater have any medical problems?

Asthma Yes _____ No _____

Nosebleeds Yes _____ No _____

Allergies Yes _____ No _____ If yes, allergies to _____

Migraines Yes _____ No _____

Other _____

Date of last tetanus booster _____

Does the skater have glasses, contact lenses, mouthpiece, etc.? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please specify. _____

Does the skater carry any self-administered medication? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please specify. _____

I give permission for the team manager or _____ to authorize minor medical treatment for my skater, _____.

Date: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

MEDICAL HISTORY

Type of treatment (physiotherapy, massage, chiropractor, athletic therapy, etc.)	Name of provider	City and phone number of provider

ALLERGIES	Please list any allergies you may have:
Medication:	
Food:	
The environment:	

COMMENTS:

MEDICAL WAIVER

I hereby, _____ (skater's name) agree that the relationship between himself/herself and any attending physician, therapist or allied medical personnel in connection with the competition shall be governed by and constructed in accordance with the laws of the Province in which the competition is being held.

The competitor acknowledges that the treatment/service was performed in the Province in which the competition is being held and that the Courts of the Province in which the competition is being held shall have jurisdiction to entertain any complaint, demand, claim or cause of action, whether based on alleged breach of contract or alleged negligence arising out the treatment. The Competitor mentioned above hereby agrees that he/she will commence any such legal proceedings in the Province in which the competition is being held and only in that Province in which the competition is being held and hereby submits to the jurisdiction of the Courts of the Province in which the competition is being held.

(SKATER'S NAME) _____ hereby state that, to the best of my knowledge, the above answers are correct.

Signature of Skater

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if skater is under 18 years of age)

Date (If skater is under 18 years of age)

Team Manager Pre-Competition Checklist

Registration	
Entry Fees	
Registration process complete (online or hardcopy)*	
Planned Program Sheet(s) complete (online or hardcopy)*	
Proof of age documents	
Medical Forms completed and signed by all event team members	
Waiver Forms completed and signed by all event team members	
Hardcopy Forms	
Competition Schedule	
Competition Information Booklet (if provided by event organizers)	
Competition Announcement	
Costumes	
Dresses	
Hair pieces	
Tights	
Static Guard	
Hairspray	
Kleenex	
Make-up	
Emergencies	
First Aid Kit	
Medical History forms for all event team members	
Emergency contact information for all event team members (phone numbers etc)	
Sewing Kit	
Laces	
Screw drivers (various kinds)	

* Registration requirements vary per event. All qualifying events require online submissions.

Note: This checklist is meant to be used as a template. All teams have different needs and requirements depending on the event they are attending and level that they will be competing at so some items may need to be added or omitted.

Skater Pre-Competition Checklist

Clothing	
Team Track Suit (jacket, warm-up pants, etc)	
Practice Uniform (dress, tights, sweater, etc)	
Competition Dress and tights (if skater carries own)	
Equipment	
Skates	
Guards and blade covers	
Spare laces	
Towel to wipe blades	
Beauty	
Make-up (practice and competition)	
Hair supplies (brush, gel, elastics, clips, etc)	
Emergencies	
Health Card	
Any personal items (inhaler, medications, etc)	

Note: This checklist is meant to be used as a template. All teams have different needs and requirements depending on the event they are attending and level that they will be competing at so some items may need to be added or omitted.

Checklist of Items to Consider in an Employment Contract

Although many employment contracts are oral, it is always a good idea to have some written employment agreement in place. A written employment contract can be as simple or as detailed as you think necessary.

The format of the employment contract can be casual (such as a letter of offer from the club to the employee), or formal (a written contract, signed by both sides). What matters most is that it is clearly written, easy to understand, and accurate.

This checklist is provided to point out some of the features you may wish to consider including in an employment contract. Remember there are employment standards legislation in your province or territory that imposes certain vacation, holiday, minimum wage and other entitlements for most employees that you must abide by, whether or not you specifically mention these in an employment contract.

While we have provided you with some sample clauses; please note that these are for illustration only. The language used in these clauses may or may not be suitable to your particular needs. It is important that you carefully consider the particular features and needs of each employment situation, and that you select the clauses and the language that specifically suit those needs.

As with any contract, if you have questions or concerns about how it should be written, and what effect it will have, you should obtain the advice of duly qualified experts, before you sign on the dotted line.

Basic features to consider

At the very least, every written employment contract should set out the following details:

1. Term - How long is the contract for - is there a fixed end date, or is it indefinite and open-ended?
2. Status - Is it full-time, part-time or casual (occasional) work?
3. Wages - What is the wage; it is calculated hourly, weekly, annually; when is it paid?
4. Probation - If it is a new employee, is there an initial probationary term? (It is usually a good idea to have a probationary term, to give the club a chance to evaluate whether the new employee is a good fit and suitable for the job).
5. Early Termination - If the contract has a fixed end date, what happens if the employer wants to end the contract early? (Remember, employment standards legislation may impose relevant entitlements which you must abide by).

Sample clauses for part-time contract with fixed end date:

(Term/Status) The ABC Figures Skating Club (“the club”) is pleased to offer you part-time employment as a coach, for the 1998-1999 skating season, starting October 1, 1998, and ending March 31, 1999 (“the term”).

(Wages) During the term, your hourly wage will be \$8.00 (gross). Wages will be paid on the 15th and 30th of each month during the term.

(Probation) During the first three months of the term, your employment will be probationary. The club reserves the right to terminate your employment at any time with or without notice, and without cause, during or at the end of the probationary period. If that happens, you will not be entitled to pay in lieu of notice or compensation of any kind.

(Early Termination) After you successfully complete the probationary period, the club reserves the right to terminate your employment early, at any time before March 31, 1998, without cause. If that happens, the club will provide you with either two weeks advance notice in writing, or two weeks pay in lieu of notice (calculated based on your average weekly earnings in the 13 week period prior to the effective date of termination).

Sample clauses for full-time contract with fixed end date:

(Term/Status) The ABC Figure Skating Club (“the club”) is pleased to offer you full-time employment as a head coach, for the 1998-1999 skating season, starting October 1, 1998, and ending March 31, 1999 (“the term”).

(Wages) During the term, your weekly wage will be \$475 (gross). Wages will be paid on the 15th and 30th of each month during the term.

(Probation) During the first three months of the term, your employment will be probationary. The club reserves the right to terminate your employment at any time with or without notice, and without cause, during or at the end of the probationary period. If that happens, you will not be entitled to pay in lieu of notice or compensation of any kind.

(Early Termination) After you successfully complete the probationary period, the club reserves the right to terminate your employment early, at any time before March 31, 1998, without cause. If that happens, the club will provide you with either three weeks advance notice in writing, or three weeks pay in lieu of notice.

Sample clauses for casual contract (open-ended)

(Term/Status) The ABC Figures Skating Club (“the club”) is pleased to offer you casual employment as a coach.

(Wages) You will be paid at the rate of \$8.00 (gross) hourly. Wages will be paid on the 15th and 30th of each month.

(Termination) The club reserves the right to terminate the employment of casual employees at any time without cause, and without notice.

Other features to consider

In addition to the basic features listed above, some employment contracts contain some or all of the following details:

1. Vacation - What vacation pay and vacation time will be granted to the employee? Is it the same as, or more favourable than, any entitlement the employee will have under employment standards legislation?

Sample: You will be provided with vacation leave and/or vacation pay, and statutory holidays, in accordance with employment standards legislation.

2. Benefits - What are the benefits, if any? (Most employment standards legislation does not require an employer to offer paid sick leave, dental or medical benefits, disability or life insurance, and so forth. However, most employment standards legislation does impose certain pregnancy, maternity and parental leave benefits and rights for certain employees).

Sample (full-time): As a full-time employee, you will be eligible to participate in our standard employee benefit package, as described in the enclosed brochure from Great West Life.

Sample (casual): As a casual employee, you are not eligible to participate in our employee benefits package.

3. Work Schedule - Will it be fixed, variable, or on an “as called” basis? Will there be a minimum or number of maximum days or hours? Is it pre-set, or to be established between the club and the employee from time to time?
4. Rules and Policies - Are there certain club or Skate Canada rules and policies that the employee must follow? (If these are written, you may wish to at least mention them. If they are unwritten, you should consider including a basic outline of the rule or policy, to ensure the employee is aware of it).

Sample: You are required to abide by the club rules, which are attached. You are also required to abide by the Skate Canada Membership Harassment Policy, a copy of which you have already received. If you breach these rules and policies, you will be subject to discipline which may include, in appropriate circumstances, immediate dismissal for cause.

5. Job Description/Job Requirements - Are the requirements of the job quite specific and detailed, or are they more general?
6. Contact Person - You may wish to direct the employee to address questions or concerns about the employment contract, which arise before or after signing, to a specific contact person at the Club. (Remember, to be properly enforceable, the employment contract should be finalized and signed before the employee starts work).

Sample: If you have any questions or concerns about this offer of employment, please contact Mickey Mouse at 800.123.4567, so that we can resolve any concerns before you accept this offer.

7. Acceptance and Acknowledgement - It is a good idea to have the employee “sign-off”, so that you each have a fully signed copy in case a question or problem arises in the future.

Sample: To indicate your acceptance of this offer, please sign the acknowledgement and acceptance below and return a signed copy to Mickey Mouse. Keep the enclosed duplicate of this letter, for your own records.

Yours truly,

Walt Disney, President
ABC Figure Skating Club

Acknowledgement and acceptance

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and understand the terms and conditions set out in this offer of employment, and I accept this offer.

Date:

Signature:

Sample Budget Worksheet

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total
Team Expenses			
Team registration (yearly membership fee)			
Ice rental			
Coaching fees			
Choreographer			
Music production			
Off-ice Training			
Total:			
Clothing and Equipment Costs			
Competition dresses			
Practice dresses			
Team tracksuits			
Tights			
Laces			
Make-up			
Hair products/accessories			
Skate bags			
Total:			
Competition Expenses			
Entry fee			
Transportation			
Hotel			
Practice ice			
Coaching fees			
Total:			
Additional Expenses			
Social functions			
Specialty trainer/coach			
Fundraising initiatives			
Total:			
Total Anticipated Expenses:			
Team Income			
Skater registration fees			
Fundraisers (estimated)			
Sponsorship			
Donations			
Total:			
Total Anticipated Expenses:			

INSERT SKATING CLUB NAME
Synchronized Skating Program
2009/2010

TEAM RULES & CODE OF CONDUCT
'SAMPLE'

GENERAL SYNCHRONIZED SKATING RULES

1. All team members must abide by the _____ Skating Club Code of Conduct.
2. All team members must be a member in good standing of a Skate Canada club.
3. The starting line-up for any performance or competition is at the sole discretion of the coach.
4. All practices are mandatory. A team member, who does not attend all practices, unless prior consent is given by the coach, may be classified as an alternate. Repeated violation may result in suspension from the team until further notice by the coach.
5. The captain of the team will take attendance 10 minutes prior to ice time. If a team member is not present for attendance, then she will be considered late.
6. A team member, who is late for practice, unless prior consent is given by the coach, may be classified as an alternate. Repeated violation may result in suspension from the team until further notice by the coach.
7. Skaters must wear the designated practice attire to all practice sessions.
8. At all practices every team member must give her entire attention to the instructions being given by the coach and put forth her best effort. A less than satisfactory effort and/or undesirable attitudinal behaviour may result in the skater being classified as an alternate and/or suspended until further notice by the coach.
9. Team members are expected to refrain from using foul and abusive language, and will conduct themselves in a manner becoming a member of the (_____ Skating Club) at all times. Failure to do so will result in automatic suspension from the team
10. Team members will not consume alcohol or use non-medical drugs during or before practices, performances, competitions or while on club sponsored trips. Violation of this rule will result in automatic suspension from the (_____ Skating Club).
11. During the season the club will sanction fundraising projects. Each team member must participate in assisting these activities as requested by the coach or club official.

TRAVEL RULES

1. All team members must attend all events even if not expected to skate, unless prior permission is granted by the coach.
2. All team members must wear the designated travel attire.
3. All team members will have clean skates and laces at all competitions.
4. Skaters will travel as a team to and from any skating event unless permission has been granted by the coaching/management staff to do otherwise. A written request must be received one week prior to the team function.
5. Members will attend all team functions.
6. Skaters will abide by curfew rules as established by coach and team management.
7. Skaters will conduct themselves in a disciplined manner showing good sportsmanship, a positive attitude and respect for others.
8. While on club sponsored trips, no visitors will be allowed in the hotel accommodation provided by the club for the skaters, except other team members or club officials as approved by the coach.
9. Team members will not leave the hotel or arena premises without the permission of the coach.
10. Skaters will not cause any damage to any arena, hotel, motel, bus/car during a team trip for which the club may be held responsible. The skater and parents will be responsible for any reimbursement to the team.

I ACKNOWLEDGE receiving a copy and having read and fully understand these rules. If under eighteen years of age, signatures of both team member and parent or guardian is required.

Skater's name (Print clearly): _____

Skater's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____