



Selecting a Coach

Skaters start working with private coaches at different times. They usually start private coaching when they finish advanced classes in the skate school, show an increased interest in skill development, and are advancing faster than the classes proceed. Selecting a coach is a big decision! You and your skater may wish to observe a Club session where you can meet and talk to coaches before you make this decision. A meeting with the coach is suggested to become acquainted and discuss goals, cost, lesson times, lesson frequency, skating equipment, and any further questions you may have. A list of current CFSC coaches is available on our website.

Coaches are self-employed and are paid directly by the skater. The Club does not have responsibility for financial arrangements made between you and your coach. Payment plans should be discussed with your coach before you begin lessons. Coaches do charge for testing sessions, competitions, and special choreography outside normal program development as well as recording music CDs for the skater.

Coaches vary in cost, style, teaching techniques, personality, and interests. Many factors should be analyzed before making a final selection. The following are some tips that might help your decision process. Evaluate a coach for:

- Membership in a professional organization (such as PSA – Professional Skater's Association) this is required by CFSC and US Figure Skating
- Compatibility with student skaters and their parents
- Coaching ability
- Knowledge of choreography and/or willingness to solicit help in choreographing an excellent program for the skater
- Ability to inspire the skater to a commitment of excellence
- Willingness to set goals with the skater and time frames for achieving them
- Ability to communicate with the skater
- Willingness to keep current by taking continuing education classes for coaching

Communication is the key to good relationships with a coach. There are several things skaters and parents can do to help make skating a good experience for all.

- Call if you are unable to make a lesson. Failure to do this could result in having to pay for a missed session.
- Arrive on time and be on the ice prepared and ready to go.
- Focus on positive support for your skater at practices and competitions. Encourage your skater to focus on effort, doing their best and not just winning.
- Leave the coaching up to the coach and be supportive.
- Make sure your skater has plenty of sleep before competitions and testing sessions.
- Continuous improvement in the skater is important and difficult. Moves and jumps may take longer to learn. If your skater becomes disillusioned, or improvement seems slow, speak to your coach as soon as possible. This is a private matter between you and your coach and should be discussed openly with them.
- "Team Coaching" is a different approach to private skating lessons. This is accomplished by engaging two or more coaches to work together to obtain your skating goal. Team teaching can be beneficial for some skaters.

Changing Coaches:

The following are points to follow when a change in coaches is made:

- Parents are to discuss with the current coach the reason(s) a change is being made. This should be done on a professional, not personal level. It is not necessary for your current coach to agree with the change; however, you must speak with your current coach before making a change. All fees due to current coach must be paid before engaging a new coach.
- Remain professional if asked about the reason for changing coaches, and encourage your skater to do the same.