

# SYNCHRONIZED SKATING ETHICS

## Statement/Guidelines

**Issue-recruitment vs. solicitation** – When you advertise for open spots on a team, you are *RECRUITING*. Targeting a skater already established on a team and suggesting they change to another team is *SOLICITATION*.

*The best way to show the difference is to give some examples:*

- **(*Recruiting*)** If a Synchronized Skating coach is asked for information from a parent or skater, the coach may give them information including the team manager's contact information. The coach may give out this information even if the skater is currently on a team or taking private lessons.
- **(*Solicitation*)** A coach or team manager should not approach (target) a skater who is a member of another team or taking private lessons.
- **(*Recruiting*)** A coach can approach other coaches (singles, dance, pairs, etc.) to ask if they have students who would be interested in your Synchronized Skating team.
- **(*Solicitation*)** Sending recruiting material directly to a skater on another team is 'targeting' a skater.
- **(*Recruitment*)** A coach may directly approach a skater as long as the skater is not currently on a team or taking private lessons (such as a retired skater or a group lesson skater). This must be checked out before you talk with the skater!
- **(*Recruitment*)** A coach or team manager may contact a parent/skater if the coach of the other team invites such action.

- **(Recruitment)** Distribution of recruiting brochures is OK but MUST be in compliance with the Board of Directors of the club and/or rink management policies.
- Some more ‘allowable’ recruitment ideas:
  1. Post flyers.
  2. Host a “skate with us - open house”
  3. Write articles about the team in the club newsletter.
  4. Set up info booths at local competitions and shows. (need permission from club and/or rink/management)
  5. Advertise in newspapers; show programs, competition programs and web sites.

## **Issue-obligations at beginning of season**

*Here are some of the most common scenarios that arise.*

- When a skater from another club is accepted on a team, the new coach is responsible to make sure that the new organization receives a letter stating that the skater is in good standing with the former team - basically, that they have fulfilled their financial obligation. *A sample financial release form can be downloaded from the U.S. FIGURE SKATING website.* The U.S. Figure Skating has a rule, #3254, stating a skater must pay their team bill prior to joining another team.
- The new coach must not allow the skater to start training on the new team before a letter is received stating the skater is in good standing with their previous team. **(Please note: this is a professional courtesy, not a legal position. The courts will not uphold a financial discrepancy unless taken to a small claims court.)**

- During tryout season, SOME SKATERS SHOP AROUND. When a coach accepts a skater on the team, even if they pay a non-refundable deposit to hold their spot, the skater may join another team and give up their deposit if they choose to do so.
- A skater is considered to be a member of a team once training commences. If the skater quits the team after training starts, the skater is responsible for any fees incurred as defined by the teams' agreement.

## Miscellaneous

- When you take on a new skater-never criticize the former coach's technique or teaching methods
- Don't resent the new coach if your skater decides to join another team.
- For documents which address professional responsibilities, go into the Professional Skaters Association website ([www.skatepsa.com](http://www.skatepsa.com)) click Professional Standards, look at: PSA Code of Ethics, Ethics, Tenants of professionalism
- Synchronized Skating coaches need to create a good relationship with singles, pairs and dance coaches. These coaches should not feel 'threatened' by the sport of Synchronized Skating. *Synchronized Skating coaches emphasize and encourage their team members to continue training in singles, moves and dance.* If there is a Synchronized Skating organization in their club, it should help their business!

