

HIRING THE
RIGHT **SKATING**
COACH

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Air Quality?

2019 →
NARCE
GUIDE



RINK

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED STATES ICE RINK ASSOCIATION | **MAGAZINE**

THUNDER **STRUCK**

→ **TRINE UNIVERSITY** EXPOSING
ICE TO RURAL INDIANA



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Terry Johnson
Howard G. Mullett Ice Center
700 North Ave
Hardland, WI 53029-1143
PRST STD
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Appleton, WI
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MARCH/APRIL 2019

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→ The single sheet at Trine University pioneered new programs.

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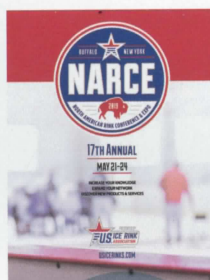
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OPENING ADDRESS ★ Welcome from Jeff Theiler



Want to Save Your Facility Money?

REMEMBER THE BASICS

In my position as United States Ice Rink Association Chief Operation Officer over the past 10 years, I have been afforded the opportunity to visit hundreds of ice rinks all across North America—and even a few in Europe!

I always enjoy the time spent out of the office, talking with rink owners and operators and learning about their daily challenges in running their businesses. What's prevalent in all these conversations is that no matter where the rink is located, the challenges are usually very similar. And they really haven't changed that much since I broke into the industry 28 years ago.

Recently, I visited one of our new facility member rinks and spoke with their general manager, who is new to the rink industry but has more than 20 years of park and recreation experience. During our conversation, he told me that his operations manager was pushing him to purchase a piece of equipment that he believed would save them thousands of dollars per year in utilities, and has a payback of less than two years.

Save a significant amount of money without a large capital investment just by implementing some basic industry best practices.

We happened to be talking out by his ice sheet, and I noticed that the ice was cloudy and the corners were very high. I asked him how often his operations staff does ice maintenance—he said every hour.

Obviously, he didn't know what I meant by "ice maintenance". I briefly explained the difference between ice resurfacing and ice maintenance. He

then told me that his operations staff were doing very little if any ice maintenance. I recommended that he take a closer look at their current operational processes and procedures, as he could save a significant amount of money without a large capital investment, just by implementing some basic industry best practices.

There are several factors that impact the utility consumption at an ice rink, including equipment and building systems, but the most significant impact is the knowledge and skill level of the people operating the rink. Regardless of whether you have been in the industry for several years, or are brand new, you can always learn something new that will positively impact the current and future success of your rink business. I encourage you to take a look at the opportunities for continuing your education through attending a U.S. Ice Rink Association event such as the North American Rink Conference & Expo, or one of our Regional Training Programs.

Wishing you the best,

—Jeff Theiler, *Chief Operating Officer, United States Ice Rink Association*

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EDITOR
Aaron Pattich

MANAGING EDITOR
Jessi Pierce

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Craig Petersen, Angie Rivello,
Jeff Theiler, Emily Zak

EDITORIAL BOARD
Mike Bauer, T.C. Lewis, Craig Petersen,
Ben Ruggles, Dave Wescott

DESIGNERS
Mike DeArmond, Brandon Favre,
Kelsey Cherwinka



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Jeff Theiler

DIRECTOR, EDUCATION
John Monteleone

OFFICE ASSISTANT
Tom Wacker

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PH: (719) 538-1149 FAX: (719) 538-7838
E-MAIL: info@usicerinks.com
WEBSITE: usicerinks.com

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PUBLISHING
PARTNER

505 North Highway 169, Suite 100, Minneapolis, MN 55441
PH: (763) 595-0808 FAX: (763) 595-0016
E-MAIL: info@touchpointmedia.com
WEBSITE: touchpointmedia.com

CEO
Steve Farbman

PRESIDENT
James McEwen

SENIOR VICE
PRESIDENT
David Jensen

CONTROLLER
Mike Schwarz

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Rob Johnson

ART DIRECTOR
Mike DeArmond

SENIOR DESIGNER
Brandon Favre

DESIGNER
Kelsey Cherwinka

AD SALES
Bryan Nelson

MARKETING &
ACCOUNT MANAGER
Jessica Disch

EDITORS:
Aaron Pattich, Jessi Pierce

MARKETING
COORDINATOR
Elizabeth Boger

Speed Skating 101



Offering Learn to Speed Skate courses

One of the best things about operating an ice facility is the countless ways you can use it. Between tournaments, games, practices and open skates, filling the schedules with Learn to Skate and Learn to Play programs are a great way to increase your facility audience—and membership.

For years we've successfully held a number of Learn to Skate, Learn to Play Hockey, and Try Hockey For Free programs, but bringing out a unique clientele can always be a challenge. How do we expand beyond just housing hockey players and figure skaters—whom we love—and reach a new group?

Recently, The Pettit National Ice Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and

The Mullett Ice Center in Hartland, Wisconsin, began teaming up to offer local youth a new on-ice activity: Learn to Speed Skate class.

Located about 22 miles apart, the two facilities wanted to work together to grow the sport, and bring speed skating exposure to a more rural area. Pettit National Ice Center's Director of Speed Skating, Carolyn Spiewak, leads the

group and the Mullett Center serves as a satellite location.

Here are a few things that we learned, as well as helpful tips in case you're interested in bringing speed skating to your facility.

Getting up to speed

Speed skating was introduced by the Dutch and first became an Olympic sport in 1924. The concept itself is fairly simple, with three different types of competitive speed skating races: long track, short track and marathon.

How it works

Our Learn to Speed Skate program helps to maximize ice usage, sharing the ice with other internal "learn to" programs. It also gives youth athletes an option if they are not gravitating toward hockey or figure skating. Speed skating, like hockey and figure skating, helps promote physical literacy (coordination, balance, flexibility, agility, etc.).

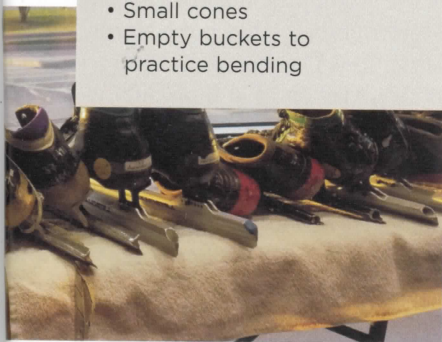
SPEED SKATING, LIKE HOCKEY AND FIGURE SKATING, HELPS PROMOTE PHYSICAL LITERACY (COORDINATION, BALANCE, FLEXIBILITY, AGILITY ETC.).

WHAT YOU NEED

- Bike helmet (or any type of standard protective helmet)
- Soft, comfortable pants
- Lightweight jacket
- Thin gloves
- Speed skates
- Elbow pads and knee pads optional for beginners

Other items:

- Small cones
- Empty buckets to practice bending



→ Speed skates have a longer blade than regular hockey or figure skates,

The Learn to Speed Skate program runs during the course of six weeks on one-third of an NHL-sized sheet of ice. Safety, equipment, rules, along with the fundamentals of speed skating are all reviewed.

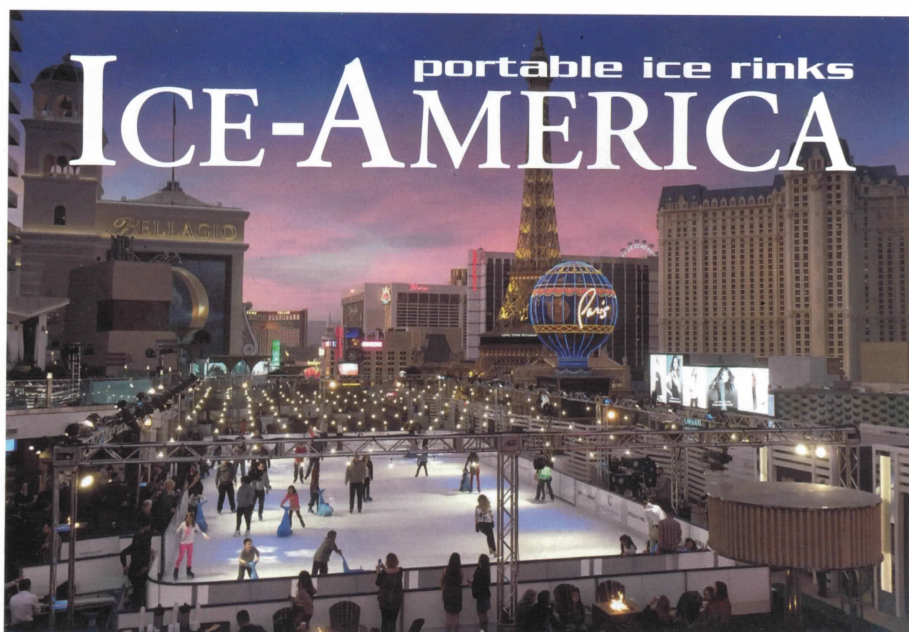
Speed skates are provided by The Pettit Center and are on hand for each participant.

The course is \$100/participant and, similar to actual competitions, this program is open to boys and girls of all ages. After all, speed skating can be an exhilarating exercise for the whole family!

Overall reception

Hockey parents and kids have been particularly curious about the sport—especially the speed skates themselves. Overall, our reception has been great, with customers seeming to enjoy having an alternative to the traditional hockey and skating program options. The program is still in its infancy, but we're excited to continue to grow it, and the sport, here in Wisconsin! 🌟

Craig Petersen is the director of operations at Mullett Ice Center in Hartland, Wisconsin. He is an active member with the United States Ice Rink Association and serves on the RINK Magazine editorial board.



Specializing in portable ice rink production, sales, rentals, and ice rink operations management, Ice-America features the Ice-World aluminum foldable floors, patented skating aids, ice bikes, rolling skate racks, on-ice dividers, Roxa rental skates, and more to create immersive ice based experiences for our rinks and clients.

THE BASE

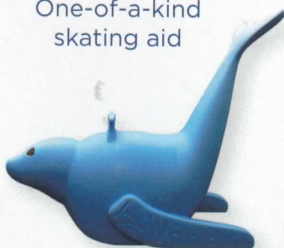
Create zones and spacial experiences with On-ice decorative dividers and benches for public sessions and special events



Bobby the Seal, Tommy the Reindeer & Ice Byk skating rides/aids

Bobby the Seal

One-of-a-kind skating aid



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Tommy the Reindeer

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