



ACT Ice Skating Association Inc

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President: Ms Julie Stalker
Vice President: Ms Chris Marsden
Honorary Treasurer: Dr Greg Ash

Honorary Secretary: Ms Wendy Tobin
Assistant Secretary: Ms Mary-Ann Ryall
Memberships: Dr Greg Ash

2016 Annual General Meeting - President's report

I am very pleased to be presenting my first President's report and I am very grateful to you all for attending the 2016 AGM.

The following report is partly pulled from a report I presented to the committee at the beginning of last year and I feel it is worthwhile providing our members some insight into the roles I have fulfilled on the committee since 2007.

I was inducted into the committee in 2008, after presenting the results from a branding survey I conducted on ACTISA in 2007, as part of my post-graduate studies in marketing and communications. I SO desperately wanted to establish a new brand for ACTISA and start getting it 'out there'. The survey indicated that the majority of responses did not want to change the logo, so I decided on addressing the strategic plan instead. This led to a one day planning event, with a moderator, held in May 2008 for all our members. Invitations were issued to ACTISA members 17 yrs + and all parents to represent any skaters 16 years and below ... it was well subscribed with some great ideas ... so the new strategic plan was born, which was expertly updated by Karen Lovatt last year, and which I hope ongoing committees put into fruition, while updating and expanding it into the future.

Through Dr Greg Ash, ACTISA was the first skating association, I think, to establish a website. I worked with Sue Francis in updating his original website into the one which has just been recently replaced.

I was also responsible for 1-2 years of coordinating the ISA tests, they were more frequent then and far more skaters ... however I think those numbers will be returning in the next couple of years if we maintain our Aussie Skate members.

With Greg taking ACTISA's financial accounts out of the red and into a healthy state including a source of continuing income, and with a strategic plan almost approved, I attacked the ACT Sport and Recreation grants after a hiatus of 6 years and was successful with a decent grant for the redevelopment of the website. So we have a new website that is developing and changing and hopefully providing a great resource for our members.

Through ACT Sport and Rec, I was also able to recognise volunteers of long-standing; Angelique Clyde-Smith, Nina Johnson and Greg Ash (Sue Shelley wouldn't have a bar of it) ... these awards are for volunteers who have contributed a great deal to a sport and usually through many years.

Through ACTSport, and my initiative, the following have been highlights for me:

- nominating Angelique Clyde-Smith for a major award and for her to be the successful recipient
- nominating both Reg Park and Miriam Manzano for the ACTSport Hall of Fame, with both selected for the honour; Reg in 2012 and in Canberra's Centenary year 2013.
- ACTSport selecting Justin Thornton, Dilli Kenyon and Callum Bradshaw as monthly recipient awardees and being awarded .

Up until 2012, I did establish a strong media profile for our skaters, through print, radio and TV ... with a fair and equitable approach for all skaters, but unfortunately the year it was handed over within the committee, it all kinda went pear-shape and I was filling gaps on the run, which was certainly not ideal,

and as a consequence some skaters were not given their due recognition. I have continued to fill gaps, when I have the time, but this is not the right approach for building a media profile. I wrote many articles, rang media constantly, chased skaters, chased stories and coordinated all media events. It worked really well, until I moved jobs. I introduced the media kits for the ACT skaters, which were used often by media when highlighting our skaters achievements. Promoting other skaters such as Adults, Aussie Skaters and Theatre on Ice were on the agenda but again time was not on my side.

I have recruited a lot of ACTISA committee members over the years, some have been successful and others not so. Its healthy to talk about what members can do and achieve for the sport and it's always great to talk to members discussing recruiting for the following year.

I introduced some consistency with the branding of our main events, the Autumn Trophy and National Federations Challenge/Reg Park and our other local events.

I purchased leave from work to 'assist' with managing, what turned out to be an exhaustive schedule, of Skate in the City, and I am extremely grateful for the huge effort Sarah and Chris Batey have put it for SIC 2014 and 2015.

I have attended every ISA AGM from 2008 to 2015, either as an observer or a delegate. All the original meetings used to be held in Canberra, so it was very easy for ACTISA and also very cheap. Its not the case these days, especially when the meetings have been in Brisbane or Adelaide. This is one item I had hoped to get government funding for, like other states, unfortunately, it's not an easy option with the ACT government.

Lastly, the last two Summer Camps I have managed have seen a great collaboration between ACTISA and the coaches and this all came about from Tony's vision of regular meetings with the coaches and rink management ... so thankyou Tony.

These are but a few of the roles I have filled, and what you have read is me ... and I still strongly believe the following:

"... I am still very passionate about figure skating in the ACT.

... I feel I would be best placed in increasing the profile of ice skating in the ACT, informing our skating families better, and thereby increasing participant numbers.

I strongly believe we have a huge untapped opportunity for increasing figure skating's profile, one would be through the development of partnerships within the community. This would work in conjunction with increasing ACTISA's profile and scaling up our skaters profiles through the media and events; Aussie Skate through to Senior, solo dance, adults and our recreational skaters.

The aim is provide figure skating here in Canberra with a profile it deserves. An increased profile would aid participation and increase our membership base, which in turn will assist with grants and sponsorship ..."

Our 2015-16 committee and volunteers

We started with a full committee this year with a few movements after the AGM. Chris Batey stepping up to fill the Vice President's role and Mary-Ann Ryall stepping into the Assistant Secretary's role.

I would like to give a huge thankyou to Wendy Tobin, who volunteered for the role of Honorary Secretary not knowing a thing about figure skating but being prepared to fulfil a position on the committee. I suggest a bit of coercion from Tony Maybury may have had a little to do with this. Wendy kept a tight ship, ensuring our meetings stuck to the agenda and did not go over time. She has been unfailing in her attendance and support. I wish her all the best in her next endeavour and hope she makes it overseas as planned.

Tony Maybury resigned from the committee due to ill health but his determination to create a community within figure skating never wavered. It was such a joy to have him play Santa at the 2015 gala ... a beautiful enduring memory.

There are so many people fulfilling roles on and off the committee that hold all the pieces together, without them our sport would not thrive let alone survive in the ACT ... quoting from a previous member ... “they are the fairies that just seem to get everything done”, but they are an integral part of our sport and devote many volunteer hours to ensuring everyone enjoys our events, including our interstate competitors:

- Our Honorary Treasurer / Public Officer / Proxy delegate Greg Ash and part-time webmaster and IJS tech - I’m sure he would love to show others the management of the IJS technical components
- Our Competition Convener Andrea Wood - a role that should not be managed by one person, so please put your hand up to learn the system
- Our ISA Test Convener Bethany Jory who has handed over her role to Adele Collett ... many thanks Bethany for your thoughts, direction and calming influence, you will be missed on the committee but I wish you all the best with your next volunteer role.
- Our Vice President Chris Marsden (Batey) who has bought in a new jacket and design for our members, managed the trophies and medallions for all competitions, and handled many tasks that I was unable to fulfil due to work commitments.
- Our Assistant Secretary Mary-Ann Ryall, stepped in to fill the spare delegates position and anything else that was needed, especially securing our ice time for each year which involves extremely good negotiating skills ... as well as her monthly communiqués for members, always a pleasure to read.
- Our Technical Advisor and Judging Convener Angelique Clyde-Smith, who may be off the committee but still works very hard ensuring we have judges for our Aussie Skate tests, our ISA tests and all our competitions ... as well as providing valuable insight into the rules and technicalities of our amazing sport.
- Our Aussie Skate Test Convener and Assistant, Sue Fletcher and Terri Henderson, who are always at the rink once a month providing advice and assistance to our new and on-going Aussie Skaters attempting tests. Both these volunteers no longer have children skating but have filled positions to assist with the volunteer load for many years.
- Our catering gurus Jennifer Ty (Marshall) and Pam Brett (Bradshaw) who put in the effort to ensure our judges and volunteers are fed and watered during our events with exceptional food and drinks.

I cannot stress enough how important volunteering is for community-based sports such as figure skating. This was evident in my letter to all members earlier in the year.

Being busy doesn’t mean parents cannot devote a little time to aid a sport that their children love. “Many hands make light work”, I hope to see some new parents step up to meet the challenge of assisting the magnificent sport of figure skating.

Our skaters

There are many discussions and sometimes controversy on the selection of our ACT team who compete at the AFSC. The committee is always open to developing new methods of selection to challenge our skaters into developing their skills and technique; such as benchmarks instead of immediate entry through their placing at ACT championships. This is extremely relevant, as we do not have enough skaters competing at this level to create a true competition during ACT Championships. I am hoping the committee will re-visit the benchmarking method to challenge our skaters to step up. I am not advocating elitism and do advocate that everyone is entitled to be given the chance to represent at AFSC, but having senior skaters showing junior skaters they can meet the challenge set for them and earn selection can only improve the sport overall.

We have a wonderful team of senior skaters, their behaviour on and off the ice instils them as great role models for our up and coming skaters across all levels.

ACTISA fielded a team of 11 for nationals last year (of which four were competing at this level for the first time). Novice Mens - Callum Bradshaw, Novice Ladies - Sarah Batey and Kody-Leigh Hirst, Primary Ladies - Monique Lawrence, Intermediate Ladies - Lauren Ashman, Emily Leong, Eleonore Willis, Tanisha Jory and Georgia Tongs, Intermediate Mens - Ben Meeuwissen and Adult Gold Ladies - Josephine Kooyman, resulting in:

A gold medal placing for Josephine Kooyman, who returned to skating after a few years break;

A bronze medal for Ben Meeuwissen and selection into the Australian Team squad; and

A strong fourth place for Lauren Ashman.

What's next

A new committee, with fresh ideas and lots of energy, and members who are willing to be on the committee for the good of the sport so that changes and events benefit all figure skaters in the ACT.

The majority of us come to sporting committees through our children's involvement but committee work must be for the benefit of all not the few. It's through improving with unbiased approaches that all skaters benefit.

I had hoped more people were willing to show their support by joining as an associate member, based on my letter to parents early this year, however only a very small number stepped forward which I am very grateful for.

However, it saddens me to see society lose its sense of community and kinsman ship. I wonder what the impact would be if our figure skating community was to falter and cease to exist ... is this what it takes for people to step forward and make it work? I truly hope not.

I wish the new committee all the best for the coming year, as I step away. I will still be around helping with Aussie Skate tests and event programs as I complete my Masters studies.

I would like to come back to the committee, in a couple of years, hopefully to a thriving figure skating community with new ideas and endless possibilities.

Thankyou,
julieS
President - ACTISA