

A SYNCHRONIZED SKATERS' MAGAZINE

# SYNCHRO NICE



**LET COACH  
DO THE TALKING**

Mozart Cup (growing to be)  
biggest Competition  
in the World?

#GrandPrixFinal  
in BARCELONA

**THEY ALL SHARE  
THE SAME PASSION...  
A SKATER'S STORY**

published by [synchrophoto.eu](http://synchrophoto.eu)

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# SYNCHRONIZED SKATING

#WhyNotSynchro

# HI THERE,

We guess you're as much into Synchronized Skating as we are, or else you probably wouldn't be reading this all new Synchronized Skating magazine. We felt like Synchronice could fill in a gap in the skating magazine business, because you can search all you want (we did), but you won't find any magazines solely devoted to Synchronized Skating. That left us with one question... Why Not?

The answer we got... "It's a small sport" Well...for the past 4 years we've been travelling around Europe and other parts of the world, capturing skaters' love for Synchronized Skating. So we decided to start SynchroPhoto.eu and within the first year thousands of Synchronized Skating fans followed us on Facebook and liked our updates, and we are still growing every day. Competition after competition we captured, over and over again, dozens of beautiful teams. Some young, some younger, some old, some older. We met girls, boys, men and women all sharing the same love for their teams and passion for Synchronized Skating. We saw hundreds of volunteers, television and radio crews, officials, jury members, technical panels, etc. In the stands we captured thousands of cheering and delirious fans.

And then there are the tens of thousands of fans trying to get a live glimpse of the competitions on the internet. Synchronized Skating isn't a small sport.....it's a HUGE SPORT.

And we think every HUGE SPORT deserves its own magazine ;-)

We hope you will be just as excited reading this magazine as we are in making it.

Richard & Patricia  
SynchroPhoto.eu



# CONTENT



## KAISA ARRATEIG



### WINTER CUP

When will it be back on the ISU list?

13

### ANDREA DOHANY

18

### FRENCH CUP 2016

Thousands of cheering and delirious fans screamed their heads off in an attempt to cheer their favorite team to the Gold.

31

### MOZART CUP 2016

This time, it was more colorful than ever before.

38

### LINDSAY GRAJEK - HAYDENETTES

47

### 'ELITE SYNCHRO COMPETITIONS'

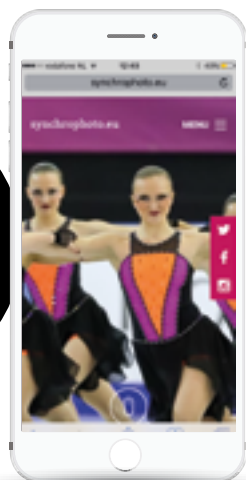
Marta Toth - Budapest Cup

68



## ANU OKSANEN

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ONLINE



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## THE ISU GRAND PRIX BARCELONA

5 ISU Top ranked Synchronized Skating  
Teams were invited.



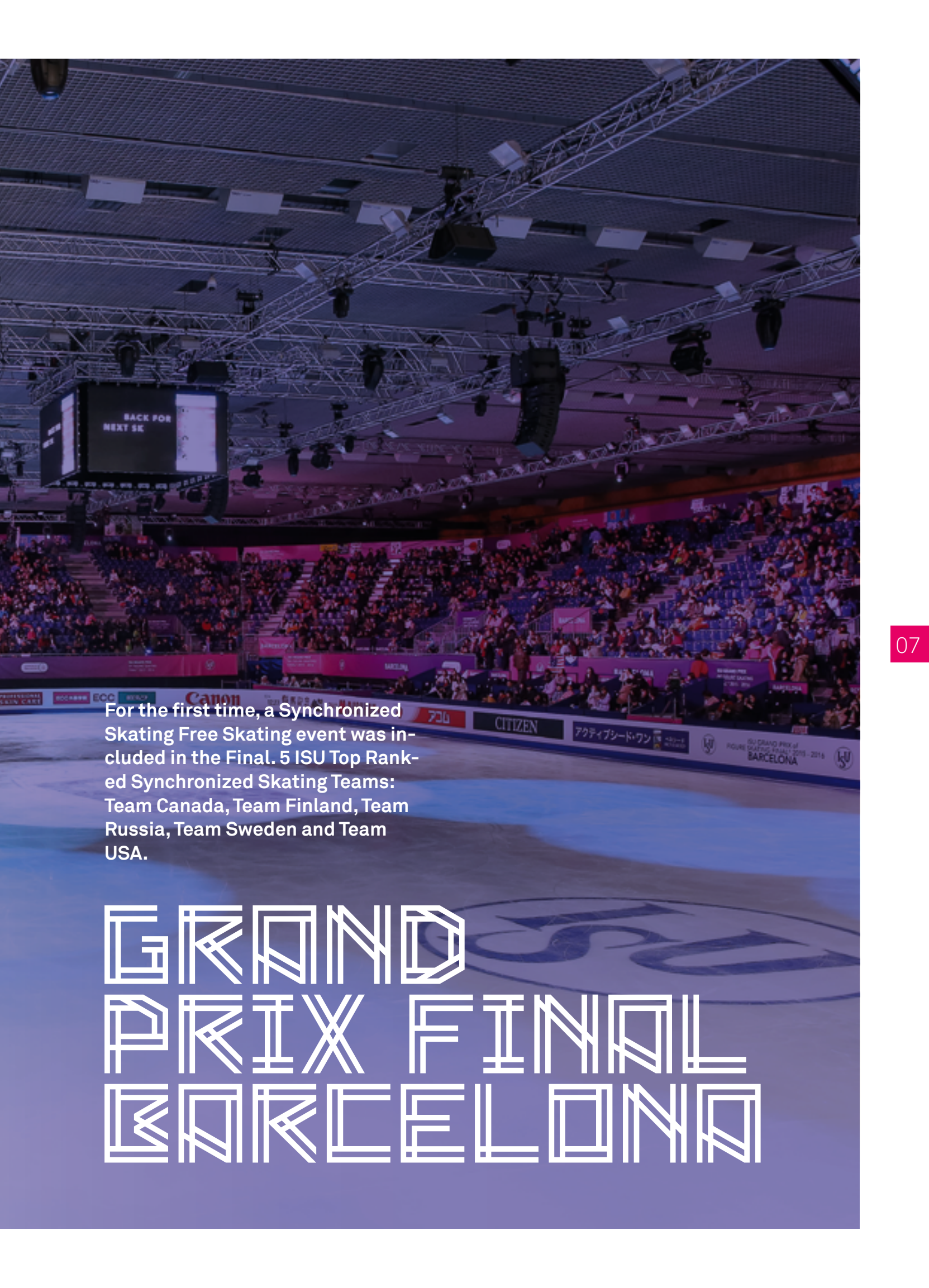
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For the first time, a Synchronized Skating Free Skating event was included in the Final. 5 ISU Top Ranked Synchronized Skating Teams: Team Canada, Team Finland, Team Russia, Team Sweden and Team USA.

# GRAND PRIX FINAL BARCELONA

The Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final is an international competition that was first staged during the 1995-1996 season and brings together single men and single women skaters, pair skaters and ice dancers. Barcelona hosted the 21st edition of the Grand Prix Final, the second most important event for the International Skating Union (ISU) after the World Championships.

# ISU GRAND PRIX BARCELONA





Location

The event took place at the Centro de Convenciones Internacional de Barcelona (CCIB), a modern space of 100,000 m2 facing the sea. It is equipped with the latest technology offering an impressive range of top-quality services.

This expansive, unique space was built for the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures with the goal of hosting congresses, conventions, exhibitions and official events on the highest level from around the globe.

Final Result

1 Team Paradise	RUS	131.09
2 Team Rockettes	FIN	127.66
3 Team Nexxice	CAN	120.34
4 Team Suprise	SWE	118.48
5 Team Haydenettes	USA	106.81

Quick Quotes

Team Haydenettes (USA), 2015 World Champhionships 7th

Tessa Hedges: It was really fun. We loved exhibiting synchro for the first time at this event. (On the falls during the program:) It obviously throws off your mind-set a little bit but we practice this. There are 16 of us out there and falls happen, but they're flukes and there's nothing you can do about it. (On their goals:) We try not to set placement goals. We were 7th at Worlds last year and we'd like to do better than that.

Lindsay Grajek (on being at Grand Prix Final for the first time:) We hope this sport is just going to keep going where the other disciplines are. Our ultimate goal is to see girls going to the Olympics. Seeing Synchro in the Olympics is our dream.

Team Suprise (SWE), 2015 World Champhionships 5th

Nathalie Lindquist: We did a good skate.

It was our first skate here. We are happy but we know that we have a lot of things to work on during the season. It's a very good start. (On the team:) We have a great spirit. We are like family. (On being here:) It has been great to be here in Barcelona, everything has been wonderful.

Louisa Lindblad (on the team): We are strong, and we are quite close. (On being included in the Grand Prix Final:) We are excited about being here for the first time in the Grand Prix. It's a great experience.

#### Team Paradise (RUS), 2015 World bronze medalists

Anastasia Lurchenko: We feel great about our performance. We had so much fun out there and we performed like we can do in training. We want to go out and prove that we can fight for victory at the World Championships. (On Synchronized Skating being included in the GP Final for the first time:) It's a big responsibility to compete in the Grand Prix Final, not only for us to represent our country well, but also for the whole discipline. We want to show that Synchronized Skating is worthy of being part of the Olympic program. We hope that it will be included in 2022.

Daria Rakhvalskaya (on skating only the Free Skating): To skate one program is easier, obviously. But you can compare yourself better to the other top teams if you skate both programs. So if they decide to include short and free skating next year, we'll be ready for it.

#### Team Rockettes (FIN), 2015 World Championships 4th

Anna Vuorela: It's so nice to be here and represent Finland and Synchro. We had some little mistakes, it was not our best and we have had better scores in Finland. There was a mistake on the lift and some other small mistakes but nothing big, the program as a whole was great overall. (On synchronized skating in the Grand Prix Final:) It's amazing to be here, finally! We have been here since Thursday and the first day we walked into the backstage area and thought "wow, are we really here now?" We want to use it to show figure skating people what synchro skaters can do. We need more publicity and it is great to be on TV and at such a big event shown around the world.

#### Team Nexxice (CAN), 2015 World Champions

Samantha Defino: Words can't describe what it's like being here. The atmosphere has been angelic. The crowd is amazing. They've been really different, refreshing. Now we're looking forward to training for Worlds.

Becky Tyler: We've overcome a lot of hardship to get here so we're really pleased with our result. We've been battling a lot of injury. In fact the man in our team (Lee Chandler) was pulled out of retirement to join us. He was with the team for five years but has only been training with us since last Sunday and then performed today.









# WINTERCUP

13

Just a few days after the horrible attacks in Paris, “The WinterCup” Belgium’s biggest Synchronized Skating competition and also the Belgian championship in Synchronized Skating took place.

The world was in shock and it took the ISU up till just a few days before the official start, to

give WinterCup OC the green light to go ahead. For approximately a week, this was very uncertain because of the fear of more attacks. Imagine, nearby Brussels was in the centre of attention those days being the homebase of some of the terrorists. One of the entries even cancelled their participation.

Still despite the cancellation of one of the participants and despite the ongoing threat, we were treated to a well organized

happening. We witnessed Team Temptation earn the Belgium Gold and Win the overall WinterCup as well. The Dutch team Illumination was able to make it to runner up and took home the Silver medal. The English Team Spirit had to settle for the Bronze medal.

Hopefully next year we can enjoy some more teams in this early in season competition again.

A news scoop on that matter.... Did you know that...

WINTER CUP WILL BE BACK ON THE ISU LIST FOR THE SEASON 2016-2017

ISU for: Senior - Junior - Advance Novice  
Int. Interclub Competition for: Senior B -  
Junior B - Basic novice - Juvenile - Mixed  
Age - Adults

It will be held in “Finlandia” icestadium in  
Gullegem Belgium  
Date: 24 - 27 November 2016.

Info: : [www.wintercup.be](http://www.wintercup.be) or Facebook  
Contact: [wintercupbelgium@gmail.com](mailto:wintercupbelgium@gmail.com)

*Responsible for all your hard work*

# THEY ARE ALWAYS THERE...



*Anu*



*Andrea*



*Kaisa*



*Andrea*



*Marilyn*

There to help you make the right moves. There to take care of you when you're down. There to cheer with you when you're winning, and also there to comfort you or cry with you in case you didn't win.

They are responsible for all your hard work, your growth and success. These Men and Women are your role model in your Skating life.... They are your Coaches

Now wouldn't you like to know what's in the head of your COACH? Synchronice asked 5 highly respected Coaches to answer our 10 Question Questionnaire.

First Up... Mrs Anu Oksanen from Finland - Coach at Marigold IceUnity (MIU)





ANU OKSANEN (FIN)

# A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

Now we are seeing different team compositions: mostly girls but there are many teams with one or more boys. Are you in favor of mixed teams or do you feel this is competition forgery ?

I like it that our sport is special and we can have both men and women in our teams. I like it that our sport is about athletes, not genders. In this world being equal is not that easy, but in skating it has been like that for a long time. For example we don't talk about women coaches or men coaches, we talk about coaches in general. I've been proud that we consider all skaters equal, no matter what sex.

**Will Synchronized Skating ever be an Olympic sport? Name your top 3 arguments why Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport?**

It is a modern sport, based on an old one (figure skating), but performed in a very different way. So it can definitely draw both the old skating crowd and the new younger audience.

It is a winter and team sport and even though I like the mixed gender idea, in this case having a new women's team event would be great and promote the equality at the Games.

**Sport that combines top level athleticism and art at such a high level sure deserves to be seen at the Games.**

**How did you become a coach in Synchronized Skating, what was your motivation?**

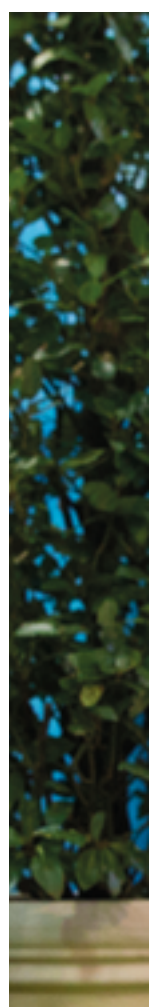
I started doing the choreographies when I was still skating singles myself. I've been involved since the synchronized skating (precision skating then) started here in our country, because I was one of the coaches who created the very first synchro program in Finland. I liked doing

the choreographies, and it was interesting to work with a big group of skaters since it gave many more possibilities to create something to fit the music.

**If not a Synchro Team coach, what else would you be coaching/doing?**

Probably doing choreographies in general. Or for sure I'd be involved in sport some other ways, like being a physiotherapist.

**If you could make one change in the ISU competition rules, what would that change be?**



There are so many... How do I pick just one...?

To make the judging open, no random draws and secret judging...

More freedom in free skating.

We have moved in a better direction now, but I would still like the teams to have more options in free skating.

Simplify the rules even more, because I still think there are at times too many things that the technical specialists have to look for within one element.

The score difference between number 1 and 25 at any WSSC is enormous. Do you think ISU should introduce minimum score limits in order to upgrade the WSSC or perhaps just to reduce the number of teams at WSSC?

I like it that all countries can have their representative at the World Championships. I think the athletes deserve it. Worlds is the place for the best teams

to have the honor to represent their own country, no matter what their level might be. Worlds is about finding out who are the best of the best.

Nexxice won the 2014/15 title....

Which team is most likely to win the 2016 World Championship?

If we're doing our best, then it will be Marigold IceUnity...

How are your preparations for the WSSC going? Are there any problems to overcome?

Always a "problem" or challenge in Finland is making it to the Worlds since we have more than two strong teams.

I have made the new free program very challenging and physically demanding, so making the girls work hard and also learn new tricks.

Besides your own team, do you have a next favorite senior team in competition? Or maybe a

team that you think has made great progress in the last few years?

Especially last year I liked Les Supremes. Fun choreographies and well presented. I think they have progressed a lot during the past couple of years.

It's not easy to select 10 questions out of a hundred we would like to ask. Which question would you like us to ask? And what's your answer?

Why am I still here...? Ha ha. I've been doing this for a long time and there have been frustrations and confusion, with the many changes in our sport. But I still love it. It's sport and art combined, and working with a team creates choreography potential that individual skating can't. That is what I love. This is a very special sport and I hope it will eventually get the recognition it deserves - one of them being an Olympic Sport.



ANDREA DOHANY (SWE)

# TEAM SURPRISE SWEDEN



Now we are seeing different team compositions: mostly girls- but there are many teams with one or more boys. Are you in favor of mixed teams or do you feel this is competition forgery?

I have had boys in Surprise in the past and I love working with them in a team. In general I think it looks best with a team of just girls, however you can make an equally nice program with boys too if it is fixed so that they are placed thoughtfully and are not just randomly in the lines. This requires more skill and work from the coach, as they have to build the program around the boy/boys so that they are always placed where they look best in each element.

Will Synchronized Skating ever be an Olympic sport? Name your top 3 arguments why Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport?

It is everyone's dream to skate in the Olympics and I strongly believe that Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport. If synchro were to be in the Olympics, I believe it would be great for figure skating overall. There are many talented skaters in the world with great potential, but they may not have the ability to be a top single skater if, for example, they aren't so good at jumping which is unfortunately a reason why many skaters quit. There are also many talented ice dancers and pair skaters but due to a lack of male skaters in most countries, it is hard for them to find a partner to compete

with. Synchronized skating gives many skaters the opportunity to continue skating for many more years and to unlock their potential. The top 6 or so teams in the world are of a very high level and every year the sport is developing. I believe many more people would take up the sport and continue skating if it were to be in the Olympics as it is a dream many people wish to work towards.

**How did you become a coach in Synchronized Skating, what was your motivation?**

I first started coaching Synchronized Skating in 1985, after the president of Landvetter FSC, Mrs Ingela Wieland went to Canada to take a look at Synchronized Skating. A rulebook was brought back for me from Canada and I was asked if I wanted to try the sport in Sweden. I decided to start up my own team which I put together using my ice dancers and single skaters and that is how Team Surprise began and how I started coaching Synchronized Skating. My motivation was that it felt fun and I could experiment and figure out a lot of new things to do on the ice.

**If not coach of a Synchro Team, what else would you be coaching/doing?**

I coach single skaters who compete on the National Team as well as coaching Team Surprise. If I wasn't coaching synchronized skating, I would be coaching more single skaters and I would also work more with ice dance. I receive a lot of invitations to help at seminars and educate others about the sport, however I don't have enough time to go to all of them and so this would also be something I would do more of.

**If you could make one change in the ISU competition rules, what would that change be?**

If I could make a change to the rules it wouldn't be just one thing, it would be several things. Every year new rules come out and there are always requirements that do not work together. There are often too many requirements and things that aren't interesting and that don't help to develop the sport. I feel that all officials need to have a really thorough understanding of the sport, how it works and what the difficulties are in order to



have the most effective rules. The rules should help develop the sport and move it forward.

The score difference between number 1 and 25 at any WSSC is enormous. Do you think ISU should introduce minimum score limits in order to upgrade the WSSC or perhaps just to reduce the number of teams at WSSC?

I don't think it is necessary to introduce a minimum score limit right now. If you look at the difference between the top and bottom skaters across all figure skating disciplines, it is also very big. If Synchronized Skating were to become an Olympic sport then they should reduce the number of teams and introduce a minimum score limit but I don't think it should be done now. If the sport grows bigger with competitions such as the Grand Prix, then the teams should also be limited.

Nexxice won the 2014/15 title.... Which team is most likely to win the 2016 World Championship?

You never know. It all depends on how the teams skate on the day and on the judges and technical

panel at the competition. It is a subjective sport and isn't something that you can predict the result of. You never know what will happen so I can't tell you who is most likely to win.

How are your preparations for the WSSC going? Are there any problems to overcome?

Preparations are going well. We are working the same as before, but even harder as the first competition of the season is earlier than usual.

Besides your own team, do you have a next favorite senior team in competition? Or maybe a team that you think has made great progress in the last few years?

I think Team Hungary have developed greatly over the last year. They have changed the way in which they train and are working much harder and more professionally and this shows in their skating. It is a great opportunity and motivation for them that the WSSC is being held in Hungary this season and I really hope that they can show how much they have developed.





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“Fans know how to create a great atmosphere and support the teams.”

## KAISA ARRATEIG - ROCKETTES (FIN)

# “A PRESTIGIOUS SPORT”

I have 24 fantastic skaters in Rockettes this season and I would love to have them all as team members in the competitions. For me and the team, all skaters are important.

**Now we are seeing different team compositions: mostly girls but there are many teams with one or more boys. Are you in favor of mixed teams or do you feel this is competition forgery?**

I think it is great to have some boys in the teams. Mixed teams, girls, boys... doesn't matter as long as sys remains synchronized skating. If the sys disappears and starts to be, for example, 8 pairs skating, then it becomes a different discipline. I have always coached teams with only girls, and I find it nice when choreographing.

**Will Synchronized Skating ever be an Olympic sport? Name your top 3 arguments why Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport?**

Yes of course it will be Olympic, because

- 1- It is a really prestigious sport.
- 2- Synchronized Skating is unique, it gives you the possibility to show and provide Feelings and Emotions through Sport, just like Art can ...

3- Fans know how to create a great atmosphere and how to support the teams. Synchronized Skating is full of joy, it's a sport for fans.

**How did you become a coach in Synchronized Skating, what was your motivation?**

I had skated both single skating and synchro, I studied at university to be an elementary school teacher. I really enjoyed coaching skating schools, single skaters and junior team Filiae Aboensis in Turku, and when I was asked to coach Rockettes in 1997, I started right away and fell in love with my job.

**If not coach of a Synchro Team, what else would you be coaching/doing?**

I think I could be a business coach. Helping people to develop.

**If you could make one change in the ISU competition rules, what would that change be?**

I have 24 fantastic skaters in Rockettes this season and I

would love to have them all as team members in the competitions. For me and the team, all skaters are important.

I would also try to make sure that more than half of the elements in every program are done in hold. I'm afraid we are moving towards side by side skating. I think traditional synchro elements should remain in the sport.

**The score difference between number 1 and 25 at any WSSC is enormous. Do you think ISU should introduce minimum score limits in order to upgrade the WSSC or perhaps just to reduce the number of teams at WSSC?**

I think not; these teams and skaters get better after a while. The competition is about 30 min / 1 hour longer when having all nations in; I think it's important.

**Nexxice won the 2014/15 title... Which team is most likely to win the 2016 World Championship?**  
If you ask me: Rockettes!

**How are your preparations for**

the WSSC going? Are there any problems to overcome?

We have started the season very well. I'm happy with both our programs and the team is strong.

Besides your own team, do you have a next favorite senior team in competition? Or maybe a team that you think has made great progress in the last few years?

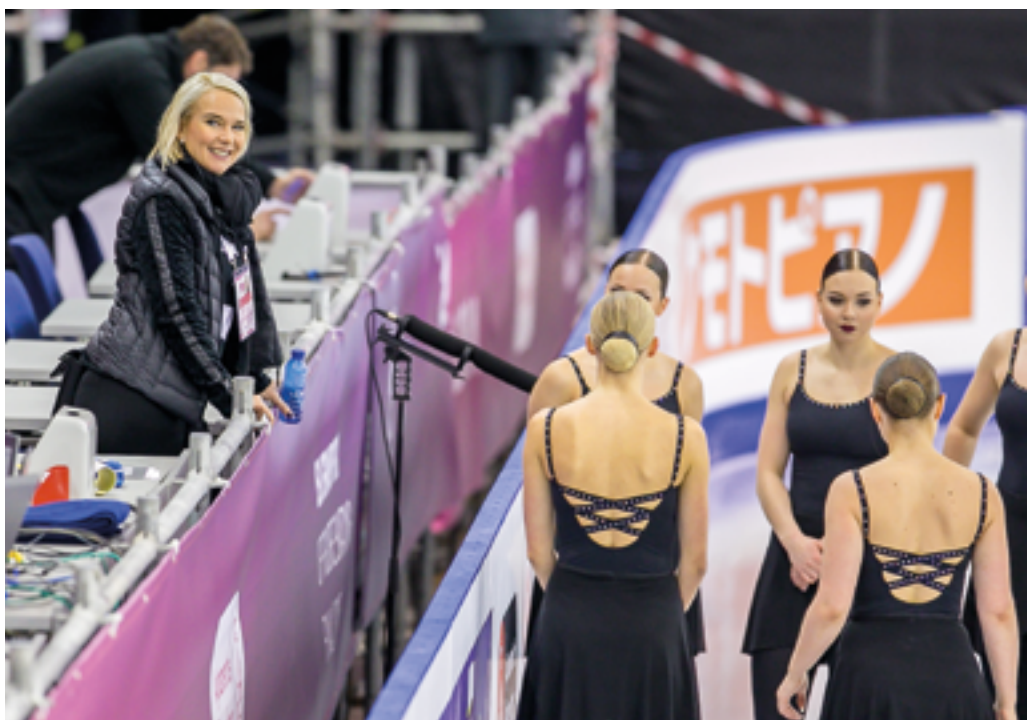
At the moment all the top teams are developing a lot. I think it's great that every team has their own strengths. We'll see which is my favorite this year...

It's not easy to select 10 questions out of a hundred we would like to ask. Which question would you like us to ask? And what's your answer?


How was the Grand Prix final?

I think it was a wonderful experience and I hope we can be part of the GP in the future also. It would be great to be part of a skating family with other disciplines.

"I think it's great that every team has their own strengths. We'll see which is my favorite this year..."



# TO CAPTURE THEIR LOVE



#WhyNotSynchro

A photograph of Marilyn Langlois, a woman with long brown hair, smiling and looking slightly to her left. She is wearing a thick, white, fur-like coat with a textured, ruffled collar and cuffs. A pink lanyard with the text "synchrophoto.eu" is visible around her neck. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor event.

**MARILYN LANGLOIS -  
LES SUPREMES(CAN)**

“I think I would like to see less limitations in the basic elements for example :Rotating wheel , number of skaters per spoke. It would allow us to be more creative.”

**Now we are seeing different team compositions: mostly girls but there are many teams with one or more boys. Are you in favor of mixed teams or do you feel this is competition forgery?**

I’m not sure about it ,I think I prefer everything more symmetrical but I’m not against boys in the sport. I think it needs to be balance when you have boys and you have to be smart the way you create your program to keep the main focus on the big picture.

**Will Synchronized Skating ever be an Olympic sport? Name your top 3 arguments why Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport?**

YES!!! It’s the most beautiful sport in the world...  
1-synchronized skating requires elite athletes of a high level of technical and artistic abilities.  
2- it’s a spectacular sport that audiences fall in love with at first sight  
3- it’s a team discipline that keeps growing in number of participants and teams all around the world

**How did you become a coach in Synchronized Skating, what was your motivation?**

I first started helping my coach with the younger team while I was still competing, and then when I retired from competing, Les Suprêmes Figure skating Club offered Amélie Brochu and I to take over the lead of the novice team. As a skater my

best time and experience in life were and are still related to my skater’s career and I thought if I could share a little part of it with my club skater that would be awesome. Sharing your passion and being able to live from it is the best job ever.

**If not coach of a Synchro Team, what else would you be coaching/doing?**

I’m actually also coaching single and if I wasn’t coaching synchro I would probably be more involved in single.

**If you could make one change in the ISU competition rules, what would that change be?**

I think the sport should keep evolving and I’m very open-minded to change. I think I would like to see less limitations in the basic elements for example: Rotating wheel , number of skaters per spoke. It would allow us to be more creative.

**The score difference between number 1 and 25 at any WSSC is enormous. Do you think ISU should introduce minimum score limits in order to upgrade the WSSC or perhaps just to reduce the number of teams at WSSC?**

I don’t think we should reduce , but I think if there was as much ISU competition in Asia ,Europe and America we should follow the same path as the other disciplines in figure skating and ask for a minimum score to qualify for a WSSC.

**Nexxice won the 2014/15 title.... Which team is most likely to win the 2016 World Championship?**

Its very hard to tell, every year teams improve so much and they are now much closer .Every team has different styles and strengths. WSSC 2016 it will be who skates best when it counts.

**How are your preparations for the WSSC going? Are there any problems to overcome?**

Before getting to WSSC we still have a lots to prepare. We will be competing internationally first and then we have to qualify at nationals to make it to WSSC.

**Besides your own team, do you have a next favorite senior team in competition? Or maybe a team that you think has made great progress in the last few years?**

I think both Spanish and Mexican teams did improve a lot. I would say I love the Russian style they have a great way to move and a very nice flexibility , I also love the Finnish commitment when they skate.

**It’s not easy to select 10 questions out of a hundred we would like to ask. Which question would you like us to ask? And what’s your answer?**

good question...

ANDREA GILARDI - HOT SHIVERS (ITA)

**'I BELIEVE SYN  
SKATING REA  
TO BE AN OLY**



# UNSYNCHRONIZED TEAM SKATING REALLY DESERVES TO BE AN OLYMPIC SPORT'

Now we are seeing different team compositions: mostly girls but there are many teams with one or more boys. Are you in favor of mixed teams or do you feel this is competition forgery?

I'm not against men in the teams, but having one or more men cuts both ways. It can be a help because of their strength and power, but they draw the attention of the audience just because they are different and this may disturb the uniformity of the team. If they are among the best skaters, they can be an advantage and useful for creating interesting choreographies.

Will Synchronized Skating ever be an Olympic sport? Name your top 3 arguments why Synchronized Skating should be an Olympic Sport?

I believe synchronized skating really deserves to be an Olympic sport. Figure skating is already. Why should it be in the Olympics? Because it's spectacular, extremely easy to understand and because the technical

content is now so high that it's perfectly comparable to the discipline of figure skating.

How did you become a coach in Synchronized Skating, what was your motivation?

I became a synchro coach without even knowing it. I started in 1990 working with a group of skaters who were doing mainly little shows and then we decided to do precision team skating and just kept going. My motivation was, and still is, to do something different, and as I love challenges I believe synchronized skating is the biggest challenge for a figure skating coach.

If not coach of a Synchro Team, what else would you be coaching/doing?

Since I was an ice dancer I believe I would have been a dance coach, but I'd love to be a singles and pairs coach too because every discipline can teach and learn something from the other ones.

If you could make one change in

the ISU competition rules, what would that change be?

Actually I don't mind the ISU rules but I'd like them just to be more simple to understand so that coaches could apply them without having doubts on everything. One suggestion could be to let junior teams learn group lifts, allowing them in the programs, maybe without levels of difficulty or with some limitations, so that when these skaters skate as seniors they will be more prepared technically and physically to face more difficult challenges.

The score difference between number 1 and 25 at any WSSC is enormous. Do you think ISU should introduce minimum score limits in order to upgrade the WSSC or perhaps just to reduce the number of teams at WSSC?

I believe that the ISU technical committee knows perfectly well about the difference in the scores at WSSC and I think that if they are letting all countries enter one team they must have

good reasons to allow it and I agree.

Nexxice won the 2014/15 title... Which team is most likely to win the 2016 World Championship?

It's very difficult to foresee what will happen in the rest of the season, but we already saw some of the top teams competing in Espoo and in Barcelona and the Russian team Paradise did a very big step forward. But the season is still young and anything can happen.

How are your preparations for the WSSC going? Are there any problems to overcome?

Our preparation for the next WSSC is on track. My team is a little more ready than last year at the same time in the season. There are always many daily problems to face but nothing we've never faced before.

Besides your own team, do you have a next favorite senior team in competition? Or maybe a team that you think has made great progress in the last few years?

I have Nexxice as my point of reference especially because I'm so lucky to have had the support of their coach Anne Schelter at our summer camp since 2009.

It's not easy to select 10 questions out of a hundred we would like to ask. Which question would you like us to ask? And what's your answer?

As it seems so difficult to make synchronized skating an Olympic discipline, what else could be done to make it more popular? I'd love to see synchronized skating at the same world championships together with singles, pairs and dancers. This is not easy but not impossible. And why not? What about European championships?

"I'd love to see synchronized skating at the same world championships together with singles, pairs and dancers. This is not easy but not impossible. And why not?"





# FRENCH CUP '16

31

In a fully packed Patinoire de Rouen, thousands of cheering and delirious fans screamed their heads off in an attempt to cheer their favorite team to the Gold. The Rockettes, Les Supremes, Team Paradise, Team Unique..... just to give you some names of the heavy-weight contestants competing in the 2016 French Cup.

The French Cup... Known for its tough and high quality competition, but also for its great atmosphere. It's more than beautiful to see the crowd going wild at the first ABBA or Village People beats. With the Zambonis doing their routine on the ice.... the French Cup's DJ knows exactly what tunes to play to get the heat on.... It's a treat, year after year. The French sure know how to throw a party.

Arriving with 11 teams the Finnish were well represented in this year's edition. For many years the

Finnish ruled the world in Precision Skating and you might expect them to snatch up all the medals here in Rouen as well. But nothing like it... We saw Canada, Russia and the USA giving maybe their best performances ever.

Happy Faces... that's what we remember most about the 2016 Coupe de France. In case you missed it this year ... it's on again in 2017. Don't miss it!



It's more than beautiful to see the crowd going wild at the first ABBA or Village People beats. With the Zambonis doing their routine on the ice.... the French Cup's DJ knows exactly what tunes to play to get the heat on....



In Advanced Novice the medals went to 3 Finnish teams:

Gold, Team Finettes -  
Finland total Score: 60.14  
Silver, Team Starlights-  
Finland total Score: 57.29  
Bronze, Team Dynamique -  
Finland total Score: 56.03

In Junior Marilyn Langlois and Pascal Denis' team Les Supremes aimed right for the highest honor.

Gold, Les Supremes - Canada  
total Score 162.88  
Silver, Musketeers - Finland  
total Score 155.14  
Bronze, Skyliners - USA  
total Score 153.14

In Senior we all could see the progress Russia's PaRaDiSe has made over the past years. Well, it paid off... They took the gold and the wonderful sculpted trophy back home to Saint Petersburg. Well done Paradise!

Gold, Paradise - Russia  
total Score 206.08  
Silver, Rockettes - Finland  
total Score 201.68  
Bronze, Team Unique - Finland  
total Score 198.90

With a difference of only 00.10 points Les Supremes Senior came in fourth with a total score of 198.80.





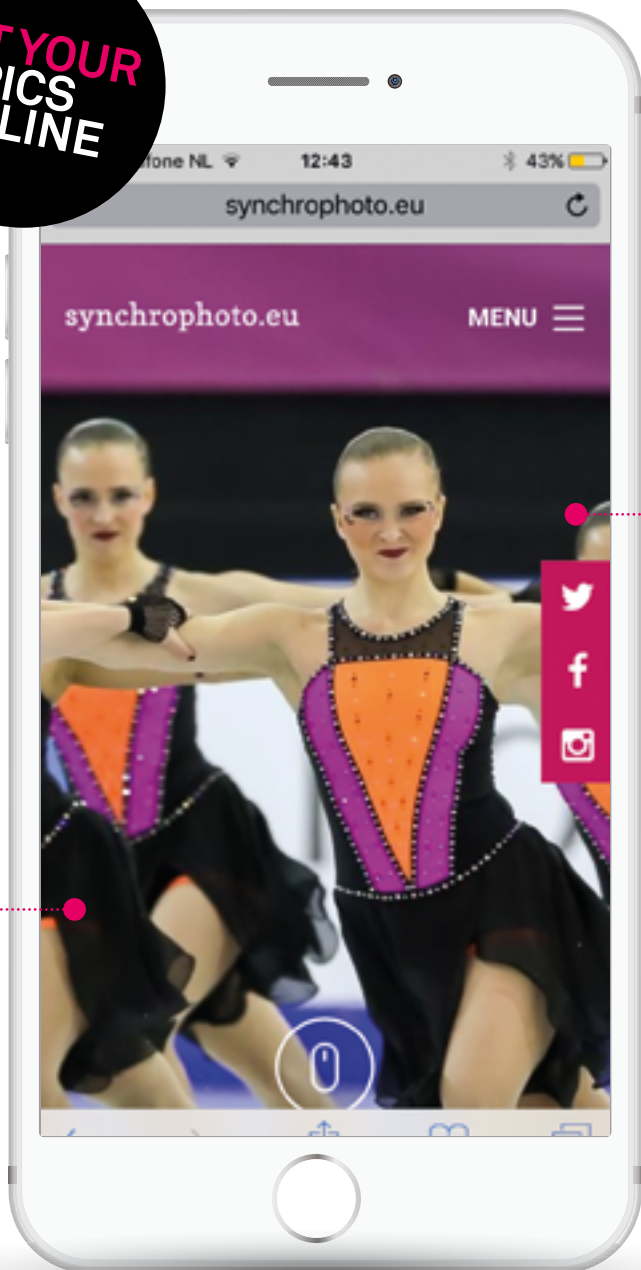




FEEL THE PASSION #WHYNOTSYNCHRO

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**TO CAPTURE  
THEIR JOY  
AND THEIR  
LAUGHTER**

#WhyNotSynchro

# MOZART CUP 2016



Beautiful white Salzburg, world heritage, snow-topped roofs, the sun high in the sky but... this time, it was more colorful than ever before! Red, blue, yellow, purple, grey, pink, green, orange... Teams from all over the planet colored the streets of downtown Salzburg.



**THIS TIME, IT  
WAS MORE  
COLORFUL THAN  
EVER BEFORE**

This beautiful ambiance was the setting for the 6th Mozart Cup. An amazing 74 Synchronized Skating teams from 15 countries battled it out in the Red Bull 'Eis' Arena for the highest honor.

We heard Dr. Christiane Mörth, President of the Austrian Figure Skating Union, say that the Mozart Cup is well on its way to becoming the biggest skating competition in the world. Ms. Carmen Kiefer and her staff can be very proud of what they have

achieved over the 6 years so far. Organizing an event as good as this year's and hosting over 1500 skaters, you have to be quite a team. Congratulations!

The Junior Competition was very exciting. We saw Chrystal Ice from Russia win the gold, just by 1.34 points over the Lexettes from the United States, with an overall score of 149.57 points. Sun City Swing from Finland completed this year's Junior podium with 139.90 points and took home the

bronze.

In the Senior Competition there was favorite Marigold IceUnity from Finland, led by Coach Anu Oksanen. Her skilled team of course didn't disappoint and earned the gold, beating out Miami University from the USA who had to settle for silver after a beautiful performance and Team Meraki from Canada who scored bronze.

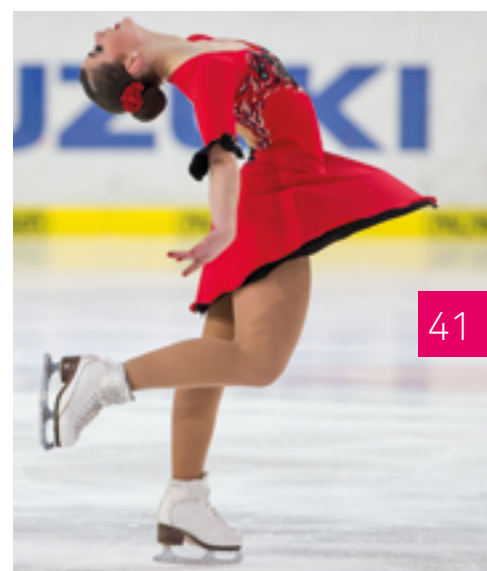
Coach Anu commented on the



	Total Points	Short Program	Free Program
Marigold IceUnity	190.31 points	64.52 points	125.79 points
Miami University	165.26 points	58.10 points	107.16 points
Team Meraki	151.21 points	51.66 points	99.55 points

win: “the Team did a great job, but we’re still missing some points”. Nevertheless, after the ceremonies everybody was happy and cheerful on the ice celebrating the 6th Mozart Cup and of course taking team shots and selfies.

See you all next year? Put it in your calendars  
**MOZART CUP 7** will take place from  
 19 - 22 January 2017.



  
**KATERS**  
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# MOZART CUP







# THE MAN BEHIND THE SCENES: ISU SPORT MANAGER FIGURE SKATING

Serenely, even with a touch of class, he floats around in ice arenas all over the world. A conversation here, a chat there, but in the meantime....he notices things that others don't. Firmly and decisively he guides people in the right direction and makes suggestions to improve competition quality. He's the ISU Sport Manager Figure Skating. He's Mr. Peter Krick.

**It's mid-season in Figure Skating, however Mr. Krick opened up a spot in his busy schedule for Synchronice to ask him some questions.**

**We know you are German. In what part of Germany do you live?**

I live in Bavaria (Bayern), the most southern state in Germany with the Olympic city of Munich as our capital.

**Do you live there by yourself or are you married?**

No I don't live there alone, I'm happily married and have 2 beautiful children. `

**Are any of them active Skaters?**

No not really but, I used to skate myself.

**When were you born?**

(Smile) Some years ago.

**Your official title is "ISU Sport Manager Figure Skating", so we**

**can assume that includes all Synchronized Skating competitions as well?**

Yes of course, Synchronized Skating is Figure Skating.

**Were you always employed by the ISU?**

No, at first I worked for the German Skating Federation. After 29 years I felt it was time to move. In 1999 I started with the ISU, mainly to improve the standard and the quality of the organization of events.

**Do you find any spare time in a profession like this, with all the traveling and if so, do you have any other hobbies?**

I'm interested in all Skating, so I spend my spare time working for the development of Skating.

**Do you maybe have a favorite discipline in Skating?**

No, I like all Figure Skating, there's no special preference.

**What's your opinion on today's level in Synchronized Skating, let's say in comparison to 10 years ago?**

In the last decade Synchronized Skating did a good step forward in quality, but unfortunately not everywhere. The top teams really evolve, the teams at the bottom on the other hand are still too low in their level. In general, however, the annual calendar of competitions is way too short. Starting the season only at Christmas and then ending already in early April is, in my opinion, not right and needs more input and body.

**Unfortunately Synchronized Skating was not selected for the 2018 Winter Olympics. Is this a good decision in your opinion.**

To make a long story short... the decision is with the IOC. We tried everything within our power, but regrettably we were not successful. However, looking back is no use, one has to look forward. We



Mr. Peter Krick, pictured in the middle.

will try our absolute best again in 2022 and hopefully then we will score our goal.

*At the World Championships they invite 25 teams to participate. There's an enormous gap in points between numbers 1 and 25. Shouldn't there be less entries or does every country deserve a starting position to represent their country?*

As I said, the top teams made good progress, but the bottom teams need to catch up.

In some teams the skating skills, as well as the physical appearance in some cases, must be improved. For the time being, it's OK that each member has the right to at least one entry, but for the future a Technical Minimum Score might be needed as a qualification to participate in the World Championships. We'll see what happens.

## FACTS & FIGURES

**Born:** 31-01-1944

Figure Skater in competition from 1958 to 1968

**Participated:**

In 10 German Championships:

3 times German Champion

In 5 European Championships:

Highest Ranking 5th place

In 3 World Championships:

Highest Ranking 8th Place

In the Grenoble Olympic Winter

Games in 1968 and placed 12th

Started with the German Skating Union in 1972

Started with the ISU in 1999



# A SKATER'S STORY...

*SynchroNice asked 5 Senior Skaters*

Every time we're shooting photographs at some competition, we see all those different teams from different countries all over the World. Skaters having fun together between performances. Skaters laughing together and singing together and sometimes.....some Skaters are just sitting together... talking together.

We imagine they are talking about Synchronized Skating, or maybe where they are from. Maybe they exchange experiences from other competitions or how long they have been skating. They could even tell each other about their dreams in life or in what competition they would like to be competing in the future.

Sports... Ain't it the perfect way to make friends around the globe?

Wouldn't you all like to know some more of the background stories of your fellow competitors? SynchroNice asked 5 Senior Skaters from Italy, Belgium, U.S.A., France

and Canada to write us their story. What is their connection to Synchronized Skating Have they always been involved in Synchronized Skating?

Do they have to train and work out as much as you and your team have to? Do they have family and what about other hobbies? Do they like the traveling as much as you do? We just want to know it all.

### **So tell us your story**

GULIA from the Italian Team 'Hot Shivers'

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OLESIA from the Belgian 'Team Temptation'

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LINDSAY from the American Team 'Haydenettes'

---

KATIA from the French Team 'Les Zoulous'

---

ANNA from the Canadian team and World Champion 'NeXXice'

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47

## LINDSAY GRAJEK - HAYDENETTES (USA)

My name is Lindsay Grajek and I am very proud to be a long term member of my dream team, the Haydenettes. To help understand why I find myself so fortunate to skate for this organization, I think you must first gain an understanding of my journey.



I grew up in the small farm town of Howell, Michigan in the Northern United States. In my state learning to skate is like learning to walk, so luckily for me I found my love for the ice early on. At first I skated on the lake outside of my house with skates that had two parallel blades on each foot for balance. Then, around the age of 5, I began taking lessons at my local rink, Grand Oaks Arena. This was when I joined my first synchroni-

zed skating team and found my calling.

I remained competing both in singles and synchro through I.S.I until the age of 12, when I learned about USFSA Synchronized Skating - the governing body for synchro that most of you around the world are familiar with. It was at this time that my mother did what she does best and began researching different programs in southwest Michigan. That was when we

discovered the Hockettes of Ann Arbor - the birthplace of synchronized skating!

Since I had not grown up under the USFSA governing body, I had to start my skating tests again from the beginning. There was little time between tryouts and the deadline for competition testing, so I was often forced to take multiple tests in a day.

I skated for the Hockettes for 5 years, working my way from Intermediate all the way up to

# SYNCHRONIZED SKATING IS A SPECIAL SPORT UNLIKE ANY OTHER.

Junior, which was the highest level in the organization. I spent 3 years on the Junior team, where my dream of representing my country first came true! I also learned the skills needed to continue toward my biggest dream.

During this time our area of Michigan was hit hard with the financial crisis from Detroit, almost ending my career. My father was forced to take a job 8 hours north of our home, while my mom stayed with us, the house and her job so the dreams of their three daughters could continue. With things getting so hard, I found it

only fueled my fire to be on the ice. It was the only place that I could feel completely weightless while the world around me weighed heavy on my shoulders.

In 2009, I attended the Hayden Elite Summer Camp where I found my happy place. At camp I had the opportunity to experience Saga's coaching style and skate with the current Haydenette team. I found it very natural to execute the drills we were given and I fell in love with the way the team skated as a whole. Following camp, I knew I had to one day become a Haydenette.

The dilemma with this next goal was that I had not yet finished my high school career. I was only going to be a junior, meaning I still had two years until graduation. It was also going to be extremely expensive to move across the country, however leaving while still in high school would help me avoid the cost of college for at least one year. After much soul searching and pleading with my parents I finally took my chance, flying out to Boston for tryouts just before I turned 17.

After the tryouts were finished I found myself standing next to the

Haydenette's trophy case staring in wonderment at the many awards and accolades. Being so immersed I did not notice that Saga had come into the lobby. As I looked over she said to me "I really hope that you can find a way to make this year work" and left. I looked at my Mom hoping that meant what I thought it did. She looked back at me and teased, "Maybe you get to be the water girl!"

Six years later I am no less grateful to be a member of my team. Being on the Haydenettes is a gift like no other. Our team is composed of skaters from all over the United States (and the world), who move thousands of miles to work tirelessly toward bettering the team. Each year new skaters arrive with their own skating

style, but once the season begins we are all transformed into one unit. It is an honor to be called a Haydenette and we do not take that lightly. It means being a part of something much bigger than yourself and always working to be worthy of the title.

Each season we quickly become a family. We make sure that the new skaters who make the move to Boston know they have a place to call home and people to look out for them. It is not uncommon for us to spend our small amount of free time away from the rink with each other. The most amazing off-ice moments over the years have been in celebrating the big moments in each other's lives. During my first year Saga shared she was engaged - and this year Saga announced she was pregnant, **WITH TWINS!** My team is my home away from home.

After I am done with my time in Boston, I'll head back to Michigan and complete my undergraduate degree. Five years from now I hope to be in Veterinary School at Michigan State University. I want to help those who cannot help themselves and specialize in either wildlife care or animal genetics. Along with this, I also know I will never part with the ice or synchronized skating. I want to remain active as a coach and will always look for new ways to help

our sport progress.

Synchronized skating is a special sport unlike any other. It is one that calls for each of its members to be completely selfless in the pursuit of perfection for the entire team. As our coach Saga always says "No one can stand out, you must all be outstanding". I like to call synchro the "miracle sport" because we all know that getting through a technically packed program with sixteen people is nearly a miracle to accomplish! It is in those rare moments when the miracle does occur that all of the effort, time and money spent is repaid. I have learned priceless lessons from my time as a synchro skater that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. The most important of these lessons being, if you love what you are doing you can accomplish anything! This sport will forever be a part of me as only a first love can.

I want to send a HUGE thank you to my family after all of these years. It is your love and support that has taught me what is possible!



## OLESIA POUISHMYNTSEVA TEAM TEMPTATION (BEL)

# IT'S BEGINNING TO GROW, BUT THERE IS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO

My name is Olesia Poushmyntseva. As you can see – that doesn't sound Belgian. That is because I was born in Russia and moved to Belgium when I was 5. I am now 23 and skate in our amazing national synchronized skating team: Team Temptation.

At the moment I am living in Turnhout (a small town in Belgium) with my mom and three younger brothers who are also skaters in Team Temptation teams. The oldest, Aleksander, skates in our senior team as well. I am studying architecture and will hopefully graduate this year, after six long and hard years. Next to skating I also like to design. I design many of our costumes: this year my mom and I actually made our costumes for the short programs. It was hard work... but it paid off, and the result is amazing. In my club I also teach children to skate, for the past 8 years now, and I like to design programs for our ice shows.

I started skating when I was 7 years old. First just for fun and later I started working towards a solo career. Which never happened... When I was 14 I started in some synchronized teams in my own club. One was a mixed age team and the other a junior team. I did this for about three years, but eventually stopped because I was bored and I still liked jumping too much .

Finally, when I was 19, I decided to try out for the national team. (Something my mom told me to do for years). I was surprised how much I liked it and I started skating with them immediately. This was the beginning of my synchro career. Now for the fourth year in a row I am skating with this amazing company and for the second year I am one of the co-captains.

Our team currently consists of 18 members, with coach, choreographer, mental coach and off-ice trainer Candy Mulder.

The biggest challenge in our country (currently) is not to be the best and win selection competitions to be allowed into the Worlds, but bring together enough skaters to go to Worlds.... Figure skating is not a very popular sport in Belgium and synchronized skating even less. It's beginning to grow, but there is still a long way to go to make it as popular as tennis or football. So it's very hard for our national team to find enough members. We train in three different ice rinks in Belgium: in the few that still have some ice available that are affordable. We get little or no subsidies, so



everything has to be paid by the skaters themselves. Because it is hard to find affordable ice venues, some of us have to drive for 8 hours a week to be on the ice for 4 hours. Fortunately there are plenty of awesome people who are happy to do it and make sure that we have such a great team! :D  
We train twice a week, two hours

each. Because of the lack of ice and long distances, some hours are off-ice workouts, but it certainly has its advantages.

What I like most about my sport are my friends and the competitions! I train with my team members every week and together we do everything possible to achieve as

much as possible. We experience the greatest moments and the saddest ones together, we see the world and represent our country with pride and that makes us all best friends and I love them! I also love going to competitions, I always look forward to watching other teams because I love to watch the sport and watching better teams



The highlight of my skating career was the 2015 World Championship in Hamilton, Canada.

make me work even harder. My favourite teams, besides my own team of course, is teams Paradise and Tatarstan! Because I just love Russia <3 and because they always have great programs and are beautiful to look at! And of course teams Marigold and Rockettes. Because they always have so much creativity in their programs and skate them very well.

My favourite program so far, would be this year's free program: Music by John Miles. Because it contains different emotions and different tempos so it is a great challenge to bring the atmosphere of 'Night of the Proms' to the ice (and because I love our dresses).

The highlight of my skating career was the 2015 World Championship in Hamilton, Canada. I had never travelled so far and would probably never do so if it was not for synchro. I thought it was a really nice experience to represent our country on

the other side of the world, to visit all the beautiful places with all of my friends and to perform in such a major arena.

The least fun experiences for me are the unfortunate times when people get injured during training. It is of course part of our sport, but I feel really sorry for my friends at that moment, and it is always very risky for our small team.

For many reasons, like I said before, it would be very helpful for such a small country like Belgium if Synchronised Skating became part of the Olympics! It's simply outrageous that it still isn't! I personally think that the reason is the media. There is not enough overall knowledge of the sport, so automatically also less demand and the media only covers what people want to see. As we all saw: Synchronized Skating at the Grand Prix in Barcelona this year was not broadcast on Eurosport.

I think if the media become more involved in Synchronised Skating, more people will come to understand what a great, interesting and difficult sport it is. As Synchrophoto takes all these great initiatives, it is a good beginning to make our sport better known among the public. But there should be more of this! Because once this is the case, I have no doubt that everyone is going to love this sport!

To conclude, I want to tell you where I'd like to see myself in 10 or 20 years. I would really like to be a judge or technical specialist in Synchronised Skating after my skating career, and to help promote the sport in Belgium and around the world. And I will certainly remain committed to Team Temptation, even though I won't be skating anymore - it remains family, and family is forever!

IF YOU CAN  
**DREAM IT.....**  
YOU CAN DO IT!

Walt Disney

#WhyNotSynchro

KATIA LEININGER -  
LES ZOULOUS (FRA)

# SKATING HAS ALWAYS BEEN PART OF MY LIFE

My name is Katia, I am 25 years old and I live in Lyon, France. I could not be more excited to be part of these skaters' stories and to share my passion for synchronized skating.

Hi everyone,

I have one brother and one sister. My sister, Magali, is a former ice-dancer who competed with her partner at the international level representing France. She is now a member of Team Zoulous in which I also skate. It's super fun to skate with my sister, we share so much and I feel lucky to have her by my side at every training and competition.

Outside of skating with my team, I am also an ice-dance and synchronized skating coach. I passed the exam in October 2015 and I am now a full time employee at the club Lyon Glace Patinage. Being able to do my passion for a living is one of the best things that has ever happened and I am very happy to wake



up every day and get the chance to teach my students and to help them to achieve their goals.

Outside of my work and my training schedule, I enjoy spending time with my friends and family as well as doing some shopping or just sitting at a café.

Skating has always been part of my life; I started when I was 5 years old. My grandmother was an English teacher, some of her students were figure skaters, she took me to one of the galas. I loved it, tried it and never looked back!

I did my first competition with the youngest team when I was 10 and then I found an ice-dance partner so I competed in ice-dance until I was 16. I started synchro again and got a spot in the senior Zoulous team. My first world synchronized skating championships was in April 2007 in London, Ontario.

I can say that the past eight years have been full of new teammates, new experiences, new programs, new goals and new countries...

I love traveling too, so when I turned 18 I decided to move to Sweden to skate with Team Convivium and Team Boomerang. This was one of the best experiences in my life. I have great memories of the two seasons I spent with them. I learnt a lot, skating for Helen Wieland and Diana Tolsa, the two coaches of these teams, and I grew up so much living by myself thousands of kilometers from home. I learnt a new language, new traditions, and I can still read, write and understand some Swedish, which makes me a little bit special! Haha, I also have the best surname ever, as my teammates called me "Baguetten"!

I left Sweden after the 2010 Worlds and returned back to France to do a bachelor's degree in Communications in Lyon. During that time I skated

again with Zoulous and we accomplished so much during these years - like qualifying for the 2012 Worlds in Gothenburg and placing 14th, the best placement for France since 2005!

After I graduated in 2013, I moved again and then I decided to move to Canada and try out for Nexxice. I made the team and started this new chapter of my skating life. I spent one season with Nexxice, and all I can say is: What a season it was! Probably the hardest season of my career but I trained so hard, gave the best I could each step on the ice and was so dedicated to my team and the goals we had that in April 2014, when I was standing on the Worlds podium with our silver medal, I realized that all the sacrifices are always worth it!

Since then I am still skating and moved back to France. Now I am enjoying skating with Zoulous. The team is great, and I have known a lot of my teammates for many years. My coaches are Alain-Daniel Hostache and Alessandro Tormena.

Alain-Daniel was my coach when I first stepped on the ice 20 years ago so we can easily say that he knows me very well - my qualities and my faults!

This season has been great so far, and I love both programs. We are skating the short to the theme "Enter the Circus" and our free program is from the musical Grease. We are having a lot of fun skating these programs as a team. We already competed at two competitions this season and in December we broke the French record earning 146,11 points. I love training because I can put all my energy into it and it clears my head but most of all I love competing with my teammates. I love competing at Worlds because it's an honor to skate for your country. Competitions always make me a little bit nervous just before I step on the ice but feeling my teammates close to me and feeling that whatever happens, we are skating as one, makes my stress

disappear as soon as the music starts.

With Zoulous, I can only be so proud of what this team has accomplished the last five seasons. I am thankful we have so many great coaches and people working with us, like Cathy Dalton and Lyne Forget who helped the team get to where we are now. And of course our long-time and actual coaches! These past years we have become more professional in our training on and off the ice. This season we skate 4 times a week; we have fitness three times a week, plus one off-ice session. Zoulous is a team where everyone feels welcome and where we can laugh so much as well as work very seriously to get where we want to be. One of my best memories with the team is in 2012 when we became national champions again after four seasons of ending second or third!

Well, I now wish everyone a great season and I can't wait to meet you at some competitions!!



# SHARE YOUR SELFIES ;)



SYNCHRONICE



Share your selfies #SynchroSelfie



ANNA CAPPUCCHITTI - NEXXICE (CAN)

# 'I DREAMED ABOUT TRAVELING THE WORLD AND SKATING'

My name is Anna Cappuccitti and I'm 17 years old. I have three older brothers, Joey, Vinny and Jimmy and live with my parents. When I'm not at the rink, I'm working on completing my high school education at the Country Day School in King City, Ontario, Canada where I'm preparing myself to attend university over the next several years.

I began skating at three years old in Bolton, Ontario. I instantly fell in love with the sport. My three older brothers all played competitive hockey, so as long as I could remember I just wanted to get on the ice and be like them. However, once on the ice I decided to take another route into figure skating. At the age of nine, when I began to really notice that figure skating was something that I wanted to pursue competitively I began traveling an hour each morning to train as a single skater at the Mariposa School of Skating in

Barrie, Ontario. My days began at 4:30 in the morning in order for me to be on the ice for 6:30 a.m. Eventually, as I grew older, I gravitated towards ice dancing because I loved the artistic elements of the performance.

Synchronized skating is a natural transition from ice dancing so I was easily led to the sport at the age of 14 when I auditioned for Nexxice and earned a spot on the Senior team, which is coached by Shelley Simonton Barnett and Anne Schelter. I was the

youngest member of the team that year and was thrilled to be a part of this world class team which consisted of athletes up to the age of 26 from across Canada in addition to three international skaters. During my first year with Nexxice we became Canadian Champions (being the eighth consecutive year for the team) and World silver medalists as Team Canada 1 at the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championship in Courmayeur, Italy, April 4-5, 2014.

Last year I took a sabbatical



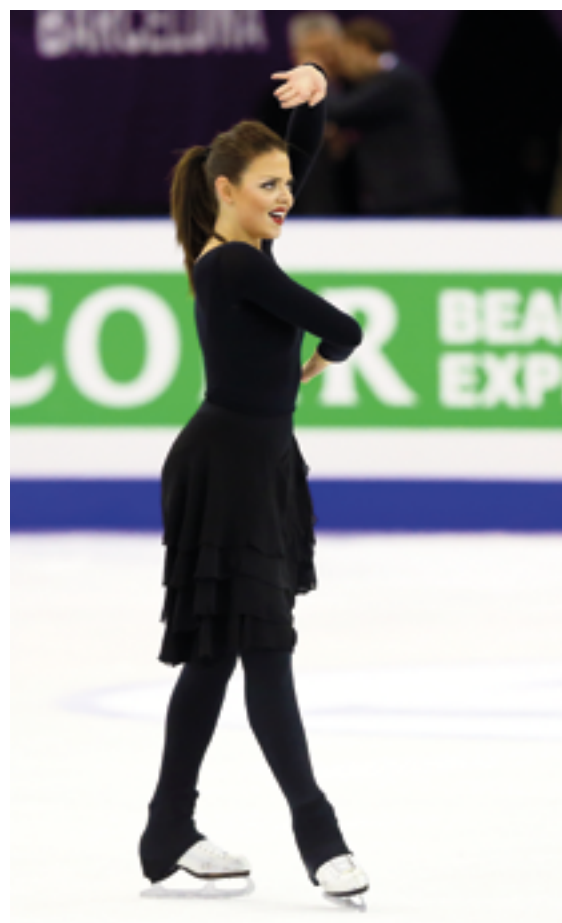


from synchronized skating in order to concentrate on my studies but the love for the sport and for performing and competing led me back to audition for the team again this season, where I earned a spot on the team, once again.

On average we train upwards of 20 hours a week with off-ice training in dance, yoga and conditioning along with nutritional education and mental preparation. This year we have started off the competition season with making history by competing at the Senior Grand Prix of Figure

Skating Final in Barcelona, Spain on December 12, 2015 where synchronized skating made its debut. The five top ranked countries in synchro competed where Nexxice, representing Canada, earned a bronze medal. This has been my favourite competition to date and one of my best experiences ever.

Growing up I dreamed about traveling the world and skating. Now, this is a dream that has become a reality for me. I'm sure you have heard many times of athletes constantly thanking their parents for the



support that they have given them throughout every step of the way, however, sometimes people do not really understand what that support truly requires. It's not just standing beside your son or daughter as they win their championship title but it's everything that adds up in order to get to that moment. There is no one that I am more appreciative of than my parents. Since the young age of nine to my present age, my mother and I, together, have driven multiple hours daily just to get to different arenas. This doesn't include the many hours that I spend on the ice training while my mom waits in order to drive me home just to do it all over again the next day. Whether it was leaving early in the morning at 4:30 a.m. to train as a single skater or ice dancer or returning home in the early morning hours at 1:30 after training with Nexxice, my mother never hesitated to bring me wherever or whenever it was needed in order to train. On the other hand, my dad works tireless long hours and funds my dream. Once I began to really develop a passion for the sport, my dad never stopped working in order to provide me with every opportunity possible to chase my dream. In addition to this support, my parents are there for me on my good days and even if I'm having a bad day. I truly would not be able to be on this roller coaster of a journey without them by my side. I owe

it all to my parents, Danny and Silvia Cappuccitti.

Skating on the National team brings a lot of challenges, such as sustaining injuries and maintaining good grades, and joys, such as training with amazing elite athletes and great coaches and managers along with traveling to different parts of the world to compete and represent my country with pride. It is my hope that synchronized skating becomes an Olympic sport but for now, I am looking forward to the ISU World Championships in Budapest, Hungary on April 6-7, 2016 where we will defend our World Champion title.

“Skating on the National team brings a lot of challenges, such as sustaining injuries and maintaining good grades”



# “OPEN A SYNCHRO ICE SCHOOL”

GIULIA GANDINI - HOT SHIVERS (ITA)



Giulia, pictured in the middle.

I'm Giulia Gandini, I'm 27 years old and I live in Milan with my family. After having completed my university degree in Foreign Languages I started working for different Italian companies and at the moment I work for a sales office. Beside ice-skating, I don't have any special hobbies: hanging out with my friends, going to the cinema and dancing in the disco.



Going out with my friends is what I love the most, since for me friends are the family you choose every single day! This doesn't mean that I don't like my family 'cause I feel blessed every day for having my dad, my mum and still my grand-mums!

Many years ago, when I was 7, I went to the ice rink with my father and grandfather, just for fun, and the week after I went again with my grandmother. I skated till the time was finished and then practice time began for the junior and senior team, Hot Shivers.

I was really enchanted by these groups of girls that skated together and seemed so happy! So my grandmother talked to the president of the society and she encouraged me to try. From that moment on I haven't left this sport and the community.

So, it's been only 20 years that I have been skating with Hot Shivers (from Novice to Senior cat.) and over these past years I have got to know so many people and to under-

stand what it really means to share pains and pleasures in your passion!

We train 4 times a week, 1 hour 30 min each on the ice with Andrea Gilardi and our new co-coach Davide Meregalli, and 2 times a week we have fitness training with our coach Valeria Bianchi.

I like training since I'll never stop learning things, but most of all I like competitions 'cause I can finally demonstrate what I've learnt and how fantastic we are!!! The training part I like the most is synchro elements instead of footwork 'cause I like to let my blades flow to the music and let my personality shine through!

My best experience is when we have a great performance (despite the judging) and we can feel that our skating was understood by the public and that they were touched by it. My best memory of achieving a goal is the WSSC 2014 when we gave such a stunning performance during our short program that we couldn't resist screaming on the kiss & cry!

Music is a very important part of our sport and luckily I have liked nearly every music I've skated to. I prefer to change the mood between short and free programs, so do one strong and the other soft.

I don't have a favourite team but I like Nexxice most for their elegance and precision (in the photos, most of the time they have the same position on the free leg - beautiful). I like Supreme for their womanliness and Paradise for their regal behaviour on the ice and no-hold block step sequences.

My skates are Graf and my blades are Wilson Synchro blades.

The most exciting competition up until now was WSSC 2014 because it took place in Courmayeur - Italy. It was really satisfying talking to regular Italians that got to know our sport and admired us during that competition week. We felt happy to spread the word in our country.

My big dream is to continue skating after competition time and open a synchro ice school to really develop little ones into big skaters, and help make our sport grow to become part of the Olympic games!!!



BARBARA WALES

# WHY NOT SYNCHRO?

I guess I will tell you the start of the WhyNotSynchro movement. In April 2013, the World Championships were hosted in Boston, MA, USA. This is my home town and I attended enthusiastically, with my daughter, who at the time skated Novice for Hayden (Ice Mates) and my sister. As a last minute scramble ensued, looking for USA emblazoned attire, I recalled a sweatshirt that I had purchased many years earlier during one of the Olympic games. The Olympic Rings were embroidered under the bright red letters USA. It was at this moment that I created the first poster asking, “Why Not Synchro?”

This first poster was a simple sign made with poster board, a Sharpie, and glitter. (I still have it.) I was conscientious about when I showed the sign. I only pulled it out during ice resurfacing, so as not to distract from the competitors’ performances. Eventually, the cameramen caught sight of me, and the crowds went wild every time I showed up on the Jumbotron.

My goal was simply to get our voices heard. So often amongst the athletes of Synchro, I would hear the conversation: “Why isn’t Synchro in the Olympics?” I simply wanted the Synchro community and the world to start talking about it and get someone to start taking some action.

The momentum started to grow after photos of me and my sign went viral on Twitter. There

was one particular blog that was written, where I was identified as one skater’s ‘idol’. The blog post encouraged more signs and louder voices.

At the beginning of the Sochi Olympics, Sean McKinnon wrote about me in his first blog of those games. Again, things got a bit viral on social media. His blog got us a bit more attention because his blog was intended for an Olympic audience, many of whom had never seen Synchronized Skating.

It’s a global effort, without much of an organization behind it. I would like to see it become more organized, and I would love to see some of the national federations and the ISU embrace it more substantially. It’s a “conversation” which cannot afford to die out.

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*father of synchronized skating*

# #SYNCHROHISTORY

In 1956 the first synchronized skating team was formed by Dr. Richard Porter, who became known as the 'father of synchronized skating'. The 'Hockettes' skated out of Ann Arbor, Michigan and entertained spectators during intermissions of the University of Michigan Wolverines hockey team. In the early days, precision skating (as it was then called) resembled a drill team routine, or a precision dance company such as The Rockettes. The discipline was originally called precision skating in North America because of the emphasis on maintaining precise formations and timing of the group. The sport officially changed its name to synchronized skating in 2000.

**“THE TIME HAS COME TO ADD THIS INCREDIBLE EVENT TO THE PINNACLE OF THE SPORT OF FIGURE SKATING.”**

Unfortunately, 2018 did not succeed, but all hope in 2022 with the hashtag #WHYNOTSYNCHRO2022.

65

## > SYNCHRO UPDATE

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Skating!*



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# MARTA TOTH - BUDAPEST CUP

## 'ELITE SYNCHRO COMPETITIONS'

The first Budapest Cup, called Sportország Cup, was held in 2009 and organized by Erika Bodnár (coach of Team Synchro Budapest and my colleague). This Cup was a non-ISU synchro event organized twice, in 2009 and 2010.



### **When was the first Budapest Cup ever?**

The first Budapest Cup, called Sportország Cup, was held in 2009 and organized by Erika Bodnár (coach of Team Synchro Budapest and my colleague). This Cup was a non-ISU synchro event organized twice, in 2009 and 2010. After this Erika didn't have enough time for both the teams and the competition organization. Also Team Budapest Synchro started growing in the time that I've been working with Erika Bodnár, since 2009. At this time I was also an active skater in Team Passion, the only ISU Senior team in Hungary since 2008.

Last year some of the parents asked Erika to help because they wanted to revive the Synchro Cup in Budapest and now it's happening: the Budapest Cup! :)

We started working with a small group of 5-6 people to make another ISU competition in the heart of Europe happen, in Budapest!

### **Is it hard to get teams to enter and register?**

This year team registration seems a little bit harder than last year (in ISU categories), but I think that's because of the Worlds in Hungary this year. What I see, sadly, is that only the numbers of Mixed Age teams increase everywhere... but I hope these Mixed Age teams will soon switch to Novice, Junior and Senior categories!

### **Is the date good to organize a competition or would you rather organize it in another period.**

I think the date is fine. But to answer your question - why

these dates? - well, we didn't have a choice... Unfortunately the Hungarian schedule was full in March, so we organized it in February this year. But we were fast and reserved the dates for the 2017 Budapest Cup. Would you like to know the dates? Please mark your calendars for March 23-26, 2017! We would like to be at the end of the competition season; if it's possible between the Junior and Senior Worlds. That's why we think the second part of March are the best dates.

### **How many people are involved in the organizing committee and how many volunteers?**

In the Budapest Cup Organizing Committee we work with 5-6 really active people (parents and coaches of Team Budapest Synchro) and ano-



ther 5-6 people who help us a lot with their valuable knowledge. Last year we had a really nice team of volunteers, around 30 parents, friends, sisters/brothers, ex-skaters, figure skaters and others. This year we need many more volunteers!

### Why should a team register and participate in the Budapest Cup?

Haha, great question! Budapest is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. The Budapest Cup would like to become one of the 'elite synchro competitions' like the Mozart Cup, Spring Cup or French Cup. We plan to invite the top Junior and Senior synchronized skating teams in 2017!

This year the best team to compete is Team Berlin Juniors, with coach Gert Hoffmann. The team ranked 5th on ISU World Standings for Synchronized Skating. We still have some places available for teams, this is your very last chance to participate in the

2016 Budapest Cup!

Team Budapest Synchro, the host team, is doing a special flash mob for the event to create an excellent atmosphere in the stadium.

And two more reasons to join us:

- 1) Tüskecsarnok is the competition venue
- 2) The venue of the skaters' party is City Park Ice Rink, which opened in 1870. It's the largest and one of the oldest ice rinks in Europe.

### You have a new location/ice center. Is it better than the old one and why?

Yes! Because, this is the latest and one of the most beautiful Sports Complexes of Budapest. Just a few advantages:

- warming up area will be in the newly opened indoor heated handball court;
- beautifully designed, comfortable dressing rooms and sanitary facilities will help the preparations for the competition;
- the results will be shown on two

large LED boards;

- auditorium can hold more spectators than the previous location and has much more comfortable chairs;
- several large hotels in the vicinity;
- location next to the Danube River, and the city center is only a few kilometers away;
- people can park in the underground parking garage of the sports complex;
- team buses can park on reserved parking spaces at ground level and close to the athletes entrance.

### How many Synchronized Skating teams do you have in Hungary? Is it popular?

Synchronized Skating is not a huge sport in Hungary unfortunately. But anyone who finds this sport falls in love with it and doesn't let go! We haven't got very many clubs and teams, just 5 clubs, with all together around 14 or 15 teams. Team Budapest Syn-



chro this year has 4 teams!

**What are your plans with the Budapest Cup, where will it be in about 10 years? What do you need to grow? Do you want to grow?**

We would like to make the Budapest Cup one of the biggest synchro events in Europe! We would like to publicize our sport in Hungary and the world as well! If we ever want Synchronized Skating to be an Olympic sport, then people have to hear about it! Skaters and the sport have to be strong enough to be able to join the Olympic family. We have to work hard to achieve our goals, but when you see and feel synchro in a team you know it's worth it! :)

**Do you have a competition role model? Which one of all the competitions is the best, do you think?**

Role model - I don't know... We haven't found an evt that could be called a role model for our Cup, but we study all the competitions we see around. Best competition? It's a hard question for me... Every competition could be the best or the worst for you... it's just a split

second or a single step and everything can change! I can't say there's one, but there are a few competitions where I felt special to be taking part. Worlds always has a special atmosphere - so first of all Colorado Springs (2010) and Gothenborg (2012) as a skater. Then as a coach, to see your skaters starting to achieve the goals you set years ago is unbelievable! My most special moment as a coach was last year's Junior WSSC, Mozart Cup 2015. Now it's just a few days until the Mozart Cup 2016, I'm really excited about our Novice skaters!

**World Championships are also in Budapest this year, is that a problem for your organization?**

It's certainly not, I think! It's a really good thing that the Worlds are being hosted by Budapest again after 2008. The focus is on the country where the World Championships are held! Maybe this year we will have fewer Senior teams but I'm sure next year we will have plenty of registrations because Worlds was here last time!

**Who is Marta? What is your profession?**

Marta, oh yes, that's me! :)

I'm one of the Team Budapest Synchro coaches and the one in the Organizing Committee who is responsible for the registered Teams/Judges/Press... I'm the contact person of the event. I'm one of a team of coordinators with nice colleagues!

My profession :) First of all I've been a Synchro Coach for Team Budapest Synchro for 8 years, along with Erika Bodnár, head coach of the club. I'm an Italianistic and I also have a little company that runs flat hostels in the heart of Budapest.

**Married? Children? Other Hobbies? Do you skate yourself? Where in Hungary do you live?**

Married, we have two little babies Lilla (girl, 3) and Krisztián (boy, 9 months). We live in Budapest. Other hobbies: I really like to try every sport, to travel, to read, go on trips...etc. Yes, I skated in the Hungarian Senior Team until 2012. I skated in synchro from an early age. I started to skate in Pécs (it was my home town) and skated until opportunities came, then I moved to Budapest and I joined Team Passion as a skater and Team Budapest Synchro as a coach.



Marta Toth

# TEAM SPIRIT



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