

Secrets of Seminar Success

Great things are happening in the skating world! Many rinks across the country and world are expanding their programming by hosting specialized seminars. As a seminar host, you will also bring value to your skaters through athletic improvement, enthusiasm, coach/parent education, publicity and FUN. It is exciting to know that a successful, well attended seminar may also bring additional revenue to your rink or club.

Benefits for the facility/club:

- Sell ice time during spring, summer months
- Bring in new customers
- Add credibility
- Free publicity in newspaper, media
- Opportunity to earn extra revenue
- Sell additional hours of practice ice to rejuvenated skaters after the seminar
- Educate your coaching staff
- A great seminar puts your facility on the cutting edge

Benefits for the skaters:

- Introduce skaters (at all levels) to the importance of a correct training regimen and proper training techniques, both on and off the ice.
- Provides an opportunity for a “team” training experience
- Expand their horizons
- Opportunity to learn from the best, in a variety of fields
- Meet new people
- Go home inspired
- Have fun!

Benefits to coaches:

- Provides an opportunity for education, observation, communication and motivation
- Provides an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and training techniques
- Local coaches often assist with the seminar, gain experience
- Close to home
- Networking
- Renewed and refreshed interest in coaching

REMEMBER: Seminars are supposed to be educational and FUN! Having fun is the best motivation to skate and to continue skating.

Select the topic/focus: Seminars attract a wide variety of audiences such as Basic Skills level skaters, jumping and spinning clinics, adult only, ice dancing/pairs, choreography, off-ice training, synchronized skating, or a combination of those. Take a survey of your coaching staff because you will need their support in making your seminar a success.

Generally, seminars have both an on-ice- and off-ice component. It is best to cluster by age and ability if registrations warrant. In general, an hour is the most time that should be spent on one topic at a time. Anywhere from 30-60 minutes per session is the norm.

Examples of on-ice topics that can be covered, such as:

- Stroking — power skating, stroking technique, edge quality
- Jumps — specific jumps, combination jumps, gaining height on jumps
- Spins — specific spins, combination spins, flying spins
- Creative Movement — music interpretation, choreography



- Turns — three-turns, Mohawks, choctaws, rockers, counters, twizzles
- Artistic Elements — spirals, spread eagles, split jumps, hydroblading

Off-ice classes can be participatory or classroom style, meaning that they can be sessions in which the skaters are active or in which a presenter gives them information. Both types of sessions can be very valuable.

Examples of Participatory Classes:

- Ballet
- Dance (Jazz, Modern, Hip Hop)
- Fitness — general conditioning
- Yoga/Pilates
- Stretch/Flexibility

Examples of Classroom Style Sessions:

- Nutrition
- Judging Skating
- Time Management
- Sport Psychology
- Goal Setting

Canned or Customized Seminars?

Many ‘celebrity’ seminar presenters advertise in skating publications. When you start looking you will find that there are many options to consider. So how do you know if they are credible? Ask. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Get a bio and references from past



seminars they have done. Call U.S. Figure Skating and the Professional Skaters Association (PSA) to find out if they have credentials and ratings. How are their communication skills? Do they seem reliable/organized when they speak with you to set the seminar date and information? Will they motivate your staff and skaters? You will be making an investment both financial and personal in hosting this seminar so make sure it will be good for you.

Seminar presenters choose to handle their financial arrangements in different ways. Some presenters prefer to be paid a flat fee. Their fees generally range between \$1,000 and \$2,000 per day. They also want all their expenses covered such as travel, lodging, meals and ground transportation. The seminar host needs to collect all registration fees ahead of time and calculate how many entries he or she will need to cover expenses. This will give the rink or club an opportunity to make money if they work hard to publicize the event and secure a big draw. Other presenters prefer to collect all the registrations themselves. They are then responsible for paying all the bills, such as ice time, room rental and travel expenses. Both methods are successful and work well depending on the situation.

World and Olympic coach Kathy Casey’s tips for successful seminars:

- Usually seminars are hosted by a rink or figure skating club
- Stick with 1-3 days in length
- Maximum of 6-8 hours per day; more is not always better.
- Divide the time with on- and off-ice presentations.
- Cover a variety of topics
- Advance flyers and registration brochures must be prepared and distributed—make sure you send these out to the entire skating community
- Average fees to attend range between \$75-\$125 per day, per person
- Major expenses include presenter fees, expenses, ice rental, administration fees and additional staff.
- TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE, HIRE A WELL-KNOWN HIGHLY RESPECTED PRESENTER!

Resources:

U.S. Figure Skating has created a manual for clubs interested in hosting a special training camp, seminar or clinic.

Go to www.usfigureskating.org click “Clubs” and go to “Resources and Forms.”