



# The Competitive Edge

*Get The Edge!*

September/October 2005

Volume 1, Number 3

## Upcoming Schedule

### Fall/Winter 2005 Skill Development

**\*\*Tuesday & Thursday  
Mornings, 6-9am**

**\*\*Tuesday, Wednesday  
& Friday Afternoons  
3:15-5:45pm**

### Off-Ice Training at KVIH

**\*\*Tuesday, Wednesday,  
& Friday Evenings  
6:15-7:15pm**

### Contact Us:



Website:  
<http://www.ceskating.com>

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[icejen9@aol.com](mailto:icejen9@aol.com)

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Competitive Edge Skating  
191 New Castle Lane  
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

President Jennifer Matras:  
248-752- 4470

## Just How Many Lessons Does it Take?

*By: Jennifer Matras*

As a skill development instructor for hockey players, I am constantly asked the question, "How many lessons does my son/daughter have to take before we see results?" That is the million dollar question. I wish I could provide the parents with an exact answer..... two weeks, two months, two years. I just don't know.

Every skater is different. Every skater has different initial values, or starting levels, with different habits that take an uncertain amount of lessons to break. Along with having different habits, each player has their own certain amount of passion they have for hockey and skill development. Passion can be what drives some players to excel faster than others. Every player achieves certain skills at different rates, and what I try and accomplish is to teach every player at the best of my ability so they learn and progress as quickly as possible. Some individuals learn faster than others. My passion and goal is to see all players succeed, and to succeed as quickly as possible. But unfortunately when it comes to skill development "instant gratification" doesn't exist.

It is this topic, instant gratification, which has sparked my interest in the following article by Marshall Goldsmith in the magazine Fast Company. Marshall talked about how one morning he was flipping through channels on his television and was amazed at all the ads he saw about getting into shape. "Six second abs", "Easy shaper", "See results in two, three minute sessions!" As Marshall states, "Where did we ever get the crazy idea that getting into shape was quick and easy?" It is this kind of thinking that I experience to often with skill development lessons.

I recently got a call from a parent who was concerned about her son's skating abilities. He had just tried out for some travel teams in the Spring and did not make any of the cuts. She is hoping that signing her son up with Competitive Edge Skating, Inc. for a few weeks will enhance his skills enough to make a travel team for Fall. The mother stated that she was friends with some of the other players that we have worked with in the past, and was very impressed with their skating abilities, especially one in particular, who is currently a Midget A player.

I pointed out to the Mother that the Midget A player had been a student of Competitive Edge Skating, Inc. since he was a Mite player. He had been told by his Mite coach at the time to go get some skating lessons. The family was patient, maintained the lessons, and with a lot of passion and love for the game, the player has now become one of the fastest players at his age.

**Cont. on page 2.**

## Honors and Accomplishments

\*Congratulations to Michael Kowicki, Kirsten Padalis and Alex Dewey, winners of the monthly "Competitor with an Edge" award for June, July and August.

\*Congratulations to Rick Stack, a Midget A player, who won the award for *Fastest Player* over the Summer 2005 program. He had a forward lap time of 13:54!

\*Congratulations to Kevin McLean, Nick Mitter, Lizzy Malear, and Joseph Mancinelli, all players who won the award for *Most Improved Skater* over the Summer 2005 program.



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## Meet the Owner of Competitive Edge Skating, Inc.:

### Jennifer Matras

Professional Skating Instructor



Over 20 years of skating experience

President of Competitive Edge Skating,  
Inc.

Intern for the USA National Hockey  
Team Development Program

Nationally Certified Strength and  
Conditioning Specialist

Exercise Physiologist

## Help Wanted!

**\*\*Competitive Edge Skating, Inc. is looking for more qualified stick-handling, shooting & skating instructors to add to their staff. We are looking for hockey players, male or female, who have played at Junior A level or higher. Must be very enthusiastic and passionate when working with kids. If you know of anyone that would be interested, please have them contact us at 248-752-4470.**

*Just How Many Lessons Does It Take (cont. from page 1)*

The Midget A player's skating abilities took years to develop and a lot of hard work and dedication, not only from him, but from his family as well. Not only did it take years to change any bad habits, but it has taken just as many years to continually enhance his good skating habits.

Unfortunately, I have to explain to many players and their parents that any bad habits that a player may have will not go away overnight, nor can I fix them in "two, 30-minute sessions".

As Marshall stated in his article, "We all set goals to get some aspect in our lives in shape. All too often, we fail to meet them. Why? There are four major challenges that we mistakenly assess". These following four challenges are common reasons why I see players/athletes fail to reach their maximal potential:

1. Time: "This is taking a lot longer than I thought it would," or "I don't have time for this."
2. Effort: "This is a lot harder than I thought it would be," or "I'm tired. It's just not worth it."
3. Competing goals: "I had no idea I would be so busy this year. I'll just have to make time for this at a later date."
4. Maintenance: "After there were improvements, I stopped coming to the lessons. Now for some unexplained reason, I'm right back where I started."

The words "simple" and "easy" are often confused. The changes I help players make are generally simple. However, they are never easy. Changing a certain habit is hard work and it takes time.

The concerned Mother's son did work with us on enhancing his skating abilities over an eight week period. Within that eight week period, he tried out for a travel team and made the team. This was very rewarding to hear that the player reached his goal after working with us in such a short period of time. Eight weeks is a very short time to break any bad habits for any possible long term benefits.

Just remember that like many other aspects in life, reaching a goal in athletics takes a lot of time, effort, prioritizing and maintenance.

*Jennifer Matras, Exercise Physiologist - B.S. in Science, National Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist*

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## Skill Development Instructors

Jennifer Matras, skating skills instructor: \$25/30 minute semi-private lesson

Meredith Gatt, skating skills instructor: \$15/30 minute semi-private lesson

Gary Osepenchuk, skating instructor: \$15/30 minute semi-private lesson

(Stick Handling Instruction currently not available.)



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## Competitive Edge Player

Name: Kirsten Padalis



Age: 10 Ht: 4'10"

Position: Defense

Team: Farmington Hills Fire  
'95, Squirt AA

Fav. Player: Nicklas Lidstrom

Kirsten is one of  
Competitive Edge Skating's  
most outstanding players.

Not only is she a hard  
worker and an unselfish  
player on the ice, but she is  
also those very things off  
the ice. Over the past year,  
Kirsten has grown her hair  
over 10" so she could have  
it cut off and then donate it  
to "Locks of Love". Locks of  
Love is an organization that  
takes donations of hair and  
makes wigs for cancer  
patients. What a great  
donation Kirsten.

## Proper Weight Training is Important for Youth Hockey

By: *Tony Moreno*

Weight training can play an important role in reducing the incidence and severity of injury in youth hockey. As with many collision sports, participation in hockey carries the potential and risk of injury depending on the frequency a player participates in recreational or competitive hockey. According to a report released by the British Columbia Injury Research and Prevention Unit (BCIRPU), ice hockey injuries ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> after basketball and soccer in emergency room visits for children and youth that participate in recreational and competitive sport. The same report claimed 42% of the injuries that occurred were sustained in the 3<sup>rd</sup> period and 47% of the injuries took place in the final 5 minutes of each period, indicating that fatigue may play a key role for the potential of injury on the rink.

Another study involving players with very little sport-specific off-season conditioning (less than 3 times per week) found the unprepared athletes to be 3 times greater risk for injury when compared to the physically prepared teammates. Many coaches agree that muscular strength, power, and endurance are highly desirable traits for young athletes. Weight training can provide the appropriate physical mechanisms that strengthen supporting structures (tendons, ligaments, and bones), improve the ability of muscle to absorb more force prior to failure (tearing), and develop greater muscular balance about specific joints. In addition, strength training generates biochemical changes in muscle that ultimately lead to mechanical advantages in the muscle-bone-joint leverage systems of the body.

While it is important weight training is associated with injury prevention, it is also a useful tool for the hockey coach who hopes to improve the athlete's performance characteristics. The combination of improved physical strength and hockey skill are most evident when athletic performance capacities such as skating speed is increased and reaction times are noticeably improved in physical testing and competition.

Because weight training exercises carry their own inherent risks, coaches with the intent to have athletes lift weights should consider the important fact that the exercises selected and the training program designed are appropriate for the age and needs of the young hockey athlete. Thus it is vital to have a qualified individual such as a certified strength and conditioning professional design physical training programs for young athletes. Well designed programs that encourage self-improvement and persistence may enable athletes to acquire positive psycho-social effects similar to those found in other recreational activities and sports. On the other hand, care must be taken to refrain from excessive levels of training that may be beyond the scope of the athletes' physical and emotional development because such practices may encourage the athlete to acquire negative psychosocial behaviors.

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## Inspirational Words:

It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get back up.

- Vince Lombardi

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Individual success or failure and the welfare of the team on the ice rink can be attributed to many things. Factors such as coaching, equipment, fitness, fatigue, aggressiveness, experience, contact in the sport, practice time, and other social or environmental influences always play a role with respect to an athletes' ability and attitude on the ice. Therefore, coaches, parents, and athletes alike should always consider providing a well-structured resistance training program to help prevent injuries and enhance performance.

*Tony Moreno, CSCS, Assistant Professor in the School of Health Promotion and Human Performance at Eastern Michigan University.*

## Chosing Exercises to Maximize Performance

There are many factors that one needs to put into consideration when putting together a training program for hockey players. Things such as what period of hockey season are the players in, what energy systems to train (aerobic vs. anaerobic), the age of each player, the height and weight of each player, the initial values, their fitness age, and sport specificity are some factors that dictate what exercises to chose for a program. It is these important factors why Competitive Edge Skating, Inc. only hires certified instructors to train our hockey players off-ice.

There are many different exercises that can be done by hockey players off-ice to help maximize their performance. The director and instructors at Competitive Edge Skating, Inc. have the knowledge of what exercises to pick for their off-ice program. Below are some examples of exercises, along with what time of season the players perform them and what the exercise enhances for the hockey players at Competitive Edge Skating, Inc.

Hang Clean	Pre-season, In-season, Off-season	Increase power & strength
Sprints	Off-season, Pre-season	Metabolic Conditioning
Balance board squats	In-season	Increase balance & proprioception
Frog walks	Pre-season, In-season, Post-season, Off-season	Increase flexibility
Running with changes in direction	Off-season, Pre-season	Increase in coordination & acceleration

*Jennifer Matras, Exercise Physiologist - B.S. in Science, National Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist.*