

## Skaters/Parents Competition checklist

I've had several requests to put together a check list for competitions. This is based on my personal experience and hints and tips from other web sites. If you have a suggestion or tip that should go on here please email Toni at [toniren@tds.net](mailto:toniren@tds.net) If we all combine our experiences and knowledge we can help each other. Absolutely nothing in here overrides what your coach says! Every coach has their own style and method and it is important to ask their preferences and opinions for your personal situation.

### What to bring for the locker room:

- Your skates (both of them) don't laugh, it happens!
- Dress (pants/shirt if male) and back up dress in case of rips, stains, etc. Your pro may want input on the costume worn so discuss this ahead of time.
- Competition tights (plus a back up pair) My daughter prefers Mondor 3310 but there are many brands and styles.
- Practice dress and tights (pants/shirt) for practice ice
- Other dresses if you are doing multiple events (optional)
- Matching scrunchies, hair accessories, etc.
- Hair ties, bobbie pins, hair spray, glitter, gel, brush, curling iron, hot rollers
- Make up, if desired
- Warm up jacket, gloves
- Guards are a must! If you don't have any you will need to get some! We even carry a back up pair.
- Medications, inhaler, Tylenol, cough syrup, etc.
- Spare laces. Make sure they will fit if you've gone up in size on skates
- Small size hand soap, tissues, hand sanitizer, toilet paper. Don't assume these items will be in the locker rooms **L**
- Your emergency kit (see below)
- Clothes to wear after competing or going home
- Water and possibly a small non messy snack. Stay away from candy and sugar.
- Bring a sense of humor. Unless you're headed to the Olympics this is supposed to be fun!

### What to bring to the competition:

- Your USFSA card or a copy of it.
- Your registration with event numbers, times, rinks, etc.
- *Some* competitions require proof of age, a report card usually is sufficient
- Flash photography is not allowed. Turn it off or bring black electrical tape to cover your flash

### **What to bring on your trip:**

- Extra batteries or chargers for camera, cam corder, tapes, CDs or film.
- Your coaches cell phone number
- Maps to rink and motel
- Your motel confirmation numbers
- Auto and road assistance cards, contacts
- Medical insurance info and Dr contacts
- Money **J** (see below)

### **Prepare for your trip:**

- Decide what dresses you will wear. Test any new outfits on home ice for fit, comfort and safety. Coaches will many times have input on this so remember to ask!
- Know what hairstyle you will do and practice it at home. Hair should be pulled up away from the face. Make sure all hair pieces are secure and that bobby pins will not fall out. It is best to criss cross two together. Use lots of hairspray and gel to control “fly aways”.
- Get lots of sleep and eat healthy foods
- Notify school if days off are required
- Make motel reservations early. Many will let you revise reservations with 24 hours notice so over book your stay and back off days when you get your final schedule. Read fine print to make sure you don't get charged for this!
- Schedule practice ice as soon as it's available for purchase. Some sessions fill quickly. Check with your pro about how many sessions you should purchase and what sessions your coach can attend.
- Polish your skates. Rubbing alcohol will remove marks, skate tape covers gouges. A new pair of laces finishes the pretty white boots!
- Good communication with your pro is priceless! Talk about your expectations, where to meet, practice ice, costumes, fears and jitters. They are there to help you!

### **Your emergency kit may include:**

- A small sewing kit
- Pre glued Velcro for last minute costume fixes
- Extra skate laces
- Rubber bands
- Extra screws and screw driver for blades (check and tighten up screws before leaving)
- Band aids, Tylenol or other OTC meds

### What to expect to spend:

- The motel costs.
- Gas
- Money for concessions and meals on the road. Many motels offer breakfasts included in the price. This can be a nice bonus. Look for motels with in room fridges and microwaves.
- Videography of your skaters program is usually available for purchase. This can run from \$35 to \$45 per event. If there are several events there is usually a discount. In most cases you must register and pay for this in advance of your skater's event!
- Pictures at awards. Awards are presented off ice and pictures are taken. Purchase is optional and you may choose the group, single or both. Minimal packages typically start at around \$12 but it is possible to spend \$100s! If time allows go to photography prior to the event and see what your options are.
- Action photography. This can be spendy (starting at \$25) but you may get a picture of that mid air jump that you otherwise would not have. You usually need to pre-register and pre-pay for this.
- Skate vendors are at most competitions. They vary and offer anything from the basics (laces, tights, gloves, practice dresses, guards, etc) to fancy custom dresses, boots/blades, air brushed art, jewelry, and other fun stuff. You may find items that are unavailable any where else.
- Some competitions have a commemorative T-shirt. It may include the club or competition name and date, their logo, and often times the names of all the participants, including your skater. There are choices as to sweatshirts, T-shirts, short/long sleeves. These start at around \$25 and go to \$60 depending on the amount of imprints you choose.

### When you arrive:

- Go to registration and check in. You will turn in your music and ask if there are locker room assignments. You will most likely want to buy a program if it's not provided.
- If there are multiple rinks know their names and where you will skate. Locate bathrooms.
- Arrive AT LEAST one hour before your first event.
- Find your coach and check in with the ice monitor, ask if they are running ahead/behind schedule.
- Find the area where the results will be posted. This will show the order that you will skate. The program will list the skaters but it is *not* the order they will be skating. When results come in, another sheet will be taped over the skate order with the final results.
- Make sure you have your back up music in a handy spot.
- If you choose to purchase videos or action photography find those vendors and make arrangements. They will usually request your event numbers.

### Misc....

When ever possible try to watch your fellow skaters and cheer them on.

Realize that your pro may have a very tight schedule. If there are multiple rinks your pro may need to be in two places at one time. Discuss the schedule prior to the competition and make plans for any conflicts. Usually another VFSC coach is available to put your skater on the ice.

Some coaches prefer their skaters do not swim or use hot tubs the night before a competition or may impose a time limit. Discuss this with your pro.

If this is your first competition you may want a little help from another club member. Don't be afraid to ask, we've all been there!

Important!!! Before you leave go back to registration and pick up your music. Most clubs will not mail it back to you if you forget. Also ask for a copy of the results sheet. They are usually 50 cents a copy. These are needed for club criteria if you are in Sr club. Even if you aren't, they are a record of your skater's accomplishments.

Competitions can be a gut wrenching high pressure experience...or....it can be a blast. It's up to you. Not every event will be your child's best skate but it can always be fun. I will never forget the time my daughter blanked out her freeskate program at the age of 7. I watched in the stands as her face formed into a frown, she slowed down and glanced at her coach. I quit breathing. Then she took off and did the same jump 3 times in a row, a couple of spins I'd never seen before and threw in an ending. As she headed for the gate I rushed down to her afraid of the trauma she may be feeling. She looked at me with a smile from ear to ear and said "Mom! What did ya' think of that! I pulled that out pretty good huh?!" It is my personal goal as her mother that she never loses that spirit.