

The Sharper Edge

April 2009



-Written by Wendy Chen ('10)

Annual Figure Skating Club Exhibition

MIT and Boston-area skaters perform various musical pieces

On Saturday, March 14th, 2009, the MIT Figure Skating Club (FSC) held its annual club exhibition at the Johnson Ice Rink. This show was coordinated by Susan Alpert; Esther Horwich was the show's emcee. This year's show featured many group, solo, and duet performances by club and local skaters and had an audience of around 200 people.

Some MIT affiliates who skated in the show for the first time include Paul Berube, Jose Correa, Lineth deBarnett, Katherine Fang, Giorgia Fortuna, Zaira Garate, Reguli Granger, Shawn Pan, Noa Rensing, and Carla Rivas. Some of the guest skaters from the Boston area include Marina Barova, Kevin Han, Teri Harte and Ian Macadam, Janelle Maddaleni, Alina Milevska, and Curran Oi.

The opening number of the show featured 28 club skaters, who skated to "Do You Love Me" by the Contours. It was choreographed by Diane Brancazio. The theater on ice team was coordinated by Jessica Eisenstein. They skated to music from *Chicago*'s "Cell Block Tango." Besides the MIT theater on ice performance, there were two other theater on ice performances — Act 1 of Boston Theater on Ice and Pizazz Theater on Ice. Both groups have MIT-affiliated skaters. Aubrey Samost is a member of Act 1 of Boston, which skated to music from the musical *West Side Story*. Diana Cheng is part of the Pizazz team, which performed to music from the movie *Star Wars*.

Besides the opening number and the theater on ice performances, there were other group performances, including the Canasta Tango (Preliminary level dance), Swing Dance (Bronze level dance), and Foxtrot (Pre-Silver level dance). These group ice dances were coordinated by Susan Alpert, Esther Horwich, and Kate McDermott. There were also free dance programs performed by Diana Cheng and Mickey Barry, and by Susan Alpert and Alex Landsman.

Others who performed solo programs at the exhibition include students Kristina Brown, Annie Ouyang, Aubrey Samost, and David Wentzlaff, and alumnae Diane Brancazio, Diana Cheng, Jess Eisenstein, and Ruth Shyu.



Performers in this year's show

An MIT Figure Skating Club Member Reflects on Her Experiences at the World Figure Skating Championships

-By Esther Horwich

The 2009 World Figure Skating Championship was held from March 22-29, 2009 in Los Angeles and showcased some of the highest levels of skating ever seen. The pressure on the skaters was enormous since at stake was the number of entrants each country could send to the Olympics. The skaters had but a few minutes on the ice to demonstrate what they had gleaned from a lifetime of practice and tens of thousands of dollars of coaching. For some, their futures hinged upon the outcome. For many others, they knew that they had no chance to win, but they wanted to achieve the joy of merely skating at Worlds.

The televised portion of the competition reflected only a small part of the event. Spectators were allowed into practice sessions and could watch the skaters do last minute tuning of their programs. The Asian press followed the Asian female skaters around as if they were rock stars. Mao Asada and Miki Ando practiced their triples axels, leaving spectators to wonder whether they would do them in their programs. Mao Asada tried two in her program, which can be seen at

<http://weblibraryjpn.wordpress.com/2009/03/29/mao-asada-2009-world-figure-skating-championships-in-los-angeles-free-skating>.

(Unfortunately, the announcers are more annoying than Dick Button). The ice dancers whizzed by at tremendous speed during practice sessions. They were so focused on their programs that near misses were a constant occurrence leaving the audience gasping at their courage. Off ice, the skaters were very friendly and accessible, staying at many of the same hotels as the spectators. They seemed to enjoy the attention from their fans. Other skating luminaries were there to watch the competition, including Tai Babilonia, Randy Gardner, Scott Hamilton, Kurt Browning, Debi Thomas, Kristi Yamaguchi, and Elaine Zayak. The top coaches such as Tatiana Tarasova and Igor Shpilband had so many skaters competing at Worlds that they often had to ignore a skater coming off the ice so that they could give a pep talk to a skater about to perform.

Some of the most memorable moments, though, came from skaters who were not among the elite. Tugba Karademir of Turkey brought her own fan club from Turkey. (http://www.videosofturkey.com/video_details.asp?id=215). The woman who hugged her after her skate also “adopted” a number of other skaters from smaller countries who had no hope of even making it to the finals, giving them hugs and gifts after they finished skating. Another skater took a terrible fall and slammed into the boards in her long program. She was stunned and did not move immediately after the fall, and paramedics had to help her off the ice. According to ISU rules, she had two minutes to recover and complete her program. Somehow she managed to get back on the ice. She was clearly in pain, but she wanted to finish.

From the twenty-five ice dance couples separately skating to the Paso Doble at the start of the competition, to the exhibition at the end, it was a glorious week of skating.



A multiple-exposure shows Laura Lepisto of Finland competing during the Ladies Free Skating event of the 2009 World Figure Skating Championships at the Staples Center in Los Angeles March 28. (GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP/Getty Images)

Competition Results

Cornell University Intercollegiate Competition, Oct. 24, 2008

Diana Cheng - PreJuvenile FS - 4th place

Low team (with BU's Mai Wong, Heather Simpson, Kristen Jones, and Josephine Wong) - 2nd place

Skating Club of New York (SCNY) TOI Showcase, Feb. 14, 2009

Elizabeth Boroson, Kristina Brown, Wendy Chen, Diana Cheng, Jane Codman, Jessica Eisenstein, Katherine Fang, Reguli Granger, Bonny Kellermann, Annie Ouyang, Carla Rivas, Aubrey Samost, and Cynthia Tang
- 1st place

University of Delaware Intercollegiate Competition, Feb. 15, 2009

Diana Cheng - PreJuvenile FS - 2nd place

Low team (with BU's Mai Wong, Gordon Towne, Josephine Wong, and Megan Chura) - 1st place

GetFit@MIT Team Blatieshoe- Feb. 15, 2009

Diana Cheng, Victoria Lee, Patrick Doyle, Cynthia Tang, Aubrey Samost, Annie Ouyang, John Gonzalez, Elaine Lin

- 2nd place in Winter Games Challenge

University of Pennsylvania Intercollegiate Competition, Feb. 28, 2009

Diana Cheng - PreJuvenile FS - 1st place

Low team (with BU's Mai Wong, Gordon Towne, Josephine Wong, Megan Chura, and Emily Baker) - 3rd place

Diana on Boston University's team - Eastern Intercollegiate Conference champions

SC Worcester Skating Competition, Mar. 27-28, 2009

Hilary Lang - Adult Bronze FS - 2nd place

Diane Brancazio - Adult Silver FS - 2nd place; 2nd place in Adult Showcase

Patricia Lee - Adult Silver FS - 3rd place



MIT TOI team at the SCNY Showcase

Recent Tests Passed

February tests passed:

Aubrey Samost - American Waltz (2 of 3 Silver dances passed)

Diana Cheng & Mickey Barry - Adult PreBronze & Bronze Free Dance

Diana Cheng - Intermediate Pairs, Adult Gold Pairs

March tests passed:

Susan Alpert - Adult Gold MIF

Mickey Barry - PreJuvenile FS

Rachael Brewin - Preliminary FS

Diana Cheng - Junior MIF

Jane Codman - Intermediate MIF

Jessica Eisenstein - Intermediate MIF

Patricia Lee - PreJuvenile FS

Amy Mossman - Intermediate MIF

Aubrey Samost - Tango (Silver Dances Complete)



*Diana Cheng and Mickey Barry
practicing their free dance*

What is the Basic Skills Program and Why Should You Test?

The Basic Skills Program is for skaters who have passed no higher than the preliminary moves in the field, preliminary free skate, or adult bronze free skate tests. Skaters learn and are tested on freestyle moves. With every test passed, skaters move up a level and begin to learn more difficult maneuvers. Although testing is not compulsory, it is a great way for skaters to monitor their progress and improve their skating techniques.

Basic Skills Adult 1-4 precedes Basic Skills Free Skate 1-6. In order to pass a level, skaters must pass all elements listed under that level. You can start testing at any level you think you can currently pass. After Basic Skills Adult 3, skaters may consider testing in the US Figure Skating program. At the end of the year party, badges (Adult, Free Skate, USFS) will be presented to skaters who have passed these tests.

MIT FSC Officers for 2009-2010

President - Annie Ouyang

Vice-President - Dina Poteau

Secretary / Newsletter Editor - Wendy Chen

Treasurer - Victoria Lee

Associate Treasurer - Shawn Pan

Membership Secretary - Esther Horwich

Education Chair - Hilary Lang

Exhibition Committee - Susan Alpert, Trish Fleming

Webmaster / List Editor - Zaira Garate

Theater on Ice team captain - Aubrey Samost

Publicity Chair - Jessica Eisenstein

Boutique / Kleenex Managers - Noa Rensing, Lisa Soricone

Librarian / Archivists - Paul Berube, Linda Warner

Special Events - Bonny Kellermann, Maureen Fountain-Quinn

Test Committee - Diana Cheng (test chair), Carla Rivas, Aubrey Samost

Adult Team Captain - Diane Brancazio

Officers-at-large - Aissata Nutzel, Macdaine St. Remy

Intercollegiate Team Captain - Aubrey Samost

Interested in Joining the Figure Skating Club?

Many new skaters join the MIT FSC since it offers a fun and supportive environment for skaters of all levels. The club provides instruction in freestyle, ice dance, moves in the field, pairs, and synchronized skating. There are group lessons on Saturdays and Sundays. However, the MIT Johnson Ice Rink is closed for the season. It will reopen in October 2009. If you are interested in joining the MIT Figure Skating Club next semester, please check out our website <http://web.mit.edu/skatingclub/www/Home.html> for more information about the club.

