

# Memorial Figure Skating Club of Houston July 2012 Newsletter

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*We don't set the gold standard—we are the gold standard.*

### Board of Directors

President: Linda Flynn

Treasurer: Milly Chan

Secretary: Sophia Mayerhofer

Membership Chair: Barbara Swift

Test Chair: Mary Chan

Hospitality Events Chair: Leslee Brown

Web Master: Wing Cheng

Rink Director: Alexey Gruber

Coach Reps: Nicole Nichols & Roman Zaretsky

Editor-In-Chief of Newsletter: Jessie Chan

Skater Rep: Jessie Chan

Members-At-Large: MaryRo Flynn & Susan Depew

### Benefits to join a club:

- ❖ Test Sessions
- ❖ Participating in and representing your home club at competitions
- ❖ Sponsorship for National competitors
- ❖ Skating Magazine from USFSA
- ❖ Monthly newsletter
- ❖ Annual social events
- ❖ Friendship
- ❖ Memories to last a lifetime
- ❖ And most importantly, FUN!

### A Welcome from the President

I would like to personally thank each and every one of our new members and especially our returning members for making our 2012-2013 Membership drive a wonderful success. Our membership is up over last year and still growing. We have a great group of people this year. The enthusiasm you have shown over the last month has really been exciting to see and hear. The MFSCH Board is working hard at making this upcoming season all that you expected from a club and more. Thank you so much for your support and faith in us.

Regards,  
Linda Flynn  
President

Memorial FSC of Houston

### Introducing our New Board Directors

The MFSCH Board of Directors would like to lead our members in giving a warm welcome to:

Mary Chan ~ Test Chair

Leslee Brown ~ Hospitality Events Chair

MaryRo Flynn ~ Member-At-Large

Susan Depew ~ Member-At-Large

Glad to have you ladies on board!

### Special Thanks to our Volunteers

MFSCH would like to recognize all of our Board Directors and member volunteers who have worked behind the scenes in helping to build and lift our club off the ground. Without your hard work and dedication, we wouldn't be where we are

today! Many thanks!

*Special Thanks to:*

*Linda Flynn  
Milly Chan  
Sophia Mayerhofer  
Barbara Swift  
Mary Chan  
Leslee Brown  
Wing Cheng  
Jessie Chan  
Nicole Nichols  
Roman Zaretsky  
Alexey Gruber  
MaryRo Flynn  
Susan Depew  
Victoria Nikitin  
Mario Gonzalez  
The Skof Family  
Ice Skate USA Staff*

### Austin Blugbonnet 2012 Results

*As you know, the annual Skate Austin competition was held last month. Many of our club skaters competed at the big event and brought home medals! One ENORMOUS congratulations to ALL the competitors; Everyone did a fantastic job out there representing the new MFSCH!*

*Also, many thanks to the skaters and parents who attended Skate Austin and cheered on their fellow club members-You guys rock!*

*Here are some of our club competitors' results:*

*Rebecca Depew*

- ❖ Pre-Preliminary Freeskate Program ~  
1<sup>st</sup> place*
- ❖ Preliminary Compulsory Program ~  
1<sup>st</sup> place*
- ❖ Preliminary Spins Challenge ~  
1<sup>st</sup> place*

*Mia Mayerhofer*

- ❖ Pre-Juvenile Spins Challenge ~  
2<sup>nd</sup> place*
- ❖ Pre-Juvenile WB Freeskate ~  
5<sup>th</sup> place*

*Emily Mayerhofer*

- ❖ Freeskate 6 WB Freeskate ~  
3<sup>rd</sup> place*

*Ana Sofia Aranda*

- ❖ Pre-Preliminary Freeskate ~  
4<sup>th</sup> place*
- ❖ Preliminary Spins Challenge ~  
4<sup>th</sup> place*
- ❖ Preliminary Jumps Challenge ~  
5<sup>th</sup> place*

### August Test Session & Make-Up Test Session

*We will be hosting a test session at Ice Skate USA in early August. This will also be the opportunity for our skaters who were unable to test at our May 6<sup>th</sup> Test Session to take their postponed tests. Once again, we apologize to those skaters for the inconvenience. Further details and dates will be posted soon.*

## Ralynn Healy Competition: MFSCH Fundraisers

*The Ralynn Healy Competition, hosted by Ice Skate USA, is coming up Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and MFSCH will be holding some fundraisers at the event!*

*The tables we will have set up at the competition are:*

- ❖ Stuffed Animal Table*
- ❖ MFSCH Car Decal Table*
- ❖ Chocolate Rose Table*
- ❖ Flower Table*
- ❖ Silent Auction Table*

*Our club is asking for any members who can volunteer in the next following weeks and on the day of the competition to prepare and execute these fundraisers. Please, we need all the help we can get! This is a great opportunity for you to support our club and acquire your mandatory volunteer hours.*

*All the proceeds from these sales will be going towards future MFSCH programs and our necessary 501(c)3 status.*

*For more details regarding these fundraisers or to volunteer, please refer to your inboxes for the MI Blast email concerning this topic and/or contact us at:  
[mi\\_blast\\_mfsch@att.net](mailto:mi_blast_mfsch@att.net) .*

## Friday Club Time

*Come join your fellow club members for some post-practice fun! Every Friday for the rest of the summer, MFSCH is hosting an off-ice club session from 10:00-10:45a.m. There is something new and entertaining for the skaters to do every week! From designing our club mural and logo to taking field trips outside the rink, everyone's certain to meet new friends within the club and have a great time!*



*Pictured Above: Some MFSCH skaters who attended the July 6<sup>th</sup> Club Time blow kisses to the camera.*

## MI Buddies

*MFSCH is in the process of starting a mentoring program! Known as MI Buddies, this program will offer many advantages to club members of all ages, including fun group events, opportunities to meet and befriend other skaters, and for older skaters, a great activity to add to college resumes. MI Buddies will also provide a safe and healthy environment for skaters to learn important life values, such as responsibility, leadership and integrity.*

*For those interested, MI Buddies will be briefly introduced to members at the beginning of our Friday club time on July 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00a.m.*

<i>Dmitri Bocharov</i>	<i>7/14</i>
<i>Inna Shaposhnikova</i>	<i>7/14</i>
<i>Victoria Nikitin</i>	<i>7/26</i>
<i>Kacie Swift</i>	<i>7/28</i>

*If you have further questions, please contact us at:*

*[mi\\_blast\\_mfsch@att.net](mailto:mi_blast_mfsch@att.net)*

*Figure Skating Fun Fact:*

*There's something you might not know about famous skater Kurt Browning- he was once an ice dancer!*

*Boots & Blades*

*Here's an easy tip on how to keep your boots and blades happy, healthy and in tip top shape!*

*Check your skates' blade screws periodically-make sure they're properly tightened so you never have to worry about them breaking loose at the worst moment!*

*July Birthday Shout Outs*

*We'd like to wish a very happy birthday to all our members earning another year this month. Don't forget to make a wish!*

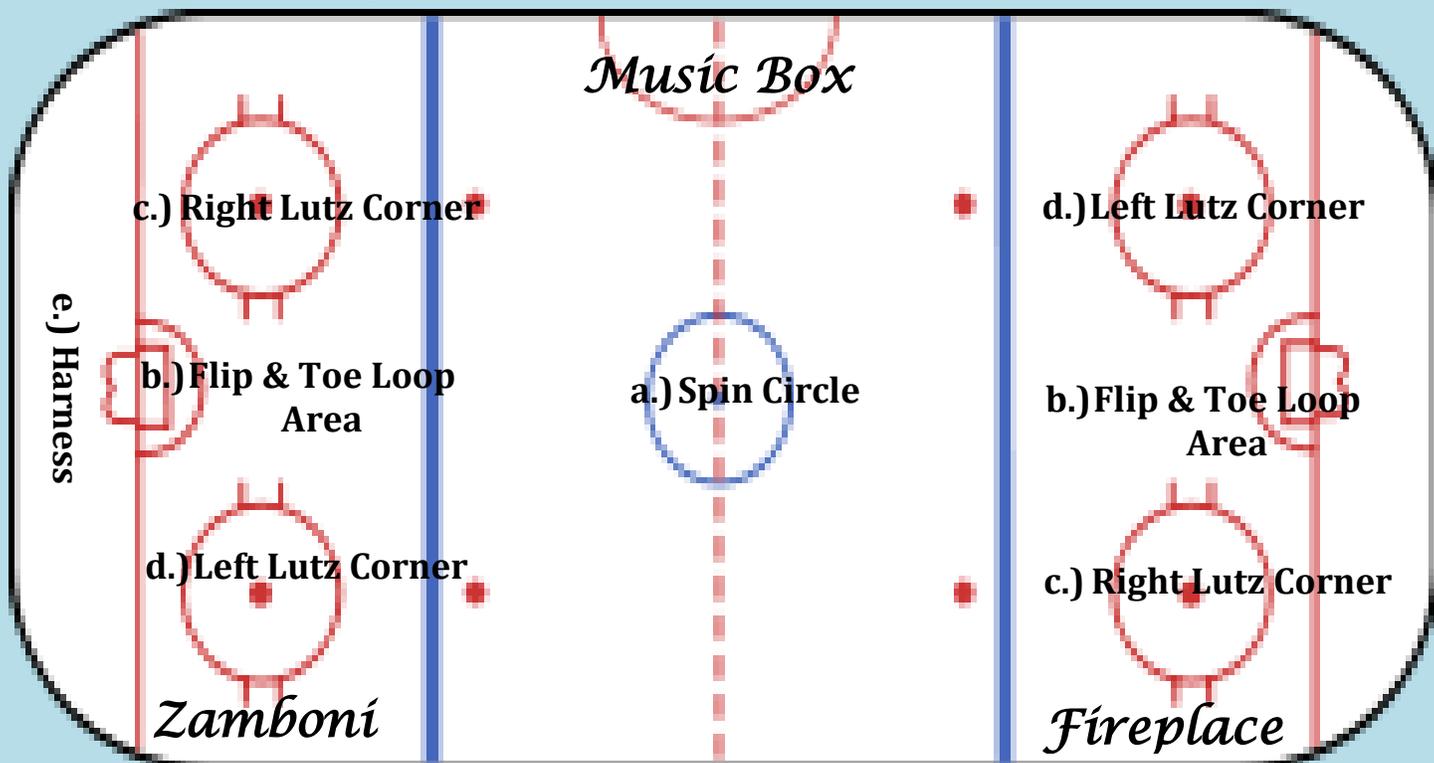
<i>Mikaela Taylor</i>	<i>7/9</i>
<i>Michelle Tse</i>	<i>7/11</i>

Coach's Corner: Freestyle sessions are often crowded and very busy, making safety procedures for the skaters even more important. Below is a rink diagram labeled with specific areas of the ice and their main purposes that MFSCH would like to share with the club parents and skaters:

- a.) Spin Circle: The middle circle is designated primarily for spins.
- b.) Flip & Toe Loop Areas: These areas of the ice between the corner circles are often used for Flip and Toe Loop jumps.
- c.) Right Lutz Corners: These corners are mainly used by right-handed Lutz jumpers. PLEASE EXHIBIT EXTREME CAUTION WHEN SKATING IN THESE AREAS. Remember that the entry to a Lutz jump is LONG and BLIND-Avoid long-term practice in these corners.
- d.) Left Lutz Corners: These corners are mainly used by left-handed Lutz jumpers. PLEASE EXHIBIT EXTREME CAUTION WHEN SKATING IN THESE AREAS. Remember that the entry to a Lutz jump is LONG and BLIND-Avoid long-term practice in these corners.
- e.) Harness Area: Watch out for potential skaters that may be using the harness in this edge of the ice. Try to stay out of this area at all times, and yield to these skaters if you must skate here.

Of course, there are exceptions to these general guidelines-such as when you're skating your program-but normally, you should remain aware of these rules. Skate safely!

Special thanks to Coach Nicole Nichols.



**Skater Spotlight**  
**Mary Besson**

**Age:** 11 years old

**Level:** Juvenile

**How long I've been skating:**

Since I was 3 years old-  
about 8 years

**How often I skate:** 6 days a  
week

**Coaches:** Roman Zaretsky,  
Alexey Gruber, Nicole  
Nichols, Katy Taylor

**Favorite skater:** Sasha  
Cohen, Mao Asada

**Favorite moves:** Double  
Flip, Layback Spin, Axel  
**Goal:** To land my Double  
Axel by October

**Favorite thing about  
skating:** Being able to do  
shows

**Least favorite thing about  
skating:** Competing

**Hobbies:** Cheerleading, track



**Fun Facts**

**Favorite food:** Apples, Spaghetti

**Favorite school subject:** Math

**Favorite color:** Pink

**Favorite TV show:** Dance Moms

**Favorite Music:** Rascal Flatts

**Any other sports/talents:** Cheerleading



# LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

*Skaters reflect back on this year's Summer Show with fond memories*

*jessieCHAN // Editor-In-Chief of MFSCH Newsletter*

## A Box Office Hit

Just last month, Ice Skate USA hit the performance jackpot of the summer with its blazing hot show, featuring skaters of all ages, levels and sizes as America's favorite TV and movie characters.

"I think the summer show went excellent. I think every aspect of the show was great," Learn-To-Skate and Show Director Alexey Gruber said. "The preparation, the skaters' execution, the group numbers-everything was simply fantastic."



*Above: Show Director Alexey Gruber and other ISUSA staff make a great team as they set up the stands before the show.*

With twice the amount of participants and double the number of tickets sold than last year, it's safe to say ISUSA kicked off the 2012 show season better than ever.

"The 2012 show was different than the previous year's show. The set up was different so the overall scale of the show was larger, and the coaching staff was more incorporation of each other. It

was truly a tremendous success," Gruber said.

## Behind the Scenes

A mix of pre-show nerves and excitement clouded over in



*Above: Rachel Skof exits the ice with a fierce slide.*

Rachel Skof's head as she waited anxiously backstage. Despite being a veteran performer, she couldn't help but feel slightly apprehensive.

"Being backstage was crazy, because there were tons of people running around and getting ready," Skof said. "Before skating, I felt nervous. I worried that I would fall."

Luckily, this strong skater didn't let the stress get to her. Proudly leading the Snowplow group through their cute-to-pieces Pink Panther routine, Skof delivered a nearly flawless skate.

"I think I did okay," Skof said, looking back on her performance. "Even though I still got nervous, there wasn't any major pressure because it wasn't a competition."

For others such as Pirates of the Caribbean skater

Alexandra Szeto-Joe, hanging out behind the curtain was actually quite relaxing.

"My favorite part of the show was watching other people perform from backstage," Szeto-Joe said. "I hadn't seen everyone before so it was cool to see what music they were skating to."

The only downside to staying off the ice?

"The show was pretty long, so waiting for the bows and the finale got pretty boring. You couldn't do much," Szeto-Joe said.

## And We're Live!

Standing in the wings of the curtain, dressed from head to toe in pretty fairy wear, Alyssa Skof waited for her time to shine.



*Above: This fairy proves she can do more than fly! Alyssa Skof wows the audience with a sit spin.*

"Right before skating, I was pretty excited," Skof said.

Unlike her older sister Rachel, Alyssa opted for a pixie number with so much charm and beauty, it must have been doused with magic.

“When I got on the ice, all I saw were people staring at me...it was a little weird because I thought, ‘I don’t know you’!” Skof said.

But even if the audience didn’t recognize her before, they surely know her now as the little Tinker Bell who stole their hearts with a breathtaking performance.

“Looking back, I wished I had smiled more, but I think I still did pretty good,” Skof said happily.

Szeto-Joe, on the other hand, barely had time to notice the watching eyes from the sold-out seats of the show-she was too busy pumping herself up for a great time.



*Above: MFSC skater Alexandra transforms the ice into a pirate’s shipwreck as she captivates the audience with a camel spin.*

“Right before going out to perform, I just kept telling myself, ‘Smile and have fun!’” Szeto-Joe said.

And that was exactly what she did, as the talented and artistic skater stroked out and impressed the crowds with her steady jumps and sharp pirate-sword wielding skills...Arggg!

“When I watched my performance again later on, I felt like there were some little things I always do when I skate that get on my nerves, but in the end, I definitely had fun,” Szeto-Joe said.

**That’s A Wrap!**

With this year’s summer show success accomplished, Gruber looks to the future with plans as big as the silver screen.

“There’s nothing similar about the summer and winter shows. We will have our traditional Nutcracker again in the winter, which is completely different,” Gruber said.”

And if you had thought the summer show was a smash, you’re in for a real treat this December.

“Nutcracker preparation will be three times longer, the budget is different, the amount of participants is different, there is a storyline and it is a preset show,” Gruber said. “The entire skill is different. The winter show will be more spectacular.”

Gruber is definitely anticipating Nutcracker 2012 to be the greatest yet, as he begins to work on this grand project with coaches and staff at ISUSA. However, don’t expect the show to grow drastically in size; As the wise Show Director said, bigger isn’t always necessarily better.

“Bigger isn’t exactly the right word in describing Nutcracker 2012,” Gruber said. “Instead, we should strive to have better organization and more creative ideas.”

ISUSA senior coach Nicole Nichols completely agrees and looks forward to the enormous winter show with growing excitement.

“I absolutely believe all the skaters who joined the summer show will want to be a part of the Nutcracker as well,” Nichols said.



*Above: The high level skaters begin their Flashdance program with the grace and poise of ballerinas.*

Along with her expectations of a full winter cast, Nichols is also aiming to find some more contribution from ISUSA’s home figure skating club, the Memorial FSC of Houston (MFSC).

“I would like to see the club and its members have a bigger role in the show,” Nichols said.

Volunteers from MFSC had run a successful popcorn stand during the summer show and plan to fundraise similarly again during Nutcracker. Many of the prospering club’s skaters, including Szeto-Joe, enjoyed their roles in last month’s performance and are planning on signing up for the winter show as well.

“I really want to skate in Nutcracker, I feel like it would be very interesting because I’ve never done something like that,” Szeto-Joe said.



*Above: There’s no secret that this pair has got talent! Advanced skaters Taylor Rognon and Mikaela T. perform their Pretty Little Liars program.*

As Gruber leads all of ISUSA in preparing for Nutcracker 2012 in the next few months, he feels empowered in his work by all the support, dedication, and love from the skating community.

“The show means to me that it bonds the coaches and skaters together. It gives a different view of skating other than competitive, and it also helps skaters to present themselves in front of a large crowd without a fear,” Gruber said. “Most of all, the shows give skaters an opportunity to shine in the spotlight and truly express their love for the sport of figure skating. In the end, that’s all that really matters.”