

U.S. Figure Skating Bridge Program

Moves in the Field

Refer to a current U.S. Figure Skating rulebook for patterns



MOVES IN THE FIELD

Coaching Points

Preparation

- A. Your program should provide several magnum markers if allowed by rink management. Coaches will use these markers (or their heel) to draw lines, circles, arcs, continuous axis, diagonal axis, etc. These on-ice marks will easily be seen during the session, help organize the class and give the skaters a visual focus as to the MIF pattern and the placement of turns steps and patterns.
- B. The skaters are usually grouped by free skating level and therefore the class will have a variety of MIF test levels. Structure the class based on the four MIF FOCI; edge, power, extension, and quickness. Present one key element from each of the four FOCI during the class.
- C. There is an order of skill building techniques in presenting a new concept or skill. The following is a general format: Teach the new skill or concept in isolation with minimal speed and then place the skill on the full ice pattern with increased speed.
- If necessary, the skill is introduced on two feet and then one foot at the barrier.
 - The skill is then skated away from the barrier either on an arc, circle, or straight line using the same system – two feet, then one foot.
 - Body alignment and free skating posture are prescribed by you, i.e. head looks in the direction of travel; arm carriage is level with shoulders relaxed; the body weight is over the skating side; the free foot is held powerfully over the skating print and the directions are given to the exact foot placement as it leaves or takes the ice.

Key Points to Establish with Skaters

- A. Clearly define each of four MIF FOCI and give an example of a MIF that has these qualities
1. Edge
 2. Power
 3. Extension
 4. Quickness
- B. Discuss the past history of figures and how MIFs utilize the “old” compulsory figure elements. (Figure eight, center, push-off, axis, types of turns, etc.)
- C. Discuss why the MIFs improve free skating or dance disciplines. The MIF testing system provides and requires skaters to accomplish:
1. Every turn used in skating
 2. Every edge used in skating
 3. Every element is done on both sides of the body and in opposite directions
 4. MIFs provide the building blocks for: (1) balance, (2) use of the blade, (3) control of body rotation (“checking ability”), (4) body line to full extension, (5) increasing speed and power and (6) accuracy of placement of patterns

D. The first position a skater establishes is necessary to control:

1. Balance
2. Rotation of the body
3. Edge quality of the move

E. With additional speed, you will observe and expect the skater to demonstrate increased depth of edges, decreased free leg action, and an increase in a “lilting” knee action. To enhance speed, emphasize stepping close as the feet must take the ice under the hips.

F. To qualify and observe the smoothness of the skater, observe the athlete’s head and arms in relationship to the horizon. (There should be as little up and down motion as possible). The top of the barrier is a recommended horizon for you to observe this quality of efficiency in skating.

Lesson Plans –

Possible class organization:

1. Create a lesson plan to introduce one or more of MIF elements per lesson/session.
2. Divide skaters into groups by age/ability. Each coach will teach the designated technical skill (5 minutes each).
3. The group now joins as a total unit and will work additional full ice skills and exercises. (5 – 8 minutes)

The Moves in the Field (MIF) Program is designed to teach the skills necessary to attempt increasingly more difficult free skating, pair or dance elements. Without a mastery of the fundamentals at each level, a young person will have little chance of success at a higher level. Remember, each MIF level contains essential building blocks of skills that must be mastered before the skater is ready to progress to the next level.

Major Points:

- The skater should skate the correct steps on the prescribed edges. For example, when an inside edge is called for, that is what will required to pass.
- The skater should skate the pattern as closely as possible to the diagrams in the Rulebook. While the diagrams are not a set dance pattern, if the Moves are done on an incorrect pattern, the skater development objectives cannot be mastered .
- The skater should show a steady and marked progression of skill, mastery and performance at each level as he/she progresses up the test structure. It is not merely enough to know the steps and get around the rink without falling!
- The skater should demonstrate an increasing ability to execute all prescribed bilateral movements with equal strength as he or she progresses up the test structure. Bilateral movement is the ability to execute movements on both sides of the body, clockwise and counterclockwise, forward and backward.
- Moves in the Field will continue to contain the four basic points: Edge Quality, Extension, Quickness and Power (refer to the following page for definitions)



<p style="text-align: center;">SKATING STANDARDS FOR MOVES IN THE FIELD</p>
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Edge Quality: Characterized by a stable arc and controlled body rotation; an edge ideally without sub-curves or wobbles, initiated by placing the body and blade on an angle to the surface of the ice and stepping on the required edge. This edge and arc will ideally commence immediately at the point where the skate takes the ice or a turn is completed, and travel uninterrupted until a required transition takes place. **Depth** of edge refers to the acuteness of the arc and the angle of the blade.

Extension: is controlled stretching of the free leg complimented by an upright body posture. The extended leg is held in an unbroken line. The height of the extension is determined by the type of movement being executed. However, the final extended position should always be attained in a controlled fashion.

Quickness: refers to foot-speed. It is the precise, rapid and crisp execution of turns, changes of edge and transitions, usually in a brisk and continuous cadence. Refinements to acknowledge include quick movement that is quiet, fluid and continuous without disturbing the proper and erect carriage of the upper body and without interrupting the established rhythm.

Power: is intended to mean obvious and rapid acceleration often from a standstill position, achieved by a forceful, gripping pressure exerted by the employed, or skating leg and skate against the surface of the ice. Power includes maintaining or increasing speed while executing various skating elements. "Power" is relative to the size of the skater, but can always be attained with proper stroking technique.

Flow: the word "flow" is used to describe the ability to maintain a constant speed across the ice while executing various skating elements and also to refer to the length of time it takes for the speed generated from a single stroke to diminish.

Free Skating Posture: the skaters' back is straight and the head up. The spine and head are perpendicular to the surface of the ice. The arms are extended out from the shoulders and are level and relaxed. The free leg is extended in a straight line and lightly turned out from the free hip to the free toe.

Spirals: in the case of spirals, both the free leg and the upper body are extended up and away from the employed leg and the surface of the ice. The torso should remain somewhat upright and not collapsed downward, and the head should maintain an upright position following the natural curve of the rest of the upper body. The free leg should be straight, turned out and extended at the level of the hip or higher. Positioning of the arms is optional.

Note: "Moves in the Field" have been designed to include the possibility of generating speed and power and each transition, when properly executed, contains a push or pull movement from one of the eight edges (forward or backward, inside and outside edges, right or left foot).