

Durham Speed Skating Club – Competing at Meets

Prepared November 2016

So...You want to race

Are the skaters ready? Where is the competition? How do I get in?

The first competition can be a daunting adventure that raises many questions. Hopefully we will answer most of those questions here.

Many new skaters feel they aren't ready to race. We recommend having at least 1 practice behind you, that's right, let's jump right in.

The competitions that skaters start with are ABILITY meets - Regional Series and the skaters race against others of the same speed. Races are based on SEED TIMES* for 400 or 500 metres (coach will time you at practice).

**SEED time- is your best time skated for a set distance, 400m = 4 laps, 500m=4.5 laps.*

Competitions are held in Divisions for Ontario; we are in the **Central** Division.

There are a few meets over the season and we encourage all skaters to attend.

Meet Registration - How do I register myself/my skater into a meet?

Log in to the OSSA website (www.ontariospeedskating.ca). Look for 'Racing' at the top of the page, then 'Competition Formats'. You can access both the Short Track: Regional Series and Short Track: Provincial Series.

Select the designated series you are to be racing in. (New skaters will be in the Regional Series).

If you select the Short Track: Regional Series, look for the next upcoming **Central** Region meet listed.

If you select the Short Track: Provincial Series look for next upcoming meet listed.

Print off the all **3** of the Registration form, Waiver, and the Announcement page.

Registration is only accepted from the clubs, so there are no individual registrations allowed

Fill in the registration form and waiver, and submit with payment to the Team Registrar by the DSSC DEADLINE, NOT by the date listed on the OSSA website! A Club email is sent out prior to each race as a reminder.

No late entries will be accepted after the DSSC DEADLINE.

All payments must include an additional \$5 on top of the actual meet cost to put toward Coaching reimbursement. If you are paying by cheque, make it out to Durham Speed Skating Club (DSSC). There are **no** refunds for meets that you cannot attend after registration. Once the club registers you, the club is responsible to pay the entry fee for that meet and the club cannot get a refund.

Helmet Covers

Helmet covers are your Racer Identification Number and that will be your number for as long as you race in Ontario Speed Skating. These are to be purchased by each skater for \$20 from the club. Your helmet cover is part of your equipment; keep it in your skate bag. See the Club President or Meet Registrar to purchase a helmet cover.

Race Day

Dressing Rooms

At a meet, the dressing rooms are unisex and many clubs share the same change rooms. The clubs will have their names posted on the dressing room doors. Please keep your equipment tidy, generally in your bag, as a courtesy to other skaters and to help prevent missing/lost equipment.

Tips for Skaters

Make sure the day before a meet you drink lots of water, **STAY HYDRATED!** Eat meals with high nutrition, and get a good night sleep for both the night before a meet and the night previous.

Spend some time stretching to ensure your muscles are loose for racing. Check that you have packed all the necessary equipment to compete. The morning of a meet make sure to have a nutritious breakfast. Once at the meet there will be many people running around, just stay calm and focus on yourself.

To start off the day there will be an on-ice warmup. Find out from one of the coaches, or from a posted list, which group you have been placed in. Check the warmup schedule to see what time your group is to go onto the ice. Start to get your equipment on. Head towards the clerking area and wait for your group to be called upon to go on ice.

After warmup check the posted racing schedule to view when your first race should be. Attempt to do warmups at least 4-5 groupings before getting your equipment on for each race, which should be at least 3-5 groupings ahead. Continue to check the posted racing schedule for race times and when your next race will be.

A **race schedule** will be available at the race. Please find your race division and make note of the races you are in. Races run one right after the other so there are no “scheduled times” for races.

Talk with more experienced members of our club to help you keep organized and on time. The race number is typically on the scoreboard and you should be ready well before your race number so that you can be on time. After your race go visit one of the coaches, to discuss how things went.

Between each race, eat lots of food to keep your energy up, and drink lots of water, **KEEP HYDRATED!**

How to read the Race Results

This is a tricky thing to learn so we recommend consulting the experienced parents/skaters or coaches at the race to help you throughout the day.

What to bring

This list is for the skaters as well as the family going to the meet.

Skate Bag Checklist

- Helmet and helmet cover
- Glasses
- Neck guard
- Gloves
- Knee Pads
- Shin pads
- Calf and Ankle Protection
- Skates
- Skate guards (hard and soft)
- Skin Suit or Team Kit
- Towel
- Extra laces
- Tape
- Band aids
- Tylenol/Advil
- Blade wrenches/tool kit
- Sharpening Jig and Stone

Meet Checklist

- Running shoes for warm up
- Comfortable clothes
- Jacket, keep warm
- Blanket, keep warm
- Spare Clothes
- Hair dryer, to dry suit
- Cooler, drinks, healthy snacks, lunch
- Books, for you and skater
- Music, make competition playlist
- Skipping rope

In addition:

-Small cooler packed with healthy drinks, snacks, lunch, for skater and family. Skaters will need to “graze” during the day and avoid large snacks or meals.

- Spare clothing is a big help, and to help be comfortable in warmer or cooler arenas

- Blanket to sit on and keep warm in the stands, observers sit most of the day

Good food to bring: cut up fruit, cut up vegetables, sandwiches, perhaps a treat, think like a picnic without the creamy sauces and high sugar snacks. Mix fruit juice and Gatorade type drinks with water, up to 50/50. Please, no candy bars, we don't want the sugar rush and the following crash. LOTS OF WATER.

Things to avoid: carbonated drinks as well as high sugar drinks and snacks. Also Peanut butter and milk as they coat the throat and make it difficult to breathe and swallow during a race. Instant noodles and soups (cup a soup, ramen noodle) as they are very high in sodium.

People working at a Meet- Who are all these people and what do they do?

As you start to watch around the rink, you will see lots of volunteers doing their part to make the meet run smoothly.

Referee- In the centre of the rink will be two or three people skating around, usually in blue blazers. The chief referee is the one in charge, and is there to ensure a fair meet, with the rules applied properly.

Track Steward- The folks who move the corner blocks, put down water, and generally care for the racing track are the track stewards.

Coaches- In one of the boxes around the rink will be the coaches for the various clubs. Coaches are at the meets to help skaters with their race strategy, technique, mental preparation and support. Coaches are also on the bench to hear referee calls, make corrections to races, and find out about schedule changes. Skaters can ask coaches how they did after their race and perhaps what to do differently next time. If you have any questions or problems during a meet, don't hesitate to talk to your coach. See your coach at the coach's box after your race. The coaches cannot go look for you after your race.

Timers- Another box will have the timers, right by the finish line. There is a chief timer and six to eight other timers.

Judges- In yet another box are the place judges. There is a chief judge and four to six place judges.

Lap Counter- On the left side of the big group are the lap counters. There will be a display showing the remaining laps for the lead skater. Lap counters are also the people who ring a bell for the last lap.

Starter- You will also see the starters with distinctive orange armbands. Which side of the arena they are on depends on the distance being raced. 500 and 1500 metre races begin on the side opposite of the crowd of officials. The finish is always right in front of the crowd of officials.

Announcer, the Chief Recorder and assistants will also be rink side. For some meets there are also people running the electronic timing, who will be there in addition to the regular timers. There will also be several runners getting results to be posted.

Clerk of the Course and assistants. They are the ones who marshal the skaters into the proper heats, and proper starting line sequence, and get racers on and off the ice. This is a very busy place as twenty to fifty skaters are being arranged into the proper sequence at any time. Note that parents are not allowed in the marshalling area.

Race rules are complex so feel free to consult your fellow skaters/parents and the coaches. If you would like to review the various Race Rules, go to the Skate Canada website and look up the Red Book:

http://www.speedskating.ca/sites/speedskating.ca/files/red_book_2016_2017_eng.pdf

In conclusion, respect your competitors, teammates, coaches, officials, and environment. Stay calm, have a positive attitude, and most of all have FUN, no matter what happens.