

## **OUR YEAR IN REVIEW – APRIL 2016**

**IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S GALA TIME AGAIN!! WELCOME TO THIS YEAR'S GALA.**

**THE CLUB HAS SEEN GREAT SUCCESS THIS YEAR FOR MANY, MANY REASONS. WE ARE VERY PROUD TO HAVE 3 NATIONAL MEDALS TO ADD TO THIS CLUB'S OUTSTANDING SUCCESSES.**

### **“SILVER MEDALLISTS IN THE SENIOR PAIRS EVENT AT THE JAPAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS”**

### **“BRONZE MEDALLISTS IN THE JUNIOR PAIR EVENT AT THE CANADIAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS”**

### **“GOLD MEDALLISTS IN THE NOVICE PAIR EVENT AT THE CANADIAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS”**

### **AND CANADIAN NATIONAL RECORD HOLDERS FOR MOST POINTS EVER SCORED IN A NOVICE PAIR EVENT IN CANADIAN HISTORY!!!**

What a year it has been!! Along with these accomplishments, our skaters achieved many other successes...

Over the past year skaters competed in over 200 events at competitions in Ontario, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Michigan, Japan and Poland. Countless medals were earned. This is from skaters starting out at their very first competition to those competing Provincially, Nationally and Internationally.

Our club is very involved in helping our athletes prepare for their competition season. Our Larry Pepler Memorial Fundraiser is one of the highlights at the start of the competitive year. This event takes place in July and skaters participate in a simulation section of the day being monitored by Skate Canada Judges and Technical Specialists offering feedback to help them with their competitive goals. The simulation is only the beginning of their jam-packed day. Special fun events and the ever-popular team event follow. The skaters never cease to amaze their unique and creative costumes and skits. This was the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event and the enthusiasm has not waned in popularity or participation after all these years.

The competitive athletes, singles, pairs and dance, high competitive season starts in the summer and in the fall, the Grand River Council organizes and runs, with the help of the regional skating clubs, a simulation day again to help skaters fine tune their programs for the upcoming qualifying competition at Sectionals in Windsor, Ontario, Challenge in Edmonton, Alberta and finishing with the National Championships in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Sapporo, Japan.

Some of these competitive athletes were invited to participate in the WOS Centre of Excellence and Skate Ontario Quest seminars, which are opportunities for the skaters to continue to improve their techniques and motivate the skaters to a higher level of excellence.

The Star Skaters had an extremely busy schedule this year as well competing in competitions in Western Ontario. The WOS Starskate Championships took place in February in Sarnia, Ontario, which is the qualifying for a Province-Wide Competition, which was held in Sudbury 2 weeks ago. As always our skaters represented Preston proudly.

The club is always looking for ways to help, motivate and support our up and coming athletes. In December we held our Regional Club Simulation Day and Team Dinner. It was great to see the wonderful, talented skaters do their solos and see their happy faces as they mingled and had fun at the team dinner that followed.

On Family Day, the Grand River Council organized a Star Simulation Day bringing in Skate Canada judges to assess the solos and offer helpful ways to improve prior to their end of winter competitions.

Preston FSC further added to the skater's opportunities by organizing a Star 1 Simulation evening in February to prepare the athletes for the "Futures" competition in March.

All of these opportunities, as well as the WOS Development Seminars our skaters are invited to and actively attend, help our skaters prepare for and ultimately reach higher goals.

Synchronized skating is still a very popular avenue for athletes as well. Both of our teams had success this year in their competitions and recently competed at a competition in Chatham, Ontario. The Juvenile "Ice Prisms" placed 4th in the Juvenile category and the Beginner "Ice Prisms" team brought home the silver medal in the Beginner category.

Not only is the club active on the competitive circuit but, competitive, Starskaters, star skaters and synchro skaters work hard and achieve many Skate Canada tests. Over 230 tests were tried and passed this year and many Gold Medals were achieved in Dance, Skills, Free Skate and Interpretive.

This club doesn't just sit back and hope for continued success. We are constantly trying to improve the present programs and introduce new programs to help better serve the skaters and their needs. We have just completed our fourth year of the "accelerated program" — helping younger skaters progress quickly through the earlier stages in figure skating. We also continue with the Power Plus Program, an advanced power skating program for hockey players/ringette players already proficient with their basic skating skills and wishing to advance their skills to a higher level. Both programs have proven to be very successful and will be continued into the future.

The skaters' love of the sport doesn't always end when they head off to University to pursue their education. Some will continue to skate on the varsity teams and continue to train here to keep their skills perfected and help out by coaching our younger athletes.

Many of our skaters have gone on to pursue careers in skating — from coaching at clubs all around the world — becoming technical specialists & controllers and taking other positions with Skate Canada and the International Skating Union — becoming technical directors of skating clubs — the list goes on and on.

Other skaters go on to enjoy a professional skating career performing in professional shows around the world. The training and experience they received from participating and performing in this show helped prepare them for the professional ice shows.

This club has been strong for many, many years and several former skaters and coaches are Cambridge Hall of Famers. Many others have been inducted in the Hall of Fames across the country.

Offering singles, free skate pairs, dance pairs, recreational - learn to skate programs from ages 2 and up, hockey skills, power skating, synchronized skating and adult programs, the club is well-rounded and offers something for everyone.

The club's main focus has always been on team spirit both on and off the ice, which is demonstrated by the team coaching environment and the many team building events that take place throughout the year — including team parties and banquets, skate-a-thons, Larry Pepler Team Simulation and Fund Raiser, Sheritt Award, the annual Gala and many other activities.

Our Board Members and volunteers in this club are second to none. That is obvious by the huge tasks that are put in front of them, and the outstanding results that are always achieved.

Congratulations to the Preston Figure Skating Club for winning the **2015 Sports Organization of the Year Award** from the Cambridge Sports Award Committee!!

Our coaching staff is incredible, and without them, we might fall short of this outstanding club record. They are respected around Western Ontario and across Canada travelling to many destinations to conduct skating seminars for skaters and coaches at all levels.

Notwithstanding the many great volunteers, board members and coaches, undoubtedly we have the greatest group of skaters there could ever be. Through enthusiasm and hard work these athletes continue to amaze!!

The great learning opportunities, life lessons and unforgettable experiences and friendships that will bond people together forever, which is very evident in this club and in this show.

**HATS OFF TO THE SKATERS!!!!**

**\*\*\*ENJOY THE SHOW\*\*\***