

**NORTHERN NEW YORK SKATING ASSOCIATION, INC.
SPRING BOARD MEETING**

Sunday, April 30, 2006
Saratoga Springs Public Library
Saratoga Springs, New York

ROLL CALL

President: Hans Hoefgen; Secretary/Treasurer: Suzanne Strauss

CLUBS: Adirondack – Absent
Binghamton – Absent
Capital District – Lee Dickinson, Paul Dillon, Howard Ganong,
Jonathan White
Center State @ Morrisville – David Soucy
Green Mountain – Absent
Lake George – Hans Hoefgen, Steve Reeves
Pittsfield Parks – Brittany Kittler, Art Milano
Saratoga Winter – Fred Cole, Ramona Hodor, Fred Krueger,
Laura Krueger, Kelly Pugliano, Sue Strauss,
Rick Timmerman
Syracuse – Mark Topp

President Hans Hoefgen opened the meeting at 12:05.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of September 10, 2005 meeting prepared by Suzanne Strauss were distributed. Motion to approve the minutes made by Mark Topp, seconded by Howard Ganong. Approved unanimously.

Secretary's Report: Suzanne distributed a NNY membership report for the 2005-06 season. She noted that total membership in our Association declined by 33 members from the previous year. She encouraged club officers to go through the list and be sure all skaters have actively paid their NNY dues. Suzanne also reported that two Memorials (Gene Keppler from Syracuse, and a former Saratoga Winter Club coach) were read at the US Speedskating Spring Board Meeting. These will be posted on the NNY Webpage in the future.

Treasurer's Report: Suzanne distributed a copy of the Treasurer's Report (attached). Motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented made by Art Milano, seconded by Laura Krueger. Approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Officials' Clinic: Suzanne announced that she has been working with US Speedskating Board Member and Head Official, Fred Benjamin, to organize an Officials' Clinic to be held in the Eastern U.S. this Fall. Arrangements have been finalized, and the clinic will take place Friday evening, October 13 and all day Saturday, October 14, 2006. The clinic will be free to anyone interested in becoming a registered Official or anyone looking to up-date their skills. It will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn at 800 Albany-Shaker Road (across from the airport) in Albany. Interested members must contact US Speedskating to "register" for the clinic.

Empire State Games: For the first time ever, Short Track Speedskating became part of the Empire State Winter Games in February 2006. Skaters from across New York State participated in this event. Our thanks go to John Dimon who continued to push to get speedskating back into these Empire Games. We were given a commitment from the Empire Games authorities that speedskating will be part of these events for a minimum of two years. The dates for the next Winter Games are February 23-25, 2007 in Lake Placid, NY. Suzanne also agreed to contact the Empire Games authorities to see if speedskaters from the Pittsfield Club could participate in this event. She has since contacted the Empire State Games authorities but unfortunately was told "no". Rules to participate in the Empire State Games require an athlete to be at least 12 years of age and be a NYS resident.

A committee with representatives from the NNY Association, Western NY Association and Middle Atlantic Association will be formed to work on the 2007 Empire State Winter Games speedskating events.

NNY Webpage: Rich Strauss has established and designed a webpage for our Association. It can be located at: www.nnyskating.org
It was unanimously agreed to continue this web listing and approval was given to pay the annual listing fee.

NNY Association Identity: Our thanks to the SUNY Morrisville art department in designing a new NNY Association logo. An Association warm-up suit has been established, and ordering information can be found on the NNY webpage. It was also agreed that clubs could order the NNY warm-ups and also place their club names/logos on this warm-up. This is especially intended to help the smaller clubs order clothing with the group discount from our association. Total cost of these warm-ups is about \$98. for pants & jacket. Clubs that already have their own warm-up suits can also add the NNY logo to their warm-ups.

National Speedskating Museum & Hall of Fame: An announcement was read by Suzanne Strauss from the Fundraising Chair for this museum & hall of fame stating that it no longer believes it possible to fund the establishment of this building in Saratoga Springs, NY. The committee has informed US Speedskating, and the opportunity to house this national museum & hall of fame will be open to bidding by other states at the next board meeting.

CLUB REPORTS:

Adirondack Club: John Dimon submitted a written report to be shared with the group. John noted that their club received a \$2,000 grant to support local kids in sports which helped pay ice fees in the fall for short track ice, and coaching by Mike Miller during the winter. Their club had up to 12 skaters at afternoon long track sessions all winter. Several of these skaters competed in the Charles Jewtraw All Around competition and the Jack Shea Sprints. They hope to encourage them to travel next year to more competitions. The Dimon Sports Marathon was extremely well attended. Also, the Village of Lake Placid plowed a loop on the lake last winter for long track skating, but due to weather conditions, it was only used for a few days. Mike Miller, the club's long track coach, is also recommending a series of Regional Training camps for the 2006-07 season. If they could get a minimum of 10 skaters interested, arrangements could be made at the OTC for housing. Training could be held on Saturday and time trials on Sunday morning, followed by public speed skating. Please contact John Dimon if skaters in your club would be interested in such Long Track training sessions this winter. Thoughts are still in "the works" to possibly host a Long Track American Cup or North Americans in Lake Placid in the future. The Canadians have already offered their help with hosting a North Americans in Lake Placid, NY.

Binghamton Club: Joel Boyd submitted a written report to be shared with the group. Joel noted that the 2005-06 season was a difficult one for the Binghamton Club, as their rink is located on flood property adjacent to the Susquehanna River. The rink was heavily damaged in April 2005 when unseasonably warm weather and excessive snowmelt combined with rains caused the most extensive flood damage to this rink in over 30 years. Over 300 gallons of ethylene glycol was lost in the ground, and the NYSDEC closed the rink in the fall while investigating this contamination. The club was forced to skate at a main arena located in a convention center, thus reducing their ice time to less than 1/3 of their regular practice sessions. The good news, though, is that the County has committed hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair the rink, along with FEMA, and the Parks Administration has committed to an October 2006 rink re-opening. The club hopes to increase their weekly ice sessions, and if this is possible, they plan on adding a dedicated "Learn to Speed Skate Program" in Binghamton.

Green Mountain Club: Frank Thum submitted a written report to be shared with the group. Dave Manfredi is coaching this club, and has acquired ice time for the skaters at the Royce Mandigo Ice Arena in Rutland, VT. Ice sessions are scheduled for Sunday evenings. The club received promotional materials (posters, brochures, etc.) from US Speedskating, and hopes to promote their speedskating program in the Fall. If their membership can be expanded, they hope to acquire ice time at the new Rutland Regional Fieldhouse for the 2006-07 season.

Syracuse Club: Mark Topp reported that the Syracuse Short Track competition was the largest one-day competition of the season in NNY. Their club has voiced concern over the city's decision to begin repairs on the Sunnyside Rink in October, which will make the rink unavailable for approximately two months. The club is looking at other

alternative sites to begin their 2006-07 skating season. The club has also expressed their enjoyment over sharing practices and activities with the Center State Club in Morrisville.

Center State Club at Morrisville: Dave Soucy commented that their club may simply include the NNY membership fee with their club membership fee next year to ensure all skaters are “paid in full”. Their club has gained more youth skaters and fewer adults, which they are pleased with, as they consider “the future of the club to be the kids.” The Club hosted its second Short Track Competition this season, with good results. They plan on scheduling another one-day meet for the 2006-07 season. Their club must continue to work on recruiting new members due to the rural location of their rink.

Pittsfield Parks Club: Art Milano reported that their club has just created a new logo and new club website. The 2005-06 season showed a growth in more younger skaters and many more competitors. Pittsfield sent more skaters to the Jack Shea event in Lake Placid than any other club!

Pittsfield Club also shared that their Learn to Skate program is their biggest fundraiser. The club makes approximately \$1,000 on this event. This program is held for 1-1/2 hours beginning at noon during Christmas vacation week. The club skaters act as coaches, and the program is advertised in the local newspaper.

Saratoga Winter Club: Fred Cole reported that the strength of this club lies partly in the support of many great parents! They were able to host the American Cup III competition in March this year (when Buffalo plans fell through). Future plans include hosting:

Speedskating Summer Camp – July 21-23, 2006

American Cup II – January 2007

American Cup III – March 2008

Fred also mentioned the support of the Saratoga City Recreation Department. They are working on plans to host a city-wide sports banquet to recognize the “best of the best” of athletes from various sports in Saratoga Springs. This banquet is scheduled to be held at the Saratoga City Center on November 22, 2006.

The Saratoga Winter Club has also been holding “in-house competitions” on three different practice nights. The competition gives the younger skaters a chance to learn about competing, and it also gives the parents a chance to learn about “officiating”/assisting at a competition.

Rick Timmerman also suggested that NNY Association should work together more to help each club host competitions. In Canada, their competitions are actually run by the province/association.

Capital District Club: Jonathan White informed the group that their club marched in the “Uncle Sam Parade” and gave out flyers about speedskating. Also, the City of Troy gave the club some free ice time (one day) to help generate interest in the sport of speedskating. Loaner skates were provided by Dimon Sports, and the club gained a few new members as a result of this event. The Club did suffer a loss of coaching while Paul Marchese traveled for the Olympics. However, the club worked closely with the Saratoga Winter Club in keeping skaters involved. The Capital District Club also noted that their fundraiser was a “Club garage sale” which earned over \$500. for the club.

Elections were recently held for Club Officers, and Lee Dickerson will now be taking over as the Club President.

Lake George Club: This is the newest club in our Association, with the club officially starting in January 2006. Hans Hoefgen serves as club president, and they currently have about 15-16 speedskaters. Skating sessions are held at a brand new Olympic-size rink at the Lake George Forum. This new facility seats over 500 spectators in the bleachers, includes a health club, restaurant, etc. Information on speedskating has been shared with area schools, and plans have been made for several ice sessions during the summer months.

NEW BUSINESS

Coaches Clinic: A Level I Coaches Clinic is scheduled for July 21-23, 2006 to be held at the new Lake George rink. Tim Doherty and Jim Cornell from the Western NY Association will be teaching the course. Those interested must register for the clinic through US Speedskating.

Long Track: Our Association continues to see a growing interest in Long Track speedskating. It was suggested that our Association bid on hosting a long track competition within the next few years.

US Speedskating Board Meeting: Hans Hoefgen attended the April 21-23, 2006 national Board Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT. Hans was our Association representative and attended the Development Committee meeting. The Development Committee is the largest committee serving the Board. Lisa Sundstrom is stepping down as chairperson of this committee. It has been decided to sub-divide the committee into smaller groups to work on specific issues, i.e. membership development.

Hans also informed us that US Speedskating is facing major funding problems with the loss of Nike, ADT and Quest as national sponsors, who generated over \$1 million of support for speedskating.

2006-07 Race Schedule (tentative):

October 28-29, 2006	Rochester Short Track Competition
November 18, 2006	Bay State Competition
December 9, 2006	Charles Jewtraw All Around Race
December 16, 2006	Center State Race @ Morrisville
January 20-21, 2007	American Cup II in Saratoga
February 3, 2007	Syracuse All Points Meet
February 17 or March 3	Pittsfield Short Track Competition

North-East Regional Coach:

Concerns were raised about why our Region no longer has a regional coach. Adam Riedy's role changed over the past year, and he was assigned to more US Speedskating duties rather than regional coaching. It was suggested that the NNY President should continue to pursue this issue with US Speedskating.

Age Class Changes:

At the US Speedskating Board Meeting, a proposal was approved to change age classes so that they all align with ISU rules. The new age classes are as follows:

Pony	Ages 9 & 10
Midget	Ages 11 & 12
(Juvenile age category has been eliminated)	
Junior C	Ages 13 & 14
Junior B	Ages 15 & 16
Junior A	Ages 17 & 18
Senior	

NNY Elections:

An election was held to fill the position of 3rd Vice President for NNY. A Motion was made by Laura Krueger, seconded by Ramona Hodor to elect Rick Timmerman as the new 3rd V.P. Motion was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the NNY Skating Association will be held on Sunday, September 24, 2006 beginning at noon. The meeting location will be the Saratoga Springs Public Library (Sussman Room on the lower level).

A motion to adjourn was made by Jonathan White, seconded by Dave Soucy. Meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Strauss
NNY Secretary/Treasurer