



Skating icon helps out State Games

By Josh Colligan

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WILLIAMSTOWN -- Low budgets have prevented the Bay State Games from having a featured skater for its figure skating show since 2006. But the Games received an early Christmas present when Skating with the Stars champion Fred Palascak called on Dec. 23 and offered to fill the void.

Palascak, along with his wife and partner Melanie Lambert, will be the featured skaters at the 2011 Bay State Skate Figure Skating Show on Jan. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at Williams College's Lansing Chapman rink.

"The fact that they're contacting us really shows a lot about what they think about the event and the experience," said Executive Director of Bay State Games Kevin Cummings, who has been around the Games for all 26 years. "I think a lot of that has to deal with the area. We really try to treat them well when they come out here."

Cummings and Co. had put the word out, as they do every year, that the Games needed a featured skater. Since the 2007 Games, their budget has prevented them from bringing in the big-time names that were regulars at the skating show in the early 2000s.

The show was headed down that same dark path until Palascak called. Bay State Games Director of Communications Peter Cohenno said while Palascak is getting paid, it is a "fraction of what he would normally get." He is basically being covered for expenses.

"We have the competition and the show is the cherry on top," Cohenno said. "We're most concerned with making sure we have a good competition for the kids and all the skaters that compete. Then, the show is kind of our way to showcase those athletes and kind of give everyone in town a reason to get involved and to come out and share in what the Bay State Games are."

When Palascak and Lambert take to the ice at Williams College, it will be the 13th time the Games has landed a top performer in its 26-year history. The most recent was 2002 Russian Olympic team member Alexander Abt in 2006. Other past performers include Olympic medalists Linda Fratianne, Paul Wylie and Nancy Kerrigan.

The duo may not be Olympians, but their resume is strong. They have toured the United States as a principle team with "Disney on Ice" and "Footloose on Ice," as well as performing at theme parks and holiday shows. They have taken their talents across the oceans to England, Germany and China. In England they performed on four series of Dancing on Ice. Lambert and her celebrity partner won the second season. Palascak matched her with his "Skating with the Stars" title last month.

"Looking at his resume and seeing the things he's been involved in, I can't imagine there's much more of a decorated ... or anyone has a much better resume than he has as a performer skater," Cohenno said. "As far as a performer, the places he's performed and the levels he's performed at, being on multiple television shows and touring groups, he's about as decorated as you can be in that regard."

Fans will have to wait a little while for the star-studded pair to take the stage, though. The show, which has a \$10 admission fee -- the only event at the Games with a fee -- is scheduled to showcase at least 20 acts, which will push the show longer than two hours. The majority will be of young, promising talents, while Palascak and Lambert will be the final act.

"I think adding a featured skater with a big name like this, what it does is it really kind of ignites interest and excites the local community," Cummings said. "We're always getting calls from people from the local community, 'Who's the feature skater?' It just makes them excited about it."

"It's good to give something back to this area that's been so good to the games."



Brooks School trainer chosen for the Hall

By Staff reports

GateHouse News Service

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North Andover — Brooks School's Head Athletic Trainer and Assistant Athletic Director Nairi Melkonian was inducted into the Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts Hall of Fame during the 63rd Eastern Athletic Trainers Association Convention in Philadelphia, alongside Past President Jeff Stone Jan. 8.

"Nairi's dedication and years of service speak volumes about her service to Brooks," Athletic Director Lori Charpentier said. "Nairi and athletic training at Brooks are synonymous."

Melkonian, who's been a fixture in the Athletic Center since 1989, received her B.S. from Northeastern University, her M.S. from Ithaca College and P.T.A. from North Shore Community College.

Assessing and treating student injuries every day, Melkonian works closely with local physicians and medical specialists to help each athlete reach his or her full potential after an injury. She's quick to recognize, prevent, rehabilitate and recondition athletic injuries, allowing Brooks athletes to return to play safely.

While she previously served as both a teacher and dorm parent, Melkonian lives off-campus these days. She fills her spare time working for numerous organizations. She worked on the BAA Marathon Medical Team for more than 20 years, as well as the Bay State Games, and was a founding member of the NEPSAC SMAC (Sports Member Advisory Council).

Melkonian also served as the ATOM Executive Council's treasurer from 1990 to 2002, primarily responsible for the group's budget and finances. Overseeing membership and collecting dues, Melkonian also acted as the workshop and conference coordinator for all four annual conferences.

Melkonian previously received two special recognition awards: Micro-Bio Medics Award in Jan. 2000, which is presented annually at the Eastern Athletic Trainers Association (EATA) conference to the athletic trainer who has made outstanding contributions to the profession at the secondary or prep school level; and the NATA Athletic Trainer Service Award in June 2005, which is presented by the NATA for dedicated service and outstanding contribution to the profession of athletic training.

The Express Hometown News

W-H student to go to Jr. Olympics

By Jared Trout

Thursday, January 13, 2011 04:19 PM

It started with a Boy Scout merit badge. Young Zack Connell wanted the badge for riflery. So he learned the rules and shot a few times at the Hanson Rod and Gun Club. He discovered that he liked it --- and also that he was good at it. That was five years ago.

Last month, Connell placed first in Small-bore Rifle and second in Air Rifle at the Massachusetts State Junior Olympic Rifle Championship held in Reading.

Connell will represent Massachusetts in Small-bore Rifle at the USA Shooting Junior Olympics in April at the Olympic Training Center, which will take place in Colorado Springs, CO.

For Air Rifle he has been made the first alternate. In Colorado Springs, Connell will compete against the top shooters from each state.

During the past five years, Connell has dedicated himself to becoming a better shooter. He spends a lot of time practicing and competing.

"I started at the Hanson Rod and Gun Club. There were some really good shooters there that got me interested in the sport. I shot there for two years. Eventually, those shooters moved on, and I moved to the Taunton Rifle and Pistol Club," Connell said.

Connell is coached at the Taunton club by Kevin Winters and Sid Martin. Martin's 13-year-old daughter Mackenzie Martin shoots as well. In fact, Mackenzie also qualified to represent Massachusetts in Colorado Springs for Girls' 12-14. So one could say it was a good day for the club and its junior team.

"We have a really good program with Kevin Winters, Sid Martin and Erik Hoskins," Connell said.

"I normally practice three days a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On any given night, I usually shoot from 6-9 p.m.," Connell said.

In a rifle shooting tournament, participants have a set number of shots, usually either 60 or 120. Participants shoot from three positions: standing, crouching or prone. They get a certain amount of shots from each position to hit two targets and a certain amount of time in which they must take all of their shots. In Small-bore Rifle, the rifle is a .22 caliber and operates with a bolt action. The distance to the targets in an indoor tournament is 50 feet. In Air Rifle, the rifle is .177 caliber and the distance to the targets is 10 meters, or about 33 feet.

Connell competes often. Last month's tournament was not the first time he had tasted success. Over the summer he won the Massachusetts State Championship, as well as the Bay State Games. This past weekend he shot in a tournament in Palmyra, PA.

"What I love about shooting is that it's all about you. It's all in your head and knowing that when you pull the trigger that you're making a perfect shot," Connell said.

"Sometimes you have to come back from a bad shot. You can't get too excited. You need to stay calm, keep your heart rate down, and focus on what you are doing. Our team motto is, 'It's just a way of thinking.'"

Connell, 17, is a junior at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. He enjoys biology and astronomy. Connell is also an accomplished Boy Scout and earned many other merit badges in addition to Riflery. He is currently a Life Scout and recently built a shed and fence at the baseball field at the Conley School

in Whitman for his Eagle Scout project. He works part-time at the Southwood Nursing Home in Rockland. In his spare time, he enjoys listening to music and playing Frisbee and video games.

Connell hopes that there is more shooting in his future.

"I plan to go in the Army and try out for the Army Marksmanship Unit. The Army has a very well-respected shooting team. It would be an honor to shoot on that team," Connell said.

"After that, I would like to go to college and shoot in the NCAA, and maybe try for the Olympics in 2016," he added.

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=X&q=http://southshoreexpress.com/whitman/7649-w-h-student-to-go-to-jr-olympics.html&ct=ga&cad=CACQAhgAIAAoATAAOABAspzD6QRIAVgBYgVlbi1VUw&cd=9pNREELp-3Q&usg=AFQjCNEAjF3Cgd6wjM6pa4J-YWaZ0KJUXA>

Williamstown Girl Hopes to Skate Away With Medal



Petrea Mannello twirls on the ice at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams.

By Phyllis McGuire
Special to iBerkshires
Sunday, January 23, 2011

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — This could be the year Petrea Mannello's dream of medaling at the Bay State Winter Games comes to life.

Petrea, now 12, first competed in the figure skating portion of the Bay State Games as a member of the Christmas Brook Figure Skating Club when she was 9.

"I was pretty nervous. The coach told me to just have fun — not to stress out," the young Williamstown resident said recently. Last year, she took fourth place in the preliminary test track competition.

But this year, as Petrea performs in the figure skating competition, she's hoping to even the odds by wearing a unique skating boot fashioned to balance out her shorter left leg.

Nine years have passed since Petrea shuffled across the ice at Peter E. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams as a new member of the skating club. "My sister Alexandra was the first in our family to figure skate, and I thought it would be fun," Petrea said. "I started skating seriously around the time I was in first grade."

While Alexandra has turned to horseback riding, skating has remained Petrea's favorite sport despite the difficulties she has had to overcome. Training can be arduous, said her mother, Christine Condaris, but Petrea has lots of energy and is very determined. She practices regularly at the North Adams skating rink; when it is closed from April through June, Condaris drives her to a rink in Troy, N.Y. They also make trips to Wellesley every six weeks to have Petrea's skate blades sharpened.

Condaris said one of the many practice sessions in North Adams stands out in her memory: A loud scream brought all the parents to their feet. They discovered it was Petrea who had cried out.

"She was frustrated because she couldn't get the one foot glide [a technique for beginners]," Condaris recalled. But she conquered the technique and is now learning to master the axel jump, considered to be the most difficult.

As a figure skater, Petrea has overcome hurdles that probably would deter others from pursuing the sport. At one point, her mother had reason to believe Petrea would be incapable of participating in any sport.

Condaris traveled to China to adopt Petrea, selected for her by an adoption agency, when Petrea was 13 months old. "I was not allowed to go to the orphanage to get her," Condaris said. "She was delivered to me at the Hilton Hotel in Hefei."

She was surprised to find that Petrea was unable to even turn over. "And I could not swallow," Petrea chimed in these 11 years later. "I was a floppy mess."

"After we got back to the United States, I got involved in a federal physical therapy program called Birth to Three," Condaris said.

Being nurtured by her loving mother and undergoing physical and speech therapy, Petrea made progress. Her main issue now is the disparities in her limbs and feet — her left leg is shorter than her other leg, and her left foot is shorter and wider than her right foot.

"Petrea is amazing," said Jenna Dickinson, Petrea's coach at Christmas Brook Figure Skating Club. "It's incredible that she's done so well. For the past 8 1/2 years as a skater, she couldn't stand up straight and was a little off balance. She had to compensate for that on her own. She is a perfectionist and the hardest-working skater I know. Now, she is coping with the change in her new boots, and has improved greatly."

The left boot on Petrea's skates has a platform a couple of inches high to balance the length of her legs. Two pairs of the specially fitted skates came to \$1,800.

It would have been impractical to have Petrea fitted for the special boot when she was younger and constantly growing. "By the time we would have received the custom boots, Petra would have outgrown them," her mother said. "Now, she's stabilized."

Petra is glad that since using the new boots, she has not suffered back pain as she has in the past. That pain, however, never prevented her from taking to the ice.

"When I skate, my mind is not on anything else. Everything else disappears," Petrea explained. "And when I accomplish a new move, the feeling is spectacular."

Petrea's idols are figure skaters Kimmee Meissner and 2010 national champion Rachael Flatt.

Dickinson and the other coaches at the club are great role models, too, Condaris said. "Parents, coaches, skaters, became family."

Though they vie against each other in competitions, Petrea said, "We do not let what place we get interfere with our friendship. We know we all have good days and bad days."

Despite giving much time and effort to honing her skating skills, Petrea has earned high honors at Mount Greylock Regional Middle School, where she is a seventh-grader.

She often does her homework in the car as her mother drives her to her hourslong practices four times a week. Condaris, a music professor at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, said she is not a pushy parent; on the contrary, there are times when she tells Petrea to stop working. "She drives herself too hard," Condaris said.

Mature for her age, Petrea has already set goals for the future — coach figure skaters part time as soon as she turns 16 (the required age); study philosophy in college, go to law school, and secure a job as an environmentalist.

Right now, she eagerly anticipates taking to the ice at the 2011 Bay State Winter Games next Sunday. Dickinson is among the people who would "love to see Petrea awarded a medal."

Sanctioned by the Ice Skating Institute and the United States Figure Skating Association, the figure skating competitions are scheduled to be held Friday, Jan. 28, to Sunday, Jan. 31, at the Lansing Chapman Rink at Williams College. Admission to all competitions is free of charge.



Petrea, 12, was born with her left leg shorter than her right. Her new custom-fitted skates equalize the length of her legs.



http://www.iberkshires.com/story/37400/Williamstown-Girl-Hopes-to-Skate-Away-With-Medal.html?source=sports_block

NCAA.com

Merrimack hires Hajjar as head coach Hajjar returns to Warriors following stint with DIII Lesley

**January 25, 2011 4:05 GMT
Merrimack Athletics**

NORTH ANDOVER, Mass. -- Former Merrimack assistant coach T.J. Hajjar has been named head volleyball coach following former head coach Joey Pacis' resignation.

Hajjar was an assistant coach for the Warriors from 2008-10, guiding Merrimack to its second-ever and second-straight NCAA Tournament selection in 2008.

"I never wanted to leave Merrimack in the first place but I had to take a head coaching opportunity when I had the chance," said Hajjar of accepting the position at Merrimack. "We ended up winning the conference at Lesley and going to the NCAA Tournament for the first time ever, so to leave that behind is very hard, but to come back here where I feel very comfortable is great."

Most recently, Hajjar was the head women's volleyball coach at Division-III Lesley University, leading them to a 19-10 record, a conference title and the program's first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance.

"We're excited to welcome T.J. as our new head volleyball coach," said Athletic Director Glenn Hofmann. "I want to thank Joey for all that he did as head coach and the team's accomplishments under his leadership. He did a lot for the volleyball program, and we expect T.J. to work just as hard and continue the success Joey had."

"The one great thing is that everyone on next year's team was a part of the recruiting class when I was the assistant coach here," said Hajjar. "I know the team here well, and it's almost like coming home to finish what we started."

Assistant coach Karen Harrington will remain on the staff, working with Hajjar for the 2011 season.

"Karen and I will work really well together to make something happen. Our first goal is to get back to the NCAA Tournament. This year's recruiting class has to be impactful. We have five talented, returning players. What they bring to the table and their confidence will go a long way, but losing five starters, and quality players, is tough."

Hajjar also runs tryouts as the Men's Open Head Coach for the Baystate Games and works as a certified personal trainer for the Workout Club in Salem, NH. As a player, he earned three Bay State Games gold medals and two silver medals from 1998 to 2007. Hajjar continues to play volleyball regularly in A/AA level USA Volleyball local and national tournaments.

Hajjar's playing experience spans 13 years at a variety of levels with several accolades. Over the course of his playing career, Hajjar has earned five first-place finishes in outdoor tournaments, two Bay State Games Silver Medals, three Bay State Games Gold Medals, and a USA Men's Open Silver Medal in 2007.

In his eight seasons with Merrimack, Pacis became the all-time winningest coach in program history, finishing with a career 117-116 record. A two-time Northeast-10 Coach of the Year in 2007 and 2008, Pacis guided Merrimack to its first-two NCAA Tournament appearances, while reaching the NE-10 Championship in both seasons. He also produced the first All-American in school history in Molly Cindric (Westlake Village, CA) while her classmate Alyssa Pickert (Tinley Park, IL) was a two-time Northeast-10 Libero of the Year.

"After almost 11 years of service, the decision to leave was not easy," said Pacis. "However, all of us coach knowing that it eventually has to end, and unfortunately, that day has come for me. I feel very fortunate to have been associated with Merrimack College Athletics, and leave with many pleasant

memories and invaluable experience. I sincerely thank Glenn, the Athletic Department, and Merrimack College for the opportunities and knowledge I have gained during my tenure.”

Merrimack finished in eighth place in 2010 with a 12-14 overall record, 9-6 in the conference.



From NEHJ: BC High defenseman lends helping hand

by Mike Zhe/

Editor’s note: This article originally appeared in the January 2011 issue of New England Hockey Journal.

Brendan O’Malley still remembers the phone call.

He still recalls the conversation from last winter, the wireless slap shot into the stomach that told him his friend from childhood, Norwood High School sophomore Matt Brown, had crashed into the boards during a high school game against Weymouth and broken two cervical vertebrae, an injury that’s left him paralyzed.

“I came home from a practice or game, and it was one of my good friends,” said O’Malley, now a senior defenseman at Boston College High School. “He said, ‘Did you hear what happened with Brownie?’ When I heard, my heart just sank.”

Brown and O’Malley had grown up together in Norwood, playing youth hockey through their elementary- and middle-school years. They would eventually drift but would still see each other occasionally after O’Malley went off to BC High.

“I found myself always playing pond hockey with him and meeting up at random rinks throughout the area,” O’Malley said.

A year later, Brown was at Norwood and O’Malley was starting to make his mark with a rebuilding BC High varsity, a proud program that has claimed Super 8 titles in four of the previous 15 seasons, most recently the back-to-back jobs in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

“His role has increased every year,” said BC High coach John Flaherty (South Boston, Mass.), a longtime assistant who succeeded Joe McCabe as head coach this winter. “Sophomore year, he was learning the ropes. Last year, he played a little bit more. This year, he’s an assistant captain, and we expect a lot from him.”

Captains are expected to lead. And O’Malley did exactly that last winter after learning about his old Norwood’s friend’s tragedy.

He set up a raffle, with the money raised going to Brown and his family. He talked to BC High athletic director Jon Bartlett about donating the proceeds from a game to them. Wristbands were distributed and worn in tribute. Though it didn’t seem like enough, it was something.

“It was a probably a couple days after that call that I found out he was paralyzed,” O’Malley said. “That’s every hockey player’s and every hockey parent’s worst nightmare.

“I saw the whole hockey community pulling together, doing fund-raising and things like that. BC High knew what was going on but hadn’t really taken action. I knew as his friend I had to do something important.”

At BC High, a Jesuit Catholic High School, students are required to perform a number of hours of community service, a commitment that grows in duration each year they attend.

Last year, through BC High's campus ministry, O'Malley and other students made a trip to Camden, N.J., to assist in homeless shelters. As a sophomore, he and his teammates spent their Sundays in South Boston teaching skating and life lessons to local youth players.

"The mothers loved it," Flaherty said, "because it was a positive male role model that some may not have been exposed to."

When details of Brown's condition and difficult road ahead became known, O'Malley approached Flaherty and asked him if he could bring his fund-raising idea to McCabe, then the head coach.

"It wouldn't shock me if Brendan O'Malley did that and didn't know Matt Brown," Flaherty said. "He's the type of quality kid who'll do something for someone even if he doesn't know him."

O'Malley has kept his role in the tragedy — and Brown's recovery — in perspective. It's what hockey players are best at. From a young age, they're taught, or should be taught, the importance and necessity of every player doing a job, from the sniper who's counted on for 30 goals to the fourth-line energy guy.

Since Brown returned home in early May from the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, a top rehabilitation hospital for spinal-cord patients, there have been positive signs but also lots of work for him and his family, including physical therapy at Journey Forward in Canton, Mass. But the support Brown has received has been welcomed — from donations and fund-raisers, to meeting Red Sox and Bruins players, to military well-wishers from across the globe.

And O'Malley plans to keep contributing in his own way: writing a letter to Brown every couple of weeks, keeping him in his thoughts and prayers, and maybe asking his friend to come out to a BC High game.

The season was only two games old as New England Hockey Journal went to press, but there are some encouraging signs for the Eagles. Both games, against Acton-Boxboro and Springfield Cathedral, were 2-1 wins. Junior Matt Sullivan — the son of New York Rangers assistant coach Mike Sullivan (Marshfield, Mass.), the former Bruins' bench boss — has three of those goals.

On a team with nine seniors — but also 13 freshmen and sophomores — leadership will be key, not just from captain Michael Cashman, and assistants O'Malley and Jack Buckley, but also from seniors such as Terence Durkin, Jake Tenaglia, Andrew White and Sean Talbot.

"(Flaherty) has got all his plans, and we can see everything coming together," said the 6-foot-1 O'Malley, a self-described stay-at-home type of defenseman. "I can tell it's going to be a good year."

O'Malley said he still harbors outside hopes of landing with a Division 1 college program but has received more interest from the Division 3 level. His Southeast team won a gold medal at the Bay State Games last summer, and he was chosen to participate in the Hockey Night in Boston showcase.

He's also spent the past five years working with certified trainer Scott Parmentier, the former University of Maine star.

"He's a real focused kid," Parmentier said.

"His work ethic, you couldn't ask for anything more. It's probably the model for what you want for that level of athlete."

On the ice and off.

Skaters aim to entertain at the 2011 Bay State Games in Berkshire County



Fred Palascak, fresh off a turn skating with actress Rebecca Budig on ABC's 'Skating with the Stars,' will highlight the Bay State Games' annual Bay State Skate on Saturday, Jan. 29. (Courtesy Photo)

By STEPHEN DRAVIS
Wednesday January 26, 2011

The featured skaters at the 2011 Bay State Skate Figure Skating Show figure to be real crowd-pleasers.

They have to be. Pleased crowds are something that have been sorely lacking from their sport, according to skater Fred Palascak.

"Unfortunately, last year was an Olympic year, and we didn't see the pickup we usually do post-Olympics," Palascak said in a recent telephone interview. "What Melanie (Lambert) and I do when we perform is not something that's seen on television too much. Nothing against the new (competitive) scoring system, but it is kind of losing pop with the general public because the routines are cookie-cutter. Everyone is doing the same thing.

"What we do is entertaining."

Palascak and Lambert have been entertaining crowds for more than a decade -- performing in touring shows, theme parks and on television in America and the United Kingdom.

The couple, who met as members of competing pairs duos in 1993 and married in 2003, have a long association with the Bay State Games, the three-day winter sports festival taking place in Berkshire County that is highlighted by the Bay State Skate.

The 26th annual Bay State Games run Jan. 28-30. The Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams will host three days of hockey. Bousquet Ski Area in Pittsfield will host the Alpine skiing events on Saturday. And figure skating takes over Williams College's Lansing Chapman Rink for 34 hours of competition and entertainment starting Friday at 12:30 p.m. and ending Sunday at 6 p.m.

Lambert, who grew up in Massachusetts, was a competitor at the state games before she turned professional in the late '90s. Palascak, who graduated from Boston College in '98, performed in the Bay State Games about 10 years ago, he said.

The pair returns to Williamstown on the heels of Palascak's appearance on ABC television's "Skating With the Stars" last fall. Palascak and his celebrity partner, actress Rebecca Budig, won the six-team competition on the show, which was based on the BBC's "Dancing on Ice," which also featured Palascak.

The American version's Dec. 21 finale drew a modest 3.4 million viewers, according to an article posted on TV Guide's website. Its British cousin grabbed nearly 12 million viewers -- or 44 percent of the TV audience -- in its '08 season finale, according to London's The Guardian newspaper.

"The show wasn't as extremely popular as the show I worked on in England," Palascak said of "Skating With the Stars." "But there's definitely knowledge of the show. A lot of people I didn't think would see me on the show saw me. Personally, in terms of where I live and work, it's exciting for the students I work with to see me on television."

He has a theory about why the American show never found the mega-audience enjoyed by the similarly branded "Dancing With the Stars."

"In England, they have a very popular ice skating couple, Tovill and Dean," Palascak said. "American skating right now is missing that iconic figure. We're already six to eight years removed from Michelle Kwan being on our television sets every two years. Hopefully something happens soon, and hopefully I can be a part of that."

While figure skating nationally struggles to find an audience, there is no doubting the popularity of the Winter Bay State Games in Massachusetts.

Organizers report a 20 percent to 25 percent increase in figure skating entries from a year ago. On Jan. 13, advance registration for the downhill skiing was nearly double what it was at the same time in 2010, and the masters hockey competition is fully enrolled with 12 teams from throughout the Northeast participating.

In the past, hockey and skiing were the only sports to allow competitors from outside Massachusetts. But this year, that changed, when BSG officials opened the door to figure skaters from Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont; Connecticut skaters compete in July's Nutmeg State Games.

BSG officials said only about half the increase in skater enrollment is coming from out of state, but they expect out-of-state participation to rise in the future.

"If you've been telling someone for 25 years that they can't be in it, and now all of a sudden you tell them they can, there's a learning curve," Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation Executive Director Kevin Cummings said. "We'll see the people who are in it this year from out of state go back to their clubs and talk about it. ... Next year more people from out of state will want to be a part of it."

The BSG figure skating competition features one division sanctioned by the U.S. Figure Skating and one sanctioned by the Ice Skating Institute. The games will award gold, silver and bronze medals in flights featuring skaters ages 8 and up.

In any given flight, the top three finishers from each state represented will qualify from their respective states to participate in the 2011 State Games of America, Aug. 4-7 in San Diego.

In other words, a Massachusetts resident who finishes fourth still would qualify for the national games if one of the medalists came from out of state.

"We polled many people, and they thought it would be an enhancement (to open the competition), but we didn't want any Massachusetts participants to lose the opportunity to advance to State Games of America," Cummings said. "We found that's what other states do when they welcome competitors from neighboring states."

Of course, the Bay State Games is about more than competition. It also is a chance for local and regional skaters to shine at the Bay State Skate, which combines the talents of the Christmas Brook Figure Skating Club with BSG medalists and the likes of Lambert and Palascak.

The couple will do a routine they recently performed in "Rock the Ice," a show conceived by Olympic silver medalist Elvis Stojko that ran for five nights in Ontario, Canada.

"It's one of the routines that we've put together for this kind of show to show off our exciting brand of skating," Palascak said.

Tickets for the Bay State Skate are \$10 and available at Where'd You Get That!? in Williamstown, North Adams City Hall, the Peter W. Foote Rink, the Lansing Chapman Rink on Friday and Saturday or online at baystategames.org.

The Cowl

Former Figure Skater Teaches Course in Mathematics Dr. Cayla McBee Impressed with Environment of Providence College

**By Michaela Cameron '13 / Asst. News Editor
Thursday, January 27, 2011**

Dr. Cayla McBee is teaching mathematics and computer science at Providence College. She became interested in teaching after having a great high school math teacher.

Cayla McBee, Ph.D., Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, was an accomplished figure skater who competed in the Bay State Games prior to teaching at Providence College.

McBee was born in Newburyport, Mass., a small city on the eastern coast.

"When I was five, my next-door neighbors both figure skated, and as a five-year-old, I decided I wanted to do that as well, so my parents signed me up for a skating lesson. After that, I loved it and kept going back," said McBee.

McBee's most memorable experience as a competitive figure skater was competing and winning first place in the Bay State Games.

"I competed in the Bay State Games and won first place in the senior ladies free skate, so that qualified me for a national competition called the Skate Games of America, but I had an injury and unfortunately could not compete," said McBee.

McBee trained and competed until she graduated from Newburyport High School, and then went on to study at Wheaton College in Norton, Mass.

"My life growing up was training and competing and when I got to college, I stopped but joined the club hockey team. It was a good option for me. Now skating is something I do for fun. I'm excited that the College has a rink on campus here and I'm hoping to skate on my off-time," said McBee.

At Wheaton College, McBee majored in Mathematics and German.

McBee spoke of her experience at Wheaton College in comparison to her experiences here.

"Wheaton was a small liberal arts school as well, so there were a lot of similarities; it wasn't a religious school so there were a lot of differences as well, like the integration of Catholicism into the university."

After graduating from Wheaton College, McBee went on to graduate school, studying at Colorado State University.

"I was born in Massachusetts and grew up in Massachusetts, as well as doing my undergrad in Massachusetts, so I was ready to try something new. I applied to grad schools all around the country. I liked Colorado State because I really liked the people there," said McBee.

McBee had always known she wanted to teach math, and upon becoming a teaching assistant at Colorado State University, she decided to teach math at a college level.

"I was fortunate to have a great math teacher in high school. He was great at helping students learn and appreciate a subject that many people dislike. After sitting in his class, I decided I wanted to try and do the same; and I decided to go to college and major in math so that I could teach at either the high school or college level. I also had the opportunity to tutor math in high school and in college, which I really enjoyed. That experience also helped me realize I wanted to teach," said McBee.

Prior to working at the College, McBee worked at her local skating rink and at an ice cream shop.

"I worked at the Graf Skating Rink in Newburyport, Massachusetts at the snack bar, front office, and as a skate guard during public ice. I also volunteered as a Learn-To-Skate instructor at the Graf Rink. In college, I worked at Willey's Chocolate and Ice Cream at Salisbury Beach. It's family run and they make everything from scratch," said McBee.

For the past three years, McBee has been a grader for the AP calculus exam.

"Every summer, over 800 high school and college calculus teachers come together to grade over 200,000 AP calculus exams. This past summer, I was randomly assigned to a grading table and my former high school teacher was assigned to sit two seats away from me. It was the first time I had talked to him since high school. The odds of running into him at the grading and being seated next to each other are pretty slim," said McBee.

At the College, McBee teaches Business Calculus, MTH 108, and Discreet Math, MTH 117.

McBee decided to work at the College because of the environment.

"It was a good fit. I wanted to teach at a small liberal arts school. The geographical location works well, my family is in New England, and when I was in Colorado, I was away from my family and friends. When I came here for my interview, everyone here was wonderful. I could tell it was a great department to be a part of," said McBee.

McBee spoke of her experience thus far.

"I am excited to teach at a liberal arts college with small classes where I can get to know my students. When I came here for my interview, I really liked the mathematics and computer science departments and everyone I met during my visit was very nice. I really like the sense of community at Providence College as well. Everyone has been friendly; that's one of the nicest things. It makes it easier to start a new job."

**Globe West Sports Notebook
Ex-Medfield star Altimar hits 1,000**

**By Marvin Pave
Globe Correspondent / January 27, 2011**

Athletic trainer joins statewide hall of fame

Ashland resident Jeff Stone, head athletic trainer at Suffolk University and medical coordinator for the Bay State Games, was inducted into the Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts Hall of Fame on Jan. 8.

The ceremony was held during the 63d annual meeting for the Eastern Athletic Trainers Association in Philadelphia.

Stone, a member of the Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts organization since its founding in 1981 and its president from 1994 to 1996, was honored as its Athletic Trainer of the Year in 1992, and in 2009 was given the Kerkor "Koko" Kassabian Award for meritorious service to the profession.

He recently completed his six-year tenure as director of District One-New England, representing more than 2,000 athletic trainers and athletic training students in the region.

A 1976 graduate of Northeastern University, Stone has served as athletic trainer at Framingham State University, his alma mater Ashland High, Natick High, Marian High in Framingham, and the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Boston.



Bay State Games Offer Winter Sports Action

**January 28, 29, 20
Rural Intelligence Kids**

If this Olympics-less year has left you and the family pining for some winter sports action, check out the Bay State Winter Games all weekend long. Competitions including figure skating, ice hockey and skiing will be held at venues in Williamstown, North Adams and Pittsfield. Competitions begin Friday afternoon and run through Sunday evening. For a complete list of events, times and venues, visit their website.

On Saturday evening, the centerpiece of the Games' figure skating competition at Williams College is the Bay State Skate Figure Skating Show. The 2011 show features the talents of regional medalists and Winter Games winners, plus a performance by "Skating with the Stars" champion Fred Palascak and his partner Melanie Lambert. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. show are \$10 and can be ordered online.

Bay State Winter Games start today in North County



Bay State Winter Games Alpine skiing begins Saturday at Bousquet. (Caroline Bonnivier Snyder)

**By Matthew Sprague and Josh Colligan, New England Newspapers
Friday January 28, 2011**

Kevin Cummings has been approached in the past about moving the Bay State Winter Games to other venues in Massachusetts.

The Games' executive director, though, says he likes them right where they are -- in Berkshire County.

"This is our 26th year here. The support we get from the Berkshires ... is really something we don't think we can replicate in any other area," he said Thursday evening.

The annual Games begin today, with figure skating and hockey events in both Williamstown and North Adams. Figure skating will be held from today through Sunday at Williams College's Lansing Chapman Rink, while masters ice hockey games will be played at the Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams.

Alpine skiing will be held at Bousquet Ski Area in Pittsfield for the fourth consecutive year, with middle school, adult open and masters divisions being added. Registration is still open for the event, and organizers expect the number of competitors to reach 100 with walk-up registrants.

Where the Games have seen the most growth, though, is figure skating. Cummings and Director of Communications Peter Cohenno note that, by opening the USFSA and ISI competitions to competitors in New England states without state games, the Bay State Games' skating competition has grown by approximately 25 percent.

"Finally, it just kind of hit us. 'Why not?' " Cohenno said. "There are all these skaters who don't have an opportunity to compete like this. We actually got 35 out-of-state skaters this year, which was a really good start.

"If the numbers don't double next year, I think we'd be surprised."

This year's Bay State Skate, which has previously featured Olympians like Nancy Kerrigan, Paul Wylie and Surya Bonaly, will feature Fred Palascak -- a winner of ABC's "Skating With the Stars" competition -- and his partner Melanie Lambert. It's the only event that charges admission, which will be \$10.

As for ice hockey, 11 teams will be competing in two divisions.

The Over 40 division has four teams -- down from eight last year -- including the Berkshires' Shamrocks.

In the Over 50, the county has two teams represented in the seven-team field (four competed last year). The Berkshire Blizzard had such a good turnout they formed two 10-man teams. Berkshire Blizzard No. 1 captain Peter Haviland said they almost had an Over 40 team, too.

This year's Games have one less team than last year, and several players from all three teams all think it has to do with the timing of the Games. Haviland, along with Berkshire Blizzard No. 2's Mike Bloom and Shamrock's Mark Ringie, agreed that because the tournament is in the heart of youth league seasons, many of the players who would play are off at their children's games.

"A lot of the guys are youth hockey parents, too," Haviland said. "So weekends are hard for them."

Ringie added that interest in the tournament has shrunk in the last five years or so and that many of the teams from the Boston area are no longer playing. He added that when he began playing in the Games in the early 1990s, there were three divisions, Over 30 being the other, and former Division I and professional players once attended the games.

But for the guys who come back each year, the Games get them excited for the competition and allow them to see guys they have played against -- for more than 10 years, in some cases.

"It's fun to get together with the guys you see year after year," Bloom said. "This is one of the more challenging tournaments."

The 11 teams will compete over the course of three days. The Shamrocks are scheduled to open the tournament today against Reils Rentals at 3:30 p.m.

The Games' support stretches beyond competitors. Cummings was eating breakfast late this week in Williamstown, when a woman approached him and asked him if he was affiliated with the Games. When he said yes, he was told that the Games were always a good weekend for that restaurant.

After last year's competition, BSG organizers asked a group at Babson College to re-do a study it had done in 2002. Cummings noted that the original study found the Games brought in \$1.1 million to northern Berkshire County.

This time around, Cummings said, the number was \$1.4 million.

"I think people honestly enjoy coming up here," Cohenno said. "I think this is a competition Bay Staters look forward to all year long, because the Berkshire area is beautiful and it's a great excuse to come up and spend the weekend."

Out-of-state Competitors Grow Bay State Games

By Andy McKeever
iBerkshires Staff
Friday, January 28, 2011



Brittany Rheault, left, the games' director of operations, gets help from Megan Goyette in hanging a welcome banner.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — The Bay State Winter Games are here and bigger than ever.

The event has continued to grow each year and is now welcoming out-of-state competitors for its 26th season. The three-day competition is a major boon for local businesses, which are doing their part to boost the event.

"It didn't take us long to see how important the community is to this," said Peter Cohenno, director of communications for the games. "I really feel that people look forward to this not just as a competition but a mini-vacation."

According to Williamstown Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Judy Giamborino, the games typically bring about \$1.5 million to the county. This year, she expects that number to be even better, with 57 more figure skaters competing.

"I know all the hotels are booked and restaurants are doing discounts," Giamborino said. "Every year, this has been growing."

North Adams plans to get into the action, too, by setting up a table to remind games-goers that the city has places to eat and shop if they need a break.

The games are broken into three separate competitions. There is figure skating at Williams College's Lansing Chapman Rink, alpine skiing at Bousquet in Pittsfield and ice hockey at the Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Rink in North Adams.

Organizers partnered with the marketing team Berkshire Direct to boost the package. Cohenno said all competitors will be given cards that will translate into discounts at local businesses and badges identifying

them as athletes. There will be an engraver for keepsake medals, a videographer and full-color program that can be autographed by Fred Palascak and Melanie Lambert, who highlight the games with a skate show on Saturday.

Palascak was just featured on "Skating with the Stars" and has performed in skating shows overseas.

"Their resumes are pretty long and distinguished. They're about as big as it gets right now," Cohenno said. "Providing all these things is something that they don't get at other events."

Figure skating is the biggest of the three competitions and continues to grow despite a drop-off in other state competitions, according to Cohenno.

"We try our best to make sure it is the best one around," Cohenno said. "We've built a great base of people who know figure skating inside and out."

Those experts warned Cohenno to expect a decrease by 10 percent this year, but the registration numbers show an increase, and not just because the competition now allows out-of-state athletes. Of the 57 skaters, 35 are from out of state.

Most New England states do not have their own competition and until this year, those athletes were barred from the Bay State Games. Now the competition can only get bigger when coaches and athletes from the surrounding states realize they are now eligible, Cohenno said.

"We'll be very disappointed if we don't get more out-of-state skaters next year," Cohenno said. "As long as there is enough time in the day, we'll add skaters."

That time in the day is already pretty filled. The competition will feature about 400 skaters that will take up 31 hours of ice time. The competition will start at noon on Friday and continue until 10 p.m.; the next two days begin at 7:30 a.m. and go until about 8 p.m.

However, while figure skating is on the rise, ice hockey is on the decline. Cohenno said the hockey competition is going through a transition period because the same teams have been competing for years but the players are now too old to compete. Organizers will be recruiting more youthful teams in the coming years to get it back. There are 11 teams in competition this year, he said.

The skiing competition has remained steady and has the most local people competing. Cohenno said the games typically get about 100 skiers.

"With alpine skiing it's harder to get people from the southeastern part of the state," Cohenno said. "They tend to think of skiing in New Hampshire, but these ski areas are just as good."



Members of the Christmas Brook Figure Skating Club were practicing. Many of the volunteers at the games are club parents and members.



iBerkshires.com 2011

Volunteers such as Tammy Moon, above, and Bay State staff were preparing the rink at Williams on Thursday night. Below, Kelsey McVay and board member Peter Thomsen of Williamstown tape a banner in place.



iBerkshires.com 2011



Ice, ice, baby Shane's World

**By SHANE COVEY
Friday, January 28 2011**

Every four years, the addiction lasts for a couple weeks. We cheer for the ones with "USA" next to their names, marvel at their pretty spins and ridiculous jumps, and then wait for that all important score to be posted.

Four area figure skaters who look up to past Olympians such as Michelle Kwan and Kristi Yamaguchi, will get their turns on the big stage this weekend. Triple axels, double lutzs and salchow jumps will all be in the mix today-Sunday during the Bay State Games at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass.

Three Brattleboro Figure Skating Club members and a girl from Vernon will be competing in the freestyle category, in hopes of qualifying for the 2011 State Games of America in San Diego.

"This is a big thing for these skaters. They will be in the limelight," said Suzanne McCaughtry, who has been coaching with the BFSC for years. "They are very into Olympic skating. They look up to those skaters."

Twelve-year-olds Amy Yannizze and Elise Lacroix, along with 42-year-old Nancie Angell, train year around at rinks in Brattleboro, Greenfield, Mass. and Springfield, Mass. Katherine Koes, 15, of Vernon, is in the Amherst, Mass. club. All four will be skating for gold in Williamstown this weekend.

They all practice about four days per week, for a minimum of two hours each session. The first hour is spent on the basics - strokes and edgework - and they typically work on spins, jumps and programs during the second hour.

Lacroix, who has already qualified for the State Games of America, is known for her wicked spins. She is a little spitfire and has very little fear, according to McCaughtry.

The long-time coach described Yannizze as a very hard worker that is very hard on herself. She said that the 12-year-old is a quality skater who just hasn't found her niche yet.

"Nancie is absolutely elegant and is absolutely a smooth skater," noted McCaughtry. "She has gorgeous flow and gorgeous edges." Chule Vinton, 10, also skates with the BFSC, but won't be competing this weekend. She has already qualified for the big event in San Diego.

When asked about Vinton and Koes, coach McCaughtry said the former is very committed and that the Vernon resident is very dedicated.

While our area representatives aren't planning on performing in Russia in 2014 or in any Winter Games ever, there's certainly hope. Nancy Kerrigan, who struck gold at the first Bay State Games skating competition in 1985, went on to participate in six U.S. Championships, three World Championships and a couple of Olympics.

Yannizze, Lacroix and Angell will also be a part of the BFSC's annual ice show, on Sunday, Feb. 20, at Nelson Withington Arena at Memorial Park, at 2 p.m. This year's theme is Skating Across USA.

Figure skaters hope hard work pays dividends



Pittsfield Skating Club member Jordyn Goodrich is hoping all her hard work earns her a trip to the 2011 State Games of America in San Diego. (Caroline Bonnivier Snyder)

By Matthew Sprague, Berkshire Eagle Staff
Saturday January 29, 2011

For Jordyn Goodrich, the Bay State Winter Games figure skating competition isn't just a chance to perform on familiar ice in front of a home crowd.

It's also a means to an end.

Goodrich, a 13-year-old member of the Pittsfield Figure Skating Club, is one of many county skaters hoping to perform well enough this weekend to qualify for the 2011 State Games of America in San Diego. The Bay State Games are one of a number of qualifying games throughout the country.

"It's great being able to perform in front of lots of people, and being able to place and go somewhere else," Goodrich said, "unlike some competitions, where you go and get a medal."

Goodrich is one of 24 area figure skaters in the USFSA competition, which began Friday at Williams College's Lansing Chapman Rink. Skating events run through Sunday, including tonight's Bay State Skate at 7:30.

It's one of the biggest events on the local figure skating calendar -- the biggest for many Berkshire County participants -- so coaches, skaters and parents have prepared for it for months.

PSC coach Kaitlyn Healy, one of Goodrich's two coaches, has been working with Goodrich on her BSG program for a full year now.

"She skates that program perfect now," Healy said during a practice at the Boys and Girls Club of Pittsfield. "She tested up four levels from last year to this. Big difference. Huge difference. And she's getting a new program after this."

That's not uncommon. Many of the skaters have more than one program, be it short-form or long-form, in the works at the same time. For them, skating is a year-round sport. If they aren't on-ice at the Boys and

Girls Club, the Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams or Lansing Chapman Rink, they're in Boston or across the New York border in Troy.

Alie Hill, 18, has been working on her Bay State Games program for a year now. A senior at Hoosac Valley, Hill is preparing for college next fall. These are her final Games, and she's going out at the highest level, the Senior Well Balanced category.

"I wouldn't want to leave knowing I didn't do as much as I can do," she said.

Hill's 4-minute routine includes five double-jumps, plus combinations and spins. She noted that it's the most challenging routine she's ever skated, but it had to be since she advanced from junior to senior over the summer.

She's been skating for 12 years, but the nerves are always there before a big performance such as the Games.

"[Home ice] definitely helps, but I still get just as nervous as I would anywhere else," she said. "I just do light stretches, just stay warm, thinking about my program and landing my jumps."

Right now, PSC skaters are on the ice three to four days per week, preparing for both the Bay State Games and the club's annual show in the second week of March.

Alice O'Connor, a 16-year-old St. Joseph's High School student skating in the Intermediate Women Test Track division this morning, estimates she's on the ice six nights per week, putting in 12-13 hours of practice in that time.

This is her fourth Bay State Games appearance, and she didn't come just for a good showing. She wants to be on the ice in San Diego.

"I definitely freak out about competitions, because I'm very competitive," O'Connor -- who was only off the ice because the zamboni was cleaning it -- said. "I like winning. It's definitely about trying to get as much stamina and practice in as I can."

For the coaches, the preparation is just as intense. Cheri Daub, a coach for both the PSC and the Christmas Brook Figure Skating Club, has been working with three of her students -- O'Connor, Lauren Lampiasi and Payton Wojtkowski -- for at least two months on BSG routines.

"I work the program and make sure it's the way I want it," Daub said. "I don't really alter [schedules] that much. I just really start nit-picking routines."

Daub has been coaching for 21 years. Healy just moved to a full-time coaching position after being a skater herself for 18 years.

Healy's commitment is four days a week, with 8-10 hours of on-ice time. The PSC's main season goes from October to the second week of March. The work load is much like that of the skaters; Healy is teaching multiple routines at the same time.

"You could have short, long and then your show," she said. "Jordyn has her program, and now she's going to learn her show program."

Jordyn's mother, standing nearby, reminds her, "And her short group program!"

"Right. And her short group program," Healy smiles and says.

The program that matters now, though, is what will be performed at Williams this weekend. Lansing Chapman is a bigger sheet of ice than what the skaters see in Pittsfield or North Adams, but it doesn't seem to faze anyone on the ice.

"I'm a pretty strong skater, so adjusting to the rink isn't that hard," Hill said.

If anything, the Lansing Chapman surface -- which many agree is warmer than those at the Boys and Girls Club or the Vietnam Veterans rinks -- just adds to the home-ice advantage Berkshire County skaters seem to have.

"It means different things to different kids," Daub said. "Now there's that added bit of pressure, because everyone wants to [make the State Games of America] once. It's like our Olympics, in a way."



Mixed results of county teams

**By Josh Colligan,
Saturday January 29, 2011**

NORTH ADAMS -- It was a tale of two stories on Day 1 of the Bay State Games for Berkshire County hockey.

The Shamrocks (Over 40) and Berkshire Blizzard No. 1 (Over 50) each earned wins to open the tournament at Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink. But Berkshire Blizzard No. 2 (Over 50) and No. 1 closed out the day with consecutive losses.

In the tournament's first game, the Shamrocks escaped with a 3-2 win over Reils Rentals.

The Shamrocks had dictated play for the first two periods and had a 2-0 lead headed to the third period, but then they wore a path to the penalty box and let Reils back into the game.

The Shamrocks took four penalties in the third period, and eventually found themselves down two men. Reils capitalized, letting one out of the box, and before the second penalty expired had tied the game at 2 with 7:19 remaining.

The Shamrocks weren't about to let a few sloppy minutes on their part overshadow an otherwise dominating effort, though. Just 2:02 later, Rob Abel and Mike Daly went on a rush. Abel fed Daly on the wing just inside the Reil blue line and continued toward the net calling for a return pass. Daly wristed the puck toward the goal, but before it got there, Abel redirected for a 3-2 lead and an early win.

There isn't much checking in these games, but don't tell that to Abel. As the Shamrocks were making a rush in the second period, he and teammate Dennis Kelly collided in the neutral zone, leaving both players struggling on the ice for a couple minutes.

"Probably 18 years since I took a hit like that. That was the hardest hit in a long, long time," Abel said. "Both of us just knocked the wind out of each other. He was supposed to zig, I was supposed to zag and we both got the messages mixed up."

The Shamrocks continue their quest for the gold medal Saturday at 7:30 a.m. against the Hingham Seadogs and 4 p.m. against TBP 40+.

The Berkshire Blizzard No. 1 weren't about to be outdone, taking the ice immediately following the Shamrocks' win. They didn't let the game become as close, though. Four different players each found the back of the net en route to a 4-1 win over Lynnfield OT's.

In a span of 26 seconds, Paul Barci and Tom Hazelton scored late in the first period to give the Blizzard a two-goal lead. It took them a while to build on it, but with 1:30 gone in the third, Jim Thibodeau did just that and as the Blizzard added to the dreaded two-goal lead. Three minutes later, Nick Whitman sealed the win with a goal of his own.

"It's huge," Shamrocks captain Peter Haviland said. "In the past, the best we've done is a bronze medal and that was quite a few years ago. We've been in the hunt each time, but this time we're hoping to get into the medal round, for sure."

He added that five or six of the guys play together in a Monday night league, which helped create some flow for the Blizzard and led to the good offensive showing.

Goalie Greg Houston had his bid for a shutout spoiled with 3:43 left when a Lynnfield forward found some open space to his right and quickly tipped a pass behind him shortly after a defensive-zone faceoff.

"As a goalkeeper you'd always like to keep the zero on the board, but we'll take the win," Houston said. "We don't often start off with a win at this tournament, so it's nice to start off with one."

Blizzard No. 1 lost the last game of Day 1 to Olde Crabs 3-1, despite Houston's best efforts, including two breakaway saves in the second period when his team was down 2-0. Jeff Hughes scored the loan goal for Berkshire. No. 1 plays the Hingham Hawks at 11:15 a.m. on Saturday.

Berkshire Blizzard No. 2 took to the ice for the second-to-last game of the day, but it wasn't to be. The Blizzard lost their opening game 6-0 to the Hingham Hawks. The play Saturday at 12:30 p.m. against TBP 50+.



Two county skaters earn gold medals

Berkshire Eagle Staff
Saturday January 29, 2011

WILLIAMSTOWN -- Four Berkshire County ice skaters won medals, two gold, as the Bay State Winter Games began on Friday afternoon.

Stacey Tutela of Dalton earned the gold medal in the U.S. Figure Skating Association's female pre-juvenile-restricted/test track Group B.

Tutela and Julie Boulais of Pittsfield earned medals in that division, as Boulais won the silver medal. Jenna Disbrow of Dalton was sixth.

The other gold medal through nine events went to Clarksburg's Lauren Lampiasi, who won the female junior-unrestricted/well balanced division. Katie Heinrich of Lexington won the silver medal.

Jocelyn Moody of Dalton earned a silver in the female juvenile-restricted/test track Group B competition. Dominique LaFlash of Worcester won the gold, while Shannon Moon of Pittsfield was 11th.

Payton Woitkowski of Pittsfield just missed a medal, finishing fourth in the female juvenile-restricted/test track Group A competition. Jordyn Goodrich of Pittsfield was sixth and Abby Coleman of Williamstown was 10th.

Coleman also skated in the ISI competition and was fifth in the female artistic freestyle 4 for ages 12-14. Heather Morton of East Longmeadow won the gold.



Bay State Winter Games: Ten county skiers win at Bousquet

By Christopher James, Berkshire Eagle Staff
Sunday January 30, 2011

PITTSFIELD -- There were no points on the line, but Saturday's Bay State Games Giant Slalom race could turn around Samantha Gooch's year.

After struggling so far in the Berkshire County high school league and on the Tri-State circuit this season, Gooch came to Bousquet Ski Area with the pressure off her shoulders.

"I just throw it all out and said 'This is fun. It doesn't matter for anything,' " Gooch said. "If I do bad, oh well, it's fun. If I do good, then hooray."

Gooch had plenty to cheer about, finishing first in the girls 11th and 12th grade division with a combined two-run time of 1 minute, 25.47 seconds. The Pittsfield resident was one of 10 Berkshire County winners spread among 12 divisions. An 11th winner, Amber Rieger in the girls seventh and eighth grade division, trains at Bousquet. Each of the 85 skiers got two runs down the GS course.

With age groups ranging from 12 to 82, the event allowed skiers from different generations to size each other up. Younger skiers like Pittsfield's David Graziani, who had the fastest combined time of the day by finishing in 1:18.18, could let loose and ski fast without any threat to their season standings.

"This race, if you have a bad result you don't have to keep in the back of your mind," Graziani said after accepting his gold in the boys Grades 11-12 division. "You can throw it in the trash."

It all added up to a banner day for the Pittsfield schools, with Graziani's Generals teammate Emma Peplowski (1:25.26) taking the girls Grades 9-10 division. Taconic's Eamon Connor (1:22.42) won gold in the boys Grades 9-10 division.

The adult divisions had no shortage of county representation, either. Pittsfield's Russell Funk (1:22.52) won the men's masters, while Eric McCormack (1:23.59) captured the men's open-A division. Dalton had a pair of gold medalists in Paul Dunham (1:23.64 in men's open-B) and Louise Brogan (1:38.3 in women's open-B). Christine Humaso of Otis (1:32.66) won as the only finisher in the women's open-A. Pittsfield's Kristine Donovan (2:39.29) also won as the lone entrant in the women's masters division.

Many of the adult competitors, like Dunham, were coaches racing against their students. Others were parents, normally relegated to watching from the bottom of the hill, flying down the same mountain as their children. Taconic's Alyssa Latimer finished second in the girls ninth-10th grade division, but was fastest in the unofficial Latimer division. She beat out her dad, Marc, and grandfather, Eric.

The three gathered by the finish line as the last racers crossed around noon.

"I've been trying my heart out to catch the young one here," Eric Latimer said. "I just can't do it anymore."

"I remember when you guys used to beat me," said Alyssa Latimer, quickly chiming in.

"Last two years, we can't touch her no more," said Marc Latimer.

It wasn't only the adults who got a taste of role reversal. After his run was over, Graziani got to play spectator for a few minutes.

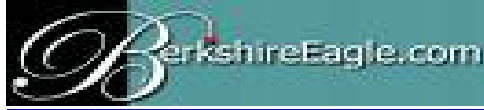
"These masters guys are fun to watch," he said. "It's like they're kids again."

One of those masters was 82-year-old Larry Voelker of Pittsfield. A regular racer who had reduced his schedule this season, Voelker couldn't resist the chance to race a few miles from home.

"I said, 'Hey, I'm going to get on that. That sounds like a lot of fun,' " he said. "We train here every Tuesday and Friday, all the masters that are in this area. ... This is in my backyard."

Bringing together skiers of every age rather than elite competition is what makes the Bay State Games unique, said event director Kevin Cummings. With so many varied divisions, the games put skiers on the same level, on the same mountain. It could be just what Gooch needed when the pressure of high school competition returns next week.

"It's given me a little bit more confidence, the confidence that I lost at the beginning of the season," Gooch said.



County skaters strike gold Kelsey Magri and Lauren Lampiasi win their groups at Williams College

**Berkshire Eagle Staff
Sunday January 30, 2011**

WILLIAMSTOWN -- Pittsfield's Kelsey Magri and Clarksburg's Lauren Lampiasi led the Berkshire County medal haul on the second day of the Bay State Games figure skating competition.

Magri and Lampiasi both bagged golds. Magri won the USFS female intermediate-restricted/test track group A. Magri was joined by Emily Rice, also of Pittsfield, on the podium in third. Lampiasi captured the USFS female junior-unrestricted/well-balanced competition.

Aimee Boulais of Pittsfield captured a silver in the USFS female pre-preliminary-restricted/test track group 1, finishing behind Shae Albertson of Nantucket.

Pittsfield's Alice O'Connor and Adams' Alexandra Hill also picked up silvers. O'Connor was second in the female intermediate-restricted/test track group B behind only Amanda Way of Cranston, R.I. Hill finished behind Chicopee's Kiara Sonoda in the female senior-unrestricted/well-balanced competition.



Bay State Winter Games: County gets more golds

**Berkshire Eagle Staff
Monday January 31, 2011**

WILLIAMSTOWN -- Berkshire County snagged two more titles on the final day of the Bay State Games figure skating competition.

Ashton Goyette of Adams won gold in the USFS female preliminary-restricted/Test Track group 2 while Pittsfield's Alyssia Bonacquisti was first in the USFS female preliminary-restricted/Test Track group 4. Petrea Mannello of Williamstown was eighth in the same event.

Winning silver medals were Samantha Dorwin of North Adams and Lauren Hunt of Williamstown. Dorwin grabbed second in the ISI female freestyle 1, age 12-14. Hunt earned silver in ISI female freestyle 2, age 9. Suzanne Woller of Lenox earned bronze in USFS female pre-preliminary-unrestricted/well balanced group 3.

North Adams' Rachel Bisson finished just out of a medal in fourth in the ISI female freestyle 1, age 10. Adams' Megan Goyette was sixth in ISI female freestyle 1, age 9. Emily Daigneault of Adams and Jacqueline Rich of North Adams rounded out the county representation, each finishing sixth in the ISI female freestyle 1, age 11.

Bay State success runs in the family for Magris



Kelsey Magri, 15, won the gold medal in the (Courtesy photo / SportsPix, Gary Gartley)

By Christopher James, Berkshire Eagle Staff
Monday January 31, 2011

PITTSFIELD -- In between winning Bay State Games medals, Lindsey and Kelsey Magri stayed glued to their cell phones on Saturday.

While Lindsey, 16, was racing to a silver medal in the 11th-12th Grade girls division of the alpine event at Bousquet Ski Area, younger sister Kelsey, 15, was skating her way to gold in group A of the female intermediate-restricted/test track division at the figure skating competition in Williamstown. For a pair with different wintertime pursuits, the games provided an opportunity to share the spotlight.

"It's a big day for us," Lindsey said inside the Bousquet lodge on Saturday afternoon. "We're both getting ready at the same time in the morning. We can't always be there to support each other but I just love competing with my sister, like being part of it with her."

By then, the sisters had been on the phone three times, sharing their triumphs. Saturday was the third Bay State Winter medal for Kelsey while Lindsey earned her first after crashing the last two years. Both started out figure skating in their youth, but Lindsey eventually gravitated to skiing alongside her dad, Jim. Kelsey stuck with skating, even winning a silver at the State Games of America in 2007.

Claiming some hardware on the same day as her sister was new to Kelsey, though.

"It's really exciting and it's difficult when we're both on the same days for our parents 'cause they don't know whether to watch my sister or me," she said. "But we come together at the end and celebrate."

The girls' mother, Holly, said the family has to squeeze quite a bit into the winter season. Area skating rinks are only open a few months, as are the ski slopes. Jim Magri usually plays ski parent, as he did on Saturday, while Holly tags along to skating events.

"It breaks our hearts that we can't be two places at once," Holly said. "I took Kelsey to Bay States and I taped it. It's work but it's fun and we're very fortunate we can do it."

It's not the first time Holly and her husband have gotten to celebrate a dual triumph. This fall, when Kelsey was on the junior varsity soccer team at Taconic and Lindsey was on the varsity at Pittsfield, both Magris played on winning teams.

"Jim and I stand in the middle [of the JV and varsity fields]," Holly said. "It was very exciting."

Holly Magri said her younger daughter looks up to Lindsey, but it was the elder Magri sister who yelled out in the middle of the lodge when she learned her sister had won. Even though Lindsey only had a silver, there was no comparing between the sisters on Saturday night -- although Kelsey did notice a subtle difference in the ribbons around each other's necks when Holly snapped a photo.

"My lace is blue and her lace is red," Kelsey said. "I knew she did her best and she deserved it. Silver or gold, she's still the best ski racer I know."

Hingham, AXIOM hockey teams take home BSG titles



Hingham's Paul Gannon, left, pressures TBP 40-Plus' Bart McCarthy during Sunday's Bay State Games Masters Hockey Over-40 championship game. (Lindsey Palatino)

**By Josh Colligan, New England Newspapers
Monday January 31, 2011**

NORTH ADAMS -- The last day of the 2011 Bay State Winter Games looked familiar in the Masters Hockey draw, as three of the four teams competing were in the title game last year.

In the Over 40 division, the Hingham Seadogs and TBP 40+ squared off in a rematch from last year's final. This time, Hingham came out on top, 2-1, to earn the gold and revenge.

"We just wanted to play hard and play well because they're great competition for us," Seadogs captain Ed Colbert said. "We're evenly matched teams and we always have good games with them. They're a bunch of good guys, so we enjoy the challenge more than anything else."

Despite TBP outscoring Hingham 6-0 in the past two games (2-0 in the first round this year and 4-0 in last year's title game), the two teams couldn't have been more even as the game went back and forth the entire time.

The difference was Hingham's special teams play.

Early in the second period, the Seadogs were rewarded with a power play. With 7:05 remaining in the period, Kevin Quilty buried home a loose puck in the crease for the eventual game winner.

The Seadogs needed the other part of their special teams unit in later in the period and in the third to secure the gold.

With 6:14 left, Don Disbrow was whistled for hooking and 26 seconds later, Tim Smith was caught interfering, giving TBP a 5-on-3 for 1:04. The penalty killers and goalie Jack Diamond stonewalled the TBP power play. Hingham took three more penalties, two in the final 8:12 of the third, and failed to yield a goal.

"I think that was the only reason we won," Quilty said.

Apparently practice helps.

"We've been working on our special teams in practice, especially hard of late," Colbert said. "Our special teams play really came through for us."

It didn't take long for TBP to break through on the scoreboard, though. Just 2:42 into the game, Dave Perry passed to Daren Cate from behind the net, who one-timed it home for the early lead.

The lead was short-lived, however. At the 3:57 mark, Rob Falvey redirected a Colbert point shot to tie the game.

Over 50

For the second year in a row, AXIOM/Bradway Insurance won the Over 50 division by a seven-goal margin. Last year it was an 8-1 win over Olde Crabs, and this year it was a 7-0 blanking of the Hingham Hawks.

AXIOM and Hingham met on Saturday in a preliminary matchup and AXIOM escaped with a 4-3 win.

"They kind of confused us a little bit [Saturday]," AXIOM captain Tim Bertch said. "They worked hard and just kind of bunched up in the middle a little bit and [Sunday], we seemed to have a little bit more fluid going. ... They played great again [Sunday], we just found the net, and they didn't."

It wasn't until the third period that AXIOM blew the game open with five goals in just 4:36.

After the first, it was scoreless and looked like it would stay that way for a while. Dan Ferioli and Kevin Collins scored in the second to give AXIOM some breathing room and open the game up a little. AXIOM took advantage in the third.

Bob Grant, Rick Mastroianni, Chip Labonte, Steve Kravitz and Pete Kenyon all tallied in the final frame to ease any nerves on the AXIOM bench.

AXIOM entered the game outscoring its opponent 12-5 in first three games of the tournament. It finished with a 19-5 margin. Last year, it was a 29-3 margin.

"I thought this one here, the competition was a little bit better," Bertch said. "We actually had a little bit of scare yesterday with [Hingham], but other than that, we came out and did what he had to do."

Winners Faced Stiff Competition in 2011 Bay State Games



By Andy McKeever
iBerkshires Staff
Monday, January 31, 2011

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — Out-of-state athletes bolstered competitiveness in this year's Bay State Winter Games.

"After 25 years things get a little stale and this adds a little spark," Peter Cohenno, director of communications for the games, said on Monday. "The added participants extended the time but it brought the competition to a new level and makes it more prestigious to win a gold."

The games welcomed 35 new figure skaters from other New England states for the first time. About a dozen of them went home with medals and stories to share.

"We got great feedback from the coaches. They were real happy to compete in the Bay State Games and they'll go back and spread the word," Cohenno said. "We're really excited about the possibilities."

Looking forward, Cohenno said that organizers will be balancing a higher competition level while still catering to beginners and in-state athletes, who are still the priority.

"We were thrilled by how it all went," Cohenno said. "It really renewed the games."

Organizers are attempting to come back strong after a downturned economy hurt the game's draw. Marketing and additional skaters were added this year to boost the competition and now organizers will analyze the event in hopes to build.

Cohenno said he heard some people say this year's games were the best they've ever had.

"With the economy now, people are beginning to come out more and stay at the hotels and visit the restaurants," Cohenno said. "I think our own worst enemy is our expectations."

The headlining skate show by Fred Palascak and Melanie Lambert drew about 1,000 spectators but Cohenno said organizers want double that.

"We strive to get back to the response we had back with Nancy Kerrigan," Cohenno said. "And that may just be unrealistic."

The Kerrigan show sold out the entire arena, whereas this year's old sold out half, Cohenno said. Kerrigan is also a much more recognizable name, which he acknowledged.

Cohenno would also like to see souvenir sales increase.

As for the alpine skiing, the competition maintained its typical draw of about 90 skiers. Organizers were hoping to reach triple-digit numbers but fell short.

For the 11 ice hockey teams, Cohenno said the feedback has been that they plan on returning next year, so it will be up to the Bay State Games staff to recruit additional teams.

"All the feedback we got was positive. They have all the intention to come back next year," Cohenno said.

The competition results are available on the game's website.

For ice hockey click [here](#).

For skiing click [here](#).

For figure skating click [here](#).

