



The South African Figure Skating Association's (SAFSA's) guide to Long Term Skater Development (LTSD)





The Launch of SAFSA's Long Term Skater Development Programme (LTSDP) is imminent:

The NTC members, led by Etienne Dreyer and Susan Marais have been hard at work and have had numerous consultation sessions with SASCOC regarding the design and implementation of the LTSDP in South Africa. We have had the privilege of being guided by the world renowned expert in the field, Dr Istvan Balyi, who has been the chief co-ordinator for the Skate Canada programme on Long term athlete development for the past 15 years. The SAFSA LTSDP will revolutionise the way that skaters, parents, coaches and administrators approach our sport. Aspects regarding required fitness levels, growth spurts, puberty, strength training, goal setting as well as long term strategic goal setting will all be addressed.

The main purpose of the LTSDP will be to:

- Identify and define as clearly as possible the sport-specific skill expectations of athletes at each stage of development;
- Strongly emphasize general physical literacy and personal development;
- Identifies the different progression vectors so that athletes are retained for longer periods in the sport;
- Clearly indicate the very critical role that all coaches in the sport of Figure Skating play during all the stages of development;
- Give a clear "big picture" overview of how all the different role players in the sport of Figure Skating must align and collaborate to give the effect of a tight-fitting and seamless puzzle to realise the common goal of assisting athletes to attain their highest level of personal excellence that they choose;
- Act as a foundation for decision-making relating to the structure and scheduling of competitions, the different programme designs, short and long-term training plans, etc.

So get ready for the exciting launch and introduction to a new era in SAFSA's commitment to developing our skaters on all levels. The "FROM ICE CLUB TO ICE CHAMPION" launch of the LTSDP will take place at the Draw and opening function of the 2012 National championships.

This will mark the beginning of the implementation process whereby every skater, coach, administrator and parent will need to familiarize and adjust their involvement in the sport to the programme for the greater improvement of our sport. See you at Nationals 2012.

