

Let's Go Racing!!!

The Oakville Speed Skating Club encourages all members to participate in Competitions. We believe Competitions are a "fun" aspect of the sport. Competitions allow members to race against skaters from other Clubs and apply their drills and technique learned during practices. In order to promote Long Term Athlete Development we encourage our Members to achieve Personal Best "PB" times during competitions and not focus on Placement or "Winning".

Types of Competitions:

The Two main types of Competitions Are:

Ontario Regional Circuit – Ontario is divided into three Regions – Western, Central and Eastern. Oakville is a part of the Western Regional Circuit. Members can register for Competitions in any of the Regions but are only guaranteed participation in the Western Regional Circuit Competitions. They are only allowed to participate in the other regions if space is available.

Ontario Elite Circuit – Members 11 years of age and older must qualify in-order to participate in the Elite Circuit Competitions. Skaters qualify by meeting time standards and Ranking outlined by the Ontario Speed Skating Association

First Time Competitors:

All first time Competitors participate in Ontario Regional Circuit Competitions. All Regional Circuit Competitions are One-Day Competitions except the end of year Regional Championship named Provincial B & C Championship which is a two-day Competition. Any member can participate in the Championship if they participated in at least one Regional Circuit Competition.

When a member decides to participate in competitions, these are the following steps:

Forms and Payment for a Competition:

Must be handed into the Club Office by the Due Date posted on our Club Calendar. Competitions are posted on our Calendar which is on the bulletin boards at the Rink between the Change Rooms or on our Events page on our Website. The Calendar outlines the date and location and the Club hosting the Competition. We also post on our Calendar the due date for forms and payment for a competition to be handed in. Payment is to be made to the Club: Cash, Email Transfer or Cheque payable to the Oakville Speed Skating Club. The Club registers and pays your meet fees on your behalf.

Forms can be found on 3 places on the Club website: On the Home Page at the Bottom under links; on the About Heading, there is a dropdown menu that says Club Links, click on that and you will see the first one reads Ontario Speed Skating Association, click on that link. On their home page click on Racing and on the righthand side there is a heading that reads Ontario Regional Circuit, click on that and it will direct you to forms; the other place is on our Competition Page at the end of the paragraph for Ontario Regional Circuit Competitions. Each Club posts a Meet Announcement – which outlines all pertinent information about the upcoming Meet and a Meet Registration Form and Waiver – which are to be handed into the Club.

Helmet Cover Numbers:

For a member to participate in any Competition they must also have a Helmet Cover Number. These are purchased through the Club for a fee. These numbers are your number/child for as long as they participate in competitions. If a Helmet Cover is lost, another will have to be purchased.

Certified Speed Skating Helmets:

Another requirement is that competitors must wear a Certified Speed Skating Helmet. Our Club realizes that new members are not in possession of these helmets and our Club has a limited supply that we attempt to make available to new members for use at meets. All Club members are, however, encouraged to eventually purchase their own Racing Helmet which can be purchased from vendors at Meets or through ZT Sports – our Clubs Official Supplier of Speed Skating Equipment – www.ztsports.com.

Association Membership:

All Members who participate in Competitions must be Association Members with Speed Skating Canada and the Ontario Speed Skating Association. This is a yearly membership and the Association has an online system named MAS. For first time members, after you have handed in your forms and payment you will receive an email from the Club outlining how to register with the Associations.

Preparing for the Competition:

It is very important to remember all your proper skating equipment. Not having all equipment could get a skater disqualified from a race. With the exception of a Certified Racing Helmet and Helmet Cover, all the equipment is exactly the same as required at practices.

Mandatory Equipment:

Speed Skates with guards
Knee Pads
Shin Guards
Cut Resistant Gloves
Clear Safety Glasses with strap
Bib Style Neck Guard
Calf and Ankle Kevlar Protection

Additional Items to Bring:

Whether you are attending a one or two-day meet, think of it as “indoor camping. Your child/children have as much fun playing with their friends between the races as they do during the races. Be sure to get a good night’s sleep before the meet and arrive at the arena early to ensure your day runs smoothly.

- Extra skating clothes, as the ice surface is continually flooded due to grooves made by older skaters. If your child falls, he/she will get wet.
- A handheld hair dryer to dry racing clothes in the event of a fall.
- Blankets to sit on to keep warm.
- Books, homework, hand-held electronic devices, etc. to help keep kids busy between races.
- A note pad or smartphone camera to keep track of times and accomplishments. Race results and times are posted in the arena on sheets throughout the day. It is a good idea to keep a record of the times skated for each distance.

- Camera/video camera.
- A Cooler filled with nutritious food for lunch/snacks and beverages as you will not have time to leave the arena to get food.

What to Expect on Competition Day:

All Competitions begin with Warm-ups which usually begin at 8 a.m., it is imperative that you arrive with enough time to be dressed and ready for your Warm-up Session. Racing starts approximately around 9 a.m. and continues to approximately 5 p.m.

When you first arrive at the rink, find your dressing room, there will be a sign posted on each dressing room with a Club or Clubs names. Posted in the dressing room will be your racing group/category you are in, the warm up schedule for all skater groups (approximately 10 minutes in length); and the Race schedules will be posted. Look for them, check for the race numbers that apply to your group and plan to get ready accordingly.

Skaters report to the "Clerk of the Course" who lines up skaters in their groups in one area of the arena called the "Heat Box". One group will be on ice and the next six or so line up in the heat box. Parents are not allowed to go with their child to the "Heat Box". While in the "Heat Box" a skater will hand in their guards, blankets, jackets, etc. and place them in a box. It is very important to have all their equipment or clothing labelled. This box will then be taken to the area where the skaters exit the ice for them to collect.

After one race, skaters can usually take their skates off as there maybe one hour wait until the next race. This will depend on the size of the meet. Skaters and parents are not to hang around in the change room between races, space is limited so we ask you find a spot in the stands to put all your coolers and stuff.

Each group will get in 2 or 3 races before there is a lunch break. For each racing distance, there will be a preliminary race called a "Heat" and then a "Final". It depends on where the skater placed in the "Heat" that decides which "Final" the skater will race in. Advancements to a final are determined either by Place Advancement or by Time Advancement.

At each Competition skaters usually race at least 5 times throughout the day with 3 different distances. Generally, as skaters get older and more experienced the distances become greater.

The race schedule can be a little confusing for first time competitors, other parents who have previously attended competitions will be happy to assist you.

The A finals earn more points than B Finals and B finals earn more points than C finals, etc. No matter where you finish, as long as you finish the race, you earn points. The skater in each group/category to accumulate the most points from the distances raced is declared the winner for the meet. Typically, the first three finishers in each category are presented with an award to recognize their accomplishments, some Clubs recognize the top 5 finishes.

Each race is measured in meters, ranging from 100m to 3000m (for the older groups).

Once the skaters are lined up and the "Starter" fires the gun or Electronic Starter, the race is on.

Each skater is racing in a group, however, we try to stress to each skater, especially the younger skaters; they are trying to beat their last personal best (PB) time. **PBs are what we strive for at the Oakville Speed Skating Club – not on placement or winning.** Each time you go on the ice to race, you are trying to achieve a better time than the last time you raced that particular distance.

After a Competition a "Protocol" is produced which shows all the distances, times, placements by every person who participated in this Competition. This can be found in the same location as the Meet Forms.

The Club always has at least one dedicated Volunteer Coach at Meets who spend the entire day assisting Club Skaters. It is a terrific gesture for every skater to take the time at the end of a long day to make a point of thanking their Volunteer Coach.

Rules and Regulations:

- Each Competition will have many Official Volunteers to ensure a fair and fun time.
- A few simple rules enforced by the Chief Referee governs the Competitions.
- No body contact is allowed at any time during the race.
- In each race one false start is allowed without penalty or disqualification. The next false start leads to a disqualification of the skater(s) who false started
- All Mandatory Equipment must be worn and should be checked before going on the ice. Helmets must be placed properly on head and strapped securely. Disqualification can occur for missing or unsecure equipment.
- Corner blocks may be hit, but not skated inside of.
- The Technical Bulletin determines the number of skaters on the line for each distance.
- The skater in the lead has the right of way.
- Should a skater fall before the last puck at the end of the first corner, the "Starter" can call all the skaters to restart the race.
- The Chief Referee has final say regarding any activity in a race.
- Only your coach can approach a Referee in limited circumstances. If you believe a race result is posted incorrectly, you must notify your coach right away and he/she may speak to the Referee on your behalf.

Every season the Ontario Speed Skating Association produces a Technical Bulletin which outlines the seasons Competition Criteria and Championships Selection Criteria. It is important for parents to become familiar with this Bulletin as it outlines what the distances are for each age group and the Advancements. It also gives parents a better understanding of all aspects of Competitions.

We also recommend that parents become familiar with the Ontario Speed Skating website: www.ontariospeedskating.ca. It hosts a variety of information about the Sport of Speed Skating, the Association and its News section is kept up to date regarding Competitions and Events. It also has a Ranking List Page, which Ranks every member that has participated in a Competition by age, gender and by their racing age group.