



Alternates

A synchronized skating team is usually made up of no more than 20 skaters. From the team pool, 12 or 16 skaters will perform the routine and the others will be alternates.

An alternate is a skater who forms part of the squad but does not perform the competition skate. At competitions the alternates are on standby to skate at the entry point to the ice with the team coach; ready in skates, full costume and makeup while the team competes. Alternates can be asked to fill in for a skater who is sick, injured, or absent. Any skater may have a problem at any time with their blades, a boot lace may come undone or even a screw could come loose at the last minute and prevent them from skating. The alternate also takes part in the practice sessions at the competition, alternates skate on with the team when it is time to compete and leaves the ice as the skaters take their starting positions, joining the coach and the manager rink side. The alternates join the team when the scores are announced and on the ice for the medal ceremony. If the team has won a medal, the alternates also receive a medal. If you are selected as an alternate on one occasion it does not mean that you will automatically be selected as alternate next time.

Why was I chosen as alternate?

There are many reasons why someone is chosen to be an alternate and the coaching team will have thought very hard about their choices. Remember the coaches are thinking of the team as a whole, not just an individual skater. You may be selected to be an alternate simply just because there are too many skaters to skate everyone and someone has to be chosen as alternate. The coaches and club officials understand that being selected as an alternate can be very upsetting especially as they would have worked just as hard as the other skaters in the team.

When will I know if I am an alternate?

All team members could be made an alternate. Skaters' names will be listed alphabetically on the competition sheet, if your name is last, it is because of the way it has fallen alphabetically and not because you are the alternate. The coach will decide the alternate and the skating squad on the day at the competition. Remember that being selected as an alternate does not mean you are not a competent skater or are doing things wrong it just means that on this occasion it is you. You are still a vital part of the whole team.

Adopting this policy means we have a consistent approach to alternates across all teams, all skaters will remain engaged in training and the coaches have the flexibility of deciding on the day as competition nerves, illness or injury can strike at any time. Coaches will make their decisions for any number of reasons including nerves, illness, injury, ability and attitude. Please talk to your team manager if you have any concerns about the role of team alternate.