



ATHLETICISM
and the new

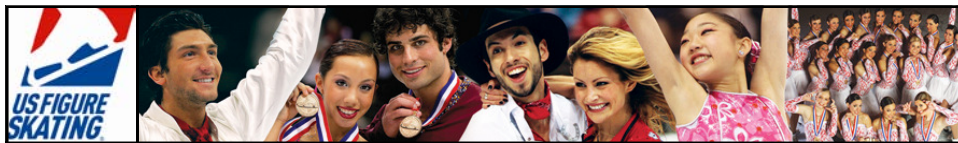
Skater Talent & Athleticism
Recognition System
(S.T.A.R.S.)

2008 Summer Competition Series

Liberty ~ Skate Detroit ~ Silicon Valley

Charlene Boudreau

Director of Sports Sciences & Medicine, U.S. Figure Skating



Athlete: One who has or is trained to contend in exercises requiring great physical agility and strength; Any strong, robust or vigorous person; A champion.

Athletic: Pertaining to athletes or exercises practiced by athletes; Strong, sturdy, robust or vigorous.

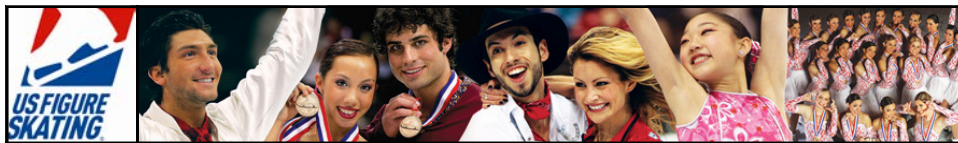
Athleticism: The practice of athletics; The strength, vigor, coordination, dexterity and stamina of an athlete.



Are we *athletic*?

Are we strong, *robust* and full of *vigor*?

Are we *coordinated*, and is our *stamina* high?



Are we athletically prepared to handle more complex and more physically demanding skills?

Is our current level of overall *athleticism* enough to introduce and train those skills *and* stay healthy and injury-free?

Do we promote and engage in robust, all-around fitness in our sport?



“Athleticism” is...

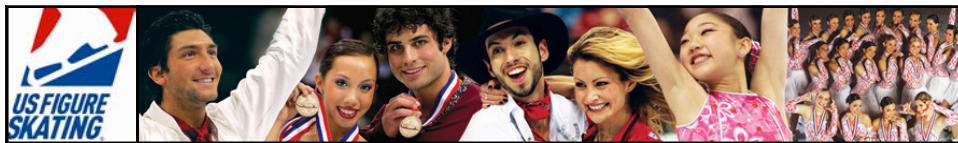
A *collection* of physical fitness components:

- Strength
- Power
- Flexibility
- Agility
- Balance
- Coordination
- Proprioception
- Stamina

Each plays an important role in sport performance.

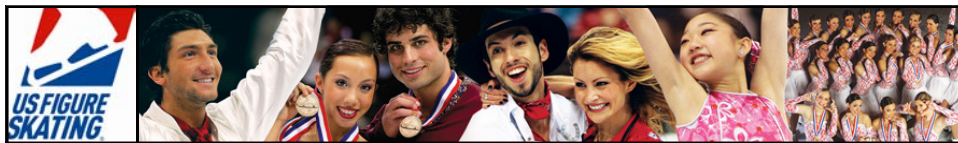
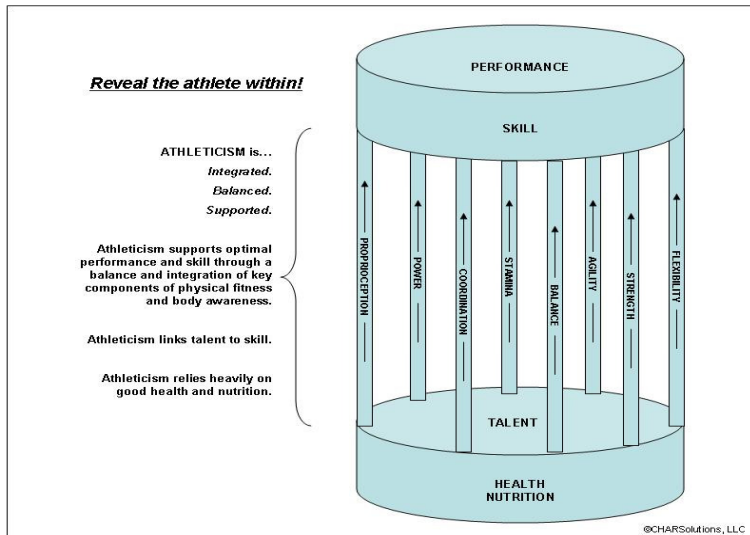
BUT

Single components do not constitute athleticism.



*Extremity strength without core strength?
Power without proprioception?
Agility without balance?*

- Unbalanced athleticism presents a risk to our safety.
- Unbalanced athleticism will always produce unbalanced skills.



Individual components of athleticism must...

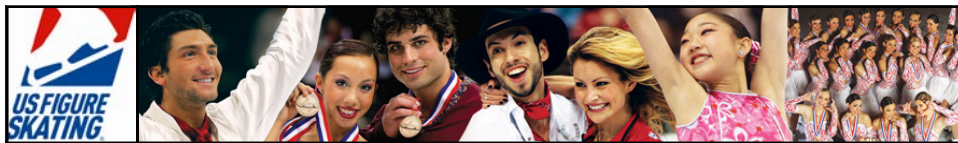
- be integrated
- be considered relevant to one another
- take one another into account



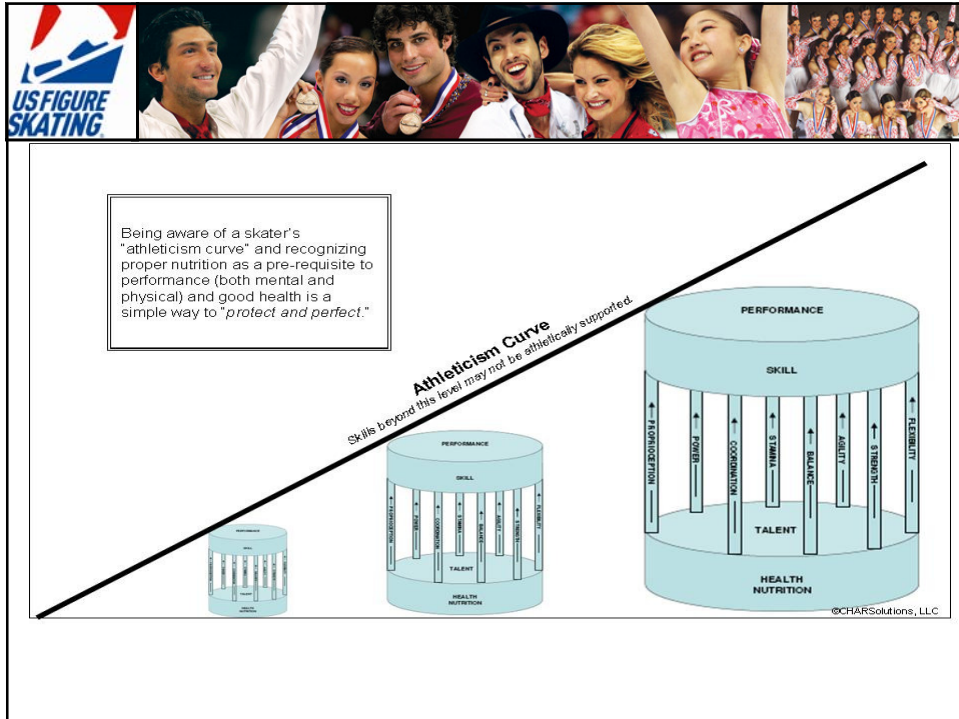
The impact of *athleticism* is greater than any single component.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Athleticism is the physical link between talent and skill.



Focusing on ALL components of athleticism, as opposed to just the ones we like and are good at, helps coordinate the development of *skill* with *athletic ability*.



Developing balanced and integrated athleticism in ourselves:

- For skaters between the ages of 6 and 10, promote physical activity and unstructured play outside of the rink.
- For those who are older, structured "conditioning" may be appropriate.
- Encourage participation in PE at school.
- For skaters over 12 years of age competing at the junior and senior level, periodized training plans are essential.
- Participate in testing/monitoring program that incorporates developmental stages and biological age.
- Keep an eye out for **S.T.A.R.S.**



Preliminary testing has confirmed that participation in athletic assessments stimulates interest and motivates young skaters to practice off-ice techniques!

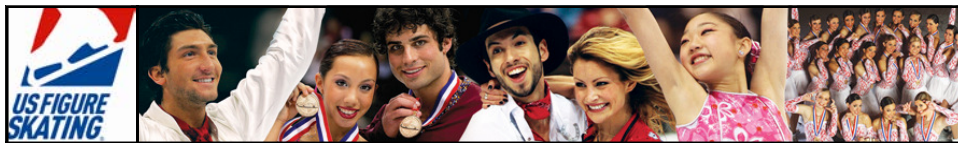
S.T.A.R.S

Skater Talent & Athleticism Recognition System

a new progressive system of flexibility, strength, power, anaerobic conditioning, balance and agility/coordination assessments

based on the need to promote robust, all-around fitness in young American skaters

encourages the physical preparation to handle the introduction of new, more complex and more demanding skating skills.



S.T.A.R.S. Objectives:

- **Promote and enhance athleticism and athletic ability in all young figure skaters through assessment, recognition, and opportunity.**
- **Reduce the rate of injury across all figure skating disciplines and competitive levels.**
- **Identify skaters who demonstrate exceptional aptitude for athleticism.**
- **Assist coaches and parents in developing and guiding their skater's potential.**



- S.T.A.R.S. is a SYSTEM
 - to establish standards of athleticism for young figure skaters
 - to encourage progression through the system by incorporating a "building" series of tests, achievement awards and improvement certificates.
- Age-, gender- and competitive level-matched assessment data across the United States
- Opportunities to be recognized for national performance, individual achievement and personal improvement.
- Opportunities for the coaches and families of skaters who demonstrate exceptional aptitude for athleticism and figure skating as an athletic sport.



Participation in **S.T.A.R.S.** should be fun, motivating, challenging and personally rewarding.

2008 is the trial and introduction year for the program.

We look forward to working with you in our first year of **S.T.A.R.S.!**



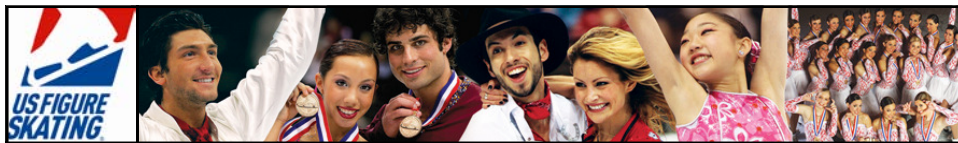
Athleticism may be the gateway to peak performance.

What we learn today may not place us on the Olympic Team tomorrow, next month or even next year.

But each new athletic improvement lays the foundation for the next, and over time, athleticism and skill execution safely approach peak potential.

Untapped athleticism will always limit talent (as opposed to revealing it).

Revealing athletic talent takes commitment, diversity and time.



“Success in competition should be the outcome of quality training, not chance or luck. It should be planned for and thus expected.”

“Bridging the Gaps” between the ART, SCIENCE and BUSINESS of coaching.

cboudreau@usfigureskating.org