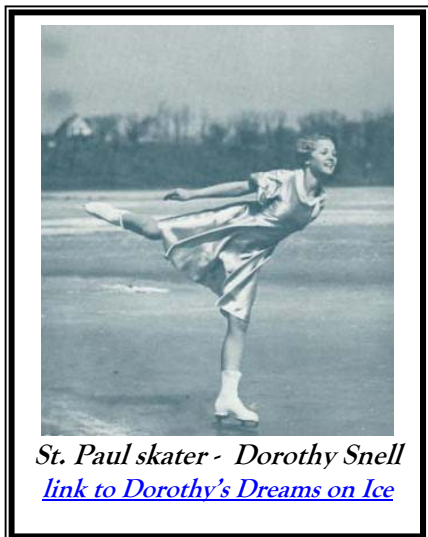


The 1930s....the dream begins here....



St. Paul skater - Dorothy Snell
[link to Dorothy's Dreams on Ice](#)

St. Paul Figure Skating Club becomes USFSA Member Club

In the spring of 1935, the St. Paul Figure Skating Club held its first organizational meeting to determine if it could meet the requirements of the USFSA and become a member. The St. Paul Figure Skating Club would replace the loosely formed "Auditorium Organization" and its home ice would be the St. Paul Auditorium. Fred Premer became the first president of the new club. St. Paul Figure Skating Club had its first official ice skating session in the fall of 1935 and became a USFSA member club in early 1936. The new club was incorporated in May 1938, and Lyman Wakefield was elected the new president.

The first year for the new club was very challenging as the club was tasked to stage a third benefit ice show for the Children's Hospital in April of that year. The Shipstads were focusing on their Ice Follies Tour and so the St. Paul Figure Skating Club stepped in and produced a highly successful third hospital fund-raiser. The Show included twenty-four acts featuring the Queen of the Snows and the students from St. Thomas Academy who performed a drill on the ice. The Club continued their association with the Children's Hospital benefit shows until 1939.



from *Ice Follies of 1936* program

"The Ice Follies of 1936 is being sponsored by the St. Paul Figure Skating Club.

This organization was recently formed and is a duly recognized member of the United States Figure Skating Association, the object of which is to develop the international style of figure skating among amateurs, to train them for national and international competition, and to publish rules governing competition.

In Canadian cities the skating clubs are an important factor in community life, and for over a period of years have put on interesting ice carnivals that have attracted many outside visitors. St. Paul can be very proud to have a club of its own to stimulate local interest in the art of figure skating and to support a worthwhile undertaking such as the Ice Follies.

Members who have received national and international recognition are Robin Lee, National singles Senior Champion 1935 and 1936, and on the Olympic Team in 1936. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Preusch, who placed third in the national pairs competition and Dorothy Snell who placed fourth in the National Novice competition in Boston in February 1936."

From Pops Concerts to Olympic Hopefuls

With several successful ice show productions behind them, the St. Paul Figure Skating Club began, in 1937, what has been called its "most significant civic contribution to the enrichment of St. Paul summers," the Pops Concerts. These ice shows would continue to be a part of the St. Paul Club, and provide summer entertainment, for the next thirty plus years!

The Pops Concerts at the St. Paul Auditorium provided the public with the perfect escape from the hot summer nights. Although the St. Paul Figure Skating Club board of directors thought the shows were a perfect plan to help defray expenses, they had to assume many of the responsibilities. They had to hire a professional staff which could teach, produce, and skate in the shows, design and make costumes, schedule rehearsals, and negotiate for the club's share in the profits.

With the start of the Pops Concerts came the start of the Summer Ice Sessions which not only provided training ice, but also revenue for the club. At that time, the only other summer ice in the United States was in Lake Placid and Sun Valley. The Summer Ice Sessions in St. Paul went from July



to September and attracted many top competitors from around the world. Among the top skaters who came to St. Paul were Barbara Ann Scott, Gretchen Merrill, Donald Gilchrist, Bobby Specht, and Hayes and David Jenkins.

The list of well-known and well-accomplished coaches who taught at the St. Paul Figure Skating Club during the Club's early years produced a long list of champions and national competitors. These coaches included A.R. Lee (National Competitor 1924), Orrin Markhus (Ice Follies), Maribel Vinson (nine time US Ladies Champion, runner-up at 1925 Worlds, and 3rd in 1932 Olympics), and Montgomery S. Wilson of Toronto (nine-time Canadian Champions, runner-up at Worlds and 3rd in 1932 Olympics.) Other professionals who helped make the St. Paul Figure Skating Club a nationally recognized club during those years were Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Brunet, Willie Frick, Megan Taylor, Vivi Anne Hulten, and Mr. Stanley Judson, a British ballet master, who was the director of the Pops Concerts.

from the *St. Paul Dispatch - April 25, 1938*

"St. Paul picked off one of the choicest of the country's sports events with the announcement today that it had been awarded the National Amateur Figure Skating Championships for 1939. Lyman Wakefield, president of the St. Paul Figure Skating Club which will be host to the event, received word today that the joint efforts of his organization and the St. Paul Winter Carnival association had been crowned with success. It was received from Roy W. McDaniel of Minneapolis and Harry Radix of Chicago, who attended the meeting of the National Figure Skating Association in New York Sunday.

The event, to be staged in the West for only the second time in records, will be January 19-20-21. St. Paul's bid for the meet was helped because the senior championship has been won four straight years by Robin Lee of St. Paul. Earl Reiter of Minneapolis, a member of the St. Paul Figure Skating Club, has been runnerup for two years. Dorothy Snell, formerly of St. Paul and now of Washington, placed second in the national junior event last winter and Shirley Bowman of St. Paul was seventh."



St. Paul Competitors included: Robin Lee, Robert Premer, Arthur Preusch, Jr., Shirley Bowman, Darlene Peterson, Joyce Metternich, Margaret Grant, Barbara Bernard, Patricia Robb, Virginia Kesting, Barbara Reynolds, Maxine Sheffer, Janet Ahrens, Mary Ann Mairs, Stanley Dwinnel, Edith Preusch, Arthur F. Preusch, Robert Uppgren, Bruce Sheffer, Dr. J. N. Pike, Angeline Knapp.

