

Leading Industry Groups Complete Skating Survey

(8/23/06) - A comprehensive, industry-driven survey conducted by the independent Southeastern Institute of Research (SIR) of Richmond, Va., concluded that overall enjoyment and interest in figure skating and hockey is extremely high and consistent among all regions of the country.

In addition, the statistically based survey found that parents' satisfaction with both of the ice sports is extremely high and that their children's enjoyment of the sports was the No. 1 reason for becoming more involved.

The research project was commissioned by five leading skating industry groups: the Ice Skating Institute (ISI), the Professional Skaters Association (PSA), STAR (Serving The American Rinks), USA Hockey and U.S. Figure Skating. Tom Hillgrove, president of Rink Management Services Corporation, served as chairman.

The survey, conducted by SIR, had a valid research sample of 17,748, a response rate of 17 percent and a margin of error of plus-or-minus 1.6 percent. Those surveyed were parents of current and former members of USA Hockey and U.S. Figure Skating, responding on behalf of their children.

The survey found that the child's level of interest was the most important factor in choosing the sport. The most important benefit of participating in both figure skating and hockey is to have fun, followed by staying physically fit.



Other findings included:

- Length of time most participants stay in the sport: 5-7 years for figure skating, 10-12 years for hockey
- Percentage of respondents who had taken part in a learn-to-skate program: 84 percent for figure skating, 69 percent for hockey
- Percentage of parents involved in the sports as adults: 17 percent for figure skating, 43 percent for hockey
- Percentage of parents likely to recommend the sports to others: 80 percent for figure skating, 91 percent for hockey
- Percentage of participants likely to stay involved after turning 18: 56 percent for figure skating, 71 percent for hockey
- Percentage of parents who have completed college degrees or post-graduate education: 73 percent for figure skating, 66 percent for hockey

"Our goal was to gather statistically valid information about our industry," Hillgrove said. "By interpreting the numbers, our industry can better plan our marketing. We have to become efficient at creating new skaters."

The survey grew out of an interest and commitment by all five skating organizations for more industry cooperation. It was an all-inclusive effort that will be utilized in marketing, retention, outreach, education and other areas.

SOURCE: USFSA.ORG