

recreational

IceSkating

Summer 2012

Ashley Wagner

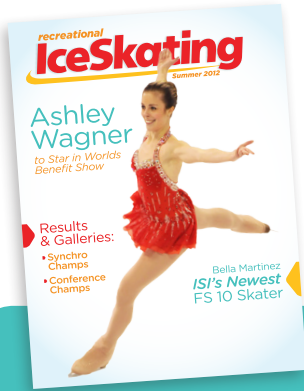
*to Star in Worlds
Benefit Show*

Results & Galleries:

- Synchro
Champs
- Conference
Champs

Bella Martinez
ISI's Newest
FS 10 Skater





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Leah Adams Photography

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▶ features

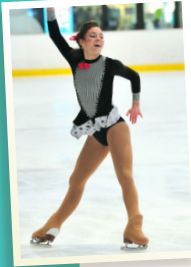
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Ice Skating Institute

Editor
Lori Fairchild

Editorial Advisors
Peter Martell
Randy Winship
Sean Flynn

Print Production & Advertising/Sponsorship Manager
Carol Jackson

Graphic Designer
Dallas Drotz



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The Joy of Being Bella

by Lori Fairchild

It's almost impossible to hear the name "Bella Martinez" and not smile. That's the effect this 17-year-old has on those who have met her — her sunny outlook, exuberant expressions, personal discipline and extraordinary talent all contribute to the joy that she brings to everything she does, on the ice and off. It doesn't hurt that she has a happy, lyrical name that seems to have been created just for her.

Much to the delight of the ISI judging panel, Bella's signature exuberance and stunning discipline were on full display during her ISI Freestyle 10 test in Burbank, Calif. last December during the Artistic Challenge competition. It was without hesitation that the judges pronounced her only the 30th skater worldwide to master the rigorous requirements of the FS 10 test.

"Bella did not merely want to pass the test," says Jayne Throckmorton, her coach of more than 10 years. "She wanted to excel at it. She set very high standards for herself, and getting every element up to her standards took a lot of time and effort. But Bella has always set her standards high. Even as a much younger skater, she allocated 15 minutes a day to practicing jumps in the opposite direction, with the FS 10 test in mind. That work has advanced her skill in other areas, allowing her to combine complex moves in the opposite direction in her competitive repertoire."

Not surprisingly, Coach Throckmorton describes Bella as "a joy to coach," adding that the teen is passionate and determined, arriving at her home rink of Skatetown in Roseville, Calif. each morning at 5 a.m., ready to make every minute count. After three hours on the ice, she's off to school at Roseville Academy of Math, Science and Engineering, where she will be a senior this year. Then she's back at Skatetown for more practice before heading home for homework, family time and an early lights-out.

Bella first set foot on the ice at age 3 1/2, when an ice rink employee invited her to help him bring in the cones at closing

time during a family visit to Squaw Valley. He and her parents were stunned at her natural balance and seemingly instant love of the surface — but after all, she had been telling them for over a year that she was going to be an ice skater when she was "a big girl."

That feisty toddler did, indeed, become an ice skater as she grew up, and an accomplished one, as well. Passing FS 10 was a personal goal for as long as she can remember. "Once I was old enough to understand that FS 10 was the top of the ISI ladder — the most prestigious of all ISI Freestyle tests — I knew that I would work toward this goal until I was ready to take the test. I absolutely love doing three butterflies in a row, and I found that the Axels in both directions were really fun, once I got the hang of it. Believe it or not, it was the death drop that gave me the greatest challenge. I had to work for a long time on that one!"

Bella has participated in two ISI Worlds competitions, in 2005 and 2009, and as ISI's newest FS 10 skater, has been invited to perform in this year's Benefit On Ice show at Worlds in Dallas.

"There are so many advantages and benefits to ISI membership," says Bella. "ISI competitions are filled with fun, friends, artistry and absolutely no stress — I love it! Being a member of ISI gives you lots of opportunities to earn unique skills and be rewarded for your hard work by passing the next test."

In addition to her achievements in the ISI program, Bella also competes in U.S. Figure Skating's Senior Ladies division, in which she has placed third at regionals and qualified for sectionals.

She and her parents and two younger brothers are a close-knit, supportive family who enjoy outdoor activities together. Bella is a voracious reader and aspiring writer who plans to study journalism and child psychology in college.

"But no matter what, skating will always be a very big part of my life," she notes. "When I step on the ice, I feel free and light, and the possibilities are endless. Skating is magical for me, and I love everything about it!" **RIS**



Coach Jayne Throckmorton, FS 10 skater Bella Martinez and ISI testing judge Carrie Clarke
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