

PICTURES OF SKATING ♦ BOOKS & PICTURES OF SKATING ♦ BOOKS & PICTURES

As the Head Spins

"Time code won't lock up." Mark Coch, so experienced at video editing, is rubbing his eyes. He's just pushed — click, click, click! — a bunch of flashing white buttons on the video mixer, trying to dissolve one shot (Gustave Lussi teaching Paul Wylie a flying sit spin) into the next (a freeze-frame of Paul in the spin). I look up from my script, an alarming amalgam of typeface, cellophane tape, staples, and white-out.

Not the first time I'd heard him say that today.... actually, tonight. We're editing Volume II of *Systematic Figure Skating* during the only available time at the edit suite. Mark states the above more as fact, or warning, for me to pay attention because this is his fourth attempt at programming the machinery and, for some mystical reason, the edit usually takes on the fourth go-round.

We've been through this 3 a.m. scene before, while putting together Volume I...

It all started with a simple, apparently logical notion: the spin and jump techniques of Gustave Lussi, originator of key freestyle moves, coach of numerous champions, should be available to coaches and skaters in video format.

In the eighties, I quit teaching, returned to college; however, Mr. Lussi and I kept in touch. He had asked me to document his skating methodology in a book. My mother and I had begun

was, on TV!

This attraction, and my personal devotion to Mr. Lussi, have impelled me into an experience, quite unexpected, that has been exciting, fun, rewarding... but very stressful.

I've always loved skating (started at four), but as a life's work I thought I'd left it behind me.

Not so. Phone rings: an order — "...expiration date, please..." Neither my mother nor I ever planned careers in mail order.

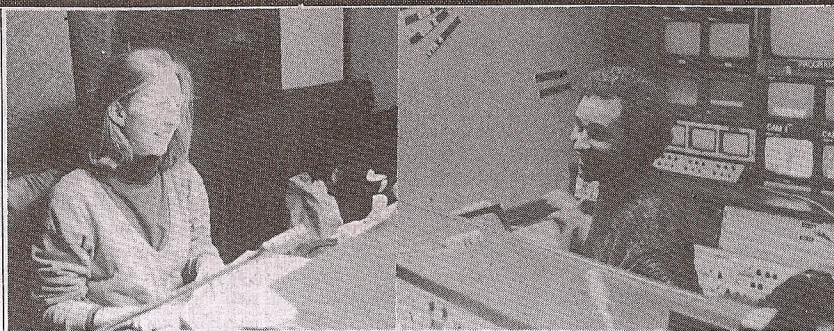
Mail arrives: letter from a coach saying that Volume I was helpful with students, and inquiring about Volumes II-IV. Nice. But... Bookkeeping. Filing. Shipping. The phone — hours and dollars. Music and performance rights. Insurance. Tax records... Aargh! Where did I put that letter? How come my computer won't...?

A simple idea has become complex and challenging.

The head spins.

Fortunately, with a great deal of help from others, extensive footage of Mr. Lussi teaching all his jumps and spins was obtained in 1988 and 1990, and I was able to edit and distribute Volume I of *The Spin and Jump techniques of Gustave Lussi* before he left us. He was extremely pleased, and encouraged me to finish the work.

Meanwhile, I started several other video projects. Now, with help from



Shown above are Cecily Morrow & Mark Coch, caught at a rare moment during the taping process; both are smiling...

Everyone: *The Beginner's Guide to a Lifetime Sport*. Another project... Last year, on camera, we taught a family, step-by-step, the fundamentals of skating from proper skate lacing (the way Mr. Lussi taught me), off-ice preparation, and first steps through forward crossovers.

Things go right, things go wrong. What is that thing in the background? Where'd that noise come from? The child is sick? Cancel the shoot. Etc. But finally Volume I is finished. (Volume II's not far behind. Yikes!)

Mom is encouraging. Always. Reminds me that good results don't come easy. So I go forward with my dizzying dream — which now encompasses numerous video volumes. The process, I find, forces a re-examination of skating fundamentals and teaching details. For instance, my intensive documentation of how to teach a beginner the fundamentals has reinforced my initial belief that a responsible skating teacher will not just get the student to do the maneuver, but will introduce/demonstrate the "refinements" (form, weight

advanced concepts..

Sharing of ideas, knowledge, within our community of expertise, is my goal... regardless of early morning hours — hours worse than when I was teaching!

"Preview edits are for wimps," Mark declares, jarring me from A.M. drifting, hand poised over the BIG, red, *RECORD*.

"No--Don't push that--!"

"Just making sure you're awake."

Much to do. Mark and I finished Volume II of the Lussi series last fall. Now, between ballet training, skating, and new production efforts, I'm working on Volumes III and IV — the jumps — which we hope to bring you sometime this summer...that is, if Mark's still willing to work with me. He's a sound engineer and musician; that may explain the keen sense of flow in his editing of skating images. I, however, constantly request the impossible, like: "Can you rotate that freeleg open a little bit?"

On our last day of editing, around 6:00 a.m., he started typing graphics on the monitor like "Why me?"

working from our copious notes. As Mr. Lussi aged, my task became more urgent. The documenting of Mr. Lussi at work *had* to happen...

Video has a special attraction for me. As a small child, I was enthralled by my inventor father's electronic experiments. Long before commercial models appeared, he had a video tape recorder in operation... Wow! there I

family and friends, I'm committed to bringing to the skating public techniques of great coaches with whom I've been privileged to associate.

While editing the Lussi Volume I in Lake Placid, a favorite place, I freeskated for demonstration purposes, but also fun. Isn't that why we came to the rink, originally? The speed, power, and control of the resident Russian Ice dancers attracted me, and Natalia Dubova introduced me to her technique. After applying her unique methods to my freeskating and seeing a noticeable difference, I realized a video for freeskaters and ice dancers was the natural outcome. Last summer we shot footage for *Stroking Exercises on Ice: The Beginner's Guide to a Lifetime Sport*, and now the video's available.

And now, my mother (a partner in all this), always considering basics, had a new idea: *Ice Skating For*

placement over the blade, posture, freeleg extension, etc.) as attainable goals — educate the beginner to more

"Help!" "Never again."
Stay tuned folks...

Submitted by Cecily A. Morrow
ASW

Liza Dey Figure Skating Photography

Liza Dey, a New York-based freelance photographer, began her skating photography business in 1992, after a fellow photographer asked her why she didn't show and sell some of her collection of skating photographs. Previously shooting primarily scenic and nature photography, her work has appeared in *Photographer's Forum's "Best of Photography"* 1987 and 1990. But in the late eighties, she began combining her love of figure skating with her love of photography to find her true niche.

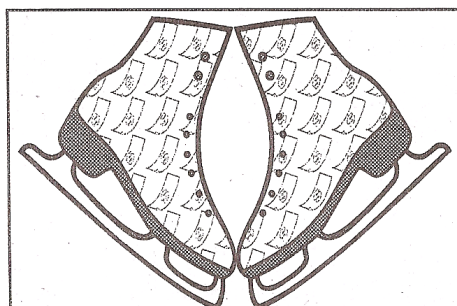
Currently listing a collection of well over 300 photos from most major shows, tours and many competitions, dating back to 1990, her photos range in style from a traditional, straight-forward approach to a more artistic, impressionistic style.

A former dancer and actress, she

feels her theatrical background heavily influences her work. She is strongly drawn to the dramatic elements and body line which make each skater, or each performance, unique. Also, having done a fair amount of theatrical lighting work, she prefers the artistic possibilities afforded by theatrically lit shows, and loves to work with the interplay of body line and shadows and silhouette.

Her work can currently be seen in all the major skating publications, as well as in the book *On The Ice*, by Alexis Burakoff. Her work will also be seen in the upcoming book *Ice Skating: From Axels to Zambonis*, by Dan Gutman, due out in the fall from Viking's Children's Press. Future plans include putting out her own calendar for 1996 and putting out a line of notecards.

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