



MID-WESTERN PRIZE WINNERS.
 (left to right) MISS DURBROW, MR. DURBROW, MR. PREUSCH, MR. LEE, MR. SWALLENDER,
 MRS. PREUSCH, MISS HAROLDSON.

Mid-Western Championships

BY THERESA WELD BLANCHARD

The Skating Club of Boston.

A large crowd of enthusiasts, both competitors and spectators, journeyed from all the important skating centres of the mid-west to the Winter Garden, St. Louis, on January 30, for the Mid-Western Figure Skating Championships, the first interstate contest of its kind ever held in this country. The events were organized under the direction of Mr. George Muller, professional at the St. Louis Skating Club, and represented much painstaking effort on the part of the club's officers and members to make it a success.

As a part of its program for the development of figure skating throughout the country, the United States Figure Skating Association sent two judges from the east: Mrs. Theresa Weld Blanchard and Mr. Heaton R. Robertson. The third judge was Mr. Chris I. Christenson of St. Paul, who has officiated at many national championships in the past.

Probably the most important angle of the Championships, outside of the excellent quality of the skating, was the enormous interest which they aroused throughout the entire mid-western area. Mr. Bennett drove a party down from Minneapolis; Anne Haroldson and her father came from Duluth; a party of ten or more came from Chicago to see Eleanor Berger compete; Dr. and Mrs. Ockerblad, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, Virginia Bucher and her father, came from Kansas City; Mr. V. E. Christenson and a friend motored from Des Moines. The opportunity to meet other enthusiasts and exchange ideas was one which they felt could not be missed and proved of immense value to those who are not able to secure good professional instruction or see expert amateurs, often.

The ladies' competition was extremely close and in many ways was the most interesting. The winner, Anne Haroldson of Duluth, ex-

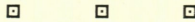
cuted her school figures with good control and form and a beautifully rounded edge. Her one foot eight would have been outstanding in any competition. Miss Haroldson's free program was varied and well-composed; containing interesting spirals, flowing dances and good spins and jumps. Her free skating showed the same easy form and control as her school figures and was delightful to watch. Katherine Durbrow of St. Louis was a very close second. She was slightly behind Miss Haroldson on school figures; mainly because, while her turns were good, her edges were not finished and she seemed hurried. In free skating Miss Durbrow was placed first by two judges; her program was well-planned and skated in a very pleasing rhythmic style. Mrs. Preusch of Minneapolis, who placed third, was apparently nervous and it was easy to see she was not skating the school figures as well as she could. In the free skating she was more in her usual form and did an interesting program well. Miss Eleanor Berger of Chicago is a skater of great promise, whose free skating at the present time surpasses her school figures. Her program, adapted to music from Faust, was well arranged and beautifully executed, but gave the impression of lacking in competitive difficulty and variety. Myra Jean Azbe of St. Louis, who is only fourteen, has a most charmingly dignified and serious manner in both school figures and free skating. Her execution shows the real thought which she puts into her skating and she should progress rapidly. Miss Virginia Bucher of Kansas City has never had any lessons and her skating was praised by all. She has an extremely pleasing style and, while her program was simple it was gracefully and rhythmically skated.

The judges were unanimous throughout the men's event, which was dominated by Robin Lee, the only really experienced competitor. Mr. Swallender of Minneapolis was second. His school figures were good and his free skating well planned and smoothly executed; he compares most favorably with our Eastern Juniors and we certainly hope he will come to compete with them soon. Mr. Preusch of Minneapolis was third; he has spent much of his time on pair skating and his school figures lack the finish of Mr. Swallender's. Ollie Haupt of St. Louis is only twelve and showed up extremely well; his free skating is nice but both that and the figures need much hard work. At the moment he is extremely promising. Mr. Williams of Kansas City entered the competition in spite of the fact that he had never had any lessons or seen any experts. After the school figures he decided to withdraw, believing he could profit more by studying the others. Such interest and

enthusiasm as he showed proves that these events are of real value to many struggling skaters.

There were only two entries in the pair event, which was keenly contested. Mr. and Mrs. Preusch won mainly on their better team work. This pair has given many exhibitions around the Twin Cities and skate splendidly together. They had very wisely removed some of the more spectacular exhibition features of their pair and offered a smooth, well arranged program. Miss Durbrow and Mr. Cady of St. Louis had an excellent program, which they skated in good form except for a slight lack of unity.

While the marks were being added, an informal waltz competition was held, which was won by Mr. and Mrs. Preusch. Then all adjourned to a supper party, where speeches were made and a birthday cake cut in honor of the inauguration of this most successful competition. The Chicago Figure Skating Club presented a trophy for the ladies' singles, to be won three times for permanent possession. This cup is of sterling silver with a gold lining; it is about twelve inches high and is set on an ebony stand, on which is a silver band for the names of the winners. Plans are now underway to hold these events in a different club each year, and if the first is any indication, the succeeding ones should be of great interest and value to all mid-west skaters.



An Ambitious Beginner

A rather stoutish lady appeared to take her first lesson in skating. She noticed Miss Loughran executing a graceful edge with her characteristic lean, and pointing at her she said to her professional: "I want to learn to get a slant like that girl"!