



PACIFIC COASTS

Coastal report

Sunny skies sustained themselves, as if on purpose, throughout the three days of the Pacific Coast Championships, December 18-20, in Berkeley, California. It was hoped that the entire competition would be as flawless. But such was not to be.

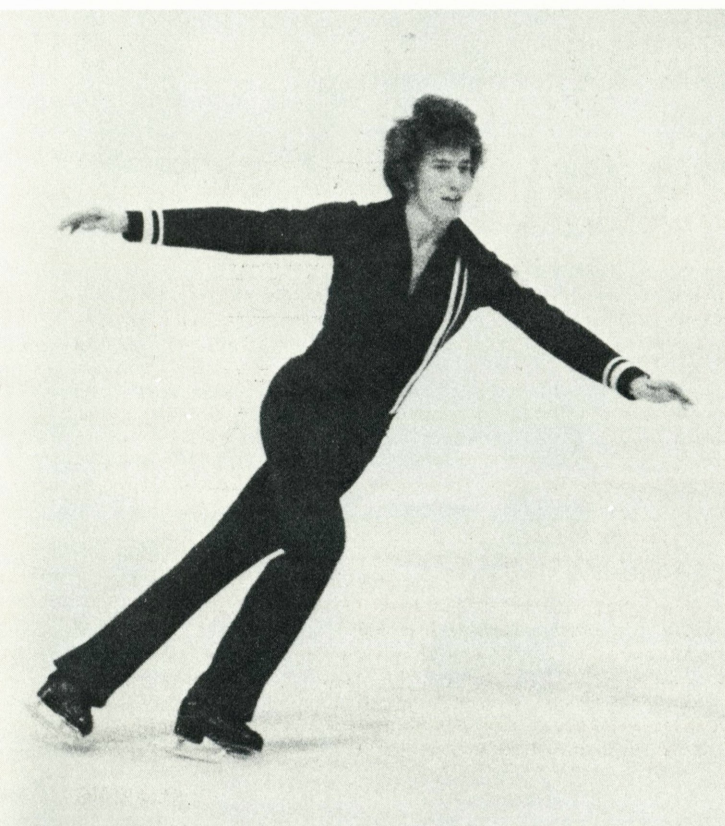
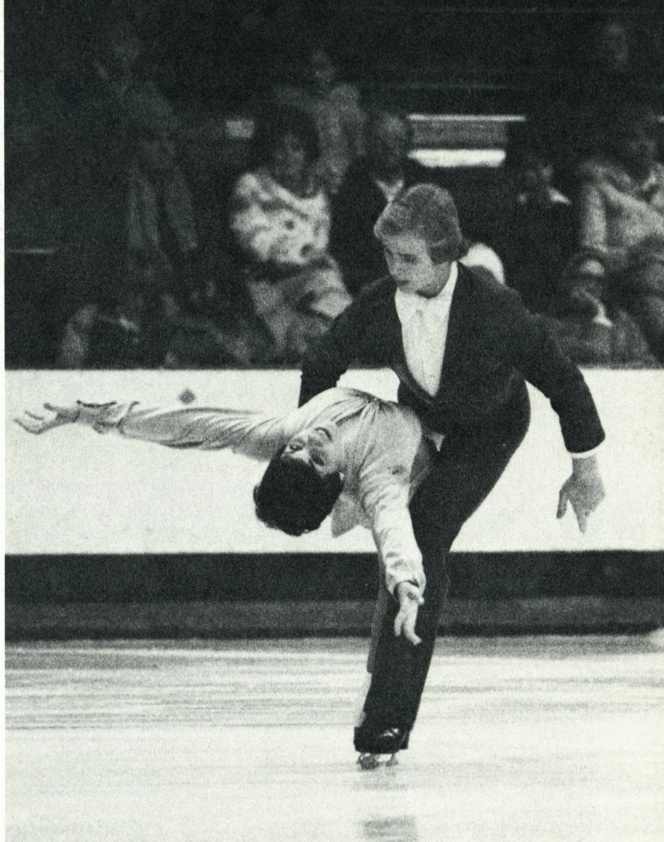
This was an unusual Pacific Coasts, in that it was not entirely dominated by Southern Californian skaters. This was immediately evident in the Intermediate categories, in which Brian Boitano of Silver Edge FSC and Lynn Smith of St. Moritz ISC won their separate divisions. Lynn's victory was particularly satisfying since her strong free program, including two double Axels, pulled her up from fourth in figures—despite an injured knee. There was a great deal of position changing in this class, with Stella Signorello, a very polished skater, moving up from seventh to fourth. The excellence of Phoenix-area dancers made itself known in Bronze

Dance, won by Robi Shepard & Kelly Witt.

In Novice Pairs, the most striking couple—for reasons that had little to do with technical merit—was seven-year-old Renee Sartuche and nine-year-old Jordan Bell. Being young and small, Jordan had a hard time lifting Renee much above his shoulders, but the mere attempt was utterly charming, and even the judges were hard put to keep from laughing. The event was won by Michelle Dornan & Alan Wardin.

The pursuit of the much revered triple jump appeared at the Novice level, in both men's and ladies' categories. Jill Sawyer's triple helped raise her from seventh to third, while Vicki Heasley just edged out Lori Benton for first place. A similar giant step up came in the Men's division. Reggie Raiford ultimately maintained the lead he gained in figures, but Scott Prussack, who was ninth in figures, won the free skating with two double Axels and a triple Salchow.

Dee Oseroff & Craig Bond (right) swept past last year's silver medalists to win Gold Dance, while Ken Newfield (below) retained his Senior Men's title. Lisa Carey & Douglas Varvais (opposite) were second only to the new National Pair Champions.



All photos: Photocraft by Alberto

He thus placed third, just behind Robert Taylor.

Like several other events, Junior Men was a statistical puzzle. This was partly due to the fact that Robert Wagenhoffer, seventh in figures, pulled up to third, thanks to his outstanding free skating. He executed a triple Salchow/double toe-loop combination in his short program and a triple Salchow, triple toe-loop and near perfect triple Lutz in the final round. But the winner and, being a local boy, the crowd's favorite, was Allen Schramm. Allen gets more spectacular every year, not so much in technical ability—he missed his triple Salchow—as in the dynamism of his presentation. One skater who has great potential is 13-year-old Mark Cockerell, the runner-up who had a solid triple Salchow and a not quite so solid triple toe-loop. He was done a disservice, however, by skating his short program in a red, white and blue outfit to the tune of "You're a Grand Old Flag"—a clear case of overreaching in the cuteness category.

Junior Ladies had some surprises, too. Carrie Rugh had the most outstanding short program, and it seemed she might take the lead. But

Clarissa Perrella, with her high-energy free skating, won out. Clarissa is an especially good jumper, with high double Axels and a combination of three double jumps. Sally Anderson, a very pleasing skater to watch, was a very close second to Clarissa, losing ground on technical merit. Tai Babilonia, showing her versatility as a singles skater, placed fourth in this event.

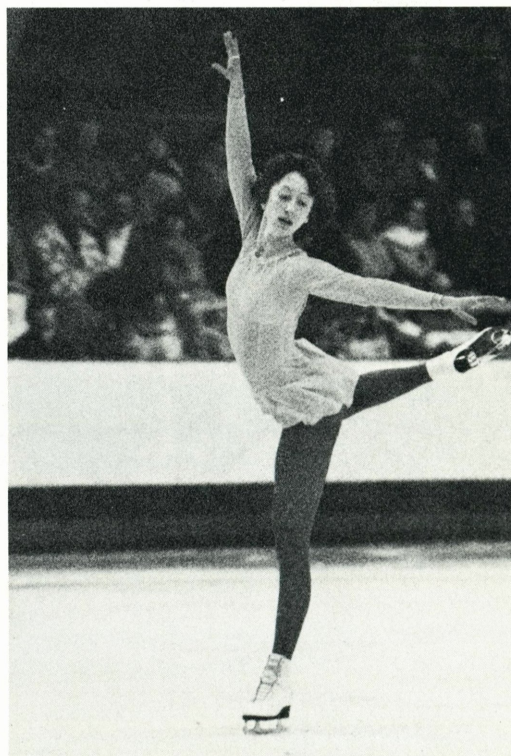
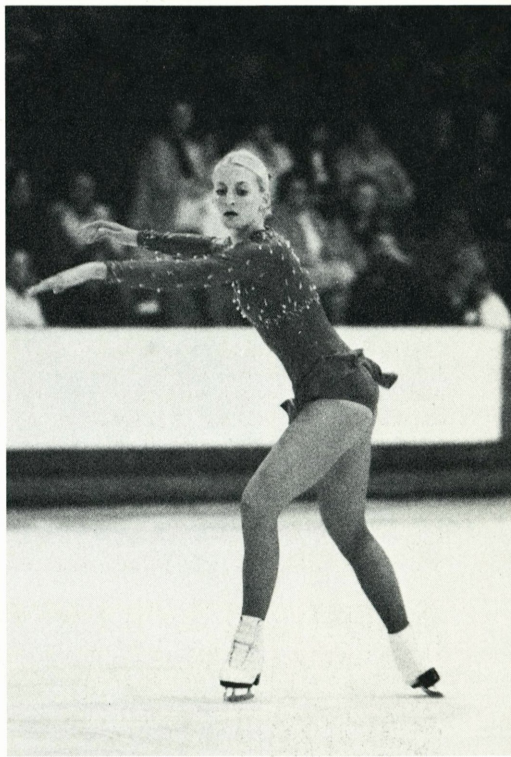
Junior Pairs was a particularly controversial category, with Danelle Porter & John Maddison coming out on top. They had the most interesting choreography of the class, with several moves, including Danelle's shoot-the-duck through John's legs, borrowed from roller skating. Dana & Edward Reisman, in second, were one of several couples to do an Axel lift into a forward somersault by the girl.

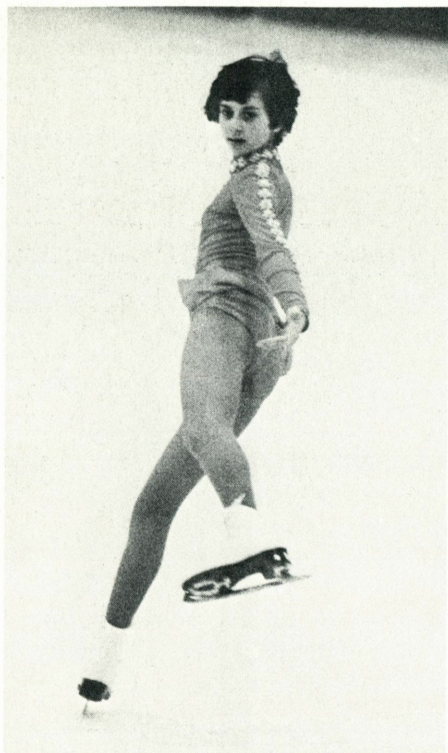
One of the real surprises and upsets came in Gold Dance, in which Dee Oseroff & Craig Bond edged out Debbie Ganson & Gerry Lane. Oseroff & Bond were notable in having an original set-pattern that was clearly a rumba, and not a samba or tango. They had the liveliest free dance, as well, with several mini-lifts and



All photos: Photocraft by Alberto

Senior Lady Linda Fratianne (below) used two triple jumps to best Lisa Allen (right) and Suzie Brasher (lower right). Local favorite Allen Schramm (opposite) won the Junior Men's crown.

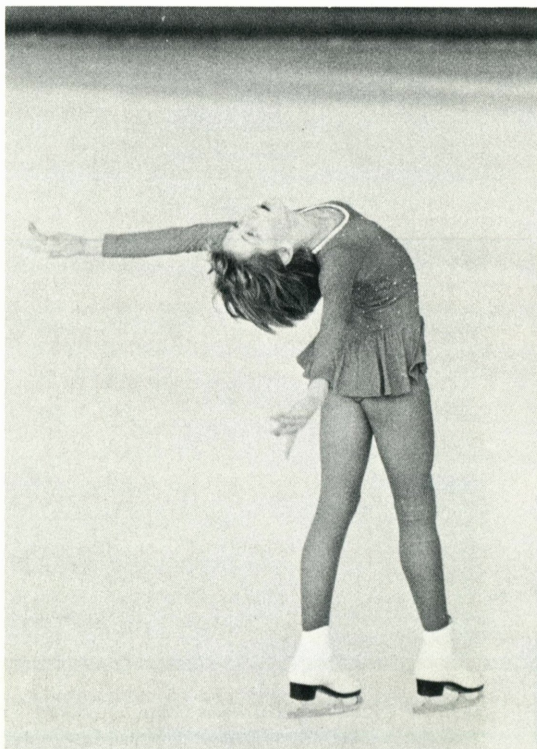




an especially good Kilian section.

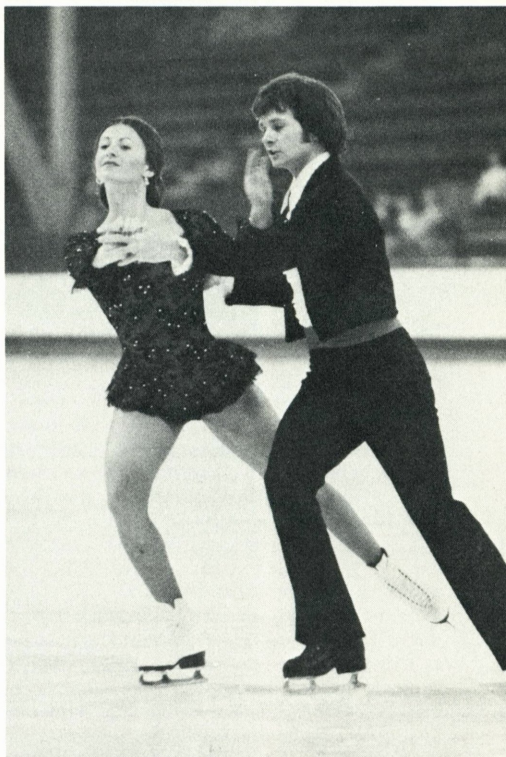
One of the anomalies of the Senior Men's and Ladies' competitions was that the technical merit of the women was generally higher than that of the men. Two women, Lisa-Marie Allen and the phenomenal Linda Fratianne, executed perfect triple jumps, but none of the men did, although three men made attempts. Also, whatever stylistic or artistic influence Toller Cranston may have had last year seems not to have carried over to this year's men's programs, which all heavily emphasized athleticism over artistry. Ken Newfield won, having established a strong position in figures. His long program was marred by a fall on the triple Lutz, but his masculine, unfussy style held him in good stead. Randy Gardner held a consistent second throughout, followed closely by Perry Jewell, who came the closest to a distinctively dance-like style.

The real showstoppers came in Senior Ladies. Despite Teresa Foy's lead in figures, the event was dominated by Linda Fratianne's free skating. In her long program she pulled off a triple Salchow, a triple toe-loop and a double Axel in combination, an achievement that earned her a 6.0 for technical merit from one judge. Lisa-Marie Allen was the other Senior Lady to have a triple jump, in her case a triple Salchow, plus a spectacular double Lutz/double toe-loop combination. It was nice to see Suzie Brasher pull up from sixth to third, as she has marvelously



light double jumps, an interesting flying camel with variations of position, and front and back split jumps.

Up to this point the competition was trouble free, but Senior Pairs was to change that. The first accident came in warm-up for the final, when Lyndy Marron severely injured her knee on a throw double Axel, and she and her brother Hal had to scratch. Then, a few seconds into their program, Joyce Hanson & Anthony Kudrna collided on side-by-side flying camels, and his chin was gashed by her blade. They had to end their program at that point and placed third. Tai Babilonia & Randy Gardner won by a healthy margin, proving once again that they are better together than apart. In addition to their customary flair, they had an especially spectacular one-hand cartwheel lift, a throw double Axel and an all-the-way-down death spiral. Perhaps inevitably, they overshadowed another excellent pair, Lisa Carey & Douglas Varvais, who were second.—*Sue Schauppner*



(Clockwise, from right:) *Silver Dancers Karen Berzon & Gary Forman; Senior Pair Joyce Hanson & Anthony Kudrna; Novice Ladies Cindy Moyers and Jill Sawyer; Junior Lady Champion Clarissa Perrella.*

