

## Ice Dance Tuition

iSKATE's sports science expert and international ice dance competitor, DIANA ENTWISTLE, gives the thumbs up to a DVD that teaches the lower level dances.

# Help yourself to learn to ice dance

The *Learn to Ice Dance Volume 1* DVD produced by USA-based Sharper Edge productions was produced to fill the gap in the market for a professionally produced instructional DVD for the lower level ice dances. While the ISU provides DVDs and videos for the higher level test dances, there has never been a good quality, clear and professional look at those dances which are performed by the majority of ice dancers. This DVD is designed for all those who are starting in the world of ice dance and features six dances in detail with a playing time of about 35 minutes.

The DVD focuses on each of the basic forward and early backward dances required for the British test levels 1-4. For each dance the format is the same - the dance is described in terms of timing, the diagrammatic pattern is shown and some of the basic key features are described in detail at the same time as the dance or particular steps are demonstrated. For example the Canasta Tango includes a detailed look at the intricacies of the chassé and slide chassé movements. There is also a look at the partnering features of the dance including the hold and areas where partner unity is essential. Finally there are useful tips on interpreting the character of the dance, be it Tango, Waltz, Cha Cha or Blues.

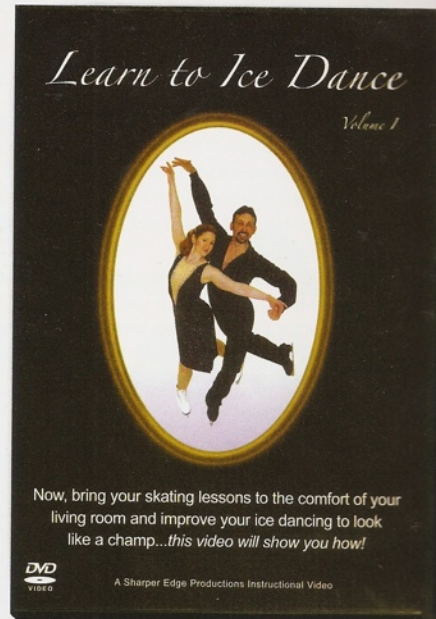
After the detailed look the dance is demonstrated in its entirety in slow motion with the commentary clearly announcing each step and its timing as it is performed. Finally the dance is shown at full speed with good use of camera angles to ensure viewers can clearly see the pattern placement on the ice surface. This final demonstration is without commentary to allow the music to be clearly heard.

*IceDancers.com*

Information, products and resources for ice dancers

**LEARN TO ICE DANCE DVD** - designed to complement your own learning & practice, this video breaks down the steps to each dance in slow motion with narration, explains basic partner holds and new steps for each dance, reviews music timing information, and provides a visual layout of each dance pattern on the ice.

[www.IceDancers.com](http://www.IceDancers.com)



The DVD provides an excellent review of the early dances. It has clear visual demonstrations by a competent dance couple and easy to understand commentary. Adult ice dancers would benefit from this visual record and for solo dancers the DVD would provide a good aide memoire as to the partnering features of the dance which they may only get to practice when in a lesson with their coach. For all adult dancers this DVD would clearly aid confidence on dance club sessions and possibly increase the number of dances in which they can participate. For trainee coaches unfamiliar with dance the DVD could equip them with sufficient understanding of the basic concepts and considerations and help with the knowledge required for the coaching exams. For younger skaters it gives a clear demonstration which would assist in learning and remembering steps - especially when the child is a particularly visual learner. The disadvantages for the younger viewer may be the unfamiliar dance music as American dance music is used.

The DVD demonstrates the tests in the first two American ice dance tests - the preliminary test (Dutch Waltz, Canasta Tango and Rhythm Blues) and the pre-bronze (Swing Dance, Cha Cha and Festival Tango). For British skaters this covers test levels 1-4 missing out the Novice Foxtrot (in level 1) and the entire level 3 test of the Golden Skaters Waltz and Riverside Rhumba. However the DVD includes the untested Cha Cha and, in the bonus preview of volume 2, the Hickory Hoedown which is in the American Bronze test. The additional dances are a bonus to dance club skaters but the missing British test dances may prove slightly frustrating especially as the dances which are included are done so in such a clear, concise and structured way.

The DVD is certainly a well produced response to a definite gap in the market.