



ALTERNATES POLICY

A synchronised skating team is usually made up of 20 skaters. From these 20 skaters, 16 will perform the routine and the other 4 skaters will be alternates. Team size is subject to individual competition criteria and the routine requirements so some teams may be smaller in number.

An alternate is a skater who does not skate in every competition for various reasons which can include newness to the team or the team just has an overflow of skaters. Our teams rotate alternates where possible so if you are selected to be alternate on one occasion, it does not mean that you will automatically be selected as alternate next time.

At competition the alternates are on standby to skate at the entry point to the ice with the team coach, ready in skates, full costume and makeup while the team competes. Alternates can be asked to fill in for a skater who is sick, injured or absent. Any skater may have a problem at any time with their blades, laces, or a screw could come loose at the last minute and prevent them from skating.

With all this in mind, an alternate is counted as much a part of the team as the rest of the skaters as they may need to jump into any spot at very short notice, in fact right up until the team is ready to start.

Why was I chosen as alternate?

As mentioned above, there are many reasons why someone is chosen to be alternate and the coaching team will have thought very hard about their choices. Remember that coaches are thinking about the team as a whole and not just about individual skaters. You may be selected as alternate because you are able to learn different spots very quickly and are able to adapt or simply because there are too many skaters to skate everyone and someone has to be chosen as alternate.

The coaches and club officials understand that being selected as alternate can be very upsetting especially as they have worked just as hard as the other skaters in the team. After trialling many ways to notify skaters and parents that they are the alternate, it has been decided that alternates will be notified on the day of the competitive skate after the warm up skate. We always do this with at least 2 members of club committee present (usually team manager and deputy) and we try to do it with parents present if the skater is under 18 and away from the rest of the club. It can be very difficult at competitions to find an appropriate moment without making it obvious to everyone

around you but we do our very best and recognise that this is a difficult conversation for everyone involved.

Remember, being selected as alternate does not mean that you're not a competent skater or are doing anything wrong, it just means that on this occasion it is you. You are still a vital part of the whole team. Also remember that synchro is a competitive sport and any competitive team has substitutes (alternates) whether it is football or skating. It is not a reflection of you as a person.

Still not sure about alternates?

Please talk to your team manager or coach if you have any concerns about the role of alternate.