

King's skating clubs mark their return to the rinks

By Robert Belardi

If you want to skate this year, you will have the chance. If you want to continue to build on your figure skating technique and elegance, there's room for that, too. King Township's grassroots skating clubs for young children and competitive will be opening this year following a collaborative effort between skating clubs and minor hockey that convinced the township to open ice facilities, the King Weekly Sentinel has learned. In what will be marked as a predominantly difficult winter season this year, Schomberg Skating Club, King City Skating Club and Nobleton Skating Club will be able to harness skaters' talents and further grow their acumen but might not be able to open learn to skate programs for beginners. President of Nobleton Skating Club, Karlene MacDonald says this is a huge loss. "All of us clubs will take a really huge hit because we can't take the little babies, we can't take the newbies, so, we're limited there," MacDonald said. Skaters must be further than stage two in their ranks to be able to sign up. As not for profit organizations, these skating clubs will have to unfortunately alter their prices due to smaller numbers on the ice. King City Skating Club, will be selling jackets and water bottles to mitigate costs in a year where all clubs will be snake-bitten financially. It was recommended by the governing body of all the clubs that 19 skaters can be on the ice at once. If there are less skaters, there is an opportunity for coaches to suit up. If a 19-skater maximum has been reached, coaches must remain in the box. But, with smaller numbers comes a little more ice time and for those registering this year, this is an excellent "building year" for skaters with more opportunity to practice. "We're going to take this as a true building year," said Brenda Ferreira, coach at the King City Skating Club. "Maybe, they will try maybe some more tests." In skating, to move on to the next level, skaters must complete a series of tests. Normally every year, Nobleton and King City Skating Club partner-up to host test days for their club's skaters in front of judges, but this year, Ferreira and Macdonald said, test days may or may not happen. What else is also "up in the air" are competitions. Ferreira confirmed, most northern skating clubs won't be running this year and competitions may have to be held virtually to accommodate for judges who wish to stay home. All-Ontario skaters who were prepared to perform last year in the province's prestigious competition, will have to continue waiting. Competitions that have yet to be announced by Skate Ontario and Skate Canada, may be held virtually so relatives and members of family can see their young competitors from the computer screen. With the Christmas season just two months away, all skating clubs have had to rethink their models for their winter celebrations. Schomberg Skating Club has had to cancel their family skate outright for this year. Nobleton's holiday show may be altered virtually as well or limited to one spectator per skater. As of now, all skating clubs are based out of the Trisan Centre in Schomberg, while awaiting on Nobleton Arena, which is expected to open Oct. 19. As of this year, King City Arena will be closed. All skating clubs took to the ice last week. They look forward to another year out on the ice despite some setbacks. Registrations are currently open.