



**Brother-sister combo**

Photo / KATE GILDERDALE

Tim and Jennifer Bunker have integrated figure skating into their lives since moving to the area from Timmins four years ago. It appears now that the pair

will travel far in the world of competitive skating, thanks in part to the early start they have at their chosen sport.

**Bunkers take figure skating seriously**

By KATE GILDERDALE

For Tim and Jennifer Bunker of Goodwood, involvement in figure skating has become an important focal point of their lives since they moved from Timmins four years ago.

Both 15-year-old Tim and 13-year-old Jennifer first decided to try skating when they went to see their niece in a carnival.

Says Tim, "when I went into Canskate, I got through it quickly and it felt pretty good, so then I tried figure skating."

They were both involved for about a year in Timmins before they moved to their present home.

Tim is now at the pre-novice level and much of his time is spent at the arena.

"I skate about six times a week, for about two or three hours a day."

In the winter Tim and Jennifer skate in Orillia and Uxbridge, while in the spring, summer and fall they travel to Barrie. During the summer vacation, says Tim, "we skate for about five hours a day, five days a week."

Getting into figure skating is difficult, he states.

"It's a little easier if you start when you're very young, about four or five."

He'd like to turn professional if he makes the grade.

On the rare occasions he's not skating, travelling or keeping up with school work, "I just ride my bike and sometimes go skateboarding, but not very often."

Tim has picked up an impressive collection of medals in the last four years, including golds at the 1985 James Bay preliminary boys pre-juvenile, the 1986 Pineridge Interclub pre-juvenile and the 1987 North Bay pre-juvenile competitions. He was fourth overall in the 1988 All Ontario competition.

His sister Jennifer has always been interested in figure skating. Her biggest thrill comes, she

says, "when I do a perfect program." Making mistakes, on the other hand is "very depressing."

Jennifer and Tim skate in the early morning between 7 and 9 a.m. and in the evenings after school. It's a time consuming schedule admits Jennifer, and there are times when it can be overwhelming, but she can't imagine giving it up.

Apart from skating, Jennifer loves playing the flute in the school band.

"I competed in the Sunderland Festival in a duet with Leanne Evans and we came second," she says proudly.

Like her brother, she would love to become a professional skater. When she gets older, her ambitions are to take up marine biology or to become a professional flute player.

Jennifer was named 1987 Skater of the Year at Uxbridge Skating Club and her trophies include silver medals in the 1987 Uxbridge pre-juvenile 'C' flight, the 1987 Pineridge pre-juvenile 'B' final and the 1988 Minden junior freeskate.

Since figure skating attracts far more girls than boys, the competition among the girls is much tougher, her mother points out.

"It's usually at least 30 to 40 girls, and maybe 10 to 12 boys competing."

Tim and Jennifer have been coached by Neil Carpenter in Orillia, and for three years Mike Sanderson was their Uxbridge coach.

"Barb Purdy also coaches us in Uxbridge," says Jennifer. "They've all been very supportive."

The Bunkers says that, for serious skaters, the younger they start the better their chances of success.

Says their mother, "it's a great advantage when you're young, because there are age restrictions when you get into competitive skating. If you start late, it's hard to catch up."

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