



Lacing The Skates

How many players tie their skates real tight, all the way to the top? And tape the ankles as well?

How many players tie them so loosely that the feet wobble around in the skates?

Skates need to be laced securely from the balls of the feet to the tops of the ankles. Skaters' feet need to be well supported by the boots, but not laced so tightly that the skates act as "casts".

Above the ankles the skates can be laced fairly loosely. Many high level skaters choose not to lace them at all above the ankles because support is not needed above the ankles.

For effective edging capability players must be able to strongly flex their ankles inward and outward. Therefore skates must offer good support while at the same time allowing the skater to "roll" the ankles inward and outward.

Knee bend is also critical. In order to bend the knees, the feet and knees must be able to flex forward. If skates are laced too tightly at the tops, or if the ankles are taped, the effect is the same as putting the feet in casts. They become immobile and un-usable. And it's pretty hard to bend the knees!

I also suggest that players keep the tongues of the skates over the shin pads rather than inside them. This allows them to bend their knees more effectively.

Bending the knees and rolling the ankles is crucial for Great Skating.

Laura Stamm, © September, 2005