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## **Welcome Matt Evers to the Board of Directors & Thank You to Jed Hopkins**

By: Ashley Clark



I would like to take this time to personally thank Jed Hopkins for a great 2 year term with us on the Board of Directors. Your help at our annual seminar in Sun Valley, and good leadership skills were exactly what PS needed. Thank you for your thoughts, ideas and time with us. I speak for the rest of the board when I say we wish you the best with your skating career and we love you.

At this time I would like to welcome Matt Evers as our new PS Board of Directors Secretary. We are elated that Matt has joined our team! His innovative ideas will help set PS on a high level. You may know Matt from Torvill and Dean's massive hit television show "Dancing On Ice" where he has been skating and starring in, for the past 6 years. In 2008 he won his first trophy with UK's Dancing on Ice".

He has done a number of professional shows as well, and more recently Matt has been noticed for his rare broadcasting talent that has been both on national and international Television. We welcome Matt with open arms and are very excited to see where Matt can take PS!



[Check out the entire ProSkaters Board of Directors online.](#)

### **Virtual SkateOff Semi-finalists**



Hot off the press, the top three in the Virtual Skate Off have been selected by the PS members. We had 61 members enter the competition. We are now down to 18 Semi-finalists chosen by you. Five of these members will walk away with the title of ProSkaters' Virtual Skate Off Champion and US\$500. The winner will be chosen by our panel of 20 celebrity judges. We have an elite panel of judges including several Olympic champions and competitors. To name a few, Kristi Yamaguchi, Brian Boitano, Elvis Stojko, Kurt Browning, Kimmie Meissner, Todd Eldredge, Kurt Browning, Tai Babalonia, Paul Wylie, and John Baldwin & Rena Inoue. [Click here to see more of our remarkable celebrity judges.](#)

ProSkaters' is thrilled with the demand for this year's competition. We are already looking to our next one so, keep your cameras rolling, and creative minds going; you've got a competition to win. Who said ProSkaters' can't compete anymore..... think again....Go Pro!

[View all the entries on the Virtual SkateOff site.](#)

The top 3 in each category selected by you, the members of ProSkaters are (All listed in alphabetical order):

<b>Men's Singles Performance:</b> Brendyn Hatfield Craig Heath Dan Hollander	<b>Women's Singles Performance:</b> Ashley Clark Kathryn McSwain Caroline Miller	<b>Pairs/Adagio Performance:</b> Kelly Everett & Daniel Gal Melanie Lambert & Fred Palascak Frank Sweiding & Anita Hartshorn
<b>Show Act Performance:</b> Emmanuelle Balmori Zabato Bebe Fiona Kirk	<b>Production Number Ensemble Choreography:</b> Adam Blake Joel Dear Richard Swenning	<b>Be sure to start preparing your programs for the next Virtual SkateOff with all new categories to come.</b>

## New Girl on the Scene -An Interview with Jessica Caprio

By Katie Uhlig

Everyone remembers their very first show. For many skaters, the decision to start skating professionally marks an important transition in one's career and opens the door to countless opportunities. Hopefully, everyone has great memories of that first experience that introduced them to the world of professional skating. Jessica Caprio recently made her first appearance in the [Holiday Ice Spectacular in Atlanta \(click on the link for a preview of the show\)](#) this past December. When asked what made Jessica stand out and land her this contract, executive producer Jeb Rand said, "Her video and resume were complete, professional, and had just the right combination of information."

Off to a great start with a professional appearance and demeanor from the very beginning, Jessica came to Atlanta with a positive and ready-for-anything attitude. In the following interview, this fantastic new show girl answers questions about her first contract and relives her experience for the ProSkaters family!

**PS: What was it that first got you interested in professional skating?**

**Jessica:** I always loved going to see professional skating shows growing up. For me, I loved watching shows more than competitions because the routines were always more theatrical and had so much life. In my own skating career, I always found myself enjoying performing in shows over competitions. I had a few friends get involved with ProSkaters and performing in professional shows, and they suggested I look into joining ProSkaters. Seeing the available shows inspired me to take a chance and try to jump into the professional world. I could not be happier that I did!

**PS: What were some of your expectations going into your first professional contract? How did those expectations compare to your actual experience?**

**Jessica:** Very long practices! In my first contract it said that practices were going to be 7-9 hours long. That intimidated me a bit because I did not want to be the newbie whose feet couldn't handle being on the ice for that long. The first day of practice was about nine hours long and to my surprise it flew by for me. Everyday sort of flew by for me because we were learning so much at practice. I found it easy to get through a nine hour practice without realizing how fast it was going.

**PS: What did you find most challenging, and what was the most fun for you?**



**Jessica:** Surprisingly, what was most challenging for me was caking on the makeup. I do not wear a lot of makeup usually, and on my first day I put my makeup on, and my roommate looked at me and said, "Your makeup looks nice, now double it." I found myself trying to be conservative with my makeup and I really have to accept that the lights will wash me right out. Cher says it great in Burlesque, "You're an artist, but instead of painting on a canvas, you paint on your face." Let's just say I found myself buying lots of fun makeup by the end of my contract. I miss wearing fake eyelashes and red lipstick everyday.

What was most fun for me, other than performing, was hearing what people thought of the show. I think being in the show gives you a different idea of the show than an audience member. I know I am my toughest critic, like most skaters. You always know what went wrong or wasn't perfect, but then when you go talk to the audience members and they hopefully, are so amazed by a spiral or have this whole new take on the show that a skater may not have. I also really loved hanging out in the dressing rooms or the hotels with the other skaters. You become a little crazy fun family!

**PS: What was the best piece of advice you received as a new show girl?**

**Jessica:** I was so lucky and had a great cast that gave amazing advice. For me, I needed advice with things like how to set costumes and sew fishnets. They gave me a lot of advice on what shows they liked, what makeup they used, and even how to improve my audition video. Most of the cast in my show had been doing shows for years, so I asked them a lot of questions. It was my first show, so I was not afraid to ask about things I did not know, or had never done before. I was lucky they were willing to give their honest advice!

**PS: Do you plan to pursue more professional skating opportunities? What sort of goals do you have for your new skating**

**career?**

**Jessica:** I absolutely plan to pursue more professional skating opportunities; as many as I possibly can. I am totally hooked on the show girl life. I'll slap on my fishnets and skates and perform all day. My goal would be to experience a mix of everything in my career and to go as many places as I can. I want to try every type of show and role as I can. I would also like to grow as a skater by learning new tricks that I may not have had the opportunity to do as a freestyle competitor. I liked getting flipped around and being a giant cupcake in my last show; where else can you do something like that every day?!

**PS: What is your favorite memory that you are going to take away from your first show?**

**Jessica:** My favorite memory would be opening night. I do not think anything can compare to the opening night of your first professional show. It's such an adrenaline rush; nothing can compare to it!

**PS: Tell me about your first opening night; what was going on in your mind as you got ready for the show? How did you feel after it was over?**

**Jessica:** Well, I was beyond excited. I woke up super early because I was so excited, and I had to go for a run I had so much energy. I wasn't nervous; all I wanted to do was perform in the show we worked so hard on. Getting ready for the show was such a whirlwind. I was the only newbie in my show and my cast mates were so awesome, getting me even more excited. Right before we were about to go on for the opening number, one of my cast mates said, "Take it all in, girl. This is your night!" So, from when I took that first step onto the stage to the last ending pose, I just tried to soak up every second. When the last note hit, it was a pretty loud boom, and the lights would go up. I liked this moment because you could see the audience members faces. I just remember looking around, and thinking, "I can not wait to do this in front of a new crowd tomorrow!"

**PS: What are you most looking forward to about shows in the future?**

**Jessica:** I am looking forward to traveling. If I can skate myself all over the world, I will. I also love learning choreography and seeing a number come together, so I am definitely looking forward to learning new numbers and playing different characters. I am also looking forward to meeting more people in the business. I was so lucky and loved all my cast mates from the first show. I hope I get to work with them all again.

**PS: Who has been the biggest influence on your skating to date?**

**Jessica:** I'd have to say my coach, Christina Welch. She is like my second mom. I was so lucky and had a great bond with my coach, and she has been my coach through my whole career. Even if I was having a rough day, having a lesson with her always made it better. She always supported me with what I wanted to do with my skating career, and she always knew what to say to make me the best skater I could be.

**PS: If you could tell someone about to experience their first show just one thing, what would it be?**

**Jessica:** Take in every second. Even if you make a mistake, do not let it get you down, learn from it. Do not take any second for granted. There are so many great little moments that can happen during a contract. Respect yourself, your cast, producers, stage crew, everyone. You are a team. Respect your team. Also, do not be afraid to try new things and show your stuff. Your producers do not know what you are capable of unless you show them. Take every opportunity to prove what you can do and also, perform

everything to the fullest; every move, every character, and smile until your cheeks hurt. Oh, and use good eyelash glue. No one needs a floppy eyelash.

## Allure's Grand Launch

By: Katie Laughner

The second ship of [Royal Caribbean's Oasis class, the Allure of the Seas, \(click on the link to see a video tour of the ship\)](#) set sail from Turku, Finland October 29, 2010 in route to its home port in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. On that 14 day crossing were 12 world class skaters who had been diligently working for 6 weeks prior to setting foot on the largest cruise ship in the world. Chris Mabee, Anne Ramos, Stuart Widdall, Carly Donowick, Pasha Slyusarenko, Caroline Miller, Jean-Simon Légaré, Sally-Jean Watkins, Shaun Rogers, Erin Reed, Valeriya Konstantinova, and Vladimir Vzdornov were all brought together by Willy Bietak Productions to christen the ship as its first cast.

There are two types of casts on cruise ships. The inaugural cast, commonly referred to as the 'take out cast', meets in San Bernadino, California where they literally start from scratch building a new show. A replacement cast meets on the ship and has a two week 'handover' with the cast that they are replacing. The two experiences are completely different. Anne Ramos says that she found the difference to be about stamina. "Any rehearsal period means long hours and hard work. However, the take out process for a new ship with two shows adds up to over two and a half months of rehearsals, tech runs, dress runs, choreography changes, and production changes, etc. You are in an intense situation; luckily I have an amazing cast. We all had our days, we all had our breaking points, but we got through it together, we all helped to pick each other up when we hit the ground, it was a really beautiful thing to be a part of."



Front Row: Anne Ramos, Carly Donowick, Caroline Miller, Erin Reed, Sally-Jean Watkins

Back Row: Chris Mabee, Stuart Widdall, Pasha Slyusarenko, Jean-Simon Légaré, Shaun Rogers

This cast endured the stress of learning not one show, but two. Bietak Productions created two outstanding shows for the entertainment of the guests; [Ice Games \(click on the link to see a brief video of one of the numbers from the show\)](#) and How To Train Your Dragon On Ice. The Allure is the first ship to offer entertainment and events with DreamWorks characters. Along with performing the two shows cast members are required to run All-Skate sessions for the guests, participate in parades, and help with the other entertainment shows amongst other things, so settling into the ship isn't just about getting the shows up and running. For someone who is new to cruise ships, this whole experience might be overwhelming. Chris Mabee describes travelling to the ship with his cast: "I felt really lucky to have six new hires with this contract. To travel to chilly Turku, Finland just adds to the experience. After being jet-lagged and tired from weeks of rehearsals to walk up to this beautiful ship and see the faces of the people who have not been on a ship before made the experience just that much better for me. As for ship life, you have to love the look on their faces when they walk into their rooms for the first time." The living arrangements for the crew members on the ship aren't that of a 5 star hotel! But, even with the limited space that ships have, Royal Caribbean sure tries to give the crew members everything that they can.

Even with all of the hard work these skaters endure, there is still time for fun. The Allure sure has rewarded their crew members with some fantastic experiences. From the first Starbucks at sea to a live performance by Taylor Swift onboard January 21, 2011, there is always a new adventure to be had. This cast of 12 has sure experienced some once in a lifetime opportunities. Erin Reed says the memories will be with her forever, "Working closely with the producers, directors and choreographers of the Allure shows was a highlight of this experience. For over two months I had the chance to learn and be inspired by the great talents and direction of Willy Bietak, Sylvia Froscher, Sarah Kawahara, Chris Nolan and Joanna Ng which I am grateful for.

"I also really enjoyed the Atlantic crossing and the opportunities we were given to enjoy the ship and stress test the incredible venues before any guests arrived. Finally, we also enjoyed unique opportunities such as being on the Today Show and being asked to perform a private show for Katie Holmes and Adam Sandler, both experiences which you don't have on other ships."

As they finish up their contract on the Allure of the Seas, the inaugural cast continues to create lifelong memories and friendships while still working hard to produce the best show possible for the entertainment of the guests. Reed adds, "I have loved the experience of being a member of the first cast on the Allure of the Seas. The start-up experience of the largest ship is more than just an ice show. The uniqueness of this experience will never be repeated and I believe this realization has made me grateful for the hard work we have put in during this contract."

### ProSkaters Welcomes New Members

Gia Alteri	Elisa Angeli	Emmanuelle Balmori	Lyndsey Beall	Sarah Beecher
Julie Berthet	Allison Best	Trevor Buttenham	Laura Carreon	Brooke Castile
Cheryl Cathcart	Pamela Cunningham	Suzanna Dagger	Joel Dear	Oksana Deyneka
Leo Paul Dufour	Matthew Evers	Tara Ford	Vanessa Gilbert	Aaron Gillespie
Jacqueline Haller	Daniel Harries	Stephanie Hornquist	Christine Hotchkin	Lisa Johnson
Anasztazia Kenyeres	Elyse Knudsen	Kitty Lau	Kathryne Laughner	Tanguy Lepage

Sabrina Logren	Roberta Loughland Snow	Brianna McLuen	Laura Mills	Sarah Monaghan
Trent Nelson-Bond	Emma Phibbs	Eveliina Pöllänen	Candace Pyun	Taras Rajec
Kyle Rougeau	Michael Sasaki	Martina Sasanelli	Steven Smith	Gracielle Tan
Pippa Teague	Elizavetta Titova	Garrett Uyeta-Buckley	Matteo Zanni	Ilia Zaytsev

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