

AMERICA IS BEHIND EUROPE IN FIGURE SKATING

Art Originated Here, Yet This Country Has Never Produced a World's Amateur Champion at the Sport

AMERICA has never had a world's amateur champion figure skater, and the irritating part of the matter is that it was an American, Jackson Haines, who taught Europeans how to write their names on the ice and mounted the skates with which they skated. That was nearly fifty years ago.

Haines, who was a professional, was known everywhere in Europe as the greatest skater of his time. The interest in figure skating in Europe began with Haines in fact marked the beginning of the systematic study of the art anywhere.

At that time the Swedes, Russians, and Austrians have been the most famous figure skaters. They introduced the art to a definite form, and at the present day there is the continental or international style. International is perhaps the better term, for the English have lately adopted the name. America, the original home of figure skating, is, strange to say, the only country not represented in the international skating union of Europe. In this, the land of its birth, the skater is not allowed to perch his feet. Americans are an outdoor skating people. They are going to get back to cut figures on the ice again and at the right moment make Europe and make a few additions to their gallery of international skaters.

There is already a nucleus for a cham-

ion team. It is certainly very small, but it is very vigorous. First comes Irving Brokaw, amateur champion of America in 1906, who had the distinction this year of being the first American to be invited to take part in the world's amateur championship, held in Manchester, England. At the 1912 Olympic games in Stockholm skating appeared for the first time on the programme. America, unfortunately, hadn't a ghost of a chance in this branch of athletics. But a handful of enthusiasts, led by Mr. Brokaw, are engaged in an educational campaign which, it is hoped, will result in America having a winning skating team at the 1916 Olympic games.

What is the matter with skating in America? To be honest, next to nothing is known in this country about the sport in its modern form. Americans have so stubbornly refused to keep up to date that their existence is now hardly known in the rinks of Paris, London, Stockholm, Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, Munich and St. Petersburg. Americans are so old-fashioned in their style that it is useless for them to compete at the world's skating congress. The American championship programme is moss grown and hopelessly ancient. Some say that hockey has almost succeeded in killing the game.

The first thing Mr. Brokaw and his followers are going to do is to convince Americans of the necessity of adopting the continental or international style. Americans skate in too small figures and too energetically. They make the tracing of figures too much of a strenuous athletic pursuit.

Figure skating should resemble dancing more than the hop, skip and jump. Grace and large figures count for everything.

Irving Brokaw and Miss Wilkinson AMERICA'S CHAMPION PAIR SKATERS



Irving Brokaw and Other Enthusiasts Engaged in a Movement to Bring the Pastime Up to Date

in the international code. Miniature on the ice, executed at a terrific speed, are not wanted. The man or woman who at the start of a figure strikes an artistic pose, holds it and skates the largest figure gets the international prize. Figure skating nowadays is really an art. The thrilling American acrobat on skates has no place in it. The aimless flinging about of arms and legs is penalized. You must skate like a Russian dancer and not like a wild Indian.

Like the average Englishman, the average American skates chiefly for the exercise. He doesn't care a rap for the spectators. The Continental European skates for the gallery. He tries to make every feat appear difficult and delights in raising in his spectators feelings of astonishment and admiration.

In the matter of costume, too, foreign skaters are far ahead. Americans wear ordinary, everyday dress with trousers that crease and fold with every motion of the body; or else they take a golfing or riding suit. Abroad skaters wear high-fitting coats and clothe their lower limbs in tights or close fitting trousers with high boots or Hessians as footgear. This costume shows up the lines of the figure, emphasizes the rhythmical motion of the body and calls attention to every nicety of the swing and motion of the unemphatic leg.

The various styles of skating emanated from Paris, Stockholm, Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, Munich, St. Petersburg and Davos Platz. The French school is marked by its abandon; the Swiss shows greater reserve; much of the freedom of the French and Swedish schools is lost in the Austrian, but in the Viennese style there is a great gain in a certain graceful reserve and added accuracy. The Viennese school really set the model for Europe. Herr Sakchow of Stockholm is the best

exponent of the mixed Swedish-Viennese style.

There are in this country a few exponents of the international style. On the Conservatory Lake in Central Park and on the rinks and ponds in Boston, Philadelphia and Toledo there are skaters who have learned the correct pose abroad. Mr. Brokaw has completed an entirely new organization for these enthusiasts, the International Skating Club, for the purpose of recovering America's lost prestige in the skating world. Mr. Brokaw hopes to see the world's figure skating championship held in America in a few years. Sakchow, ten times European champion; Gustav Hugel of Vienna, Dr. Gilbert Fuchs of Munich and Henry Grenander of London, all former European champions, are among those who are giving Mr. Brokaw active assistance.

In America George Brown of Boston and James R. Deo of Michigan are helping to build up the organization. In New York those interested in Mr. Brokaw's scheme include Mrs. Barger-Wallach, who until this year held a skating class at St. Nicholas Rink; Mrs. Charles S. Brown, Mrs. Harry La Montagne, Mrs. H. Faltnerstock, Mrs. Ernest Berlin, the Misses de Coppet, Erskine Hewitt, Alonzo Potter, Emil Fuchs, Linzee Blagden, Norman de R. Whitehouse and T. C. Trask.

There is a very enthusiastic following of the movement at Toledo which includes Mrs. Frederick Gallatin, Mrs. Charles B. Alexander, Paul Tuckerman, James C. Parrish, Pierre Durillard, George Griswold and Stuart Duncan. Among the Boston members of the new association are Mrs. Nathaniel Sayer, Mrs. H. S. Hunnewell, Mrs. Robert C. Hoops, Mrs. George Von L. Meyer, Miss Edith Ratch, Dr. I. Collins Warren, Hollis H. Hunnewell, Barrett Woudell, J. Montgomery Sears and Courtenay Croker.



Skating in the International Style



Mr. and Mrs. Irving Brokaw



Pair Skating

FIVE THOUSAND RED STOCKINGS BEING PREPARED FOR HOMES WHICH MIGHT BE FORGOTTEN AT CHRISTMAS

Santa Claus is listening and of course he always listens hardest just before Christmas. He is hearing a new question this year. The question is: "What am I going to get my stockings?" But the new one is: "What did I put in my stockings?"

In the homes where Santa Claus is most certain to come the children are busy with paste pens and scissors. Awkward little fingers are holding needles and

tries of the world to put in the top of Vincenzo's stocking. He had watched the buying of the sweater and cap and the skates that went into the toe with eager interest. And now he added his own chief treasure.

"Won't you miss them, dear?" his mother asked.

"Of course I will," he answered. "But he'll like them too, and you know I'm all the Santa Claus he's got."

For every city child knows that deep and wide as the big pack is it sometimes runs short on Christmas morning. It was the picture of one such tragedy that first suggested the idea of the red stockings. It showed two little children sitting up in bed in a bare room with cracked plastering. And there was Santa Claus with the Christmas joy gone out of his face and his pack quite empty. "Nothing left!"

The picture was on the December page of a calendar that hung in the pleasant Brooklyn sitting room of a very busy woman. She was a doctor's wife, with many calls upon her time, but she found herself looking at the picture often that first week and wishing she could put something into that empty pack.

"Just as I had decided that I could not stand the picture and would have to take it down, I got my inspiration," said Mrs. Waterman, smiling happily at the remembrance. "I went to a hospital to see a sick friend and found her busy filling a big red cambric stocking for a child in the out-patient department. Everybody who could sit up seemed to be whittling, pasting or sewing.

"I borrowed the hospital's idea at once and made up my mind that I would get

other people to help me fill Santa Claus's pack, since there must be many who, like me, had never had the chance to fill a stocking. The city was full of lonely, childless people and there were the children themselves. Wouldn't they like to fill as well as to get stockings?"

"I called a meeting of friends and people with whom I had worked on committees and charitable organization officers at the Barnard Club. They were all enthusiastic. One woman went to the phone and came back with the announcement that her husband, who was with a big electrical company, would have all the stockings cut for us. An organization offered to do the sewing for us. Another husband has furnished the linen name cards and had them printed. Our only serious expense has been the cambric and this year it amounted to \$246.

"At that first meeting Mr. Wakeman of the Children's Aid Society offered to fill 500 stockings. Several persons took 100 stockings and others took dozens. We decided what we would put in them—sweaters, caps, games, toys, books, toilet articles, school supplies, candy, nuts, anything a child could use or enjoy, except fruit, which is apt to spoil or crush. This year a store is supplying and filling the stockings for us at wholesale rates for \$1.50, \$2 or \$2.50, since we found that there were many people ready to give them who did not have time to shop.

"But we prefer to have people fill them personally, because they get more of the Christmas feeling out of them that way. Mrs. William R. Adams of 1327 Pacific street, Brooklyn, has them to give out, all ready ticketed with the name and age of a child certified by one of the charitable organizations. We are particularly glad to have the children take them, for this is the Children's Christmas for Children."

"I must have filled 500 stockings myself that first Christmas, for we were so late getting started that boxes and barrels of things were sent here and the house looked like a museum. Appeals came in on Christmas morning and I couldn't bear to let any of them go by, so I worked right up to the moment that the automobile was ready to start.

"There had been a heavy snow and the car with its load of red stockings could hardly get through the streets. The doctor wore a fur coat and everywhere the children greeted him with shrieks of 'Here comes Santa Claus!' It was hard to resist them when they begged us for the stockings, and next trip I took along a pail of loose candy for them.

"At one of the first places we went we

found a woman with six children and a little new baby without any clothes. Fortunately we had an extra baby's stocking in the car. She hugged it in her arms as she thanked me.

"Oh, ma'am," she said, "I knew the Lord wouldn't let a Christmas baby go without anything to wear!"

The next home was two rooms in a basement where a man and his wife and seven children lived. They were clean and neat, but barefooted, for the man simply couldn't earn enough to supply shoes for them. In the same house was a little crippled girl living in one room with her grandmother, a scrubwoman, who had to leave her alone all night.

The little thing hugged her stocking for a minute and then she held up her arms.

"I want to kiss you, Santa Claus," she said.

"It was all she had to give.

"The stockings were a complete surprise as the organizations had not notified any one that we were coming. When the people asked where they came from we said 'Santa Claus.' The children were satisfied with that, but one man wouldn't believe they were for his children until he saw the names on the cards. If he hadn't had steady work for months and had hoped the society might send the children some dinner, but he had never hoped for anything like this.

"The committee members delivered 2,000 stockings, for we hadn't time to make any other arrangements. Last year a

storage concern offered space to store the stockings and vans to deliver them. For we had double the number. The men couldn't leave their other delivering until 5 o'clock, and then they worked straight through the evening without any supper, so that not a single child should be disappointed on Christmas morning. This year another company is going to help, for we have 5,000 stockings already promised, though not enough to fill the appeals.

"So sometimes the appeals are very hard to resist. Last year a teacher telephoned me at the last minute from a free kindergarten in Astoria, asking for stockings. I told her I was afraid we couldn't furnish them. She said she had tried everywhere else, and she guessed she would just have to pray. That was too much for me and I telephoned two of my friends. One of them appealed to a Sunday school in which she had taught for years and the other said she would do ten more stockings, though she already had filled a hundred for us.

"We got the names and addresses of the children and on Christmas morning my friend telephoned to say that the Sunday school had brought the stockings. There were sixty of them stacked up in her hallway, and two men had come out from the kindergarten with four suitcases. They thought the stockings would be six inches long. They finally hired a cab and loaded it full, and they wrote me afterward that after the driver got out there and helped to distribute the stockings he wouldn't take any money.

"That is why people sometimes like to deliver the stockings in person. One friend says her two little girls never get into the car without begging to go see Annie and Marnie, whose stockings they filled last year, and who came downstairs to thank them. They get to feel that they know the other child, whose needs they have thought of so long.

"A little boy from across the street brought me the stocking he had filled for Willie. On top was the black horse he had drawn up and down the walk all summer. 'Don't you think we had better give the horse to Pietro?' I asked. 'His name has just come in and there isn't time to fill a stocking for him.' 'Well,' he said, 'I mended it for Willie and it's his now, but I guess he would give it to Pietro.'

"The boys like to fill the stockings as well as the girls, and I have had some splendidly filled ones from the private schools. If a boy ever thinks that it is 'girl's work' he only has to be reminded that Santa Claus is a man.

"We have had some touching reminders of last year. One widow wrote me that if we intended to send her children stockings this year she would like to divide with the woman downstairs 'who was so poor.' She enclosed the two big stockings cut over into four smaller ones.

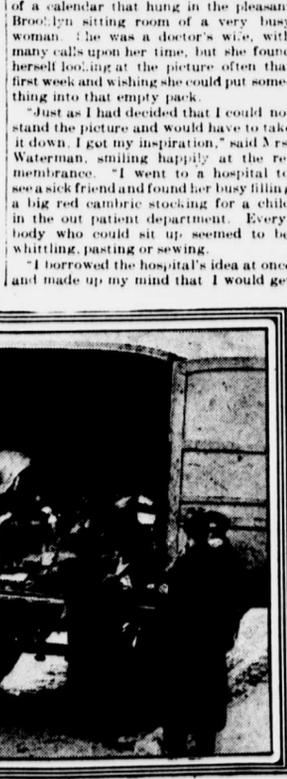
"I used to have to struggle to be cheerful at Christmas time—the household that is without children always does. But I don't have to any more and there isn't a child in the city who is happier than I. That's why I know that, now ever much the stockings may have done for the children who received them, they have done infinitely more for the people who have filled them. It is such a privilege to help Santa Claus."



Mrs. J. S. Waterman, who organized the red stocking movement.

children are mending last year's stockings. Some of them are not their own stockings but those of their friends. Santa Claus is trusted to look out for these things. The boys and girls whom they sometimes miss. Every child is attended for a real boy or girl, name, address and age is written on a printed card. The little stockings are taking their mission very seriously. Not all of the toys are distributed.

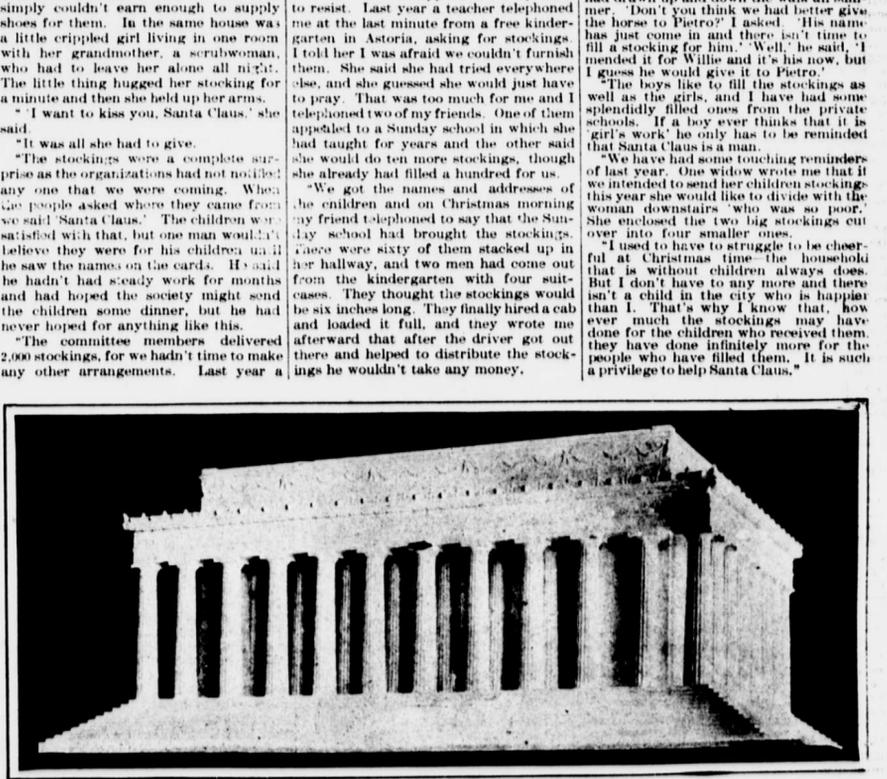
There is Stuart, who brought the toy soldiers he had collected in all the coun-



Loading the Van for Santa Claus.

ty. There had been a heavy snow and the car with its load of red stockings could hardly get through the streets. The doctor wore a fur coat and everywhere the children greeted him with shrieks of 'Here comes Santa Claus!' It was hard to resist them when they begged us for the stockings, and next trip I took along a pail of loose candy for them.

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