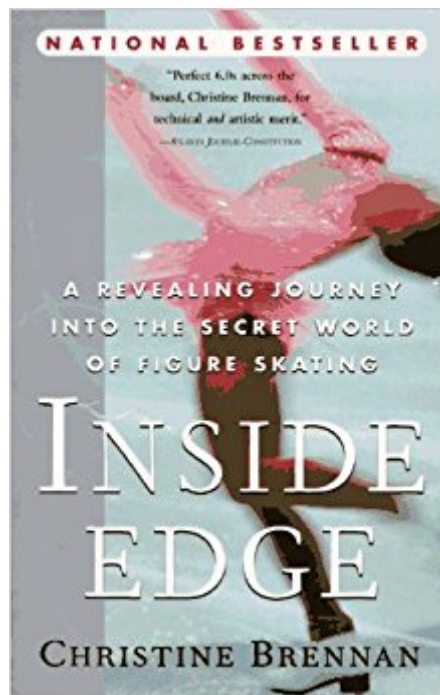




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# **Inside Edge: A Revealing Journey Into The Secret World Of Figure Skating**



## Synopsis

Figure skating is the most beautiful and mysterious of all sports. When the skaters are on the ice, every twitch of a muscle and every slip of a skate blade is visible for the world to see. In *Inside Edge*, Christine Brennan chronicles--for the first time--a season on the skating circuit, intimately portraying the lives, on and off the ice, of the sport's current and upcoming stars. Woven into the narrative are stories of figure skating luminaries past, present, and future--including Peggy Fleming, Katarina Witt, Brian Boitano, Scott Hamilton, Kristi Yamaguchi, Nancy Kerrigan, Oksana Baiul, Michelle Kwan, Rudy Galindo, and Tara Lipinski. Revealing the backstage conflicts high-profile figure skaters face, and the ambition that drives them, Brennan also tells the stories of their families, of improbable rises to the top, and of wasted talents. If skaters are perfect, they can become international heroes. But if they fall, if they miss a three-revolution jump on a quarter-inch blade of steel, the despair is theirs alone. This is their life on the edge, where decades of training culminate in little more than four crucial minutes on the ice. There is no other sport like it. There is no other story like theirs. The figure skaters gathered slowly in the mahogany-paneled lobby of the majestic Mirror Lake Inn in Lake Placid, New York, flashing no smiles, barely saying a word. The collection of gregarious entertainers had been reduced to silent, wide-eyed stares. The crackling wood in the fireplace made the room's only noise. They had met in hotel lobbies in fancy street clothes hundreds of times in the past, but never for an event as devastating as this. On a cold night in late November 1995, they were to travel through snowswept Adirondack mountain roads to a nearby funeral home for a private wake for Sergei Grinkov, their colleague and friend who died of a massive heart attack during a skating practice the day before.

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## Customer Reviews

Figure skating is emerging as a major force in worldwide professional sports. Get the inside edge on the events and personalities of the professional figure-skating circuit. Profiles on stars such as Nancy Kerrigan, Peggy Fleming, Scott Hamilton, and Oksana Baiul are interspersed with the author's impressions and research from a year on the tour, including analysis of the major competitions, the judging process, and the emotional and physical toll the sport takes on young athletes. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Washington Post sports reporter Brennan knows all the greats in figure skating?past, present and probably future. So she is superbly qualified to do a book about the sport. And, she counsels, make no mistake: despite all the talk of style and grace, it is nonetheless a competitive sport, but unique in that women are more important than men at the box office and in the officials' offices. Here she follows the season from October 1994 to the Nationals held the following February, concentrating largely on the likely stars of tomorrow. Of course she touches on the Tonya Harding-Nancy Kerrigan imbroglio and the arrest of U.S. champ Nicole Bobek on a burglary charge (later dismissed), but she is less interested in scandal than in showing how a year's work and tens of thousands in parental dollars can be lost by a couple of missteps in a single four-minute program. She demonstrates how the homosexuality of many?perhaps most?of the men in the sport is covered up, how quixotic the judging is and how the sport is becoming more like tennis as it attracts younger participants and more high-powered agents. In short, she covers every aspect thoroughly and candidly in this fine volume. Photos not seen by PW. Author tour. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I enjoyed reading the inside scoop on 1980s-1990s figure skating. This book covers the judging scandals, the revision of the points system and elimination of compulsories. It gives the inside story on how the system worked at the time and how skaters "paid their dues" if they wanted to move into the realm of the icons such as Peggy Fleming, Dorothy Hamill, Scott Hamilton and others of that era. The AIDS era is covered in great detail as is the homosexuality of many skaters who, at the time, were in the closet. The Kerrigan-Harding scandal is covered and you may find that some of the so-called "ice princesses" were really witches in disguise. The book is informative and very entertaining. The only drawback is the book is written from the 80s-90s years making some of the

information out-dated but for the figure-skating buff you will likely enjoy this book. I know I did.

Brennan does a great job in bringing the reader into the inside world of figure skating. This book is so well written and enjoyable that I read it several times. It was fascinating reading about the double dealings, backstabbing and intrigue involved in this sport. Brennan also touches on the Nancy Kerrigan/Tonya Harding story and debunks the perception most people have about Nancy Kerrigan being "America's Sweetheart." Another fascinating part of this book was the story on the sacrifices parents make for their children for figure skating, and how champion skaters are raised. If you are a figure skater, enjoy sports, or interested in history/politics, you will definitely love this book.

This book is now dated, figure skating is scored quite differently now, then it was when this book was written. The skaters in the book have long since been replaced by a current crop. Not being an "insider", I don't know how the "politics" of figure skating have changed, but I'd suspect that the "politics" is also at least a bit different from when the book was written. Still, the book is an entertaining read into the world of figured skating in the '90's. The book introduces us to personalities and gives us some background on the famous personalities of that time period. It's interesting to contemplate that today's prominent figure skaters were just starting out when this book was written. In that regard, this book provides an interesting look at how today's prominent skaters were raised in the world of figure skating.

terrific book, great seller!

This is Brennan's expose on figure skating, the figure skating of the 1990s, that is. Basically, Brennan finds all sorts of corruption in the highest levels of the sport. Judges trade support for skaters from each others' factions. The Cold War may be over but it was still alive and well in 1990s figure skating, as formerly communist countries aligned as did the US, Canada, and western Europe. Of all the things to say about this book, the most important is that it is out of date. Michelle Kwan was an up-and-coming teenager when this was written. This book was written pre-IJS, and that's only one of the many things that has changed in the sport. While I don't deny that there are still problems and accusations of favoritism, IJS has solved, or at least greatly lessened the kinds of judging problems Brennan illustrates. For the figure skating fan of 2013 this book reads more like a historical document. My main issue was a much more esoteric one. For all the time that she spent researching and reporting on figure skating, I never really felt like Brennan had a deep, emotional

connection to the sport. While she recognizes the difficulty of the sport, Brennan just never seemed to have the spiritual attachment that is evident among figure skaters and many fans. I really think this book could have been written more effectively by someone with that emotional attachment. That's why people do this crazy thing, where they whiz around a slippery surface on quarter-inch blades. There's something in the body movements and the music that makes the moment transcendent.

Lots of inside information about figure skating that most of us might never have guessed! A good and fast read!

This is a really good look at the world of figure skating. It gives you a better view of judging and what the skaters go through to become champions. All of the popular American skaters are covered, well as a few up and comers. The book is full of history and gossip. It is a really fast read.

Having just finished this terrifically addictive book, I was thrilled to learn she's written an update and hope she considers writing more skating-related nonfiction in the future. I'll admit I was a bit chagrined to learn she focused pretty much entirely on American figure skaters (seems like Paul Wylie was a primary source for much of her material which is interesting) in this work, but those who she does focus on are fascinating subjects after being touched upon by Brennan's prose. She jumps (pardon the pun) about a bit from skater to skater, but I greatly appreciated the insight into Nancy Kerrigan's history as well as Janet Lynn and Michelle Kwan, to name a few. Her chapter on Christopher Bowman reminded me of how supremely talented he was, and how he didn't know what to do with it all besides fritter it away; it's especially poignant considering his recent demise, which could have been predicted by pretty much anyone who came into contact with him during his skating years. I plan to send my copy of Brennan's "Inside Edge" to my mother as she too has been a longtime figure skating fan, and look forward to seeing what else she touches upon in "Edge of Glory".

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