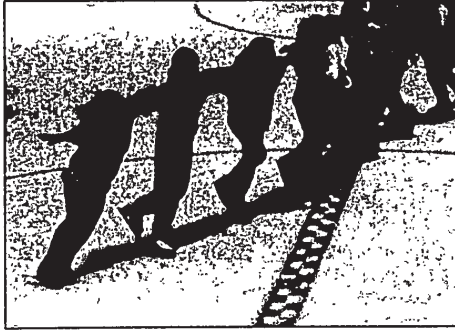


ICE ARENA OPENING

Members of the Ames Figure Skating Club practice for their upcoming show at the new Ames Ice Arena Wednesday in Ames. The new arena will open Saturday with a performance by the club.



The Ames Figure Skating Club show will start at 7 p.m. Saturday. The first half will feature Oscar-winning songs, and the second half will be a theater production called "Alice in Movieland."

Ice arena ready for first big show

By DAVID GREBE
Staff Writer

The new ice arena jointly built by the city and Iowa State University is open for use, and will be formally opened on Saturday.

"We're in transition now between the old ice arena and the new one," said Parks and Recreation director Nancy Carroll.

Officials had hoped the arena would be open by Feb. 15, but Carroll said construction time was lost because of the extended cold weather. But she said the project still

was on-budget.

She said the big opening — the Ames figure skating ice show — is at 7 p.m. Saturday.

The show will be presented by the Ames Figure Skating Club. The first half will feature Oscar-winning songs, and the second half will be a theater production, "Alice in Movieland." The production is the story of a little girl named Alice, who loves movies and is transported into a magical land populated by Disney characters.

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Arena: City hopes to offer free public skate nights

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A total of 45 performers will be in the show, according to Mandy Safley, director of the Ames Figure Skating Club.

A second show will be held on Sunday at 2 p.m.

Tickets cost \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door, and are available at the arena by calling 232-1837 or 292-0279.

Safley said she expects the arena to be filled for the performance.

"Because they work on ice, they have a larger surface for performing and can do a lot more. This (show) is the highlight of the skaters' year," Safley said. "They all look forward to it."

In with the new

The new arena is located in Gateway Hills park off Mortensen Road, right next door to the old arena.

The project cost a total of \$3.8 mil-

lion to build, with \$1.7 million coming from an Ames bond issue, \$1.7 million from ISU student fees, \$300,000 from the Iowa State Foundation and a \$100,000 grant from the state.

The arena is expected to cost about \$375,000 annually to operate, and Carroll said it will be self-financed through skate rental prices and concession sales.

The arena can seat 1,000 people, and

features an NHL-regulation size ice rink (200 by 85 feet).

The arena was built by Harold Pike Construction of Ames.

It includes seven locker rooms, with three reserved for local and ISU teams.

Carroll said public skate costs should range between \$3.50 and \$4, and the rink will be open throughout the summer — but the schedule remains in flux.

"We want to have some free nights to

come out and skate with city and university officials," Carroll said — but dates have yet to be finalized.

Residents wanting to know about hours and rates should call Parks and Recreation at 239-5350 for more information.

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