

Spin to Win! With Craig Heath www.craigheath.com

I want to inspire you to spin, spin, spin! There are many reasons to work on your spins. The following reasons are just a few:

1) Judges love good spins. Being a well- rounded skater is the best investment that you can make in yourself. The more you can do, the better you are and the more “valuable” you are in the skating industry. It takes many different talents to make a great skater. Spinning is just one of the many facets of skating but in my opinion it is one of the most important! :-)

2) Audiences love spins. The faster you can spin, the louder the audience claps! Believe me, I've tried it! There is something very magical about spinning. It is exciting and unusual for people to watch.

3) Show Producers love good spinners. Many Ice shows are performed on very small ice surfaces. When I say small...I mean VERY small! Sometimes it is very hard to do jumps and long edges on the small surface, but you CAN spin your brains out!

4) I love good spinners. That should say enough! No, but seriously, I am fascinated when I see great spins. I think it is an art form that should be displayed in every museum!

5) With the new judging system, spins are more important than ever. The more well rounded as a skater you are, the more competitive you will be. Finally, skating is not just about jumping. Take advantage of the new system and make your spins as good as possible. Take extra time everyday to improve them. Learn inside and outside camels and outside edge sit spin. Invent your own trademark spin so that everybody will remember you!

The following are some of my opinions (whether you like them or not) :-)

I was inspired to spin when I was a kid. I had a coach that told me to spin for AT LEAST 20 minutes per day. She explained how important good spins were and she said that it just takes lots of practice. I really listened to her and I did as she said. Sometimes I would spin for even more than 20 minutes per day! It is such a great feeling when you are spinning fast and doing unnatural things with your body!

On some spins, like forward outside camel spins or forward inside camel spins, I actually feel like I am flying! Hitting the perfect spin is like hitting a home run in baseball. It is a fantastic feeling and one that you should be proud of. Don't be discouraged if it takes a while to master a spin. Spinning is very difficult and it takes lots and lots of practice. Did I say lots and lots? I think that the reason I have had such a great competitive career in both amateur skating AND Professional skating is simply because I LOVE to spin! I sometimes think of it as a kind of Yoga or Pilates practice. You can lengthen, stretch and strengthen your muscles while building strength and stamina. I get frustrated when I am watching a skater's performance and I see that they are resting during their spins. Don't laugh! I see this much more than I would like to. The spins are not the rest stops of a program! You have plenty of time to rest AFTER your performance!

So, I encourage you, from the bottom of my heart and the center of my spins, to make spinning a priority in your daily practice. Make it a fun part of your day. In a few years, you will thank me for taking the time to write this letter to you. Please find me, wherever I am in the world, and email me about how you are doing and how your spins are doing. I really care and I really want to hear about your progress. I want to be your cheerleader!

Work hard. Enjoy yourselves. Don't take life too seriously. Be Honest. Be sincere. Be real. Perform from the bottom of your heart and soul. Give back to the world. Recycle. Eat your veggies. Appreciate your parents. Smell the flowers. Set goals. Never give up. Smile. Create a fantastic reality for yourself. Believe in yourself. Don't watch much TV. Exercise. Take time for yourself. Be kind to others. Be kind to yourself. Keep a positive attitude. Clean your room. Make it happen. Love yourself. Love others. Spin your brains out!

Sincerely, Craig Heath “Spin to Win!!”