

A VIDEO REVIEW



SYSTEMATIC FIGURE SKATING:

The Spin and Jump Techniques of Gustave Lussi, Volume I: Spins – produced by Cecily A. Morrow (60 minutes)

Hosted by Dick Button and directed by Doug Wilson of ABC Sports, this videotape deftly weaves together extensive footage of Mr. Lussi teaching with an authorized narration of a step-by-step breakdown of his techniques. Archival skating footage of former Lussi students such as Dorothy Hamill, Don Jackson, and Dick Button exemplify Mr. Lussi's methods.

Volume I, the first of four, features Mr. Lussi instructing Paul Wylie, Tracey Damigella, and Julia Simkin in every aspect of the sit, back scratch, and "forward" scratch spins, including Mr. Lussi's five-step entrance for spins.

Gustave Lussi, who has been called "the father of modern free skating", not only invented many techniques and skating moves employed today, but also devised a teaching style which inspired students to execute faster, more dramatic spins and spectacular jumps. Mr. Lussi's verbal imagery, which is often humorous, was developed over a period of years into an effective language of key words and phrases to remind students of his requirements.

A Swiss emigré, Mr. Lussi came to North America in 1919. He began a skating career, started teaching, and within a few years had coached Canadian Constance Wilson to victory. His retirement from teaching in 1992, at age 94, ended a coaching career spanning more than seventy years. During this time he taught sixteen world and Olympic champions, and produced scores of national champions.

Brief statements from interviews with some of his former champions, interspersed between the instructional segments, illustrate how Gustave Lussi's techniques have disseminated into the skating community.

Cecily Morrow, who has been assembling material for this historic project for nearly a decade, is thoroughly familiar with the Lussi spin and jump methodology, both as a former Lussi student and from many years of collaborative work with Mr. Lussi. Morrow coached skating for fifteen years, but has since retired to finish this and other projects. For information on obtaining the video, write to Cecily Morrow, 207 Earle Avenue, Easton, MD, USA 21601, or call (410) 820-6125.