

5. THE BIG SK8 OUT

Officer responsible Leisure Manager	Author Community Recreation Advisor
Corporate Plan Output: Recreation Promotion and Programmes	

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a recent series of innovative skateboarding workshops delivered by the Recreation and Arts Team during the April school holidays.

INTRODUCTION

Following the success of 'The BIG SK8 Out' in January, a series of skating workshops was again held during the April school holidays. The aim of these workshops was to provide introductory level skaters, ages 10 – 14 years, with the skills and expertise to confidently and safely skate Christchurch skate parks. Specific workshops were also held for female skaters. The workshops were very successful and created a lot of interest and energy amongst Christchurch skaters.

PROGRAMME CONTENT

The 'The BIG SK8 Out' consisted of a series of 6 skating workshops – one workshop per community board area. Each workshop met at a local skate park and spent the day touring various skate parks. The participants learnt how to skate each park, and also covered issues such as etiquette, "slam prevention" and maintenance of skateboards. A crew of experienced skaters and skate tutors instructed the workshops.

BENEFITS

The BIG SK8 Out gave participants many new skills. There are a myriad of moves, jumps and combinations that make up the abstract fabric of skating. Not only were the participants able to learn how to execute these moves, they were also able to see them executed by the experienced tutors. The tour of various skate parks gave the young skaters an appreciation of the different skate parks and the styles to skate them.

The BIG SK8 Out created an appropriate forum to educate the participants on what is and is not appropriate behaviour at a skate park. Safety issues were also covered - 'Slam Prevention' showed skaters how to prevent themselves from falling off their boards, and if they do fall off, how to land safely.

As in earlier workshops, one of the major benefits was the networking that has resulted from these workshops, in particular amongst female skaters. This is important in such an individual sport and in a sport that is dominated by male participants. A real safety issue for female skaters is having someone to skate with.

FUNDING/SPONSORSHIP

Many of Christchurch's leading skate businesses supported The Big SK8 Out, generously providing numerous prizes for participants, including many skate platforms and safety gear. The funding for this programme came from the Leisure Unit of the Christchurch City Council. The Hagley/Ferrymead programme was based at the Phillipstown Community Centre

STATISTICS AND FEEDBACK

Enrolments were taken around the city from keen skaters and catered for over 100 participants. As with the January workshops, feedback has been ecstatic, with the main criticism that there were not enough workshops! A formal evaluation is presently underway, by way of questionnaire mail out to participants.

FUTURE DIRECTION

After the January workshops, a core group of skaters got together and formed a skate club. Members of this club made up the crew of tutors for the April workshops. This was a positive development within the sport of skating in Christchurch. Council officers will be working with this club to ensure the momentum continues over the winter months.

Once a stable skate club is established in Christchurch it is envisaged that such a club would take over the role of running skate workshops such as the ones presently being run by the Council. In the meantime it is important the Council works with key skaters to keep the momentum going, and encourage networking amongst skaters.

With the cooler winter months ahead it is not envisaged skating workshops will be held in the July school holidays.

Over the last six months the Recreation and Arts Team has focussed a great deal of energy on active young people, utilising their interest in skateboarding. Over the next six months the Team will focus on developing other opportunities for this age group around the city in the arts and passive recreation area.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received and that the organisers be commended on their initiative.