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Skyliners synchronized skaters start season in style

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IMAGE 2 OF 3

The Skyliners junior line perform their short program to a Michael Jackson theme at the Anaheim ICE Synchronized Team Championships at The Rinks Anaheim Ice two weeks ago.

The **Skyliners Synchronized Skating Team** couldn't have scripted a better start to its season.

The Greenwich-based Skyliners, who feature skaters from all over Connecticut, as well as Westchester County, N.Y., and New Jersey, sparkled in their first two competitions of their 2015-2016 season.

Overall, the squad claimed six gold medals, one silver and one bronze at the Anaheim Ice Synchronized Team Championships at **The Rinks Anaheim Ice** in Anaheim, Calif., two weeks ago.

The junior and senior lines — each Team USA designees — performed both their short and free skate programs at the Anaheim ICE Synchronized Team Championships, with the junior line winning the gold medal in their division and the senior line earning a silver medal.

“The team did an outstanding job,” said **Josh Babb**, the Skyliners’ head coach and director of synchronized skating. “Our Juniors are the 2015 national gold medalists and they continued to skate like champions in Anaheim. And our seniors proved why they are among the top in the nation. I couldn’t be prouder.”

More Information

About synchronized skating: About Synchronized Skating: Synchronized skating consists of 12-20 athletes performing a program on ice to music, moving as one flowing unit at high speeds. For a synchronized team to flow in unison, individual skaters must be competent at a variety of skating skills, including speed, footwork and ice presence. There are more than 500 synchronized skating clubs in the United States alone, with elite competitions held at both the national and international level. Although not currently an Olympic sport, there is significant movement toward including it at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games.

The junior line included Greenwich residents **Katherine Elmlinger** and **Whitney Elmlinger**.

Last weekend, six Skyliners lines traveled to Marlborough, Massachusetts for the **Boston Synchronized Skating Classic**. Facing some of the strongest competitors in the Eastern division, the Skyliners’ beginner, preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile and intermediate lines all earned gold medals and the novice line earned a bronze medal.

Boston Classic,” said **Sarah LeBlanc Blosat**, the Skyliners’ director of non-qualifying lines.

“I am so proud of how all of our teams performed at the

“We’ve been practicing throughout the summer and fall to prepare our programs for competition. The skaters have been working hard both on and off the ice, as a team and individually. It was a wonderful way to start the season and build momentum for the competitions ahead.”

The Skyliners’ beginner line includes **Madeline Besgen**, Ellie Block, **Jenny Kessler**, **Nancy Kessler** and **Lily Rose** Vallieres, all of whom hail from Greenwich.

Anastasia Pearson (preliminary line), Helena Seibert (pre-juvenile line), Sherlynn Arcuri and **Maya Hirani** (juvenile line), **Elizabeth Essaid**, **Nathalie Felton** and (intermediate line) and Madison deBlasi, **Nicole Huber**, **Kristen Lewis**, Mary Ashley Mendik (novice line), **Christine Zhang** of Riverside (preliminary line), **Melissa Woo** of Riverside (juvenile line), Raven Vaz of Greenwich (intermediate line), **Brooke Abbott** of Greenwich (senior line), are also Greenwich residents. Celebrating their 15th season, the Skyliners program includes 200 skaters ranging in age from five to 26.

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