



## Questions & Answers About Outdoor Skating Rinks

By Mike Bryson, December 2006

### **Q: My yard is sloped. What can I do to build a level skating surface for my backyard ice rink?**

A: To make your rink level, you must first find out how much of a slope you have. Take a stake and put it in the ground where your rink will be the highest. Then tie a string to the stake about 4" from the bottom. Then walk around keeping the line of the string level. You will quickly see how much of a slope you have and you will then know if you need 2x8, 2x10, 2x12"s or more to make the boards level. The rest is easy, when you've built your rink and it's level. just put the tarp in and add water. Gravity is a great leveler.

### **Q: My ice rink is really bumpy and choppy. What can I do to make it a smoother surface for skating on?**

A: The best thing to do is skate on it. I know this sounds strange, but skating will knock off the high spots. Also if you use the RinkRake you'll never have to ask this question.

### **Q: I'm getting lots of divots and small holes in my ice surface. How do I repair or "fill-in" these areas?**

A: For big holes just put some snow on it and wet it a little, then take a hockey puck and rub it. (just like the pro's). Then when you flood it next the hole will be gone.

### **Q: Last year, we went through a bit of a warm patch and my skating rink started to melt. Is there anything I can do to keep the coldness or prevent too much melting for those warm patches in the future?**

A: The best thing to do is make your rink with a tarp/liner. Then when it gets a little warm you don't lose the water and all you have to wait for is it to get cold again.

If you don't use a tarp. The RinkRake makes the rink so fast, just wait until it snows again and start flooding with the RinkRake again. By this time you know it doesn't take very long.

### **Q: When is the best time that I should be flooding my ice rink?**

A: The more ice you have the longer your rink will last when it gets a little warm. Therefore when it's cold (15F or colder) flood and flood. I have put 2" of ice on my rink in one night with the RinkRake (8 floods 1/4" each time) Besides that, flood it when you want a beautiful surface to skate on.

### **Q: I've seen on some other backyard rinks, like those in your Gallery, where they look like real hockey rinks with paint lines, etc. I want to do this for my ice rink too, how do I do that? Is there some special paint I need to buy?**

A: Be careful when you do this. If your rink is in direct sunlight, the ice will melt where you paint the lines. Also, the only paint that works well is lead based and this stuff is really bad for the environment. They look great and fun to play on, but the last time I played on an outside rink, there was no referee to call off-side.