



Our Alumni in the News

Flashbacks



A little JoJo & Ken recently at Rockefeller Center

Flashback to 1972 - courtesy of Tai Babilonia



In 1972 my pair skating idols [JoJo Starbuck](#) & [Ken Shelley](#) had just turned professional & signed with the Ice Capades, that same year Mr. Nicks excepted us into his stable of champions at [Santa Monica Ice Capades Chalet](#) & everything changed ~ Two years later we made the World Team! On June 1st Mr. Nicks will be presenting us as we're inducted into the ISI Hall Of Fame [2016 ISI/PSA Conferences & Trade Show](#) in Las Vegas!

Photo by Sgt.Babilonia

[Romaine & Steele - Ice Capades of 1960](#)



Courtesy of [Carl Moseley](#)

Phil Romaine & Cathy Steele - "Aida", from "Operama II", Ice Capades of 1960, The Ed Sullivan Show.

[Click here](#) to view video

The Unlikely Birth of the Beloved Zamboni

How war surplus parts and California sun led to the iconic ice hockey contraption.

By [Matt Blitz](#)



The boxy four-wheeled contraption is not particularly graceful. It does one job, night after night, intermission after intermission. Yet the Zamboni machine, that overgrown ice tractor that resurfaces a rink between figure skating routines or ice hockey periods, always elicits pure joy from onlookers.

"It's particularly mesmerizing to children," Richard Zamboni, the son of the machine's inventor and [president of Frank J.](#)

[Zamboni & Co, Inc](#), tells Popular Mechanics. "But the adults seem to enjoy watching the operators, likely putting themselves in the position of the driver and imagining if they could a better job."

Richard's father, [Frank Zamboni, debuted his "Model A" Zamboni](#) in 1949 at his Iceland Skating Rink in Paramount, California. As the world's first ice resurfacing machine, the Zamboni made a hard task simpler—before this mechanical marvel, up to four workers and a tractor were needed to shave, scoop, and spray the ice in a 90-minute process. Nearly seventy years later, the Zamboni has become so much more than just a machine. It's a star.

"Everyone wants to watch it, wave to it. People throw it kisses. I don't understand why."

Frank Zamboni's invention was inspired by his mechanical engineering and ice-making background. Born in 1901 to European immigrant parents, Frank grew up [fixing tractors on his family's Idaho farm](#). While his formal education ended early, he kept tinkering with and fixing

farm equipment. "While my father never got past the ninth grade in formal schooling, he always had an inquisitive mind in solving problems," Richard Zamboni says. "Whether it was electrical, mechanical, or business-related, he had the unique ability to get to the heart of issues."



When Frank was 19, his family sold the farm and moved to a small sun-drenched Southern California town about 15 miles south of Los Angeles. There, he went to electrical engineering school and started a company with his brothers called, appropriately, the Zamboni Bros. Co. In 1928, he earned his first patent for the "[adjustable reactor resistance](#)"— an electrical resistor that prevented the core from chattering while making or breaking a magnetic circuit. Zamboni, who died [in 1988 at the age of 88](#), would be awarded 15 patents over his lifetime, including his 1974 patent for "[water removal machine for artificial turf](#)"—

also known as the [Astro Zamboni Machine](#), a contraption that could suck up and pump water off Astro Turf at a rate of about 400 gallons per minute.

[Click here](#) to read the complete article.



Comments from Last Month's Blade

Really interesting stuff. I especially liked hearing where the headbanger came from. I always wondered where adagio stuff came from, since it was so different from the kind of skating you were normally taught. It makes sense that it came from vaudeville, and hotel/Lido like tank shows. just like Broadway musicals sorta morphed out of English, French, German-Viennese operettas. I guess the ice shows started as sort of a blend of vaudeville and the old Zeigfeld/George White/French production spectacles. It's nice to know the History. Happy Spring! Mark Beck

Upcoming Events

Ice Show Gypsies Cruise Reunion 2016



September 24, 2016. 7 nights, Sailing on the Norwegian Escape from Miami, Florida.
Itinerary: Miami, sea day, sea day, St Thomas - US Virgin Islands, Tortola, sea day, Nassau - Bahamas, Miami.
All prices are in U.S. Dollars and will be per person for double occupancy.

For more information - <https://www.facebook.com/events/501694283332385/>

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World Figure Championship & Figure Festival

Welcoming the World to join us on the ice in Toronto!

Mark your calendar!



[Click here](#) for details

Website Update

The reunion website – www.icecapadesreunion2015.com is still there. Even though the reunion is over, the plan is to continue to use this site for alumni updates so please keep checking back from time to time as news will be added periodically. Don't forget, there are also show rosters for your reference, updated obits and upcoming events.