

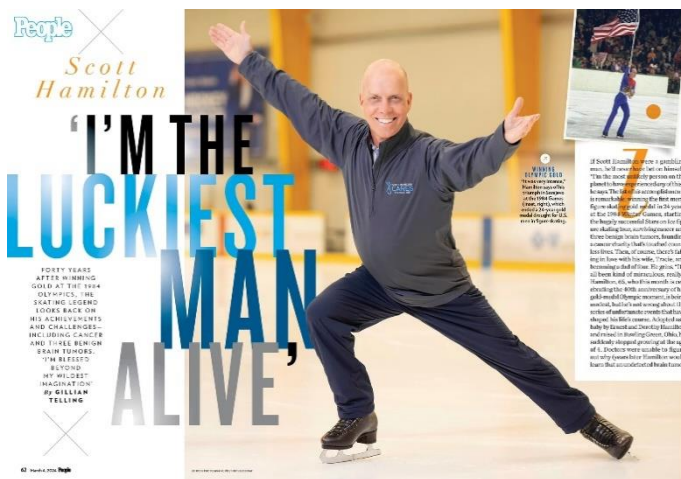
Our Alumni in the News

Scott Hamilton Is Sharing Why He Is the 'Luckiest Man Alive' (Exclusive)

Forty years after winning gold at the 1984 Olympics, the skating legend looks back on his achievements and challenges—including cancer and three benign brain tumors. ‘I’m blessed beyond my wildest imagination’

By [Gillian Telling](#)

Updated on February 22, 2024 04:54PM EST
Scott Hamilton in 2022. Photo: Ed Rode Photography



If [Scott Hamilton](#) were a gambling man, he'd never have bet on himself.

“I’m the most unlikely person on the planet to have experienced *any* of this,” he says. The list of his accomplishments is remarkable: winning the first men’s figure skating gold medal in 24 years at the 1984 Winter Games; starting the hugely successful Stars on Ice figure skating tour; surviving cancer and [three benign tumors](#); founding a cancer charity that’s touched countless lives.

Then, of course, there’s falling in love with his wife, Tracie, and becoming a dad of four. He grins. “It’s all been kind of miraculous, really.”

Hamilton, 65, who this month is celebrating the 40th anniversary of his gold-medal Olympic moment, is being modest, but he’s not wrong about the series of unfortunate events that have shaped his life’s course.

Adopted as a baby by Ernest and Dorothy Hamilton and raised in Bowling Green, Ohio, [he suddenly stopped growing](#) at the age of 4. Doctors were unable to figure out why (years later Hamilton would learn that an undetected brain tumor was likely to blame), and the condition took its toll on everyone.

“My parents were shattered, just exhausted emotionally, financially,” says Hamilton, who required a feeding tube as a child to ensure he was getting enough nutrition. “A physician told them they needed a morning off once a week to rest and recharge their batteries.”

A new skating rink had just opened near their home, so Scott was enrolled in its Saturday-morning classes. “It was so exciting,” says Hamilton. “All of a sudden I wasn’t just this odd, sickly kid with the tube in my nose. Pretty soon I realized I could skate as well as the best athlete in my grade. It was the first taste of self-esteem I ever had. Soon I wanted to be on the ice all the time.”

Out of nowhere, he started growing again, but he wasn’t yet championship material. “I was like a last-place guy,” he says. But his mother, Dorothy, maintained an unwavering belief in her son, telling neighbors, “We’re going to the Olympics someday!” Hamilton recalls, “I’d look at her and be like, ‘Based on what? I’m not that good!’ ”

And then in 1976 the family received devastating news: Dorothy had breast cancer. They were also out of money and could no longer fund his skating career. However, at the Nationals, Dorothy told her son she’d met a couple who would sponsor him so he wouldn’t have to quit. It turned out to be the last competition Dorothy would see him skate in before her death in 1977.

“She was the center of my universe. She meant everything to me,” he says. “I took a walk the day she died and realized I had to honor her.” He started taking training seriously. The next year he made the podium at Nationals, and he placed 11th at Worlds.

Hamilton’s career blew up from there. Still small at just 5'3", he capped a four-year undefeated run with his win at the Sarajevo Olympics, where he earned worldwide fame and became notorious for incorporating a backflip into his exhibition routines. “I remember it all so vividly,” he says of his Olympic victory four decades ago. “It just feels like it happened to someone else!”

After the Olympics he joined the Ice Capades for two years until a new owner decided he wanted only women in the show. So Hamilton helped launch a new ice skating tour: Stars on Ice. “We were like rock stars,” he says. “Selling out arenas all over the country.” The tour has performed more than 1,500 shows since 1986. [Click here to read the complete article](#)

Scott Hamilton receives the Midas Touch Golden Legacy Award



Photos by Phillip Faraone/Getty Images for Gold Meets Golden

I am overjoyed, thankful, and honored to have received the first-ever Midas Touch Golden Legacy Award at the 11th Annual [Gold Meets Golden](#) Event in Los Angeles presented by [Coca-Cola](#)! Celebrating 40 years of excellence and service to the Olympic community is an honor I don't take lightly.

Thank you to Gold Meets Golden for hosting an incredible event, to my dear friend and fellow Olympic champion Kristi Yamaguchi for presenting me with the Midas Touch Golden Legacy Award, to all who made it to the event to celebrate in person, to all who sent videos of encouragement and kindness to be watched at the event, and to the incredible Nadia Comaneci for making it all happen. I am so grateful and blessed!

Lastly, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Gold Meets Golden for their generous donation to the [Scott Hamilton CARES Foundation](#) and [Angel City Sports](#).

...and the accolades keep coming for Scott. This time he was named a member of the **Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2024**. Congratulations Scott.



What I thought was another fun-filled [Scott Hamilton Skating Academy](#) Learn to Skate session turned into something more exciting than I could have imagined!

Brad Willis, Executive Director of the [Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, Sponsored By The Tennessee Lottery](#), surprised me tonight with the news that I have been named a member of the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2024! I'm honored and humbled to be recognized amongst so many inspiring and accomplished athletes.

<https://tshf.net/uncategorized/olympic-figure-skating-gold-medalist-scott-hamilton-announced-as-2024-tennessee-sports-hall-of-fame-inductee/>

JUDY THOMAS

Talent Director and Production Coordinator



As Talent Director and Production Coordinator for Feld Entertainment, Judy Thomas is responsible for identifying talent worldwide for the 9 touring *Disney On Ice* productions. Additionally, Thomas is part of the team that coordinates the build and rehearsal of new *Disney On Ice* shows and works to maintain the existing productions.

Thomas grew up in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and moved to Vancouver in 1971. As a professional figure skater, she carried on a family tradition. "My father was an NHL hockey player, but since there were three girls in the family, we were all enrolled in figure skating lessons," she says.

Thomas began her professional career as a performer with Ice Follies in 1973 and joined Feld Entertainment when the company began producing ice shows in 1979. The company began producing Disney-themed ice shows in 1981, and Thomas was in the cast of the first show, *Walt Disney's World On Ice*. She was also a

performer on some of the first *Disney On Ice* shows to tour outside of the U.S., *Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom On Ice – Sport Goofy*, followed by *Snow White* and then *Pinocchio*.

After 15 years as a performer, Thomas continued to tour as a Performance Director on multiple shows until hanging up her figure skates in 1991 to become Recruiting Manager. In 1995, she was elevated to her current position. She has since cast and co-ordinated over 40 ice show productions for Feld Entertainment in addition to the updating, upgrading and maintenance of the creative elements in as many as a dozen shows annually. She contracts and oversees a cast total of about 450 performers each season. She has even occasionally been called in to assist in creating the choreography. She had also assisted in finding talent for **Ice Capades**.

Through her position, she has hired and cast more skaters than anyone else in history. She is able to keep in contact with people with whom she toured on the shows, many of whom are now coaches who refer their students to Thomas. Commenting on her position, she says, "It's an absolute joy to offer a skater an opportunity that will truly change their life!"

Were you ever an understudy?



Louise Gasper & Gary Jones understudied for Ken & JoJo's Jitterbug number in East Company 72-73. Never knowing when they would be out, lo and behold it was at New York's Madison Square Garden.

On Friday night after the show, it was amazing hitting all the great piano bars in Manhattan so wasn't prepared when we came in for the first show on Saturday to see Cliff writing Gary's and my name on the blackboard. I was shocked. Luckily Gary seemed much calmer than me. Thank God and we lived to tell about it today. Whew!

What's your understudy story?

Video of the Month

Life on the Road, Skating with the ICE CAPADES



From Nov 23, 2015

Tim Estilez just bought a new pair of skates - and somehow the purchase reminded him of when he was on Boston's WBZ radio a few years back shortly after our last big reunion in Vegas

... to tell the audience a bit about how amazing it was for us all to be part of this incredible life experience in Ice Capades.

Entertainment reporter Tim Estiloz chats with WBZ's Jordan Rich about what it was like to be a performing skater in front of thousands with the world famous **Ice Capades** touring ice show - before returning to broadcasting.

<https://youtu.be/e7mSa08slf4?si=aQg9jC6sDoxgY7iK>

Fun times on the Road

Tom McKusick shared this moment in time.



This was taken in Sioux City Iowa during the "Gershwin" show in Continental...this picture was taken between the second and third show on Saturday...we rigged a tarp with balloons and stuff to the rigging on the stage...had a rope to pull and release the balloons...another rope was fixed to the curtain between the boys and girls dressing room...we lined up our chairs pulled the rope just in the for the girls to drop their tops...thanks to the crew and the trucker's for all of their assistance...great memories ❤️

Pictures from Past Reunions

[All Skater's Reunion – May 1-3, 2023 Las Vegas](#)

[Ice Capades 2022 Reunion pictures](#)

Reunion News

Ice Capades 2025 Reunion Cruise Announcement

'Escapades 2025 Cruise' We'll have a good time! 🎵🎵'



Please click below to join the [Escapades 2025 Cruise – events page](#) and get all updates relating to the cruise.

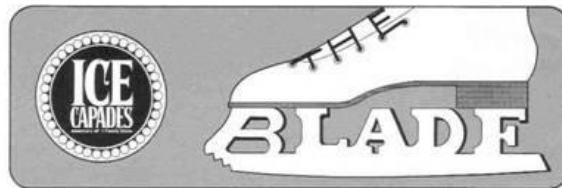
<https://facebook.com/events/s/ice-capades-escapades-cruise-a/746073810575573/>

THIS EVENT IS BEING CREATED AND COORDINATED BY Johnna "J" Bates...

NOTE: PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED!

[Click here for more Reunion information](#)

Questions: Contact 'J' directly - dabatej@bellsouth.net



The website, www.icecapadestheblade.com has been revamped and more information has been added. If you have something to add, please send them.

Look here for **2022 Ice Capades Reunion** information, including reunion pictures

Cast, Precision & Production Pictures – Relive some memories.

Past reunion Pictures – Check them out for some you may have missed.

Rosters – Looking for someone or remembering who you skated with in the show?

Video links – have been collecting skating 'You Tube' links from the early years.

Program Covers – we had the most beautiful covers

Past Issues of The Blade – just in case you missed an issue

Past Reunion Pictures – relive the times you attended the reunions

In Memorium – remembering those who have left us too soon

Check it out!

Upcoming Events

2024 The Experience Adult Skate Camp
Cape Cod & Palm Springs

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Cape Cod 2024
JULY 24 - JULY 27
Hyannis Youth Community Center

Palm Springs 2024
SEPTEMBER 17 - SEPTEMBER 20
Berger Foundation Iceplex

For more details
and registration



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