

FREESTYLE AND DANCE TIP

Music and Artistic Impression

When selecting particular pieces of music for your skating program in either free skating or free dance, you must have a theme.

If your basic theme is one of a Spanish dance, then you should not insert pieces of music from Mozart, Shostakovich, or the soundtrack from "Flashdance." With the millions of pieces of music that you have to choose from today, you can certainly find phrasings and instrumentations that lead from one to another. The musical theme does not have to be so specific that you are limited only to Spanish music, but each selection must blend—either through tempo, melody, the sound of the instruments or the key in which the piece is written. The point is that by doing the blend correctly, you lead from one part of your skating program to another as necessary. You may have several composers, but don't jump from one to

another without some kind of connection.

Abrupt musical changes are very disconcerting. It's then left to you as a performer to try to overcome what's just happened to the spectators and judges—to try to bring them back to where they were when you were doing that terrific spin. But you aren't always strong enough to bring the audience back after a bad transition, and so the whole routine falls down.

With the high quality of tape editing available today, there's no reason to perform to a choppy, jarring collection of musical odds and ends. It may be that you need a section of fast music to highlight fast footwork, and slow music to feature depth and strength of beautiful edges, but these changes can be accomplished within your basic theme. Stay within the general style of music you have chosen—within the thread that you have begun and are trying to em-



phasize through your program—and you will greatly enhance the artistic impression you are attempting to make. ■

—Dance/Freestyle Tip adapted from Stanley Kahn's presentation to SRSTA members at the 1983 Coaches' Convention. Kahn is a choreographer and consultant for the Ice Follies and other skating performers.