

Canadian skater, coach and choreographer Gary Beacom to do masterclasses at Ally Pally and Lee Valley.

If you don't know Gary, he was Canadian men's senior silver medallist behind Brian Orser, competed for Canada at the Olympics and Worlds (highest placing 10th) and later became World Professional Champion. He was in Torvill and Dean's ice show for a few years; has been in Evgeny Plushenko's show; has choreographed for Kurt Browning and the current Canadian men's senior number two, Vaughn Chipeur. I have attached a brief CV for your info. I should also say that he is known for his maverick style and unorthodox but very difficult moves - and he gives great and inspiring classes, and at 48 he's still terrifyingly fit! He's a coach and technical specialist at the main club in Victoria, British Columbia.

(I know him because he was a good friend of my coach in Toronto back when he was competing, so that's how I know him.) He was only here for two days last year so there wasn't an opportunity for him to go to other clubs in the UK. We kept him busy for two days with masterclasses, stroking sessions and private lessons.

Anyway this year Gary is taking a break after a big show with Joannie Rochette (world silver medallist) in Montreal at the end of this month, and he is coming over for a bit of a holiday June 8-16. He will however be doing masterclasses at Lee Valley on the evening of Monday June 15 (lower and higher level skaters) and, for the rest of the time that he's here and not sightseeing, he will be at Ally Pally doing stroking/skills classes in the morning and probably private and group lessons in the daytime.

The reason I wanted to let you know was in case there is anyone at your club who was interested and wanted to attend, either the Lee Valley masterclasses (they are £20 for a 90-minute on-ice session and then a talk) or something at our club (I think our morning skills classes will be £10 per skater and run for an hour). Gary is charging £10 per 15 minute lesson for private lessons - less than he charges in Canada but he's interested in meeting more skaters and coaches here and is on holiday anyway so not looking to make a load of money.

I realise that this sounds like I am writing to you out of the blue trying to earn money for someone, but I hope I can convince you that I am just trying to share the knowledge in case you thought you had any freeskaters at the club (of any level really) who might like to come down and work with him. I don't really know people (coaches, club presidents, top skaters) at clubs other than Ally Pally or Lee Valley - I'm just a recreational adult skater after all - but I just thought that if I let other clubs know, there are bound to be some coaches or skaters who would be interested, and I'd rather let them know than keep it a secret. Guildford isn't that far away from London after all! (I guess as a Canadian I reckon it has to be 800 miles before it's far away.)

I realise that telling you all this isn't the same as telling everyone at Guildford, but I thought that if you thought someone would be interested then you could tell them to email me and I would be very happy to give them more info.

Also I noticed on your website that your ice rink is shut for maintenance during that period so maybe some of your skaters would be skating elsewhere anyway.

Hope I haven't been a bother. If you want to see something of Gary's style, I can highly recommend this footage on YouTube!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjHpnsI9Xh8>