

Sasha COHEN

INTERVIEW

U: When did you realize figure skating was something you could be exceptional at?

SC: When I was around 9 years old. I just worked really hard and loved the thrill of accomplishing something new. The first Olympics I watched was in 1992 and I knew then that it was something I wanted to do one day.

U: Who were your role models in skating?

SC: Kristi Yamaguchi and Tara Lipinski. They, to me are the best. I know Kristi very well. I haven't met Tara but I really admire her skating.

U: How do you cope with the intense pressure of each competition?

SC: I go into every event just trying to do my personal best. I try not to make too much of the competitive aspect.

U: Watching you skate, your preciseness and focus is evident. It makes the viewer hold their breath each time you jump or spin and then "WOW!"

SC: That's really a nice thing to say, thank you. I have worked really hard trying to get better on all of my moves. I do lots of stretching and work out as much as possible off the ice to keep my body flexible.

U: Tell me about the incredible 'Sasha Spiral' and how you came to incorporate it into your skating?

SC: A dance teacher asked me to try it years ago and I've kept working on it. It's a great move.

U: How do you select the music for your competitions? And the music you will skate to at the Olympics?

SC: I will hear something that just inspires me or seems to be just right for me and I like to go with that. I work with my choreographers and take their suggestions as well. I have always loved Romeo and Juliet and the theme from that movie is my choice for the Olympics. It's deep and emotional music, and I think it is perfect for me.

U: What do you tell yourself when you have fallen on the ice?

SC: I basically try to let it go right there. I get up as fast as I can and keep moving. I've learned to shake it off and let it go.

U: How do you deal with criticism in a world where you're just constantly being judged?

SC: It just doesn't bother me. I don't make a big deal of it. People will always judge you for something. I try to always do my best and I am happy with that.

U: How did it feel to win the U.S. National Championship?

SC: That was such a great night for me I was soooo happy and proud that I had done my best. It was also very crazy after the program. I had to go right into photo shoots, media interviews and I had a very bad cold. I was tired and had given my all during the program.

U: Are you friends with the women you are competing with?

SC: We all get along and all have the same goal. We have fun together.

U: We absolutely loved you on Project Runway. Can you tell us how you got involved with the show and your experiences on it? Also, tell us about the outfit made for you and when you plan to wear it.

SC: The show and designers actually came to my training rink and each designer had to come up with their own outfit for me. I loved it and had so much fun! The outfits were incredible. I really liked the one that won the contest. It's white with sequins. I haven't worn it yet.

