

Kaetlyn's fans cheer on Olympian

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Hometown bursting with pride

She truly is the Queen of figure skating in Canada!



Hundreds of residents turned out to St. Gabriel's Hall in Marystown Saturday to cheer on Olympian figure skater Kaetlyn Osmond as she climbed to the international Olympic stage. The hometown girl did not disappoint. George Macvicar Photo

18-year-old Kaetlyn Osmond didn't disappoint as the first female skater Saturday in the new 2014 Winter Olympics figure skating 'Team Event'. She skated a program that set the bar for other competitors to follow.

Supporters gathered at St. Gabriel's Hall in Marystown to watch her performance were not disappointed.

Children and adults both were on their feet clapping, cheering and showing their warmth and pride for their hometown girl as she skated her short program on the big TV screen overhead.

"She did really well," was the general comment from her adult supporters.

The children, many want-a-be skaters themselves, were busy yelling out their appreciation.

Enthusiastic residents dressed in Canada's red colors to display their backing of the 18-year-old Kaetlyn, who still considers Marystown and Newfoundland and Labrador her home although she had lived away for eight years

St. Gabriel's Hall Committee chair John Baker said before her skate "This is a proud day for Marystown, no matter what Kaetlyn does. She made it to the Olympics!"

Marystown Mayor Sam Synard, confined to his house for several days due to surgery, said he had to be present with other supporters for her skate.

“I can see Kaetlyn’s pride and poise as she skates reflected in her family, especially her grandparents here today.

“I recall Kaetlyn when she was a young girl in school but I never thought she would be the ‘Olympian Kaetlyn’.

Random Burin-St. George’s MP Judy Foote arrived for the event. She noted all the Olympians have had their pictures taken in Ottawa, one of which she is particularly proud.

“Hanging in my Ottawa office is a picture of Kaetlyn, which she has autographed for me.”

Burin-Placentia West MHA Clyde Jackman called it “unbelievable what a young girl who started out skating in our Arena has done and is now at the Olympics. This is all about her.”

Kaetlyn’s sister, Natasha, a one-time competitive skater herself, thanked the town’s residents for “showing their support for one girl who started out here.”

On the eve of Kaetlyn’s skate at the 2014 Sochi Olympics in Russia, her family and community supporters responded to the Marystown Town Council call for a group to send a ‘town greeting’ of support last Tuesday.

Councillors decorated the chambers at the Municipal Centre, held a cake cutting and a video message taping for Kaetlyn in Russia.

Deputy-Mayor Al Spencer, who chaired the town’s event, said “I’m hoping we can grow on our community support (through similar events).”

One of Kaetlyn’s grandmothers present, Claudia (Osmond) Lambe was beaming from ear to ear at both community events. Many of her family members had travelled to Kaetlyn’s two victories as Canadian Women’s Figure Skating Champion, most recently in Ottawa in January.

Mrs. Lambe’s heart is also in Russia for her granddaughter’s Olympics’ skate. She said her son, Jeff, and daughter-in-law, Jackie, are going to Sochi this week to support their daughter.

“We’re hoping she will be able to finish in the top eight, like she did last year at the Worlds (Figure Skating Championship). I’ll be glued to the television when she skates in Sochi.”

She added, with Sochi eight hours ahead of Newfoundland time, “It’s good for us with Kaetlyn skating at 11 a.m. or 12 noon our time.”

Local fundraisers for Kaetlyn's trip to Russia are underway and include Marystown councillors/town employees, Marystown Volunteer Fire Department members (\$750 at \$25 a member), another \$1,000 from Sacred Heart Academy students and staff's red and white day and \$500 from the Marystown Lions Club. Schools are hosting student assemblies to celebrate the Winter Olympics and Kaetlyn's participation and Allied Youth Post 989 in St. Lawrence is also celebrating.

Residences and businesses are decked out in red and white colours for the two weeks of the Olympics, Feb. 6-22. The local Tim Hortons has also produced a 'Kaetlyn Donut' to mark her accomplishment.