



## ***Skater Interview***

Brian Larsen is the force behind Vancouver's inline speed skating scene. As the founder and president of The Vancouver Torrent, as well as the head of the local National Skate Patrol, Vancouver has seen a surge in participation in both activities. His tireless efforts and investments grew the membership for the Torrent from zero to 45 members in less than 18 months and The Skate Patrol is diligently assisting skaters and cyclists throughout Vancouver. Brian is a very accomplished inline speedskater and has placed in numerous inline skating marathons throughout North America.

**Q:** Why did you decide to take such a monumental task on, i.e. giving birth to The Vancouver Torrent and essentially integrating it with The Skate Patrol. What's in it for you?

**B.L.** It was really a group idea and very much a group effort arising from our passion for skating. Once many of us started travelling across the continent doing marathons and seeing all the different clubs and how much fun they had as a group, experiencing the thrill of speed skating, we knew that Vancouver needed a speedskating club. I enjoy the sport so much and I love to see skaters develop, coming in on 4 wheels and graduating to 5 wheels and improving their technique and enjoying the sport.

**Q:** What are the biggest challenges to keep both of these skating bodies running smoothly? What is your vision?

**B.L.** The challenge for the Torrent is to make it fun, make it interesting and along the way we all improve our skating. I want the Skate Patrol to be fun as well and the challenge is to be able to get patrollers to commit to spending time on the sea wall assisting other skaters, cyclists and anyone visiting Stanley Park, we are providing a valuable community service. My vision for the Torrent and a critical one if we are to grow stronger and be able to develop our younger skaters is to find a coach who can develop our technique, it's not a money position, thus we need someone with passion and a background in coaching skating either ice or inline.

**Q:** Having said all of this, how did you actually get started in inline skating, and what keeps you on your skates?

**B.L.** I grew up on the prairies playing hockey and as soon as inline skating emerged, I bought my first cheap skates and out I went, one week later a new pair of Rollerblade top-of-the-line skates were purchased and now today 12 years later I am on Bont racing skates. Passion, tons of passion, I simply love to skate, especially with a group of friends, great cardio and lots of fun.



**Q:** Can you list some of your favourite skating/training venues in and around Vancouver?

**B.L.** For a cruise, the sea wall, once it's repaved, will be one of the best in Vancouver and certainly the most scenic. For training you can't beat doing the hills at Seymour, terrifying speed and long grinding hills, as good as it gets!!

**Q:** Which inline marathons are you planning to tackle in your 2004 season? Where can we expect to see you?

**B.L.** If Kim allows this is the season, Orlando, Ottawa, Napa, Seattle, Saint Paul, Duluth and if the body holds up and the courage is there and Gerry leads, do the A2A for the first time!

**Q:** What is your most successful achievement in your inline skating career?

**B.L.** Starting the Skate Patrol and nine years later we are going strong and we have made a huge difference on the sea wall.

**Q:** Are you willing to reveal anything about your training schedule and philosophy and what works best for you?

**B.L.** Training is different for everyone and at my age I have discovered that I usually overtrain, I skate so much that by fall I am bogging down, so now less mileage and more interval training, I have learned to get faster and have more endurance you must at any age, train faster for short periods. Hard gut sucking intervals!!!!

**Q:** Do you have any 'juicy' news or information about yourself that you would like to share to brighten everyone's day up?

**B.L.** As I am a skate addict I am so lucky to have my significant other be very tolerant and understanding.

**Q:** Any comments you wish to add?

**B.L.** We have a great club with many keeners, the future looks rosy with lots of great fun filled skating.

*Thank you so much for your time Brian. Happy Skating!*