

## **Taking Care of the Small Things**

By Susan Ellis

I am often asked by athletes what they can do to improve, and often the answer comes down to one simple little thing. But then the athlete will say, “Yes coach, but what else can I do to improve?” And the answer is – nothing until you take care of that one simple thing first.

Seemingly simple things such as an incorrect arm swing can make so much difference in the athlete’s ability to use the core to apply pressure, prevent rotations, carry the hips forward, etc. And those things can’t be properly assessed until the arm swing is correct. And many times just correcting the arm swing corrects a multitude of other problems that stemmed from the incorrect arm swing. A simple thing like keeping the eyes up can have a major effect in body position and the ability to bring the hips under, apply pressure, keep the pushing going in the right direction, trajectory in to and out of the corner.

Athletes often brush off the simple things as minor details, believing that there must be something bigger than that to make them faster. They may also take the attitude that the coach is just brushing them off and not really committed to helping them improve. I hear it all the time – “All my coach ever tells me is keep my eyes up!”

But great athletes, the ones who are really dedicated to being the best they can be, take care of the small things. By taking care of even the smallest of details they clear the path to even greater success.

So the next time your coach gives you a ‘little’ thing to take care of, take care of it because it might be the ‘biggest’ thing you ever did for your skating.

*“If you take care of the small things, the big things take care of themselves. You can gain more control over your life by paying closer attention to the little things.”*

~ Emily Elizabeth Dickinson – Famous poet

*“Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things, I am tempted to think there are no little things.”*

~ Bruce Barton – Author and Congressman

*“There is nothing, Sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible.”*

~ Samuel Johnson – Author

*Everyone is trying to accomplish something big, not realizing that life is made up of little things.*

~ Frank A. Clark – Writer