

'Impossible' skate show big success

By Jim Cressman
of The Free Press

Brenda Northey was fighting back tears Friday night as a sellout audience of 4,200 spectators at Thompson Arena rose in unison to reward the courageous efforts of the 19-year-old Western general arts student and the talents of an impressive array of figure skaters.

In mounting *An Evening With Stars*, Northey pulled off what many had warned her was the impossible in lining up such skating champions as Toller Cranston, Lynn Nightingale, Brian Pockar and Tracey Wainman. The cast also included Karyn and Rod Garossino, Denise Benning and Alan Kerslake, Louis Lasorsa, Shelley MacLeod and John Rait, the London Su-

premes, Ilderton Silver Jets and Forest City skaters.

(Photo on Page C3.)

All the skaters and behind-the-scenes personnel donated their services and as a result the evening raised \$20,000 to be shared equally by the Thames Valley Children's Centre and Western Day Care Centre.

"I was a little scared . . . skeptical," Northey, in her graduating year, said of the project which began last September. "A lot of people warned me that ice shows like *Ice Capades* have failed in London. I realize this is nothing like *Ice Capades*, which I think has too much of the glitzy part. Tonight shows more of a skater's talent.

"The thing that worried me is most cities tend to classify them as former skaters and don't appreciate what they can still do. As

we sold tickets, I found Toller Cranston still an incredibly big name in London."

The London audience was certainly appreciative of the talent it was watching and afforded prolonged standing ovations for Cranston and Pockar.

"We'll definitely do this again," said Pockar, who appeared awed by the reception the skaters received from the people who had paid \$10, \$8 and \$6 for two hours of brilliance and a lifetime of memories.

Northey, from Toronto and a former skater herself, wasn't ready to say whether she would make this an annual event, although she does want to get into this type of work.

"I was doing so much running around tonight, I never got much chance to watch the show. I think I just want to go home and look at the video."



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Shining stars

Brenda Northey, 19, centre, had reason to smile Friday as the ice show she produced, with stars including Toller Cranston, left, and Lynn Nightingale drew a sell-out crowd to Thompson Arena. The show, presented by the University of Western Ontario Students' Council, raised \$20,000 to be shared equally by the Thames Valley Children's Centre and the on-campus Western Day Care Centre.