

SPORTING LEGENDS: TORVILL & DEAN

SPORT: FIGURE SKATING

COMPETITIVE ERA: 1976 - 1998

Torvill and Dean (Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean) are British ice dancers and former British-, European-, Olympic- and World champions.

At the 1984 Winter Olympics the pair became the highest scoring [figure skaters](#) of all time (for a single programme) receiving twelve perfect 6.0s, including artistic impression scores of 6.0 from every judge. The pair turned professional following the 1984 Olympics, regaining amateur status briefly ten years later in 1994 to compete in the Olympics once again.



The pair retired from competitive skating for good in 1998 when they toured one last time with their own show *Ice Adventures*, before rejoining *Stars on Ice* for one more season. Their final routine was performed to Paul Simon's "Still Crazy After All These Years", a routine they'd devised a few years earlier for competition. Around 1975, Jayne Torvill was a former British Junior Pairs champion, and Christopher Dean and his partner had won a British Junior Ice Dance competition.

Nottingham coach Janet Sawbridge put them together, and shortly afterwards, they started their ice dancing history. They took their first trophy in 1976. They changed coaches to Betty Callaway in 1979.

After a 5th place finish at their first Olympic Games, in Lake Placid in the 1980 Winter Olympics, and 4th place in Worlds that year, they never took lower than first place in any competition they entered, except in the 1994 Winter Olympics.

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Torvill & Dean have won every major ice dancing championship title.

Singer-actor Michael Crawford was the fourth member of the team, along with their trainer. He became a mentor to them around 1981, and went on to help them create their 1983 and 1984 Olympic routines, and "taught them how to act".

He was present with their trainer at the ringside, when the team won their perfect Olympics score with their *Boléro* routine. Although Torvill and Dean had been able to leave their jobs as an insurance book clerk and policeman, respectively-thanks to grants from the City of Nottingham - they were not allowed to earn any money from skating as long as they wished to remain eligible for the Olympics.

Turning professional in 1984, they took advantage not only of the financial but of the artistic possibilities of their new status. They worked with Australian dance choreographer Graeme Murphy at first, and they were able to create not only routines for themselves but entire ice shows with a thematic coherence, which toured Australia, the U.S., and Europe. Their projects included a filmed fairy tale "Fire and Ice."

In general, Dean would imagine the sequence he wanted to perform, and Torvill would work with him to refine it technically. They choreographed, as a team, for other ice dancers and skaters, particularly the Canadian brother-sister team Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay, who skated for France at the Albertville 1992 Winter Olympics, taking the silver medal with their *West Side Story* routine.

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Torvill & Dean will forever be associated with their magical Bolero routine.

After the disappointing finish at Lillehammer, Torvill and Dean "picked themselves up and dusted themselves off" and continued with their planned and very successful "Face the Music" tour, to be followed by numerous other projects: Dean choreographed a suite of dances to the songs of Paul Simon for the English National Ballet, professional competitions, touring with Stars on Ice, and collaborating with cellist Yo-Yo Ma and director Patricia Rozema on the video *Inspired by Bach: Six Gestures*.

In late 1998, they produced an ice show at Wembley Stadium in London, "Ice Adventures," which included a "flying" ice ballet and other wonders. In the meantime, they were still choreographing, notably for the dynamic French Ice Dance team, Anissina and Peizerat, who won first place in the World Championships in 2000.

In 1998, the pair officially retired, each continuing to coach and choreograph separately. On 14 January 2006, they acted as coaches, choreographers and performers in ITV's *Dancing on Ice*. They returned for a second series in January 2007, a third in February 2008 and a fourth series in February 2009.

After the 2007 & 2008 UK series of *Dancing on Ice*, Torvill and Dean took the show on the road for a British tour during 2009.

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Scott Burton's Final Thought

Growing up in my home city of Nottingham, it wasn't difficult to notice the amazing careers of Torvill & Dean.

In many ways, they were the pride of the city. Some people are good at what they do, but Torvill & Dean are GREAT at what they do.

Their dance routines will be remembered for many years to come, and for them to still be entertaining crowds more than 30 years after their debut, that says it all.

They have it, and you can't help but watch them!



Another show, another perfect routine by the master duo!