

# **Kwan, Michelle (1980-) Encyclopedia Article**

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## Kwan, Michelle (1980—)

Michelle Kwan is often called the best all-around figure skater of her generation, with a particular emphasis on artistry. Extremely popular, she most resembles ice queens Peggy Fleming and Kristi Yamaguchi, successfully combining grace and athletic ability as well as achieving artistic and financial success. Her consistent excellence and precocity made her a star; in 1994, a thirteen year-old Kwan stepped easily into the vacuum left by Nancy Kerrigan's turning professional. Initially, Kwan was presented as an "exotic" but found her stride as an interpreter of classical pieces. Kwan remained optimistic about her Olympic prospects for a gold medal after narrowly losing to Tara Lipinski in 1998 at Nagano. A frequent performer in ice shows and pro-am competitions, Kwan is remarkable for her professionalism and unaffected manner.

### Further Reading:

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Downey, Mike. "Real Life Becomes a Short Program." *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 1998.

Ryan, Joan. *Little Girls in Pretty Boxes: The Making and Breaking of Elite Gymnasts and Figure Skaters*. New York, Doubleday, 1995.

Tresniowski, Alex. "Belle on the Ball." *People*, November, 1997.