

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 7 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

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For immediate release

ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2013 **Preview**

The 2013 ISU European Figure Skating Championships will open in Zagreb, Croatia, on January 23. The ISU European Figure Skating Championships return to Zagreb for the fourth time in history. The event was held in the Croatian capital in 1974, 1979 and 2008 before. 151 skaters from 34 ISU members have been entered for the Championships. Following a decision of the ISU Congress in 2012, no Preliminary Rounds will be held. Instead, skaters/couples need to have obtained a minimum total technical score in Short Program and Free Skating in order to compete at the European Championships.

Overview of the top contenders

The Men's event focuses on the battle of the veterans against the youngsters. 2006 Olympic Champion, two-time Olympic silver medalist and seven-time European Champion Evgeni Plushenko (RUS), 30, returns to the European Championships to defend his title. Plushenko's toughest rival probably will be Grand Prix finalist Javier Fernandez (ESP), 21, who aims at a historic first ISU Championships medal in figure skating for Spain. Fernandez has the highest season best score of the European men with 258.62 points. Plushenko did not compete internationally yet this season. 2011 European Champion and reigning European bronze medalist Florent Amodio (FRA), 22, is looking for another medal, but competition will be tough with Michal Brezina (CZE), 22 as well as 2008 European Champion Tomas Verner (CZE), 26 and another veteran, three-time European Champion Brian Joubert (FRA), 27. The top contenders also need to watch out for ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final Champion Maxim Kovtun (RUS), 17, who debuts at the European Championships.

Reigning World and European Champion Carolina Kostner (ITA), 25, is aiming for her fifth European crown. Kostner did not compete in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating this season but won the Italian National Championships. Kostner faces competition from 16-year-old Russians Elizaveta Tuktamysheva and Adelina Sotnikova who debut at the ISU European Championships. Tuktamysheva comes with a seasons best of 179.62 points to Zagreb and won the Russian Championships in December. Sotnikova got a seasons best of 168.96 points. Other contenders include two-time and reigning European bronze medalist Elene Gedevanishvili (GEO), Valentina Marchei (ITA) and Viktoria Helgesson (SWE). 2012 European silver medalist Kiira Korpi (FIN) has withdrawn due to injury.

The Pairs event is highlighted by the duel between four-time and reigning World Pair Skating Champions Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy (GER) and two-time and reigning World silver medalists Tatiana Volosozhar/ Maxim Trankov (RUS). The Germans aim for their fifth European title after missing the event last year while the Russians want to defend their title. Savchenko/Szolkowy competed only in one Grand Prix event and achieved a seasons best of 201.36 points at Skate Canada while Volosozhar/Trankov travel with a seasons best of 207.53 points to Croatia. 2012 European and reigning Grand Prix Final silver medalists Vera Bazarova/Yuri Larionov (RUS) are challenging the top two teams. 2010 European Champions Yuko

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Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS) want to prove that they are back after missing the Europeans Championships last year. Other contenders include Stefania Berton/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA) and Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres (FRA).

In the Ice Dance competition, several talented teams are looking to capture the European title as two-time and defending European Champions Nathalie Pechalat/Fabian Bourzat (FRA) have withdrawn due to injury. The top challengers for the title are now Grand Prix finalists Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA/seasons best 165.64 points), 2011 and 2012 European silver medalists Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS/seasons best 159.95), and reigning European bronze medalists Elena Ilinykh/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS/seasons best 158.46 points). Other couples to watch include Nelli Zhiganshina/Alexander Gazsi (GER), Ekaterina Riazanova/Ilia Tkachenko (RUS) and Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri (ITA).

Please note that for the seasonal best total scores only the ISU Grand Prix competitions (senior and junior) have been taken into consideration, not other international competitions or National Championships.

Prize money

The ISU awards a global prize money of US\$ 350,000 at the ISU European Figure Skating Championships to skaters/couples placed 1st to 12th. The prize money is awarded as follows:

Men and Ladies

1st place	US\$ 20,000
2nd place	US\$ 13,000
3rd place	US\$ 8,000
4th place	US\$ 6,500
5th place	US\$ 5,000
6th place	US\$ 4,000
7th place	US\$ 3,500
8th place	US\$ 3,000
9th place	US\$ 2,500
10th place	US\$ 2,000
11th place	US\$ 1,500
12th place	US\$ 1,000

Pairs and Dance (per couple)

1st place	US\$ 30,000
2nd place	US\$ 19,500
3rd place	US\$ 12,000
4th place	US\$ 9,750
5th place	US\$ 7,500
6th place	US\$ 6,000
7th place	US\$ 5,250
8th place	US\$ 4,500
9th place	US\$ 3,750
10th place	US\$ 3,000
11th place	US\$ 2,250
12th place	US\$ 1,500

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The schedule of the ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2013 is as follows:

Wednesday, January 23: Short Dance, Pairs Short Program

Thursday, January 24: Men Short Program, Pairs Free Skating

Friday, January 25: Ladies Short Program, Free Dance

Saturday, January 26: Men Free Skating, Ladies Free Skating

Sunday, January 27: Exhibition Gala

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and
<http://www.europeans2013.hr/home>

For further information please contact:

ISU Media Coordinator
Selina Vanier
email: vanier@isu.ch

ISU European Figure Skating Championships
Organizing Committee
email: info@europeans2013.hr
Phone: +385-99-2101309