

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2013 **Day One**

The 2013 ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships opened in Osaka, Japan, Friday with the Short Dance, Pairs and Men's Short Programs. 85 skaters from 13 ISU members have been entered for the Championships.

Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir (CAN) dance to narrow lead in Short Dance

Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir of Canada danced to a narrow lead over Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA) in the Short Dance. Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) are currently standing in third place.

Virtue/Moir's Waltz and Polka to "The Waltz Goes On" by Anthony Hopkins was highlighted by intricate footwork and a rotational lift. The reigning World and Four Continents Champions picked up a level four for four elements to post a seasons best of 75.12 points. "The biggest thing for us today was – it felt like the seasons best skate. So no matter what the score was, that's always the best feeling. Ever since we've been young that's really the feeling we chase. If we feel we are together, it feels like a strong performance, if the coaches are happy with it - that's the big thing", Moir commented.

Dancing to March, Polka and Waltz from the ballet "Giselle", Davis/White earned a level four for the two Yankee Polka patterns, the twizzles and the rotational lift. They scored 74.68 points, another seasons best. "I think it was a really good performance today. It was a step up in a lot of aspects. Technically it wasn't what we were aiming for. We had a couple of little mistakes here and there which certainly you can't get away at this point. We're looking to execute everything perfectly at this point of the season, but I think we've made some improvement in a lot of other areas. Despite the little mistakes we are headed into the right direction and we're feeling good", Davis said.

Chock/Bates delivered a strong performance to Waltz and Polka from "Quidam" that included three level-four elements. The National bronze medalists achieved a seasons best of 65.44 points. „We have been training to be consistent and have fun, and today we did, we had a lot of fun. When we heard this music we immediately liked it and that is always a good sign because we have to listen to it all year", Chock noted.

Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani (USA) came fourth at 63.26 points ahead of Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier (CAN) with 60.20 points. Cathy Reed/Chris Reed (JPN) finished sixth (53.97 points).

Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford (CAN) win Pairs Short Program

Canada's Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford won the Pairs Short Program followed by their teammates Kirsten Moore-Towers/Dylan Moscovitch and Marissa Castelli/Simon Shnapir (USA).

Performing to "La Boheme", Duhamel/Radford hit a triple twist, side by side triple Lutz, throw triple Lutz and difficult lift. The Canadian Champions set a new personal best of 70.44 points for themselves. „To break that 70 points barrier, not too many teams have done that, it feels incredible", Radford shared. "We kind of discovered especially after last Nationals the more pressure that's on, the better we seem to skate. Coming in here we knew that we have a great chance to finally have a gold medal after all these silver medals. We came in with a fighting attitude as opposed to trying to ride the wave from Nationals", he added.

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Moore-Towers/Moscovitch's program to "Motley Crew" featured a triple twist, side by side triple toe and throw triple loop. The couple picked up 66.33 points, a new seasons best. "I feel good about the performance today, though there were small things that we didn't do as good as we would have liked to. So we are looking forward to cleaning that up for worlds. We are just going to go out and perform just like we have been training it. We had a great performance at Nationals so we are looking forward to building on that", Moore-Towers commented.

Castelli/Shnapir opened their routine to "Stray Cat Strut" and "Pink Panther" with triple twist and side by side triple Salchow, but Castelli fell on the throw tripe Salchow. The U.S. Champions scored 53.06 points. "We just came back from Nationals. It was not the best performance. We did kind of well trying to get back into the program after my fall. Every skate is an experience for us, even though we did some mistakes", Castelli told the press.

Felicia Zhang/Nathan Bartholomay (USA) came fourth at 52.98 points ahead of Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang (CHN) with 52.46 points. Wenting Wang/Yan Zhang (CHN) placed sixth (51.26 points). Alexa Scimeca/Chris Knierim (USA) withdrew due to injury. Scimeca is suffering from pain in her right foot.

Yuzuru Hanyu takes lead in Men's Short Program

Yuzuru Hanyu of Japan took the lead in the Men's Short Program. China's Han Yan came second and Richard Dornbush (USA) finished third.

Skating to "Parisian Walkways", Hanyu hit a quadruple toeloop and triple Axel as well as difficult spins but he did only a single Lutz-triple toeloop combination. The Japanese Champion scored 87.65 points. "I do not feel good about my performance. I think I missed the Lutz because my timing was a bit fast. I did not feel the pressure from being the national champion. I did not focus on winning or losing to Daisuke (Takahashi) or Takahito (Mura), and I was focusing on my own performance", the reigning World bronze medalist said.

Yan's Tango routine featured a triple Axel, quadruple toeloop and a triple Lutz-triple toeloop. The 2012 World Junior Champion earned a seasons best of 85.08 points. "I am very pleased with what I did. I did all my elements. I don't have a special goal for this event, this being my first (international) senior competition. I don't expect a medal or anything, I am here to learn. Today's result won't put pressure on me. I just want to show what I can do in practice in the free skating and want to do all my elements", Yan told the press.

Dornbush produced a quadruple toeloop, triple Lutz-triple toe and three level-four spins in his program set to „With Or Without You“ by U2, but touched down with his hand on the triple Axel to collect 83.01 points, a seasons best. "I felt really good mostly because I was not expected to be here. Skating better than at Nationals was very fulfilling. I was called up on Sunday and I came up here. I just want to end the season with high note", the Californian shared.

Daisuke Takahashi (JPN) is currently ranked fourth after falling on his triple Axel (82.62 points). Nan Song (CHN) placed fifth at 81.16 points and Kevin Reynolds (CAN) rounds up the top six (78.34 points).

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The ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2013 continue Saturday with the Ladies Short Program and the Men's Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see:

www.isu.org and <http://fcch2013.com/index.html>

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