

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2013** **Day Two**

The 2013 ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships continued in Osaka, Japan, on Saturday with the Ladies Short Program and Men's Free Skating.

### **Mao Asada (JPN) earns big lead in Ladies Short Program**

Mao Asada of Japan earned a big lead in the Ladies Short Program ahead of teammates Akiko Suzuki and Kanako Murakami. All three skaters posted a new seasons best score.

Asada opened her routine to "I've Got Rhythm" with a high triple Axel and followed up with a triple flip-double loop combination and a triple loop. The two-time World Champion produced two level-four spins and level-four footwork to achieve a seasons best of 74.49 points. "This is the first time I landed my triple Axel in my short program this season. I was in good condition since I came here. The moment I jumped I was 99 percent sure I was going to land it (triple Axel). My condition has been going up since Nationals. It is exactly one year till the Sochi Olympic Games, and I would like to skate my best there. I would like to bring this confidence into my free skate tomorrow", Asada said.

Suzuki delivered a strong performance to "Kill Bill" and "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" as well, completing a triple toe-triple toe, a triple flip and double Axel. The World bronze medalist picked up 65.65 points. "I was able to feel like "I finally made it". I have been struggling with jumps this season, and I had tough time making my best towards the competitions. I didn't have 100% confidence in the triple-triple but my coach and I went through practices to make me strong mentally", the Grand Prix Final bronze medalist commented. "(In the Free Skating) I would like to skate like a "flying bird" and I hope my skate will make the audience smile", she added.

Murakami completed the success of the Japanese Ladies with her program to "Prayer for Taylor" that included a double Axel, triple toe-triple toe and triple flip. The National silver medalist scored 64.04 points. "I did of course concentrate in practice on my jumps because in all short programs that I have performed in this season I did not have a successful triple- triple and flip", the 2010 World Junior Champion noted. "At Nationals I learned that I just have to be confident and relax, then I everything is possible."

Christina Gao (USA) sits in fourth at 62.34 points followed by Gracie Gold (USA) with 60.36 points and Kexin Zhang (CHN/57.56 points).

### **Kevin Reynolds (CAN) skates to gold**

Kevin Reynolds of Canada surged from sixth to take the gold in the Men's event. Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu claimed the silver medal and Han Yan of China captured the bronze.

Reynolds gave a flawless performance to "Concerto No. 4 in E minor" by Andre Mathieu, reeling off a quad Salchow, quad toe-triple toe, triple Axel-triple toe, another quad toe as well as three more triple jumps and two level-four spins. The Canadian scored a personal best of 172.21 points and racked up 250.55 points overall to take his first ISU Championships title. "This was completely beyond anything what I could have expected. I knew I was in the range of medals if I do everything in my free program. I had a couple of under-

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rotated quad jumps on my short program. I came back to the practice this morning and worked on them. Recently, I was able to do two strong performances at our National Championships, so that that gave me a lot of confidence, but being able to win this competition surpassed everything I could have expected", Reynolds said.

Overnight leader Hanyu opened his program to "Notre Dame de Paris" with a quadruple toeloop but popped the Salchow into a double. He rallied back to nail five triples. All three spins merited a level four. The Japanese Champion was ranked third in the Free Skating with 158.73 points and slipped from first to second at 246.38 points. "I am full of disappointment, but after I was done, I felt refreshed and relieved. Regarding my performance, there is a lot of what I need to improve. But I have not lost my confidence and I know there are still a lot of things I can do better", the 18-year-old commented.

Yan's program to "Masquerade Suite" by Aram Khatchaturian featured a triple Axel-triple toe and five clean triples, but he fell hard on an underrotated quadruple toeloop. The reigning World Junior Champion earned 150.14 points, a new personal best, and dropped from second to third at 235.22 points. "I hurt my shoulder on the fall on my second jump (quad toe), and started to feel my old injuries. I grew more anxious through the program, but overall I feel satisfied with this event. I did not expect to win a medal here", the 16-year-old told the press.

Max Aaron (USA) landed two quadruple Salchows to move up from 10<sup>th</sup> to fourth at 234.65 points. He was ranked second in the Free Skating. Richard Dornbush (USA) dropped from third to fifth (234.04 points) and Nan Song (CHN) finished sixth (228.46 points).

The ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2013 continue Sunday with the Free Dance, Pairs and Ladies Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org) and <http://fcch2013.com/index.html>

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