

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2013/2014 Rostelecom Cup, Day One

Rostelecom Cup opened in Moscow, Russia, Friday with the Ladies, Pairs, Men's Short Program and the Short Dance. Rostelecom Cup is the sixth and last event and thus the last chance for athletes to earn a spot for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Fukuoka, Japan, next month.

Julia Lipnitskaia (RUS) skates to the lead in Ladies Short Program

Russia's Julia Lipnitskaia skated to the lead in the Ladies Short Program followed by Carolina Kostner of Italy and Agnes Zawadzki (USA). All three Ladies posted a new seasons best score.

Performing to "You Don't Give Up on Love", Lipnitskaia hit a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, a triple flip and impressive level-four spins to score 72.24 points. "Today for the first time ever I skated calmly. Usually I am very nervous, and I was nervous before I skated, but once I stepped on the ice this time I was absolutely calm. My goal is as always to skate clean. You should never think about scores, you have to do job and then the score will come", the 15-year-old said.

Kostner's program to "Humoresque" by Anton Dvorak included a triple toe-triple toe combination, a triple loop and two level-four spins. The five-time and reigning European Champion collected 67.74 points. "I actually really enjoyed performing. As soon as I stepped on the ice, I felt a pleasure being here. The 2005 Worlds came to my mind. This was the practice rink, I competed there. It is an honor still be able to skate. It feels very special (the Moscow ice)", the 2012 World Champion noted.

Zawadzki landed a triple toe-triple toe combination and a triple Lutz in her routine to "Sex and the City" to earn 60.45 points. "I'm so happy with the way competed today. I finally feel like I was myself and I competed what I do in training. I have been struggling with my confidence, but since yesterday when I stepped on the ice felt myself again. I was so easy going and calm. I'm happy to be back (to Moscow), this is my fourth time here and I really love it."

Mirai Nagasu (USA) is within striking distance of the podium at 60.44 points in fourth place.

Elizaveta Tuktamysheva (RUS) came fifth at 60.16 points ahead of Satoko Miyahara (JPN) with 56.57 points.

Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy take Pairs Short Program

Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy of Germany took the Pairs Short Program. Russia's Vera Bazarova/Juri Larionov came second and Canadians Kirsten Moore-Towers/Dylan Moscovitch are currently ranked third.

Savchenko/Szolkowy produced a triple twist, side by side triple toe and level-four lift, pair spin, death spiral and footwork in their routine to "When Winter Comes" in an arrangement by Andre Rieu, but Savchenko fell on the throw triple Axel. The couple picked up a seasons best with 73.25 points. "Our skating today was a lot better than our last competition in China, and that was our goal for today. As everybody could see we had a bad fall on the throw. It is a risky element. Right now I

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hope Aliona will be okay for tomorrow”, Szolkowy commented. “I am very sad (about missing the Axel). But tomorrow is a new day and we’ll try to make the best out of it”, added Savchenko. Bazarova/Larionov’s program to “Titine” from the “Modern Times – Charlie Chaplin” soundtrack featured a triple twist, throw triple flip and as well four level-four elements, but he doubled the side by side toeloop while she stumbled on a triple. With 69.72 points, the 2012 European silver medalists got a season best score. “Compared to (the Grand Prix in) Paris (last week) we were able to fix the mistake on the death spiral. We had lost a level there, now we changed the entry and got the maximum level for all elements. The first jump didn’t happen for both of us. It is very upsetting, because it worked in training and in the warm up. Tomorrow we’ll try to fix our mistakes”, Bazarova explained.

Skating to “Motley Crew – Mic Mac”, Moore-Towers/Moscovitch completed a triple twist and throw triple loop, but he fell on the triple toe. The reigning Four Continents silver medalists earned 65.65 points. “I think I was working on some yoga poses on the landing (of the triple toe). The ice was a little bit slippery”, Moscovitch joked. “We’ve been skating all week, we haven’t missed anything. It happens, that’s skating. The rest of the routine felt very good, aside from the mistake I think we did everything quite well.”

Julia Antipova/Nodari Maisuradze (RUS) finished fourth with 62.87 points and Alexa Scimeca/Chris Knierim (USA) placed fifth at 59.56 points.

Maxim Kovtun (RUS) wins Men’s Short Program

Russia’s Maxim Kovtun won the Men’s Short program ahead of Tatsuki Machida of Japan and Spain’s Javier Fernandez

Kovtun reeled off a quadruple Salchow-triple toeloop combination, a quadruple toeloop, triple Axel and a level-four combination spin his Flamenco program to score a personal best with 92.53 points. „I am very happy today with my performance, everything I planned worked out. But I still can skate better than that. I am waiting with impatience for each competition and for the off-season to work more on my skating in order to get a higher component score. I am still lacking in this area”, the 18-year-old said.

Performing to “East of Eden”, Machida stepped out of the quad toe-triple toe combination, but rallied back to nail a triple Axel, triple Lutz and picked up a level four two spins and the step sequence. He collected 84.90 points. “I am not in the best condition right now and considering that I am happy with how I performed. I am looking forward to perform my free skating to “Firebird” by Russian composer Igor Stravinski tomorrow in front of a Russian audience”, the Skate America Champion told the press.

Fernandez routine to “Satan Takes a Holiday” featured triple Axel, triple Lutz-double toe combination and two level-three spins, but he missed the quadruple Salchow. The European Champion earned 81.87 points. “My short program wasn’t the best one again. I have some little problems with the quad and I keep working to fix them. I have been doing quads well in practice and warm up, but I have a little problem in the pattern. I have to keep my mind clear for the warm up and competition to pull out a better program”, the reigning World bronze medalist explained.

Konstantin Menshov (RUS) placed fourth at 72.43 points, just edging out teammate Artur Gachinski (RUS), who has 72.18 points.

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Joshua Farris (USA) withdrew from the competition following the morning practice. He had sprained his right ankle in practice on Thursday.

Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS) lead after Short Dance

Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev of Russia danced to the lead in the Short Dance. Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje of Canada are sitting in second place and Russia's Ekaterina Riazanova/Ilia Tkachenko finished third.

Bobrova/Soloviev's performance to Quickstep and Foxtrot to "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend" and "I Will Wait For You" was highlighted by intricate steps and a straight line lift. The Finnstep sequences and the side by side footwork merited a level three, while the twizzles and the straight line lift were a level four. The European Champions posted a new seasons best with 68.42 points. "Today, before we took our starting pose, I told Katia, that we aren't just going to skate, we are going to dance. We did that and we were actually talking to each other during the performance, there were moments like Katia said, 'chasse' and I said, 'great'. We did that for the first time and I think it helped us to skate with emotions and power", Soloviev shared.

Weaver/Poje produced level-four twizzles in their dance to "42nd Street", but their Finnstep pattern garnered only a level two and one and their curve lift was a level two. The Canadians scored 61.50 points. "Andrew and I were actually very happy with our performance. We felt like we performed like we do it at home and it felt strong. Unfortunately it wasn't really reflected in the technical score, but it's no surprise, because the Finnstep is a difficult dance and we're going obviously keep working. We hope to get to the Grand Prix Final and skate strong there", Weaver said.

Riazanova/Tkachenko's routine to "Chicago" included fast twizzles and a rotational lift that got a level four, but the other elements were called a level two. They couple from Odintsovo earned 58.59 points. "We are also very happy with our performance. Obviously the levels we received today were lower than at our previous competition which is just another sign that you cannot stop working", Tkachenko commented.

Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) are sitting in fourth place with 57.80 points. Ksenia Monko/Kirill Khaliavin (RUS) came fifth at 55.83 points.

For full results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2013/14 please refer to www.isu.org. Rostelecom Cup continues Saturday with the Ladies, Pairs, Men's Free Skating and Free Dance.

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