

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2013/2014 Lexus Cup of China, Day Two

The Lexus Cup of China continued Saturday in Beijing with the Free Dance, Ladies, Men and Pairs Free Skating. Lexus Cup of China is the third of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2013/2014 series. The athletes are competing for a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

Nathalie Pechalat/Fabian Bourzat (FRA) dance off with gold

France's Nathalie Pechalat/Fabian Bourzat overtook overnight leader Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev of Russia to dance off with the gold medal. Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) earned the bronze.

Pechalat/Bourzat's dance "Le Petit Prince et Sa Rose" was highlighted by difficult lifts and smooth footwork. The French team got a level four for the twizzles, lifts and the spin while the step sequences garnered a level three. The two-time European Champions scored 102.08 points and totaled 165.68 points. "We are really happy to have won the third gold medal at the Cup of China, but at the same time we feel a little sad because this is our last season and the last Cup of China we will do. So it was a great pleasure for us to compete here", Bourzat shared.

Bobrova/Soloviev put out a strong performance to "Four Seasons" and "Lacrimosa" as well. Four elements merited a level four, but a rotational lift had a level two. The reigning World bronze medalists earned 97.72 points which added up to 163.42 points and they slipped to second place. "As for our Free Dance, we probably just don't have enough mileage on this program and we are not in top shape yet. We now will have some time to work before the next Grand Prix in Moscow", Soloviev commented.

Chock/Bates produced level-four lifts and level-three footwork in their routine to "Les Miserables" to pick up 93.76 points. At 150.53 points overall, they remained in third place. "We are very pleased with our performance. We went in with a plan of attack and just to enjoy and put our best skate and I think that we did that. We are so excited about our first medal at the Grand Prix", Chock told the press.

Pernelle Carron/Lloyd Jones (FRA) pulled up from fifth to fourth at 134.12 points and switched places with Alexandra Aldridge/Daniel Eaton (USA, 132.06 points).

Pechalat/Bourzat will compete in two weeks at the Trophee Bompard in Paris, while Bobrova/Soloviev and Chock/Bates will meet again at the Rostelecom Cup of Russia in Moscow.

Anna Pogorilaya (RUS) skates to Ladies gold

Anna Pogorilaya of Russia upset teammate Adelina Sotnikova to claim the gold medal. Carolina Kostner of Italy settled for the bronze.

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Pogorilaya's program to "Mermaids" from the "Pirates of the Caribbean" soundtrack featured a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, a triple loop-single loop-triple Salchow combination as well as three more triple jumps and three level-four spins. However, she popped an Axel. The 15-year-old from Moscow scored a personal best of 118.38 points and racked up a total of 178.62 points to win the title in her first (senior level) Grand Prix event. "This was quite unexpected. I would have been very happy if I had been third. Today I showed everything I can do and the judges apparently appreciated it", the World Junior bronze medalist said.

Skating to "Introduction et Rondo Capriccioso" by Camille Saint-Saens, Sotnikova landed four triple jumps including a double Axel-triple toe combination, but crashed on both flips. The Muscovite earned 108.67 points and with 174.70 points overall she slipped from first to second. "Maybe I just got too nervous as I had to skate last and I had the chance to win. I tried not to think about it and I don't know why the performance went wrong. But I don't give up. I still have another Grand Prix and I will try very hard", the 17-year-old commented.

Kostner landed a triple flip-double toe, a triple Salchow-double toe-double loop combination, but made errors on other jumps. She collected 110.65 points in the Free Skating which added up to 173.70 points. "I actually enjoyed performing tonight, although I had quite a bit of mistakes. Usually I make mistakes when I am nervous, but today I was not nervous. But that is how I learn every time I compete. Of course not very pleased about performance, but in the end I am in third place and I can go home with a smile", the 2012 World Champion explained.

Pogorilaya and Sotnikova are up against each other again in Paris at the Trophee Bompard. Kostner's next event is the Rostelecom Cup of Russia in Moscow in three weeks.

Kanako Murakami (JPN) remained in fourth place at 165.95 points. Nikol Gosviani (RUS) moved up from sixth to fifth (152.04 points) while Haruka Imai (JPN) dropped one spot to sixth at 150.30 points.

Han Yan (CHN) claims Men's gold medal

Han Yan of China won the Men's event in his debut at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating. Russia's Maxim Kovtun, another debutant, earned the silver medal and the bronze went to Takahiko Kozuka of Japan.

Yan reeled off a quad toe-triple toe combination and four more clean triples as well as three level-four spins in his Waltz program. However, he stepped out of the triple Axel and doubled the loop. The 2012 World Junior Champion was ranked second in the Free Skating with 155.48 points, but remained in first place overall at 245.62 points. "I was nervous in my free skating today, maybe because I didn't skate so late. I didn't perform the complete program, it is very hard and I didn't show all the difficulty yet. But I am very happy that the judges appreciated my program", the 17-year-old noted.

Kovtun's routine to Peter Tchaikovski's Piano Concerto No. 1 included two quadruple Salchows, two triple Axels as well as three more triples, but he doubled an intended quad toeloop. Kovtun was awarded 156.81 points and totaled 238.65 points. "To win the silver medal in my first senior Grand Prix is very valuable for me and a motivation to train harder and to win more competitions. I learned for myself that I have to work more on my second mark. Today it was already higher than yesterday and I skated more freely", the 18-year-old said.

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Kozuka fell on his opening quad toe (underrotated) and also on a triple flip, but recovered to land five triple jumps. He scored 145.30 points and accumulated 226.92 overall. "Today's performance was the worst in my skating life. I am not injured or sick, but I need to concentrate more on my next competition", the 2011 World silver medalist commented.

2013 World silver medalist Denis Ten (KAZ) finished fourth at 224.80 points. Richard Dornbush (USA) was fifth with 218.57 points and Florent Amodio (FRA) slipped from fifth to sixth at 213.39 points.

Yan is scheduled to compete again at the Trophee Bompard and Kovtun will go to the Rostelecom Cup of Russia. Kozuka has 16 points from his two Grand Prix events.

Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy (GER) strike gold

Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy of Germany struck gold while China's Qing Pang/Jian Tong and Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang picked up the silver and bronze medals.

Performing to "Nutcracker" by Peter Tchaikovski, Savchenko/Szolkowy completed a throw triple flip, a triple toe-triple toe sequence, triple twist and earned a level four for the death spiral, the side by side spin and the Axel Lasso lift. But Savchenko fell on the last element, the throw triple Axel, and both made a mistake on the side by side double Axel. The four-time World Champions scored 132.14 points and overtook Pang/Tong with 201.21 points overall. "Today's program was a little better than the short program. This is our first competition and it is just one step to Sochi. After all we are satisfied. But we still can get a lot more points", Szolkowy told the press.

Pang/Tong's program to "I Dreamed a Dream" from "Les Miserables" featured a triple twist, a throw triple loop and Salchow, but he struggled with the solo jumps, singling an Axel and doubling the toeloop. The reigning Olympic silver medalists received 124 points and slipped to second at 194.38 points overall. "We skated like in training, but we had a few problems and we lacked energy", Pang analyzed. "We didn't feel so confident before the competition as it is our first one and this is hard for everybody. We are not at a 100 percent yet", Tong added.

Peng/Zhang's routine to "Yellow River Concerto" was highlighted by a quadruple twist, triple throws and level-four lifts. The Chinese team earned 122.95 points for the Free Skating and 187.19 points overall. "We are glad to have won our first Grand medal. We have been skating together for a little over a year only", Zhang said.

Xuehan Wang/Lei Wang completed a strong showing of the Chinese pairs by finishing fourth (172.35 points). Alexa Scimeca/Chris Knierim (USA) came fifth at 161.72 points.

Savchenko/Szolkowy will compete again in three weeks in Moscow at the Rostelecom Cup of Russia. Pang/Tong's next event is the Trophee Bompard in France. Peng/Zhang will already take the ice again next week at NHK Trophy in Tokyo.

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Lexus Cup of China concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating continues next week with NHK Trophy in Tokyo, Japan. For full results please refer to www.isu.org.

For further information please contact

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