

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2013/2014 NHK Trophy, Preview

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2013/2014 continues this week with the NHK Trophy, the fourth of six events in the series, in Tokyo, Japan. Several top skaters are aiming at securing a spot for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final while some others are entering the series just now. The world's top figure skaters are competing for a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

50 skaters/couples from 9 ISU Members have been invited to NHK Trophy. The event is headlined by two-time World Champion and reigning Olympic silver medalist Mao Asada, World Champions Tatiana Volosozhar/Maxim Trankov (RUS), Ice Dance World Champions Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA) as well as European Champion Javier Fernandez (ESP) and Olympic bronze medalist Daisuke Takahashi (JPN).

World bronze medalist Fernandez competes in his first Grand Prix event this season. He has to deal with Takahashi, Nobunari Oda (JPN), Adam Rippon (USA), Max Aaron (USA), Jeremy Abbott (USA), Konstantin Menshov (RUS) and Sergei Voronov (RUS). Takahashi wants to improve on his fourth place-finish from Skate America and needs a win in order to have a good chance for the Grand Prix Final. Rippon has a silver medal from Skate America and hopes to qualify for the Final. Oda and Aaron got bronze medals from their first event and are in the run for a ticket to Fukuoka as well.

Competition in the Ladies event will be tough as well. With her gold medal from Skate America, Asada has a good chance to qualify for the Final. Skate Canada silver medalist Akiko Suzuki (JPN), Skate America bronze medalist Elena Radionova (RUS) and Skate Canada bronze medalist Gracie Gold (USA) are challenging for the podium again and also hope to book a ticket to the Final. Mirai Nagasu (USA) and Alena Leonova (RUS) are entering their first Grand Prix this season.

World and European Champions Volosozhar/Trankov are looking for their second Grand Prix victory this season. Skate Canada silver medalists Wenjing Sui/Cong Han (CHN) and Cup of China bronze medalists Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang (CHN) are eying the podium and the Grand Prix Final as well. Other contenders include World Junior Champions Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier (USA) and Paige Lawrence/Rudi Swiegers (CAN). 2012 World bronze medalist Narumi Takahashi (JPN) will compete with new partner Ryuichi Kihara in their first Grand Prix as a team.

While World Champions Davis/White are the top favorites in the Ice Dance event, the battle for silver and bronze should be intense. Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA) come with silver from Skate America while Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani (USA) got the bronze in Detroit. 2013 European silver medalists Elena Ilinykh/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS) and 2012 World Junior Champions Victoria Sinitsina/Ruslan Zhiganshin (RUS) are entering their first event this season and are challenging for the podium as well.

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For full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2013/14 please refer to www.isu.org.

The schedule of NHK Trophy is as follows:

Friday, November 8: Pairs, Men's and Ladies Short Program

Saturday, November 9: Short Dance, Pairs, Men's and Ladies Free Skating

Sunday, November 10: Free Dance, Exhibition Gala

For further information please contact

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating & Final

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NHK Trophy

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