



January 16, 2014

ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2014
Day Two

The 2014 ISU European Figure Skating Championships continued in Budapest, Hungary, Thursday with the Men's Short Program and the Free Dance.

Javier Fernandez (ESP) claims Men's Short Program

Javier Fernandez of Spain claimed the Men's Short Program. Russia's Sergei Voronov and Tomas Verner of the Czech Republic follow in second and third.

Fernandez produced a quadruple Salchow, triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe and two level-four spins in his entertaining routine to "Satan Takes a Holiday". The defending champion posted a new personal best of 91.56 points. "I felt pretty good out there. In fact I really enjoyed it. I feel I have a good chance to win the gold medal again but every skater coming behind me has a chance to steal it from me. So I have to calm myself and be strong", the 22-year-old noted. "Early in the season I had problems with my skates. You can't train well when the skates aren't good. Everything becomes harder. But I went back to my old skates and just kept training", he added.

Skating to "Two Guitars", Voronov hit a quad toe-triple toe combination, triple loop and triple Axel. The change foot sit spin merited a level four, the other two spins a level three. The 26-year-old from Moscow earned 85.51 points, which is a new personal best. "Today was hard for me, I had very strong emotions. I remember last year which was not good, and today it felt like one year was a very short time ago. I don't think today was my best skate, but I'm so pleased I beat the nerves and the worries I had before", the two-time Russian Champion shared.

Verner stumbled on his opening quad toe, but recovered to nail a triple Axel and triple Lutz-triple toe, but he wobbled on his final sit spin that was graded a level one. The 2008 European Champion scored 83.51 points and set a new personal best for himself. "I'm just glad to make a decent short and be in the game. After last year's World Championships in London take a decision whether I compete and go for Olympics or I quit. I took a time and then (get away) from the hate I had in my heart after London, the hate towards figure skating, because it didn't bring me any good feelings, then I decided to tie up my skates one more time and go on the ice and find the love again and I found it. That's why I'm here, that's the only reason. I don't want to leave the sport with bitter feelings", Verner commented.

Several Men still have a good shot at the podium. Maxim Kovtun (RUS) came fourth with 83.15 points. Michal Brezina (CZE) placed fifth (82.80 points) and Alexander Majorov (SWE) is currently ranked sixth at 79.62 points.

Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA) dance off with gold

Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte of Italy danced off with the gold medal. Russia's Elena Ilinykh/Nikita Katsalapov claimed the silver medal and the bronze went to Penny Coomes/Nicholas Buckland of Great Britain.

Cappellini/Lanotte put out a strong dance to "Barber of Seville", collecting level fours for the lifts, spin and twizzles and a level three for the two step sequences. The couple from Milan scored 102.03 points, a new personal best in the Free Dance, and totaled 171.61 points to win the European title. They were

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bronze medalists in 2013. It was the first gold medal for Italian Ice Dance since 2001 when Barbara Fusar Poli/ Maurizio Margaglio became European Champions. “We felt more tight today of course than before the short dance. But going into this free dance being in the lead gave us a boost of confidence, and anyway when you’re out there on the ice you’re not thinking about the others and their points, you have to go out and do your job. This was also definitely a great step forward looking on to the Olympics”, Cappellini told the press.

Ilinykh/Katsalapov’s passionate performance to “Swan Lake” was highlighted by innovative lifts and smooth footwork, but Ilinykh fell on the twizzles. Four elements garnered a level four, while the circular steps and the twizzles were rated a level three and the diagonal steps a level two. The Muscovites earned 100.97 points and overall had 170.51 points to repeat as silver medalists. “It’s sport. Sometimes this happens. We were giving a 100 percent from the beginning and we were trying so hard. We were very well prepared for this competition. It is a great lesson for us”, Ilinykh commented.

Coomes/Buckland turned in an entertaining program to Michael Jackson songs and especially their acrobatic lifts were well received by the crowd. The British Champions posted a new personal best score with 96.93 points, which added up to 158.59 overall. “I think it was Tallinn, Estonia (our first European Championships) and we were 16th, so I feel very proud to be sitting here today with a bronze medal. We’ve come a long way. (On the size of the medal) We’ve not had a medal before so this is size it should be! It could come in any size, I wouldn’t care”. Buckland noted.

Victoria Sinitsina/Ruslan Zhiganshin (RUS) finished fourth in what was their debut at the ISU European Figure Skating Championships (153.73 points). Teammates Ekaterina Riazanova/Ilia Tkachenko followed in fifth place with 150.44 points and Julia Zlobina/Alexei Sitnikov (AZE) came sixth, the best result for an Azeri Ice Dance team in the history of the European Championships (147.78 points).

The ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2014 continue Friday with the Pairs Short Program and the Ladies Free Skating. For more information and full results please see: www.isu.org and <http://www.efsc2014.com>.

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