

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 7 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

October 24, 2014

For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2014/2015 Hilton HHonors Skate America, Day One

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2014/2015 opened Friday with Hilton HHonors Skate America, the first of six events in Hoffman Estates (Chicago), USA. Skaters compete for points to qualify for the Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) take lead in Short Dance

Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) danced to the lead in the Short Dance followed by teammates Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani. Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin of Russia are currently ranked third.

Performing to “Don Quixote”, Chock/Bates picked up a level four for the straight line lift, twizzles, and the Paso Doble sequence while the Partial Step Sequence and the side by side footwork were rated a level three. The 2013 Four Continents bronze medalists scored 68.96 points, a new personal best. “The Paso Doble is a very strong and mostly serious dance. We have a different look obviously, we don't look like typical Paso Doble matadors and we wanted to put our own spin on it. We are still trying to bring that strong presence as well. We don't want people to feel intense watching us. We want people to enjoy it and suck them in as they are watching. We want to give them something to wonder about”, Chock commented.

Shibutani/Shibutani's Flamenco to “Asturias Variations” and Paso Doble to “The Last Corrida” featured level-four twizzles and a level-four lift. The two Paso Doble parts were graded a level two. The brother-and-sister team earned 64.14 points, which is a new seasons best. “This performance was a little disappointing for us. We feel like we have really improved since our senior B. We were happy we went to Slovakia this year. But at the same time we had a slight mistake in the twizzles. That's a costly mistake. It was at the beginning of the program and we had a really strong recovery. So much of the program has improved and we feel really good about how strong this program is we are going to move on from today and focus on the free dance”, Maia Shibutani told the post-event press conference.

Stepanova/Bukin produced a solid dance to “Espana Cani”, earning a level three for the lift and the Paso Doble sequences, but the twizzles garnered a level one only. The 2013 World Junior Champions collected 56.37 points. Stepanova had to overcome a crash into the boards in the morning practice. “I feel good. It was not that hard to come back (from the accident). We were busy with my treatment and didn't have time to get nervous before the competition”, she noted.

Frederica Testa/Lukas Csolley (SVK) with 55.63 points, Anastasia Cannuscio/Colin McManus (USA) at 55.14 points and Nicole Orford/Thomas Williams (CAN) with 55.10 remain close to the podium.

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 7 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

Tatsuki Machida (JPN) claims Men's Short Program

Japan's Tatsuki Machida claimed the Men's Short Program. U.S. competitors Jeremy Abbott and Jason Brown follow in second and third.

Machida put out an excellent performance to "Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra" from the "Ladies in Lavender" soundtrack by Nigel Hess and Joshua Bell, reeling off a quadruple-triple toeloop combination, triple Axel, triple Lutz and two level-four spins. The World silver medalist picked up 93.39 points. "This is my first competition of the season and this was the first time I skated this short program. I'm very happy I was able to skate through it without big mistakes. I am very proud", Machida said. "This is the third year I've worked with (choreographer) Philipp (Mills). I think he is the person who understands me in terms of my artistic side the most. I trust him 100 percent and that's why I asked him to choreograph my short program", the Japanese skater added.

Jeremy Abbott's routine to "Lay Me Down" included a triple flip-triple toe, triple Lutz and level-four step sequence, but he stepped out of the triple Axel. The U.S. Champion scored 81.82 points. "This is also my first competition of the season. This is a brand, brand new short program. I love performing it, I love the music, I love the feeling of the program. I felt just very comfortable, at ease and at home tonight. I was really pleased with the starting point, so only up from here", the 29-year-old told the press.

Skating to "Juke" by Little Waters, Brown had to overcome a rough start when he fell on his opening triple Axel, but rallied back to land a triple flip-triple toe, triple Lutz and three level-four spins. The 2013 World Junior silver medalist earned 79.75 points. "I wish would have had a better start, the triple Axel I fell on, but I am really happy with the way I recovered. I really made sure to get every point with the rest of what I did. In that sense I'm really happy that I kept the integrity of the program. I can't wait for the long tomorrow", the National silver medalist continued.

Olympic bronze medalist Denis Ten (KAZ) is currently ranked fourth with 77.18 points and World Junior silver medalist Adian Pitkeev (RUS) came fifth (76.13 points).

Follow @ISU_Reporter on Twitter for selected athletes' quotes. For full entry lists of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2014/15 please refer to www.isu.org/en/single-and-pair-skating-and-ice-dance/series/isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating. Skate America continues Saturday with the Pairs and Ladies Short Program, Men's Free Skating, and Free Dance.

For further information please contact

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating & Final
Selina Vanier, Media Coordinator
+41 21 612 66 66 (phone)
email: vanier@isu.ch

Hilton HHonors Skate America
Renee Felton, Press Officer
+1 303 717 77 49 (cell phone)
email: rfelton@usfigureskating.org