

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2015/16 Audi Cup of China, Preview

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2015/2016 continues this week with the Audi Cup of China, the third of six events in Beijing (CHN), November 6 to 8. 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.

Overview over the top contenders

Reigning World Champion Javier Fernandez (ESP) starts his season in Beijing. Competition should come from 2015 Four Continents bronze medalist Han Yan (CHN), who wants to improve on his fourth place finish at Progressive Skate America two weeks ago as well as from ISU Grand Prix Final bronze medalist Sergei Voronov (RUS) and Elladj Balde (CAN). Other contenders are Nan Song (CHN), Richard Dornbush (USA) and Misha Ge (UZB).

Three-time World Champion Mao Asada (JPN) headlines the Ladies event. In her first competition following a year-long break the 2010 Olympic silver medalist will face 2015 World bronze medalist Elena Radionova (RUS) and 2015 European bronze medalist Anna Pogorilaya (RUS). 2015 Four Continents bronze medalist Rika Hongo (JPN), Zijun Li (CHN) and Courtney Hicks (USA) are aiming at the podium as well.

2015 World silver medalists Wenjing Sui/Cong Han (CHN) lead the Pairs event and are looking for second gold medal on the circuit following their victory at Progressive Skate America. 2015 European Champions Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS) and ISU Grand Prix finalists Xiaoyu Yu/Yang Jin (CHN) and Lubov Iliushechkina/Dylan Moscovitch (CAN) want to challenge the leaders.

2015 World silver medalists Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) are aiming at their second gold medal after winning Progressive Skate America and at securing their spot for the Grand Prix Final. Competition should come from 2014 World Champions Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA) and Russian Champions Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin. Other competitors include 2014 World Junior Champions Kaitlyn Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker (USA) and Federica Testa/Lukas Csolley (SVK).

A total of 56 skaters/couples from 12 ISU members compete at Audi Cup of China. For full entry lists of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2015/16 please refer to www.isu.org under Single& Pair Skating/Ice Dance then select Grand Prix.

The schedule of Audi Cup of China is as follows:

Friday, November 6: Short Dance, Ladies, Men's and Pairs Short Program
Saturday, November 7: Free Dance, Ladies, Men's and Pairs Free Skating
Sunday, November 8: Exhibition Gala

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