

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2015/16 Rostelecom Cup, Day One**

Rostelecom Cup opened in Moscow (RUS) on Friday with the Short Dance and the Men's, Pairs and Ladies Short Programs. Rostelecom is the fifth of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2015/16. 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. Several skaters have the chance to book their ticket for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

### **Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje (CAN) dance to lead in Short Dance**

Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje of Canada danced to the lead in the Short Dance. Italy's Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte follow just two points behind in second place. Russians Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov are currently standing in third place.

Dancing to "On the Blue Danube" and "Annenpolka" by Johann Strauss, Weaver/Poje picked up a level four for the twizzles, the second Waltz pattern and a level three for their curve lift, the first part of the Ravensburg Waltz and the partial step sequence. The 2015 World bronze medalists scored 69.49 points, a new seasons best. "I think that we skated fairly well. We've doubled the amount of training time for this program since we had two weeks before Skate Canada and now another two weeks before this event. So that feels great to have a little bit more mileage. We definitely can perform it better and we're looking forward to growing on this program and make it the best it can be", Weaver said.

Cappellini/Lanotte's Waltz and Polka from "The Merry Widow" by Franz Lehar featured three level-four elements: the twizzles, the rotational lift and the second Waltz pattern, but the first Waltz pattern was rated a level two. The 2014 World Champions earned a seasons best with 67.82 points. "Skating-wise we are 90 percent satisfied, it was a better skate than at Cup of China, but still not a 100 percent what this program can do. We made a couple of changes and we're still working on it and hopefully we'll be able to raise the bar with this program even more", Cappellini commented.

Sinitsina/Katsalapov delivered a smooth dance to Waltz, Polka and March from "Swan Lake", earning a level four for the twizzles and the rotational lift to post a seasons best score as well with 63.63 points. "Our coaches and people whose opinion matters to us said that we took a step forward. Compared to Skate America it maybe felt a little harder to skate here, maybe because of the time change. We're already used to the time in the USA. Today we felt how the audience reacted to us and we have conquered the fans", Katsalapov commented.

Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri (ITA) are standing in fourth place at 60.58 points followed by Ksenia Monko/Kirill Khaliavin (RUS) with 59.03 points. Russian Champions Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin finished sixth as he fell on the twizzles (54.46 points).

### **Adian Pitkeev (RUS) captures Men's Short Program**

Russia's Adian Pitkeev edged out Javier Fernandez of Spain for a narrow lead in the Men's Short Program. Ross Miner (USA) placed third.

Pitkeev landed a quad-triple toeloop combination, a triple Axel and triple Lutz and collected a level four for his spins and the footwork in his routine to "Appassionata". The 2014 World Junior silver medalist set a new personal best with 87.54 points for himself. "I was very nervous before the short

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program. I used to come here as a spectator only and now I'm skating here myself and I wanted to do well", the 17-year-old said. "I am obviously very surprised to be in first place. It is a big success for me to be in this room (at the press conference) for the first time", the Muscovite added.

Skating to "Malaguena", Fernandez produced a triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination and two level-four spins, but he tripled his planned quad Salchow right at the beginning. The reigning World Champion scored 86.99 points. "Today and yesterday I had a great practice, but the six-minutes warm up was a little so so, there was a fall and I couldn't get comfortable with the quad Sal. But tomorrow will be a different day and hopefully I'll have a better day. I have a lot of fans and friends here and it is always a great pleasure to come to Moscow", the European Champion shared.

Miner's performance to "New York State of Mind" by Billy Joel included a triple flip, triple Axel and triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination. The American achieved a new personal best score of 85.36 points. "I was very focused on staying calm throughout my performance and I felt I did really good job with that. I'm really looking forward to tomorrow to continue the same calm, methodic way of skating", Miner noted.

Sergei Voronov (RUS) remains close to the podium in fourth place with 84.17 points and Mikhail Kolyada (RUS) is currently ranked fifth at 79.64 points. Peter Liebers (GER) withdrew before the Short Program due to injury.

## **Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov (RUS) win Pairs Short Program**

Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov of Russia won the Pairs Short Program ahead of their teammates Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov. China's Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang are currently ranked third. All three couples posted a new seasons best.

Stolbova/Klimov's performance to "I Put a Spell on You" was highlighted by a throw triple flip, side by side triple toe and four level-four elements. The 2014 Olympic silver medalists earned 75.40 points. "It was a very good, we almost did everything as planned. After Skate America we've been training a lot and we changed some things that seemed not so favorable for us", Klimov told the press.

Performing to "I Finally Found Someone", Kavaguti/Smirnov completed a set of triple toes, a triple twist and throw triple loop to score 71.70 points on Kavaguti's birthday. "We did our difficult elements and we were nervous to skate at home. We want to thank the fans for their support. We've been able to work on the quad throw loop since China and we want to try it in the free skating", Smirnov said.

Peng/Zhang produced a throw triple loop, triple twist and side by side triple toe in their routine set to "Come Together". The ISU Grand Prix Finalists picked up 68.10 points. "We couldn't practice for six days, because we returned home after the short program in France and then came here to Moscow. Yesterday was the first time for us to train again. So considering that I think we performed very well", Zhang explained.

Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA) placed fourth at 62.43 points followed by Natalja Zabijako/Alexander Enbert (RUS) with 60.77 points.

## **Elena Radionova (RUS) claims Ladies Short Program**

Elena Radionova of Russia claimed the Ladies Short Program. Canada's Alain Chartrand

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finished second while Evgenia Medvedeva of Russia ranked third.

Radionova opened her performance to “Je t’aime” by Lara Fabian with a solid triple Lutz-triple toe combination and followed up with a triple loop, double Axel and level-four spins to set a new personal best of 71.79 points. “I’m happy for this moment, but I still can do better than that and I know what I can improve. The tears at the end came, because I knew what I’ve been through, the pain, the emotions and I skated with a lot of emotions. At the end I couldn’t hold back these tears of joy”, the European silver medalist said.

Chartrand’s program to the “Pina” soundtrack included a triple Lutz-triple toe, triple loop and double Axel. The Canadian achieved a new personal best as well with 67.38 points. “I’m excited to be back in Russia. Last year was really exciting for me here, too. I won the short program and I was on the podium for the first time. I had a personal best in the short program score and I did it again. I’ve been training really well and I’m glad I showed that today”, Chartrand told the post-event press conference.

Skating to “Melody of the White Nights” by Isaac Schwarz, Medvedeva fell on her triple flip but recovered to land a triple loop-triple toe combination and a double Axel. The World Junior Champion received 67.03 points. “I am not pleased for now, because I can do much better than this. I will try to present myself tomorrow in the free skating and I know what I’m capable of. The fall came unexpected, because I skated cleanly in practice. I don’t know the reason, but everyone makes mistakes and you have work on that and to perfect yourself mentally and physically”, the 16-year-old explained.

2014 Olympic Champion Adelina Sotnikova came fourth at 65.48 points after reducing her combination to a triple-double toeloop. Polina Edmunds (USA) placed fifth (65.29 points) ahead of Rika Hongo (JPN) who has 63.45 points.

Rostelecom Cup continues Saturday with the Free Dance, Men’s, Pairs and Ladies Free Skating For full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2015/16 please refer to [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org) under Single& Pair Skating/Ice Dance then select Grand Prix.

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