

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Progressive Skate America 2016 Preview #GPFigure

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2016/17 kicks off this week with Progressive Skate America in Chicago/Hoffman Estates, IL October 21 to 23. Skate America is the first of six events in the series. 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

In the Men's event, World bronze medalist Boyang Jin (CHN) and reigning ISU Grand Prix Final bronze medalist Shoma Uno (JPN) will face strong competitors including Russian Champion Maxim Kovtun (RUS), U.S. Champion Adam Rippon (USA) and Jason Brown (USA).

World silver medalist Ashley Wagner (USA) and three-time World Champion Mao Asada (JPN) headline the Ladies field. Two-time US Champion Gracie Gold (USA), 2014 Four Continents Champion Kanako Murakami (JPN), Gabrielle Daleman (CAN) and So Youn Park (KOR) are aiming at a podium finish as well.

The Pairs event features 2016 European bronze medalists Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov (RUS), ISU Grand Prix finalists Julianne Seguin/Charlie Bilodeau (CAN), French Champions Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres (FRA), Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA) and US Champions Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea (USA).

World silver medalists Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani (USA) lead the Ice Dance competition. Competition should come from 2016 European bronze medalists Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS) and 2014 Four Continents Champions Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue (USA). Other contenders include Isabella Tobias/Ilya Tkachenko (ISR) and Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin (RUS).

A total of 58 skaters/couples from 13 ISU members compete at Progressive Skate America. For full entry lists of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2016/17 please refer to <http://www.isu.org/en/single-and-pair-skating-and-ice-dance/series/isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating>

The schedule of Progressive Skate America is as follows:

Friday, October 21: Ladies and Pairs Short Program

Saturday, October 22: Men's Short Program, Short Dance, Ladies and Pairs Free Skating

Sunday, October 23: Men's Free Skating, Free Dance, Exhibition Gala

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