

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

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Audi Cup of China 2016 Day Two #GPFigure

Audi Cup of China continued in Beijing Saturday with the Free Dance, the Ladies, Men's and Pairs Free Skating. Audi Cup of China is the fifth of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2016/17. 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.

Maia Shibutani/ Alex Shibutani (USA) dance to gold

Maia Shibutani/ Alex Shibutani (USA) came from second place after the Short Dance to dance to gold. Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje of Canada claimed the silver medal and the bronze went to Russia's Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin.

Shibutani/Shibutani delivered a strong performance of their dance named "Evolution", earning a level four for the lifts, twizzles and combination spin and a level three for the step sequences. The World silver medalists score 111.90 points and totaled 185.13 points to move up to first place. "Since Skate America we've been working hard to raise the level of both programs. So this was a strong competition for us. We're looking forward to going home and receiving some feedback, and just working on and improving our programs," Maia Shibutani said.

Dancing to "Concierto de Aranjuez", Weaver/Poje collected a level four for their lifts, the twizzles and the spins, but the diagonal footwork garnered a level two. The two-time World medalists earned 107.76 points and slipped to second place at 181.54 points overall. "We just want to keep on making progress every time we're out and we felt like we stepped our performance up from Moscow. Now we get home and take the time to analyze where we could be stronger and working on those details and make sure next time we're out we progress even more," Poje explained.

Stepanova/Bukin's Argentine Tango featured level-four lifts, twizzles and a level-four spin as well while the diagonal and serpentine footwork was rated a level three. The 2015 European bronze medalists achieved a new personal best with 105.32 points and accumulated 177.41 points to collect the third Grand Prix bronze medal of their career. "For the first time we got more than 100 points (in the Free Dance), which is very nice. This is just the beginning for us, we want to go from there and continue working", Stepanova told the post-event press conference.

With two gold medals from the circuit, Shibutani/Shibutani booked their spot in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS) remained in fourth place at 171.54 points and Natalia Kaliszek/Maksim Spodyrev (POL) came sixth at 150.78 points.

Elena Radionova (RUS) skates off with gold

Russia's Elena Radionova skated off with the gold medal, overtaking overnight leader Kaetlyn Osmond of Canada, who took the silver medal. Russia's Elizaveta Tuktamysheva moved up from fourth to clinch the bronze.

Skating to "Turandot", Radionova nailed six triple jumps including a triple Lutz-single loop-triple Salchow, but underrotated a triple toe in combination with a triple Lutz. The two-time European silver medalist collected a level four for two spins and scored a seasons best of 135.15 points and

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totalled 205.90 points to win the fourth Grand Prix gold medal of her career. “My performance was not flawless today, but it was the best performance of the season, as for the jumps as well as for the skating overall. I am overwhelmed with positive emotions and just so happy to have achieved this result”, the 17-year-old Muscovite said.

Osmond started well into her routine set to “La Boheme”, landing a triple flip-triple toeloop combination, and a double Axel-triple toeloop, but she stumbled on a triple Lutz (downgraded) and fell on an underrotated triple loop. The Skate Canada silver medalist was ranked third in the Free Skating and slipped to second at 196.00 points. “I started off really strong, it was the first time that I did those two jumps (combinations) together in competition. After that I did two mistakes that were really uncharacteristic for me. I know that is something I just have to work on leading into the next few competitions, hopefully keeping my focus a little bit longer,” the two-time Canadian Champion noted.

Tuktamysheva’s program to “Peer Gynt” featured five clean triples including a triple toe-triple toe combination and two level-four spins. The 2015 World Champion only doubled a Lutz. The 2015 European Champion set a new seasons best with 127.69 points, was second in the Free Skating and accumulated 192.57 points overall to move up one spot to third. “After Skate Canada I changed my free program and it is more difficult. For the first time I tried two triple Lutzes in the second half. We are going towards the future step by step”, Tuktamysheva commented.

Mai Mihara (JPN) dropped from third to fourth with 190.92 points after two errors on her jumps. Rika Hongo (JPN) came fifth (181.75) and Ashley Wagner (USA) finished sixth (181.38 points) six triple jumps were called underrotated (181.38 points).

Radionova proceeds to the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final with a gold and silver medal from her events. Osmond should qualify with her two silver medals. Wagner still has a chance depending on what happens next week in Japan.

Patrick Chan (CAN) strikes gold

Patrick Chan of Canada struck gold in the Men’s event. China’s Boyang Jin earned the silver medal and Sergei Voronov of Russia captured the bronze medal.

Performing to “A Journey”, composed by Canadian Pair skater Eric Radford, Chan reeled off a quadruple-triple toe, quadruple toe, two triple Axels as well as three more triples and picked up a level four for two spins. His only error came when he fell on the quadruple Salchow. The three-time World Champion posted a new seasons best with 196.31 points and racked up 279.72 points to overtake overnight leader Jin and win his second Grand Prix gold this season. “The program felt very methodical, I didn’t give it more energy that it needed. I really just told myself to relax and not rush, just to enjoy every element on its own and I think it worked. Even with the fall on the quad Salchow I didn’t panic. I got up and started doing the program as I do it at home, forget about the mistake and just move on,” the 2016 Four Continents Champion offered.

Jin’s program to “La Strada” was highlighted by a quadruple Lutz, quadruple Salchow and quadruple toeloop-double toeloop as well as two triple Axels, but he missed one quad toe (underrotated). The World bronze medalist achieved a new seasons best with 182.37 points and totaled 278.54 points. “I felt that I skated very well. I made one mistake on the quadruple toeloop that I underrotated and that influenced my score. It did not feel pressure and I got a seasons best in both programs”, Jin explained.

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Voronov completed a quadruple-triple toe loop combination and two triple Axels in his program to “Exogenesis Symphony” by Muse, but he did one triple toe too many. The two-time European medalist scored 160.83 points which added up to 243.76 points and he pulled up from fourth to third place. “Overall I did well in the competition and I am glad to be in the top three. I am just a little upset that I not only didn’t go for the second quad but that I did an extra triple toe,” the two-time Russian Champion commented.

Max Aaron (USA) finished fourth at 242.74 points followed by Han Yan (CHN) with 230.19 points and Alexander Petrov (RUS) with 228.44 points. Daniel Samohin (ISR) dropped from second to eighth after several errors (213.51 points).

Chan advances with two victories on the circuit to the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang (CHN) claim Pairs gold

Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang of China claimed gold in the Pairs event. Teammates Cheng Peng/Yang Jin earned the silver medal and Canada’s Liubov Ilyushechkina/Dylan Moscovitch settled for the bronze.

Skating to “Cavatina” and “Larghetto Amoroso” by Emil von Sauer, Yu/Zhang completed a big triple twist, double Axel, throw triple loop and Salchow as well as level-four lifts, spins and death spiral. However, Zhang fell on the side by side triple toe loop. The Skate Canada silver medalists earned 131.27 points and accumulated 203.76 points to win the gold. “We are very pleased to have won our first Grand Prix gold medal. However, I made a big mistake on the jump, I think the last time I made that kind of mistake in competition was at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Maybe it was the pressure to skate in front of a home crowd. With first and second place, we should go to the Grand Prix Final and I want to do the jump better there,” Zhang noted.

Peng/Jin’s performance to “I Will Wait For You” from “The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg” featured a double Axel, triple twist, throw triple loop and Salchow, but she stepped out of the side by side triple toe. The Chinese team scored 128.03 points and had 197.96 points to make the podium in their first international competition as a team. “This is our first international competition and I think we showed what we do in training. In our free skating we still had a small mistake on the solo jump, but we got good levels and it shows the approval of the judges,” Jin said.

Ilyushechkina/Moscovitch produced a throw triple Lutz, triple twist and level-four lifts, but they struggled with the solo jumps. The Skate Canada bronze medalists earned 120.26 points and slipped from second to third at 191.54 points. “It was a rough go for us today. It was unfortunate and disappointing and it wasn’t depicting how we’ve been training and how we’ve been practicing here. The program got kind of broken up by the mistakes. We worked hard throughout the program, so there are definitely some positives within the routine that we can be proud of,” Moscovitch commented.

Yu/Zhang qualified for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in their first season as a team.

Xuehan Wang/Li Wang (CHN) placed fourth (182.02 points) followed by Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise (ITA) with 176.38 points and Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS) with 175.53 points.

Audi Cup of China concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series continues next week with the sixth and last event, NHK Trophy, in Sapporo, Japan

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For full entry lists and results 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>

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