

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 CH 1006 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND  
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: media@isu.ch

For immediate release

November 5, 2016

## **Rostelecom Cup 2016 Day Two #GPFigure**

The Rostelecom Cup in Moscow (RUS) continued Saturday with the Free Dance and Men's, Pairs and Ladies Free Skating. Rostelecom Cup is the third of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 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.

### **Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS) dance to gold**

Russia's Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev danced to the gold medal. Overnight leaders Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) slipped to second to earn the silver medal and the bronze went to Canadians Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje.

Bobrova/Soloviev put out a confident performance of their dance to "Prelude No. 20" by Frederic Chopin and "Four Seasons", collecting a level four for their lifts, twizzles and spin and a level three for their step sequences. The Russian Champions set a new personal best with 111.76 points and totaled 186.68 to overtake Chock/Bates. "Today was a very strong performance, we were able to put together the choreography and the technique and to bring across the idea of our program", Soloviev commented.

Chock/Bates' routine to "Under Pressure" included four level-four elements, but Bates stumbled on the twizzles that garnered only a level two. The 2016 World bronze medalists were ranked third in the Free Dance at 107.09 points and overall dropped to second at 182.13 points. "Overall we have to take a lot of positives from this week and from the last two weeks having done our two Grand Prix in a row. Obviously I'm very disappointed to have made a such a big mistake in the twizzles in the free dance, which obviously cost us greatly in this competition", Bates said.

Dancing to "Concierto de Aranjuez", Weaver/Poje produced level-four lifts, twizzles and a level-four spin to score 108.76 points. They were second in the Free Dance, but overall remained in third place at 178.57 points. "Andrew and I are feeling very satisfied with our performance today. This program really speaks to us, not only with the music, but with the theme and the story. This our first competition, we have so much learning to do", Weaver told the press.

Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri (ITA) finished fourth at 170.45 points and Tiffany Zahorski/Jonathan Guerreiro (RUS) came fifth (156.95 points).

With gold and bronze from their two events Bobrova/Soloviev should qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final as should Chock/Bates, who collected two silver medals in their events.

### **Javier Fernandez (ESP) strikes gold**

Javier Fernandez of Spain struck gold in the Men's event. Japan's Shoma Uno settled for the silver medal and Alexei Bychenko of Israel claimed the bronze, his first Grand Prix medal.

Fernandez, who stood in second place following the Short Program, reeled off a quad toe, quad Salchow-triple toe, quad Salchow, two triple Axels as well as four more triples to score 201.43 points. He accumulated 292.98 points to overtake overnight leader Uno. "My performance today was really, really good. There are not many bad things I have to say. There are a few levels missing

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that we have to practice. I'm glad I fought through the program. When you fight you always have a reward, so this was the reward today", the four-time European Champion shared.

Uno opened his Tango routine with a quad flip and followed up with a quad toe and six more triples including two Axels, but he fell on the second quad toeloop. The 2015 World Junior Champion earned 186.48 points and slipped to second at 285.07 points. "Like my short, my free skating wasn't quite perfect. I am not completely satisfied with today's program", the Japanese skater noted.

Bychenko's performance to "Pagliacci" was highlighted by quad-triple toe, quad toe, a triple Axel and three more triples. The only major glitch came when the European silver medalist stumbled on the second triple Axel. Bychenko collected 168.71 points and moved up from fourth to third at 255.52 points to win the first Grand Prix medal for an Israeli single skater in 20 years. "My free program went well today, but there were a few errors and I missed some levels on the spins and footwork, so there is something left for me to work on. I am pleased with the result, though", Bychenko said.

Mikhail Kolyada (RUS) dropped from third to fourth after falling on a triple Lutz (245.30 points). Max Aaron (USA) pulled up from eighth to fifth (235.58 points) while Elladj Balde (CAN) remained in sixth place (225.45 points).

With his gold from Progressive Skate America and the silver from Moscow, Uno qualified for his second consecutive Grand Prix Final. Fernandez will compete again next week in Paris.

## **Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot (GER) skate off with gold**

Germany's Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot skated off with the gold medal in what was their Grand Prix debut as a team. Russian pairs Natalia Zabiiako/Alexander Enbert and Kristina Astakhova/Alexei Rogonov picked up the silver and bronze medals.

Performing to "Lighthouse" by Patrick Watson, Savchenko/Massot completed a huge triple twist, a triple toe, and level-four lifts, spins and death spiral. However, Savchenko popped the planned throw triple Axel into a double and fell on the throw quad Salchow, their last element. The European silver medalists posted a new seasons best with 138.38 points which added up to 207.89 points to move up from second to first place. "Today was better than yesterday, we made a little progress. Not everything was a 100 percent yet, but we are improving step by step our result. We had prepared the throw quad Salchow at home and we decided to include it into the program here," Savchenko explained.

Zabiiako/Enbert's routine to "Cry Me A River" included a triple twist, triple toe-double toe-double loop combination, throw double Axel and throw triple loop as well as level-four lifts, but she missed the take-off for the side by side Salchow and he fell on the jump. The Russian duo achieved a seasons best with 128.01 points and slipped to second at 197.77 points overall. "There was serious error on the Salchow. We did a double Salchow before in competition, now we went for the triple, we did it in practice. It didn't work in competition today, but we know we can do it", Enbert said.

Astakhova/Rogonov hit a triple twist, throw triple flip and loop as well as level-four spins, but they struggled with solo jumps loop and Salchow. The Muscovites achieved a seasons best of 123.23 points and moved up one spot to third at 188.74 points. "To skate at home helped us. Too bad for the errors on the jumps, we can do them in training", Rogonov commented.

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Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA) dropped from third to fourth at 187.61 points and Julianne Seguin/Charlie Bilodeau (CAN) came fifth at 183.37 points. The Canadians will now have to wait and see if this and their gold from Skate America will be enough to make the Grand Prix Final. Savchenko/Massot and Zabiiako/Enbert will meet again next week on the ice in Paris at the Trophee de France.

## **Anna Pogorilaya (RUS) wins Ladies gold**

Russia's Anna Pogorilaya won the Ladies gold ahead of teammate Elena Radionova. Courtney Hicks (USA) captured the bronze medal.

Performing to "The Modigliani Suite" and "Memorial", Pogorilaya pulled off a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, a triple Lutz-single loop-triple Salchow combination as well as three more triples and two level-four spins. The World bronze medalist achieved a seasons best with 141.28 points and totaled 215.21 points to win the gold. "Overall I feel that I did a good job. Obviously there are some glitches that I noticed already during the performance. My next Grand Prix is Japan, I'll have short break and then I'll prepare," the two-time European bronze said.

Radionova's program to "Turandot" featured five clean triples, but she went down on an underrotated triple loop. The reigning European silver medalist earned 123.67 points and accumulated 195.60 points overall. "I can't say that I'm satisfied with my program, there was that regretful fall and some other small errors. But this was my first Grand Prix. I hope I can prepare well for my next Grand Prix in China", the 2015 World bronze medalist noted.

Hicks executed six triple jumps and two level-four spins in her routine set to "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" to post a new personal best with 119.30 points. With 182.98 points overall, the Californian moved up from sixth to take the second Grand Prix medal of her career. "I was very pleased with how I skated. I thought I stayed with the program through the whole thing and I was really happy to go out and do two solid programs in this competition. It's really the first time I felt I was able to put the jumps and the skating together", Hicks told the post-event press conference.

Zijun Li (CHN) ranked fourth at 181.83 points followed by Elizabet Tursynbaeva (KAZ) with 181.32 points and Yura Matsuda (JPN) with 177.65 points. Julia Lipnitskaia (RUS), who stood in third place following the Short Program, was affected by injury and interrupted her program. She decided to finish the performance, but received a five-point deduction for interruption in excess and also had left out three elements. As a result, she plummeted to 12<sup>th</sup> place (148.13 points).

Rostelecom Cup concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating continues next week with the Trophee de France in Paris. 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>

## **For further information please contact:**

Selina Vanier

ISU Communications Coordinator

Email : [vanier@isu.ch](mailto:vanier@isu.ch)

Tel: +41 21 612 66 66

ISU Social Media Hub: <http://www.isu.org/en/social-media>