

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2017 **Ladies Short Program**

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2017 opened in Helsinki, Finland, Wednesday with an exciting Ladies Short Program. Helsinki hosts the ISU World Figure Skating Championships for the third time after 1999 and 1983. 193 skaters from 36 ISU Members have been entered for the Championships. Skaters/Couples need to have obtained a minimum total technical score in Short Program and Free Skating in order to compete at the World Championships. All four reigning World Champions are back in action. The results of the World Championships will also decide about the majority of quota places for the 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

Evgenia Medvedeva (RUS) takes lead in highly competitive Ladies Short Program

World Champion Evgenia Medvedeva of Russia took the first step to defend her title by winning the highly competitive Ladies Short Program. Canada's Kaetlyn Osmond and Gabrielle Daleman are sitting in second and third.

Medvedeva had drawn to skate first in the last group. She opened her program to "River Flows In You" with a flying camel spin and the step sequence and then reeled off a rock-solid triple flip-triple toe combination followed by a triple loop and double Axel. The reigning World Champion earned 79.01 points. "I never think about what I have to do to win. The most important thing for me is to show what I can do, to skate clean and to enjoy skating. Last year I didn't quite understand what was happening because it was my first world senior championship. Now I don't feel any pressure, I feel very motivated and the support of the people, that they feel my program as I feel it, they feel what I want to tell with my skating and it's really amazing", the two-time European Champion said.

Osmond's routine to "Sous le ciel de Paris" und "Milord", was highlighted by powerful jumps – a triple flip-triple toe, triple Lutz and double Axel as well as by level-four spins and footwork. The Canadian Champion scored a personal best of 75.98 points. "It feels incredible, I started off my season in Finland and it started off a great season and to be able to finish my season here feels equally fantastic. The audience was so super excited about skating which makes me more excited to perform my programs and so to be able to do a program like that here at Worlds was a dream", Osmond told the press.

Skating to "Herodiade" by Jules Massenet, Daleman hit a big triple toe-triple toe combination, a triple Lutz and double Axel to pick up 72.19 points. "Before the skate I am in my own bubble and do not see who is skating before me. I focus on what I have to do and take one element at a time exactly as I do in training. The Four Continents really boosted my confidence and I am so happy to be here at this great competition and to be able to show my best and I want to enjoy every minute", the Four Continents silver medalist shared.

2016 World bronze medalist Anna Pogorilaya (RUS) put out a strong performance as well and is not far behind with 71.52 points followed by Karen Chen (USA/69.98 points) and Maria Sotskova (RUS/69.76 points). 2016 World silver medalist Ashley Wagner (USA) came seventh with a solid skate (69.04 points) and five-time European Carolina Kostner (ITA) placed eighth after wobbling on the flying camel spin (66.33 points).

The competition continues tonight with the Pairs Short Program. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and the official event website <http://www.helsinki2017.com/> #WorldFigure and #helsinki2017

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