

Press release

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Team Paradise (RUS) takes strong lead at the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships 2018

Two-time and defending champions Team Paradise from Russia took a strong lead as the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships 2018 opened in Stockholm (SWE) Friday with the Short Program. The Russians lead by more than three points and can dream of a third consecutive title. Cheered on by an enthusiastic home crowd, six-time World Champions Team Surprise of Sweden came second and hopes to return on to the podium for the first time since 2012. Finland's reigning World silver medalists Marigold Ice Unity are currently ranked third, just 0.22 points behind the Swedes.

Skating to 'Exogenesis Symphony' by Muse, Team Paradise earned a level four for the travelling wheel and for the no hold element with a level-four step sequence as well as a level three for the pivoting block, the intersection and the move element to score 76.05 points. When asked if they feel more pressure with two consecutive titles under their belt, Team Paradise commented "No because we don't think about places. We just skate and enjoy it. I think we can only do our best.

Team Surprise's performance to "The Winner Takes It All" by ABBA featured a level-four no hold element and level-four wheel, but level three steps. The six-time World Champions picked up 72.83 points and edged the Finns for second place. "we want to say congratulations to team Paradise and Marigold Ice Unity. It feels amazing (to be in second place), we enjoyed the skate we did today and skated with all of our hearts. We have our focus on our Free Program and we will do everything we can to skate our best tomorrow"

Marigold Ice Unity skated to 'Under the Northern Star', a traditional Finnish song, and had the same technical base value as Team Surprise, but got a little less for the execution. Their component score on the other hand was a bit higher and they earned 72.61 points. There were more Finnish supporters in the crowd than Swedish and when asked Team Surprise said: "Well we are a Synchronized Skating fans us Finns. It was so amazing for us skating today. We are very proud."

Multiple World bronze medalists Team Haydenettes (USA) came fourth with their routine to 'Run Boy Run' by Woodkid, scoring 71.22 points. The 2013 World Champions Team Unique (FIN) are just 0.02 points behind in fifth place. Les Supremes (CAN) are currently sitting in sixth on 70.64 points. The 2017 World bronze medalists Nexxice (CAN) had to settle for seventh place in the Short Program (69.91 points).

The Short Program is 2 min 50 seconds in length and consists of five required elements: Intersection Element, Move Element, No Hold Element, Pivoting Element – Block and Traveling Element – Wheel.

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A total of 25 teams representing 20 ISU Members are competing in the Championships. All teams will compete in the Free Skating. This is the 19th edition of the ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships. The event is held for the first time in Stockholm and for the third time in Sweden. Finnish teams have been dominant, winning 22 medals including eight gold medals since the inaugural championship in 2000.

The ISU World Synchronized Figure Skating Championships conclude Saturday with the Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see the [ISU event page](#) and the [official event page](#) . Follow the discussion on social media using #WorldSynchro and #SynchroSkating

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