

PRESS CONFERENCE

Ladies, after Short Program

Alina Zagitova (RUS) 1st after the Short Program

I'm happy with today's program. Everything worked. There were little imperfections, but in principle I'm very happy with how I am skating this season. (on the depth of competition in ladies figure skating in Russia) There has always been lots of competition in this event. (on training with Medvedeva) First and foremost, she is a good friend and in training it's not bad competition. We encourage and motivate one another. It's like a game for us, if Zhenia will do 3-3-3, I will try to do the same. (on competing at her first European Championships) I have tried to concentrate on myself and try to skate a clean program, but at the same time I was very nervous to compete with such outstanding athletes.

Evgenia Medvedeva (RUS) 2nd after the Short Program

First of all I want to say thank you. I know people read the media, and I want to say thank you to everyone who has been with me throughout this difficult period. Everyone has put in effort for me to be here today. I want to thank my fans and coach for their help. It's almost a miracle that I've recovered so quickly. I'm happy that I'm back. It feels like my sport, I've missed competing, and training. I'm just so happy to be here. Regarding today's program, I'll be brief. I'm not completely happy, but there is still time to tighten the screws and correct it. (on the depth of competition in ladies figure skating in Russia) My personal opinion is that here we have the conditions to train and live this sport. It's not only figure skating, it's not a secret that Russia has always been one of the strongest countries in sport. It's thanks to these conditions and the Russian soul. (on training with Zagitova) I would like to say I have always followed the principle: 'I have my own way'. I try to follow this because I have learnt that you need to not look around too much because it is an individual sport. Yes, competition stimulates us, but you need to concentrate on your own elements and for me that is very important. (about Russia going to the Olympics) I think on all social media, literally a month ago it all exploded about the decision that, yes, Russia is going to the Olympics. Russia has a team going to the Olympics, we are the Olympic Athletes from Russia. Yes, we will carry the white Olympic flag, but we are sportsmen from Russia. It's a great honor to represent our country.

Carolina Kostner (ITA) 3rd after the Short Program

As for my program, I am very happy. I felt grounded and serene and I loved the authentic and genuine reaction of the audience. I could literally hear the silence. (on the meaning behind her Short Program) It is mostly about, in life you will encounter obstacles and it's not so much about what obstacles you encounter or if you fall down, but it's about how you get back up and how you keep on fighting and keep on walking your journey step by step. If I think back to last year's European Championships, I skated in the 2nd group at 10.30 in the morning. Today I had the honor to take the ice with the best in the last group. I just kept thinking back about how far I've gone in just one year. So don't think too much about what you can do, but about what you have already accomplished. I love skating, I love my job. I feel lucky to be able to continue this journey and I will try my best. I have this vision of skating where you combine the technique with the feeling and the emotions. It's not only the movement but it's about opening your heart. Opening your heart sometimes means also opening it to difficult emotions. If you want to feel joy, you have to feel the pain as well and that's sometimes not so easy, but it takes courage, patience and determination to lay it down and skate it and feel it with your heart. The short story is I love figure skating. (on skating in Moscow) Moscow for me represents a special city for skating. I won my first World medal here in Moscow and my second bronze medal also and many gold medals at the Grand Prix. It's been full of positive memories. Plus, being able to, as I said before, compete with the best in Europe it's always a pleasure. It's a challenge, but a big joy and being part of it is very stimulating. We will all try our best and are happy to show and share our skating with this audience, which has such a huge tradition of figure skating in its background, which in Italy there is not.