

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games **Figure Skating Ice Dance Short Dance**

The figure skating competition at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games continued in Sochi, Russia, on Sunday with the Short Dance.

Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA) dance to the lead

Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA) confidently danced to first place in the short dance at the Iceberg Skating Palace on Sunday. Defending Olympic champions Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir of Canada are currently ranked second, trailing the leaders by 2.56 points. Russia's Elena Ilinykh/Nikita Katsalapov stand in third place going into the free dance on Monday.

Davis/White's Quickstep and Foxtrot to music from "My Fair Lady" was highlighted by a smooth Finnstep pattern and fast twizzles. The world champions earned a level four for all elements and set a new record score in the short dance with 78.89 points. "Excellent is a word to describe it. I felt like I was in a dream. Everything is coming together", Davis said. "We were just in our zone, so we could go out and skate like that. It felt awesome. When we were going out, we said, 'Let's do it for each other'. We love skating. We're not thinking. We're letting it flow", White added.

Performing to "Dream a Little Dream", "Muskrat Rumble" and "Heaven", Virtue/Moir produced intricate footwork and an excellent rotational lift. Their side by side footwork, twizzles, second Finnstep sequence and rotational lift garnered a level four. The Vancouver Olympic champions picked up 76.33 points. "We certainly felt more like ourselves out there tonight. We created the moment we wanted to create. I don't think we could have done it much better than we did tonight", Virtue commented. "For the team event, I think we felt a little more pressure, but we were really comfortable tonight. I think you could tell by our reaction that we were really excited about that skate. We did what we needed to do tonight. We like our chances. When you have a career like us, so much hard work goes into everything. We've worked so hard this season and every season to get us here. Now we just want to enjoy ourselves", Moir explained.

Ilinykh/Katsalapov put out a lively Quickstep to "Bei mir bist du schoen" and Foxtrot to "Sixteen Tons" that featured four level four elements. The European silver medalists posted a new personal best of 73.04 points. "Participation in the team event gave us confidence. We had an opportunity to try the ice, to hear the roars of the crowd, to feel the atmosphere", Ilinykh said. "I knew how to do things tonight, I could feel my partner 100%. So, it looked perfect", Katsalapov told the press.

Nathalie Pechalat/Fabian Bourzat (FRA) are within striking distance of the podium in fourth place with 72.78 points, only 0.26 points behind Ilinykh/Katsalapov. 2013 World bronze medalists Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS) finished fifth with 69.97 points. European champions Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA) are ranked sixth (67.58 points).

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24 couples from 15 ISU members competed in the Short Dance. For the first time, Spain and Turkey were represented in the Ice Dance event at Olympic Winter Games. The top 20 couples advance to the Free Dance, which will be contested on Monday. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and www.sochi2014.com

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