

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games **Figure Skating Ladies Short Program**

The figure skating competition at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games continued in Sochi, Russia, on Wednesday with the Ladies Short Program.

Yuna Kim (KOR) grabs narrow lead in Ladies short program

Yuna Kim of Korea edged out Russia's Adelina Sotnikova and Carolina Kostner of Italy for a narrow lead in the Ladies Short Program at the Iceberg Skating Palace on Wednesday. The top three are virtually tied with just a few tenths of a point between them.

Performing to "Send in the Clowns", Kim produced a triple lutz-triple toeloop combination, a triple flip and double axel. Two spins garnered a level four. The 2010 Olympic Champion scored 74.92 points. "I've been practising very well in Sochi, and Korea, a clean short every day. In warm-up, I was very nervous, I couldn't jump at all. But I tried to believe in myself and believed in what I've done before", the reigning World Champion commented. "I felt like I was dreaming. I had a lot of thoughts when I was giving my performance."

Sotnikova's routine to "Habanera" was highlighted by a triple toe-triple toe combination, a triple flip and excellent level-four spins. The Russian Champion earned 74.64 points, a new personal best. "The competition was incredible, stepping out on to the ice here was a pleasure. I have competed in Russia a lot but to perform at the Olympics in Sochi is just something else - it is an incredible moment", the European silver medalist said. "I'm very happy the first (technical element score) mark was so high. I skated really well and I got good levels on everything so I think they reflected my skate", she added.

Kostner delivered a strong performance to "Ave Maria", nailing a triple flip-triple toeloop combination, triple loop and double Axel. The 2012 World Champion picked up a personal best score of 74.12 points. "I'm just trying to enjoy myself here. I don't just skate for myself, I want to share my skating with the people", the five-time European Champion noted. "I didn't even talk to my coach about changing it (the combination from triple toe-triple toe to triple flip-triple toe). Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. I'm thankful that he left the choice up to me. I wanted to show him that I could do it", the 27-year-old explained.

US Champion Gracie Gold finished fourth with a clean but somewhat shaky performance. She has 68.63 points. Olympic team champion Julia Lipnitskaia (RUS) fell on a triple flip attempt and currently sits in fifth place with 65.23 points. Ashley Wagner (USA), an Olympic team bronze medalist, placed sixth with 65.21 points. 2010 Olympic silver medalist Mao Asada (JPN) faded to 16th after falling on a triple Axel attempt and doubling a planned triple loop. Asada has 55.51 points.

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The figure skating competition at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games concludes Thursday with the Ladies Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and www.sochi2014.com

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