

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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

The figure skating competition at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games continued in Sochi, Russia, on Thursday with the Men's Short Program.

Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN) claims Men's Short Program, cracks 100 points

Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu set a record score to take the lead in an eventful Men's Short Program at the Iceberg Skating Palace on Thursday. Patrick Chan of Canada sits second place and Javier Fernandez came third before the final Free Skating on Friday.

Hanyu's bluesy routine to Parisian Walkways featured textbook perfect jumps: a quadruple toeloop, a triple Axel and triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination. He also earned a level four for two spins and the footwork. The 19-year-old picked up 101.45 points, improving his own top score in the Short Program and becoming the first man to crack a 100 points. "I'm over the moon. I took it one element at a time. I wasn't trying to clear 100 points. I was just trying to turn in the best performance I possibly could - and I did", the 2012 World bronze medalist said. "I was very nervous and my legs were shaking. So I was certainly feeling the atmosphere of the Olympics out there. I did everything I possibly could today. I'll enjoy this for tonight and will rest up for tomorrow because it's another day. I'm not thinking about a medal yet", he continued.

Skating to *Elegy in e flat minor* by Sergei Rachmaninov, Chan landed a quadruple toe-triple toeloop combination and triple Lutz, but stumbled on the triple Axel. The world champion earned 97.52 points. "It was a big improvement from the team event. I got the quad-toe and triple-toe out there and my (triple Axel) is getting more confident. It's getting bigger and bigger. I got a bit more height and I over rotated on the landing", Chan noted. "Four points I made up before in the long program. I have done it before and I have quite an arsenal for the long program. I am relying on that and relying on my training from the whole year. It's going to be a whole new day tomorrow and a whole new competition", he added.

Fernandez stepped out of the quadruple Salchow and the triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination, but all three spins garnered a level four. The European champion scored 86.98 points. "It wasn't my day, I was stumbling a lot. The only thing you can do is fight until the end, that's what I did. I'm still in the game, I will do 100% tomorrow to get a higher score in my free skating", the 22-year-old commented.

The competition is very tight. The skaters ranked third through eighth are separated by a little over a point and anything can happen in the free skating. 2010 Olympic bronze medalist Daisuke Takahashi (JPN) came fourth with 86.40 points. His quadruple toeloop was downgraded. Peter Liebers (GER) turned in a clean performance with a quadruple-triple toeloop combination to finish fifth with 86.06 points. Jason Brown (USA) came sixth with 86.00 points.

Drama unfolded in the second flight when Evgeni Plushenko (RUS) withdrew following the six minutes warm up citing injury. Jeremy Abbott (USA) crashed badly on a quadruple toeloop, hitting his right hip and crashing into the boards. It took him a few seconds to get up and continue his performance as the crowd cheered him on. He finished in 15th place with 72.58 points.

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29 men from 20 ISU members competed in the Short Program. The top 24 advance to the Free Skating. The figure skating competition at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games continues Friday with the Men's Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and www.sochi2014.com

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