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Beijing, China

USA takes lead as Olympic Figure Skating competition in Beijing starts with the Team Event

Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games

Team USA took the lead as the Figure Skating competition at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games started Friday with the Men's, Pairs Short Programs and the Ice Dance/Rhythm Dance of the Team Event. USA edged the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) by two points. Team China follows in third.

A total of ten teams has qualified for the Olympic Team Event that is held for the third time. The teams qualified by getting points according to the results at the ISU Championships and ISU Grand Prix/Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating (see [ISU Communication N°2443](#) for full entry lists).

USA edges ROC for lead on Day One

Three-time World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) put Team USA into the lead in the Men's Short Program - the first segment of the competition. Chen, who had competed in the Team four years ago already, put out a strong performance to "La Boheme" that featured a quadruple flip, quadruple Lutz-triple toe and a triple Axel. He set a personal best of 111.71 points and earned the maximum of ten team points.

[Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) followed up with an excellent Rhythm Dance to songs by Janet Jackson, picking up a level four for the twizzles and the stationary lift. The two-time World silver medalists won their segment with a personal best of 86.56 points and added 10 points to the team score. Pair Skaters [Alexa Knierim/Brandon Frazier](#) put out another clean Short Program to "House of the Rising Sun" that was highlighted by a triple twist and side by side triple toeloop. They finished third with 75.00 points and got 8 team points.

Altogether, Team USA collected 28 points.

"It was an absolutely fantastic day for the Team Event," said Team USA co-captain Madison Chock. "All of our Skaters brought their best, and I couldn't be more proud of the performances they put out." Her partner and captain Evan Bates commented on the lead over the hot favorite ROC: "Our team has great potential. Looking at the roster we know we have the potential to bring home the gold medal."

Reigning ISU World Champions [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) (ROC) narrowly lost the Rhythm Dance to Hubbell/Donohue (USA) after Katsalapov wobbled on the twizzles, but the Midnight Blues and the rotational lift garnered a level four. The ISU European Champions received 85.05 points and nine team points.

ISU World Champions [Anastasia Mishina/Aleksandr Galliamov](#) (ROC) came second in the Pairs Short Program as well. They delivered an excellent performance of their routine to "Esmeralda", completing a triple twist, throw triple flip and side by side triple Salchow to post a personal best with 82.64 points (9 team points). The new ISU European Champion [Mark Kondratiuk](#) delivered a clean Short Program to "The Magnificent Century", landing a quad toe, triple Axel and quad Salchow-triple toe to place third (95.81 points/8 team points).

Altogether, ROC totaled 26 points on the first day.

"We have a very strong team and all gave the maximum. Unfortunately, Victoria and I made a mistake, but it is nothing terrible, we still have the Free Dance ahead and we are ready and happy to skate it," team captain Katsalapov said. "If everyone does what they can do and have trained for the whole season the result will be extraordinary."

Not many expected China to be in medal contention, but two-time ISU World Champions [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) led the way by winning the Pairs Short Program. They put out a crisp Flamenco to "Nyah" that included a triple toeloop, triple twist and high throw triple flip and netted a personal best of 82.83 points.

Ice Dancers [Shiyue Wang/Xinyu Liu](#) were fifth in the Rhythm Dance at 74.66 points and contributed 6 team points. [Boyang Jin](#) in sixth place with 82.87 earned 5 points for his team.

Overall, the host country now has 21 points.

"It is the first time for us to participate in the Olympic Team Event and we are very pleased to see the performances of our team members, we were rink side to watch everyone. We are fully prepared to fight for the team (in the Free Skating). We like to use the opportunity to perform and to fight for our team," Sui told the press.

Japan follows in fourth position with a total of 20 points - just one point behind China. [Shoma Uno](#) was the top scorer for his team. Skating to two classical Oboe concertos, the 2018 Olympic silver medalist produced a quad flip, quad toe-triple toe and triple Axel to achieve a personal best of 105.46 points (9 team points). ISU Grand Prix medalists [Riku Miura/Ryuichi Kihara](#) placed fourth with a personal-best performance that was worth 74.45 points (7 team points). Ice Dancers [Misato Komatsubara/Tim Koleto](#) ranked seventh with their Rhythm Dance (66.54/4 team points).

Italy stands in fifth with 18 points and hopes to clinch a spot in the Final. Two-time ISU bronze medalists [Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri](#) came third with their upbeat Michael Jackson Medley, securing a seasons best of 83.83 points and 8 team points.

2018 Olympic Team Champion Canada is currently ranked sixth at 16 points. 2021 ISU World bronze medalists [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) were the highest ranked team members by coming fourth in the Rhythm Dance (82.72/8 team points).

The Team Event continues Sunday with the Women's Short Program and the Men's Free Skating. The top five teams after the Short Programs and the Rhythm Dance will advance to the Free Skating to compete for the medals. A maximum of two Skaters/Couples per team can be exchanged between Short Program/Rhythm Dance and Free Skating/Free Dance.

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What's next ?

Team Event program:

Sunday, February 6:

Women's Short Program, 9:30 (local time), Capital Indoor Stadium

Men's Free Skating, 11:50 (local time), Capital Indoor Stadium

Monday, February 7:

Pairs Free Skating, 9:15 (local time), Capital Indoor Stadium

Ice Dance/Free Dance, 10:30 (local time), Capital Indoor Stadium

Women's Free Skating, 11:35 (local time), Capital Indoor Stadium

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About the International Skating Union

The International Skating Union (ISU), founded in 1892, is the oldest governing international winter sport federation and the exclusive international sport federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) administering the sports of Figure Skating (Single & Pair Skating and Ice Dance), Synchronized Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating worldwide. The objectives of the ISU are to regulate, govern, promote and develop its sports on the basis of friendship and mutual understanding between athletes. Currently three ISU disciplines are included in the Olympic Winter Games program (Figure Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating). For further information please visit [isu.org](#).