

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 CH 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

Media Advisory

Lausanne, January 23, 2003

2003 European Figure Skating Championships Malmö, Sweden

Day 4

Original Dance

The Ice Dancing couples showed an interesting variety of styles in interpreting the "Memories of a Grand Ball" theme for the Original Dance this season. The skaters can choose two or three rhythms from the following: Waltz, Polka, March, Gallop.

Irina Lobacheva/Ilia Averbukh (RUS) defended their lead after the Compulsory Dance while Albena Denkova/Maxim Staviski (BUL) remained in second place ahead of Russia's Tatiana Navka/Roman Kostomarov.

Lobacheva/Averbukh went for a classical interpretation, dancing a flowing Waltz to "The Blue Danube" and an upbeat Polka "Thunder and Lighting". The reigning World Champions showed their class with their difficult footwork and strong rotational lifts. The marks ranged from 5.4 to 5.9 for composition/required elements and from 5.6 to one 6.0 for presentation. "It's very nice to have a 6.0. It's only the second one for us (in the Original Dance), we had one in Salt Lake City at the Olympic Games", Averbukh explained. "We had only one month between our last competition and Europeans. We worked very hard and we really made a big step forward. At Cup of Russia and NHK Trophy, we had many mistakes. Still we have a lot of work ahead of us. Winning Worlds again is our dream."

Denkova/Staviyski wowed the crowd with their unusual baroque-style dance to a March and a Waltz rhythm. The couple was dressed in velvet costumes similar to those worn in the royal court in the 18th century. Highlights of the dance included an original spin and a demanding footwork line with interweaving moves. The judges awarded the Bulgarians marks up to 5.7 for composition/required elements and up to 5.8 for presentation. "We had to skate last, and that's a bit hard", Denkova said. "It's a long wait after the warm up. Everyone else has skated already, and it puts some psychological pressure on us. But we're very happy with the result. I even saw one first place ordinal, and I was very glad about that."

Navka/Kostomarov set a contrast to the other couples with their romantic Waltz ("My sweet and affectionate beast" by E. Doga) and their crisp March. They impressed with their sweeping moves and their rotational lifts. The couple earned marks ranging from 5.4 to 5.7 for composition/required elements and from 5.3 to 5.8 for presentation. "In these times, and during the war, there were also ballroom dances", Navka commented on having chosen a rather military March. "When we chose the March, we were looking for a sharp contrast to our soft and flowing Waltz", her partner added.

Ukraine's Elena Grushina/Ruslan Goncharov delivered a characteristic Waltz to "The Blue Danube" and a funny Polka. They are standing in fourth place and still have a shot at the podium. Kati Winkler/Rene Lohse of Germany entertained the audience with their original performance set to a Polka, Waltz and March from the German operetta "Frau Luna". World

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 CH 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

bronze medalists Galit Chait/Sergei Sakhnovski (ISR) showed good speed and difficult lifts in their dance to “Radetzky March”, Shostakovich’s Waltz No. 2 and a Polka from “The Bartered Bride”. They are standing in 6th place.

Ladies’ Free Skating

The Ladies’ Free Skating turned out to be an exciting competition. The suspense lasted until the very last skater.

First up in the final group was Viktoria Volchkova of Russia. Last year’s bronze medalist hit a triple toeloop and a triple Lutz-double toeloop combination, but then she lost her energy and made some errors. Volchkova had been sick with pneumonia at the end of December and obviously hasn’t yet fully recovered. Elena Liashenko of the Ukraine was next. She completed four clean triple jumps in her Tango routine, which was not enough to move up. Then overnight leader Elena Sokolova took on to the ice. She had to wait a few minutes before Liashenko got her marks, and the audience started to clap for her while she skated around on the ice. Sokolova looked completely focused when her music “Notre Dame de Paris” started and she hit a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination right out of the gate, followed by a triple flip. The 23-year-old reeled off a triple Salchow, a triple loop-double toeloop combination, a triple toeloop and a high double Axel in the last seconds of her dynamic program. The only glitch was a two-footed triple Lutz. At the end, Sokolova clapped her hands together and smiled radiantly. Her marks ranged between 5.4 to 5.8 for technical merit and between 5.5 and 5.8 for presentation. She took the lead and could be sure that she had won a medal, but she didn’t yet know which color it would have.

Then it was Julia Sebestyen’s turn. The Hungarian was sitting in third place after the Qualifying and Short Program and never had been so close to the podium before. She opened her program to a selection of music by Raoul di Blasio with a triple Salchow and a huge triple Lutz. The 21-year-old went on to produce excellent spins and another triple Lutz (with double toeloop), but she singled the loop and doubled her final jump, a toeloop. The judges awarded marks up to 5.7 for technical merit and up to 5.8 for presentation. Sebestyen remained behind Sokolova and with one more skater to come, she knew she had the bronze medal.

Russia’s Irina Slutskaya was the last one to skate. The four-time European Champion looked determined when she went out and took her opening position. After having watched most of the other performances she knew that she had to risk everything. Slutskaya nailed a solid triple loop at the beginning of her “La Traviata” routine, but she just hung on to the next element, a triple Lutz. The 23-year-old went for a triple Salchow-triple loop combination, but fell on the second jump. However, she didn’t let her performance go downhill and completed all remaining elements, including a triple Lutz-double toeloop combination, a triple flip, triple toeloop, a layback into a Biellmann spin and her trademark combination spin. Then the marks came up: 5.6 to 5.9 for both technical merit and presentation. Slutskaya had won her fifth title, Sokolova took the silver in her first European Championship and Sebestyen claimed the bronze. It was the first medal for Hungary since Krisztina Czako won the bronze medal in the 1997 European Championships.

There were two more notable performances tonight. 15-year-old Carolina Kostner of Italy wowed the crowd with a stellar performance that included two triple-triple combinations. She finished fourth in her first European Championships. Finland’s Alisa Drei, who had injured her left knee in a bad fall during the Short Program, delivered an inspiring routine without a mistake, landing seven triples. She was ranked 5th in the Free Skating and 7th overall.

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 CH 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

“I can’t believe it! It’s been a while since I’ve won anything. My last win was the World Championship, and that’s quite a while ago”, Slutskaya said right after her performance.

“I don’t feel like one of the young girls anymore, I already see my successors coming up. The Italian girl (Carolina Kostner), for example, Julia Sebestyen.... And Alisa Drei skated very well. I watched them.” She added that this victory was the hardest one for her. She felt the pressure. “It’s hard to be on the top for 8, 9 years. I see all the young girls doing the triples in practice like this” - she snipped with her fingers –“and they’re only 15, 16 years old.”

Sokolova was happy with the silver. “It was a bit hard today to skate the Free Program for the second time. My coach Viktor Nikolaevich, my choreographer Alla Kapranova, my parents, (coach) Natalia Dubinskaya all helped me to achieve this today. I didn’t think about a medal when I went out to skate. I’m really happy with the silver medal in my first Europeans. It’s a good result for me.”

Sebestyen commented: “The audience was a big help for me throughout the whole competition, even in Qualifying. I didn’t expect to medal here at all. This is a great result for me and for Hungary.”

The Championships continue tomorrow with the Men Short Program and the Free Dance.

Full results are also directly available on the ISU Internet site on **www.isu.org**

Patricia Mayor, ISU Sports Coordinator
Figure Skating
Tel: +46 40 34 79 46 Fax: +46 40 34 79 40

Paul Peret, Press Officer
Tel: +46 40 34 79 44
Fax: +46 40 34 79 43

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 CH 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

2003 European Figure Skating Championships

Ice Dancing

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	CD	OD	FD
1	Irina LOBACHEVA / Ilia AVERBUKH	RUS	1.0	1	1	
2	Albena DENKOVA / Maxim STAVIYSKI	BUL	2.0	2	2	
3	Tatiana NAVKA / Roman KOSTOMAROV	RUS	3.0	3	3	
4	Elena GRUSHINA / Ruslan GONCHAROV	UKR	4.0	4	4	
5	Kati WINKLER / Rene LOHSE	GER	5.0	5	5	
6	Galit CHAIT / Sergei SAKHNOVSKI	ISR	6.0	6	6	
7	Isabelle DELOBEL / Olivier SCHOENFELDER	FRA	7.0	7	7	
8	Federica FAIELLA / Massimo SCALI	ITA	8.0	8	8	
9	Sylwia NOWAK / Sebastian KOLASINSKI	POL	9.0	9	9	
10	Kristin FRASER / Igor LUKANIN	AZE	10.0	10	10	
11	Natalia GUDINA / Alexei BELETSKI	ISR	11.0	11	11	
12	Veronika MORAVKOVA / Jiri PROCHAZKA	CZE	12.4	13	12	
13	Oksana DOMNINA / Maxim SHABALIN	RUS	12.6	12	13	
14	Nora HOFFMANN / Attila ELEK	HUN	14.0	14	14	
15	Julia GOLOVINA / Oleg VOIKO	UKR	15.0	15	15	
16	Roxane PETETIN / Mathieu JOST	FRA	16.4	17	16	
17	Pamela O'CONNER / Jonathan O'DOUGHERTY	GBR	16.6	16	17	
18	Marta PAOLETTI / Fabrizio PEDRAZZINI	ITA	18.0	18	18	
19	Tatiana SINIAVER / Tornike TUKVADZE	GEO	19.0	19	19	
20	Jessica HUOT / Juha VALKAMA	FIN	20.0	20	20	
21	Marina TIMOFEIEVA / Evgeni STRIGANOV	EST	21.0	21	21	
22	Agnieszka DULEJ / Slawomir JANICKI	POL	22.0	22	22	

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 CH 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

Ladies

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	QB	QA	SP	FS
1	Irina SLUTSKAYA	RUS	3.0		2	2	1
2	Elena SOKOLOVA	RUS	3.0		1	1	2
3	Julia SEBESTYEN	HUN	6.4		4	3	3
4	Carolina KOSTNER	ITA	9.4		3	7	4
5	Elena LIASHENKO	UKR	9.6	3		4	6
6	Galina MANIACHENKO	UKR	12.4		6	5	7
7	Alisa DREI	FIN	13.0		5	10	5
8	Viktorija VOLCHKOVA	RUS	13.0	1		6	9
9	Susanna POYKIO	FIN	15.6		7	8	8
10	Elina KETTUNEN	FIN	17.2	2		9	11
11	Anne Sophie CALVEZ	FRA	18.2	4		11	10
12	Daria TIMOSHENKO	AZE	23.8	9		12	13
13	Lucie KRAUSOVA	CZE	24.8		8	16	12
14	Idora HEGEL	CRO	26.2	8		15	14
15	Olga VASSILJEVA	EST	27.2	7		14	16
16	Zuzana BABIAKOVA	SVK	29.2	6		13	19
17	Diana POTH	HUN	30.2	5		17	18
18	Sabina WOJTALA	POL	30.6	12		18	15
19	Jenna McCORKELL	GBR	35.4	10		24	17
20	Vanessa GIUNCHI	ITA	36.2		9	21	20
21	Annette DYTRT	GER	38.4		11	20	22
22	Kimena BROG MEIER	SUI	39.6		12	23	21
23	Mojca KOPAC	SLO	40.4		10	19	25
24	Sara FALOTICO	BEL	42.4		13	22	24
25	Asa PERSSON	SWE	45.4	14		28	23
26	Julia LAUTOWA	AUT		11		25	
27	Tugba KARADEMIR	TUR		13		26	
28	Hristina VASSILEVA	BUL			14	27	
29	Karen VENHUIZEN	NED			15	29	
30	Roxana LUCA	ROM		15		30	
31	Anna BERNAUER	LUX		16			
31	Gintare VOSTRECOVAITE	LTU			16		
33	Georgina PAPAVALIOU	GRE			17		
33	Aleksandra PETUSHKO	LAT		17			