

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Media Advisory

Lausanne, 25 January 2003

European Figure Skating Championships Malmö (SWE)

Day 6

Men, Free Program

The Men concluded the competition at the 2003 European Championships with their Free Skating.

Last year's bronze medalist Brian Joubert (FRA) had drawn to skate first in the final flight. He seemed composed when his music "The Untouchables" started. The 18-year-old pulled off a quadruple toeloop and a triple Axel in the first seconds of his program, but then he tripled his second planned quad toeloop. Joubert went on to complete solid spins, a triple Axel-double toeloop combination, a triple Lutz, a triple Salchow and a triple flip. The judges awarded marks up to 5.8 for both technical merit and presentation. Now Joubert would have to wait and see what his competitors would do. Ilia Klimkin of Russia was the next of the top contenders to skate. Klimkin stood in third place after the Short Program. He opened his innovative routine to music by Rene Aubry with a triple Axel and a quadruple-triple toeloop combination, but he had some shaky landings on some other jumps later in his program and he fell in his footwork. Klimkin remained behind Joubert in the standings. Then two-time European Champion Evgeni Plushenko (RUS) took the ice. The crowd greeted him with thunderous applause. Skating to a composition of music entitled "St. Petersburg 300", the Olympic silver medalist nailed a quad-triple toeloop combination, but he tripled the next toeloop. Unfazed, Plushenko completed six more triple jumps including two Axels and fast paced footwork. When the marks came up, he jumped up in the Kiss and Cry area and waved to the audience. His performance had earned him all 5.8s and 5.9s for technical merits as well as all 5.9s and two 6.0s for presentation. Plushenko had recaptured the title that he had won in 2000 and 2001.

Then it was the turn of Stanick Jeannette (FRA). His first element was a high triple Axel, followed by a quadruple-triple toeloop combination, but he stepped out of the first jump. The esoteric program "L'Enfant Pure" based on the theme of "Le Petit Prince" (The Little Prince) also featured a triple flip, triple Axel-double toeloop combination, three more triples and excellent spins. Jeannette's marks were as high as 5.7 for technical merit and 5.9 for presentation. He was ranked third at that stage, but there was one more skater to come. Switzerland's Stephane Lambiel singled his opening Axel but then produced a perfect quad-triple toeloop combination and impressed the crowd with his spectacular spins. But it was not enough to medal today, and Lambiel came in 5th. The silver medal went to Joubert and Jeannette got his second bronze medal since 2001. It has been ten years since two Frenchmen stood on the podium at Europeans. In 1993, Philippe Candeloro and Eric Millot had finished second and third to Dmitri Dmitrenko (UKR).

"I had trouble in the warm-up, I missed the flip and loop. But I was able to pull myself together in the competition and I hit them both. That was very positive. I was fighting with myself, and I succeeded", Plushenko said. "What I did was enough for today, but in the future I'll need to do the quad-triple-triple combination and the second quad, of course."

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Joubert felt the pressure in Malmö. “It was quite difficult for me this year. Nobody knew me last year, and it was a surprise (that he won the bronze). I had to do well, because I was third last year. It was harder than last year.”

Jeannette, who didn’t make the French team last season, was thrilled about his comeback. “It was a nightmare for me that I couldn’t go to the Olympic Games. I had worked three years for that. But last year, I made many mistakes. Then I changed a lot of things in my life, I changed coaches. Now I want to go to the Olympics in Turin. It’s a dream for each athlete to compete in the Olympics.”

Russia was the most successful ISU Member at the 2003 European Championships, taking all four titles and seven out of twelve medals overall. France collected two silvers and one bronze medal in the Men and Pairs events. Bulgaria took one silver in Ice Dancing and Hungary won the bronze in the Ladies’ competition.

The 2003 European Figure Skating Championships conclude tomorrow with the Exhibition Gala.

Further coverage of the event, including complete results, is available from www.isu.org .

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2003 European Figure Skating Championships

Men

FPI.	Name	Nat.	Points	SP	FS
1	Evgeni PLUSHENKO	RUS	1.5	1	1
2	Brian JOUBERT	FRA	3.0	2	2
3	Stanick JEANNETTE	FRA	5.0	4	3
4	Ilia KLIMKIN	RUS	5.5	3	4
5	Stephane LAMBIEL	SUI	8.0	6	5
6	Stanislav TIMCHENKO	RUS	9.5	5	7
7	Vakhtang MURVANIDZE	GEO	12.0	8	8
8	Frederic DAMBIER	FRA	12.5	13	6
9	Gheorge CHIPER	ROM	14.0	10	9
10	Kevin VAN DER PERREN	BEL	16.5	11	11
11	Silvio SMALUN	GER	16.5	9	12
12	Stefan LINDEMANN	GER	16.5	7	13
13	Sergei DAVYDOV	BLR	17.5	15	10
14	Neil WILSON	GBR	21.0	12	15
15	Kristoffer BERNTSSON	SWE	22.0	16	14
16	Ivan DINEV	BUL	25.0	14	18
17	Zoltan TOTH	HUN	25.5	19	16
18	Gregor URBAS	SLO	27.0	20	17
19	Karel ZELENKA	ITA	28.5	17	20
20	Konstantin TUPIKOV	UKR	31.0	24	19
21	Hristo TURLAKOV	BUL	31.5	21	21
22	Clemens JONAS	AUT	32.0	18	23
23	Sergei KOTOV	ISR	33.5	23	22
24	Sergei SHILIAEV	BLR	35.0	22	24
25	Alexei KOZLOV	EST		25	
26	Bartosz DOMANSKI	POL		26	
27	Ari-Pekka NURMENKARI	FIN		27	
28	Aidas REKLYS	LTU		28	
29	Lukas KUZMIAK	SVK		29	
30	Aramais GRIGORIAN	ARM		30	
R	Tomas VERNER	CZE			