

PRESS CONFERENCE

Ice Dance, after Rhythm Dance

Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov (FSR), 1st after the Rhythm Dance

Sinitsina: Hello everyone, we are thrilled being here at this competition, we waited for it for so long, we are thrilled the championship took place, the season was tough and we all are and were going through it. So it's important to be on the same ice and compete together with everyone again. We were waiting for it for a long time.

Katsalapov: (On their development in the past six years) Indeed a long time has passed and it's the destiny that we did not participate these Europeans (in Stockholm in 2015) but we are here now. As for being first after the short program, I think it's for a reason. What has changed - Victoria and I feel each other with no words and we trust each other a 100 percent, we are enjoying what we do, we walk through the hardships holding hands, it's our life now. (on whether it is an advantage to enter the Olympic season as World Champion) I think it's a bit of advantage because rating plays a role in our sport. We get medals and ranking points in the competitions we do well. Of course those who will be the world champions should they skate just as well after think they will be treated better.

Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue (USA), 2nd after the Rhythm Dance

Hubbell: (On the upbeat programs) It's Broadway, so I think there weren't many performances that weren't energetic, it's a very energetic theme. (On competing in an empty arena) We've had some experience of competing with no audience, the difference here, I realized when watching the men's event, is that we have never in our career and will probably never again compete when the audience is all other skaters who are gathering for this World Championships. Everyone in the stands is extremely involved in the skating family and that felt really special. When I was watching the men's event there was a lot of appreciation and gratitude to be here. I felt a lot of support, we had many skaters from Montreal in the stands and they were cheering for us, we felt the energy and it was a great performance. (On the new programs) We had a lot of time like everyone to talk about what we wanted for this season. We knew right away we were going to do a new free dance, and with everything that happened this year we knew we would do that project with Scott (Moir), so then the conversation came up about whether we change both [programs]. Looking at last season, especially with how we performed our rhythm dance at Four Continents last year, we felt we grew it as much as we could, we skated it extremely well at Four Continents and there wasn't as big a gap competitively as we would have liked. We decided for that reason to change the theme, to change something about the program, and we started looking at all the different types of Broadway. We wanted something that felt a little bit more modern, a little bit more us, powerful and sexy, so we ended up with Burlesque. We also at some point realised that this year wasn't going to be a typical season. The fans weren't going to be in the stands, and for the most part we were going to be performing for the judges, for the skating community, and of course the fans at home too, but the people who were going to be there judging us were these judges who have committed a lot of their life and time to his journey with us. We thought they might want to see something new from us, a new project, something exciting. I always love the beginning of the season when people put out their programs and I'm on YouTube so curious to see what music they chose and their costumes, so we wanted to give people a bit of that excitement. We're happy with the project, so it worked out.

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(On being World Champion in the run-up to Olympics) It's what we all work for, we've been with this goal for the last several years and it's just as real today as it was two or three years ago. There is something that happens to your confidence or your view of yourself when you win something like this, so I think it will definitely give whichever team is at the top some momentum going into their Olympic season.

Donohue: (On being World Champion in the run-up to Olympics) Some food for thought is that while one team gets a medal, everyone else gets another dose of hunger. When you get so close, whether it's fifth or sixth, when you feel that you're reaching the top and really trying to push your potential, you want it that much more when someone has it. There is certainly some technical advantage with our system and the judging the way it is with points and everything, but to count out a team who doesn't win the World Championships going into the Olympics would be a mistake, because they're going to show up twice as hungry as they were the year before.

Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA), 3rd after the Rhythm Dance

Chock: (On skating an energetic program in front of a small audience) The audience is definitely missed but the audience here is incredibly supportive. It's the skating family, one we've come to know and grow with in over a decade in the sport. We're very grateful that we're able to compete here. The ISU have put on a wonderful event for us and we're grateful to all the federations that have participated and made this possible. It's a very energetic program and that kind of energy creates a buzz in the arena even if there aren't that many people and there was a really good vibe in the rink today. (On this competition as preparation for the Olympics) There are advantages (to winning this competition) of course and I think personally you feel you've accomplished a goal and that's a great thing. And then you can set yourself up, not have to prove yourself but to keep accomplishing goals. Of course we don't count anyone out but it leaves a lot of opportunities for growth next season whether or not you win. Again it's anyone's game. There are so many talented athletes and everyone's going to be hungry next year especially because it's an Olympic year. It's going to be interesting no matter what happens.