

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games **Pair Skating Free Skating**

The figure skating competition at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games continued in Sochi, Russia, on Wednesday with the Pairs Free Skating.

Tatiana Volosozhar/Maxim Trankov crowned Olympic Champions

Russia's Tatiana Volosozhar/Maxim Trankov were crowned Olympic Champions in Sochi on home ice on Wednesday. Teammates Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov claimed the silver medal and Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy of Germany settled for the bronze.

Skating to Jesus Christ Superstar, Volosozhar/Trankov started strongly with a triple twist and side by side triple salchows and toeloops, but later in the routine Volosozhar touched down on the throw triple loop and the triple Salchow. The World and European Champions picked up a level four for the maximum of seven elements and earned 152.69 points which added up to 236.86 points overall. Thus they took their second Olympic gold medal to their collection. They had already won in the team event on Sunday.

"Today was a big day for all of Russia," Trankov said. "Two of our couples have skated very well and I think everyone in our big country is pleased. It was the hardest job of our lives. We dealt with huge pressure today. We already have gold in the team event, but this is the realization of the goal and the dream of our lives."

Stolbova/Klimov put out the cleanest performance of the night with their dynamic Addams Family routine, reeling off a triple twist, triple toe-double toe-double toe combination, throw triple flip and Salchow. They scored a personal best of 143.47 points and moved up from third to second with 218.68 points overall in their debut at Olympic Games. Stolbova/Klimov were also on the gold-medal winning Russian team.

"We did everything exactly the way we were planning it. We've been working very hard and that's what has made us succeed. We are so thrilled. And we can't believe that it's over," Klimov shared.

Savchenko/Szolkowy produced a throw triple flip, double Axel and triple twist in their program to "Nutcracker", but their hopes for gold crumbled when he missed a triple toeloop at the beginning and she crashed on the landing of a throw triple Axel right at the end. The Germans earned 136.14 points and slipped to third like they did at Vancouver 2010. They collected 215.78 points. "It was not a good skate today. We wanted much more," Szolkowy said. "I do not have an answer (what went wrong). The warm up was as always, there were no shaky legs. Sometimes it happens."

Qing Pang/Jian Tong (CHN) remained in fourth place 209.88 points. Their performance was strong, but he singled an Axel while she stumbled on a double. Kirsten Moore-Towers/Dylan Moscovitch (CAN) finished fifth with a solid skate and 202.10 points.

Volosozhar/Trankov claimed the 13th gold medal for Russian or Soviet pairs since 1964. Only in Vancouver in 2010 Russian pairs missed out on the gold.

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The figure skating competition at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games continues Thursday with the Men's Short Program. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and www.sochi2014.com

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