

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2014/15 Lexus Cup of China, Day 2

The Lexus Cup of China continued Saturday in Shanghai with the Free Dance, the Ladies, Men and Pairs Free Skating. The Lexus Cup of China is the third of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series. The world's top figure skaters are competing for a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix and are collecting points towards the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Barcelona (ESP).

Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron (FRA) dance to gold

Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron of France upset the favorites and danced to the gold medal, their first medal at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating. Overnight leaders Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani (USA) collected the silver medal and Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte of Italy settled for the bronze.

Performing to the Adagio from Mozart's Concerto No. 23, Papadakis/Cizeron earned a level four for two lifts, the twizzles and the spin, a level three for the diagonal footwork and a level two for the circular steps and the curve lift. The 2013 World Junior silver medalists posted a new personal best with 98.00 points and totaled 160.12 points to move up from third to first place. "Coming in our goal was third place, so winning this Grand Prix is a nice surprise for us. We performed well yesterday and today, but it is totally unexpected", Cizeron told the press.

Shibutani/Shibutani delivered a smooth performance to "Roses from the South" and "The Blue Danube" by Johann Strauss. The brother-and-sister team collected a level four for three elements while three other elements merited a level two. With 92.16 points for the Free Dance, the 2011 World bronze medalists slipped to second at 157.36 points. "We were very happy with our performance today. The crowd energy was great. As far as how the program compares to Skate America, I think we noticed of couple of things that could have been a little bit better. But I think we attacked the program in some different ways. There is always growth. We'll have a look at the protocols, because I think we missed some levels", Alex Shibutani said.

Cappellini/Lanotte had a rough start into their "Danse Macabre" routine when he fell in the first seconds during a transition. The World Champions recovered to produce four level-four elements, but the spin garnered only a level one. The European Champions earned 86.88 points which added up to 149.58 points overall. "It (the fall) was very tough, because it was very unexpected. A mistake like this hadn't happened to us in a long time in competition. It was definitely unsettling for the rest of the program. There is a lot to work on, but these things can happen. We are not depressed about it, it is a sport, you win some, you lose some", Cappellini noted.

Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin (RUS) remained in fourth place with 144.70 points followed by Alexandra Paul/Mitchell Islam (CAN) with 140.46 points.

Elizaveta Tuktamysheva (RUS) storms to Ladies gold

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Russia's Elizaveta Tuktamysheva stormed to the Ladies gold medal, relegating her teammate and overnight leader Julia Lipnitskaia to the silver medal. Kanako Murakami of Japan took the bronze medal.

Tuktamysheva delivered an excellent performance to oriental music "Batwannis Beek" and "Sandstorm" and hit six triple jumps including a triple toe-triple toe combination. The 2012 Youth Olympic Champion picked up a level three for her spins and the footwork to score a new seasons best with 128.61 points. With a total of 196.60 points, the 17-year-old moved up to first place. "I had a good skate today, but there still were some errors. Overall I am glad with how I dealt with myself. I am pleased with how the beginning of the season went for me. Now I'll have a break of about two weeks before the Grand Prix Final and I can prepare", the former Russian Champion shared.

Lipnitskaia opened her "Romeo and Juliet" program to music by Nino Rota and Abel Korzeniowski with a double Axel-triple toe-double toe combination but she fell on a triple Salchow and also made errors on other jumps. The World silver medalist salvaged points with her excellent spins. With 104.01 points, the 16-year-old was ranked fourth in the Free Skating but overall held on to second place with 173.57 points. "I do not know what happened. Nothing really worked. This was probably the worst skate of my life", the European Champion commented.

Murakami's program to "The Phantom of the Opera" included three good triple jumps and level-four spins, but she underrotated two triple loops and singled an Axel. The Four Continents Champion earned 108.99 points and remained in third place with 169.39 points. "I made the same mistakes I did in training this morning. I am satisfied with third place, but not with my performance", the 20-year-old Japanese told the post-event press conference.

Polina Edmunds (USA) turned in the second-best Free Skating of the day and moved up from seventh to fourth at 161.27 points. Gabrielle Daeleman (CAN) slipped from fourth to fifth (161.26 points). Zijun Li (CHN) finished sixth with 152.62 points.

Maxim Kovtun (RUS) strikes Men's gold

Maxim Kovtun of Russia struck gold in the Men's event. Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu overcame a bad collision in the warm up to claim the silver medal and Richard Dornbush (USA) moved up from fourth to earn the bronze medal.

Skating to "Exogenesis Symphony" by Muse, Kovtun landed a quad toe, a triple Axel-single toe as well as three more triples, but he fell on a quad Salchow. The Russian Champion scored 157.38 points to win his first Grand Prix title with 243.34 points. "This was the first competition of the season and it came with these unpredictable events. I was absolutely not ready for this turn of events. When they led us off the ice, I was very upset. I did not know what was going on. My coach tried to calm me down. It was hard for me to pull myself together. It is a very sad day", the 19-year-old said.

Hanyu had collided with Han Yan (CHN) right at the beginning of the six-minute warm up. Both skaters suffered cuts on the head. The warm up was suspended and restarted after both skaters had

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received medical attention. Hanyu skated with a bandage around his head. The Olympic Champion completed four clean triples in his routine set to “The Phantom of the Opera”, but he missed his two quads and three other jumps. The 19-year-old scored 154.60 points and remained in second place with 237.55 points. “He is getting stitches on his chin and he has a big lash on his head”, Hanyu’s coach Brian Orser commented. “For me, the most important thing was his health. He immediately wanted to compete and I wanted to make sure that he was healthy enough to compete, that he didn’t show any major signs of a bad concussion”, Orser continued.

Dornbush’s performance to “Yellow” and “Viva la vida” by Coldplay featured a quad toeloop, two triple Axels (one in combination with a triple toe) and two level-four spins, but he fell on at triple Lutz and doubled two jumps. The American earned 149.50 points and collected 226.73 points overall. “I’ve never experienced anything like this in a competition before. I was very happy with how I able to keep my cool and my concentration. My team leader, my coach were very helpful. I was able to focus on my job and going out there, doing what I had to do”, the Californian said.

Nam Nguyen (CAN) moved up two spots to fourth place (221.85 points) and Misha Ge (UZB) pulled up from seventh to fifth (219.38 points). Yan, who stood in third place following the Short Program, dropped to sixth (206.65 points).

Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang (CHN) skate to Pairs title

Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang led the Chinese Pairs to a podium sweep. Xiaoyu Yu/Yang Jin claimed the silver and the bronze went to Xuehan Wang/Lei Wang. Peng/Zhang won their first Grand Prix title as a team while Yu/Jin and Wang/Wang made the podium at a (senior level) ISU Grand Prix event for the first time in their career.

Skating to “Allegretto”, Peng/Zhang produced a quadruple twist, throw triple loop and Salchow as well as three level-four lifts. Peng only struggled with the solo jumps. The Skate America bronze medalists scored a seasons best of 124.94 points and claimed the title with 194.05 points. “Today is a festive day for us. It has been a long time since the Chinese pairs swept the podium. We did it at the Four Continents Championships 2003. To do it again after all those years makes me very proud for all of us”, Zhang commented.

Yu/Jin’s performance to “Humility and Love” was highlighted by side by side triple toes, a triple twist and throw triple loop. However, Jin dropped his partner from the reverse lasso lift. The World Junior Champions were awarded 116.30 points and had 173.33 points overall to move up one spot. “Last season we won the Junior Grand Prix Final and now we won our first medal on the senior Grand Prix. But I am not totally happy with our performance. There are many things we can improve and hopefully we can do that in our next event, the Grand Prix in Japan”, Yu said.

Wang/Wang completed a triple twist, throw triple Lutz and loop and difficult lifts, but they made errors on the side by side jumps. The team picked up 114.88 points and accumulated 172.15 points. “This is our first medal (at an international event) and we are very excited about that. It is a big achievement for us. However, I am not so satisfied with myself and want to do better next time”, Xuehan Wang explained.

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Vera Bazarova/Andrei Deputat (RUS) placed fourth (166.44 points) followed by Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise (ITA) with 155.90 points.

For full results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2014/15 please refer to
www.isu.org/en/single-and-pair-skating-and-ice-dance/series/isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating.

The Lexus Cup of China concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating continues next week with Rostelecom Cup in Moscow (RUS).

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