

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND  
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 7 E-MAIL: info@isu.ch

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For immediate release

## **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2014/2015 NHK Trophy, Preview**

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2014/2015 continues this week with NHK Trophy in Osaka, Japan, the sixth and final event in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series. NHK Trophy provides the last opportunity for skaters to qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Barcelona, Spain in December. The world's top figure skaters are competing for a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

53 skaters/couples from 12 ISU Members will compete at NHK Trophy. The event is headlined by Olympic Champion Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN), World silver medalists Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje (CAN) and World bronze medalists Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford (CAN).

Hanyu has a silver medal from the Lexus Cup of China and wants to secure his spot in Barcelona. Competition should come from teammate and Four Continents Champion Takahito Mura who took the gold medal at Skate Canada International and from European silver medalist Sergei Voronov (RUS), who comes with a silver medal from Rostelecom Cup to Japan. While these three men have the best chances to qualify for Barcelona, three-time U.S. Champion Jeremy Abbott might spoil their party. Other competitors include Jeremy Ten (CAN), Ivan Righini (ITA), Jin Seo Kim (KOR) and Ross Miner (USA).

Two spots in Barcelona are still up for grabs in the Ladies event. Four Continents silver medalist Satoko Miyahara (JPN), Four Continents bronze medalist Kanako Murakami (JPN) and U.S. Champion Gracie Gold all earned a bronze medal in their first Grand Prix event this season and will compete for these spots in the Final. Polina Edmunds (USA), who was ranked fourth in China, has a chance as well. 2012 World silver medalist Alena Leonova (RUS) wants to improve on her sixth-place finish from Skate Canada and while her chances to qualify for Barcelona are very slim, she could take away points from others. Other challengers are Elene Gedevanishvili (GEO), Gabrielle Daleman (CAN) and Four Continents bronze medalist Zijun Li (CHN).

In the Pairs event, Duhamel/Radford will be up against two-time World bronze medalists Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS). Both teams won their first event on the circuit and want to book their tickets to Barcelona here in Osaka. World Junior Champions Xiaoyu Yu/Yang Jin (CHN) come with a silver medal from Cup of China to Japan and have a chance to qualify for the Final as well. Also competing are Vera Bazarova/Andrei Deputat (RUS), Narumi Takahashi/Ryuichi Kihara (JPN), Mari Vartmann/Aaron van Cleave (GER) and Dee Dee Leng/Simon Shnapir (USA).

Weaver/Poje lead the Ice Dance field and are looking for a second Grand Prix gold medal and the qualification for the Final following their victory at Skate Canada. European bronze medalists Penny Coomes/Nicholas Buckland (GBR) come with a bronze from Rostelecom Cup to Osaka and are aiming for the podium again plus for Barcelona. Other podium contenders in Osaka include

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Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS), Ksenia Monko/Kirill Khaliavin (RUS) and Nelli Zhiganshina/Alexander Gazsi (GER).

For full entry lists and 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](http://www.isu.org/en/single-and-pair-skating-and-ice-dance/series/isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating).

**The schedule of NHK Trophy is as follows:**

Friday, November 28: Pairs, Ladies, Men's Short Program

Saturday, November 29: Short Dance, Pairs, Ladies, Men's Free Skating

Sunday, November 30: Free Dance, Exhibition Gala

**For further information please contact**

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating & Final

Selina Vanier, Media Coordinator

+41 21 612 66 66 (phone)

email: vanier@isu.ch

NHK Trophy

Mr. Tamio Suzuki, Press Officer

+81 72 803 60 23 (phone press room)