

# 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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## **ISU World Team Trophy in Figure Skating 2015** **Team USA defends lead**

The fourth edition of the ISU World Team Trophy in Figure Skating continued Friday in Tokyo, Japan, with the Pairs Short Program, the Free Dance and Men's Free Skating. The six top ranked national teams of the 2014/15 season have qualified for the event. Each team consists of two Men, two Ladies, one Pair and one Ice Dance couple. The Yoyogi National Stadium once again was filled to capacity.

### **Team USA defends lead**

Team USA defended their overnight lead and now has 83 points. Team Japan remained in second place at 79 points while Russia is still in third with currently 77 points.

U.S. Champion Jason Brown placed second in the Men's Free Skating to bring home 11 points for Team USA. Brown landed eight triple jumps in his routine to "Tristan and Isolde". World Ice Dance silver medalists Madison Chock/Evan Bates ranked third in the Free Dance with their performance to "An American in Paris", adding 10 points to the team score. Pair skaters Alexa Scimeca/Chris Knierim (4<sup>th</sup> in the Pairs Short Program/9 team points) and Max Aaron (8<sup>th</sup> in the Men's Free Skating/5 points) also contributed to the success of the team. "Today was a very exciting day for the entire competition. Apart from the ladies everyone competed today and we had a chance to get to watch the Pairs and Men's event. It was just thrilling. You really could see at the end of the season the skaters are in top form and maybe a little bit more relaxed. Some of the performances were exceptional today. So this is really nice to see, and I think the audience enjoyed it as well", team captain Bates commented.

Team Japan once more could rely on their Men. Olympic Champion Yuzuru Hanyu turned in an inspiring performance to "Phantom of the Opera", reeling off a quadruple Salchow and eight triples. He won the Men's Free Skating with 192.31 points and picked up 12 team points. Takahito Mura placed third in the Men's Free Skating with another strong performance (10 team points). Pair Skaters Ami Koga/Francis Boudreau Audet and Ice Dancers Cathy Reed/Chris Reed ranked sixth in the Short Program and Free Dance respectively and scored 7 team points each.

„I watched the pairs, ice dance and the men and all skaters skated very well, especially Yuzuru Hanyu. He skated at the very end of the day so I think it is difficult for him. I think the ladies will do very well and we'd like to continue to fight until the end of the competition", team captain Mura told the post-event press conference.

European Champions Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov led the charge for Russia, earning 10 team points as they placed third in the Pairs Short Program. Kavaguti had stumbled on the triple toe, but the other elements were strong. Elena Ilinykh/ Ruslan Zhiganshin came fourth in the Free Dance to get 9 team points. Sergei Voronov and Maxim Kovtun competed in the Men's Free Skating, finishing fifth (8 team points) and sixth (7 team points). "Today was another great day, a festival of figure skating and our whole team skated very well. Some surpassed their abilities, others couldn't quite do that, but the result is good. The placements didn't change, and everything will be decided tomorrow", team captain Smirnov said.

Team Canada remained in fourth place with 63 points. World Champions Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford scored 11 team points by coming second in the Pairs Short Program. Duhamel had doubled the side by side

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triple Lutz. Another 11 team points came from World bronze medalists Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje, who finished second in the Free Dance.

Team China sits in fifth place (59 points). Their top scorers were World silver medalists Wenjing Sui/Cong Han, who placed first in the Pairs Short Program.

Team France is currently standing in sixth place at 44 points. World Ice Dance Champions Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron won the Free Dance, but their 12 team points were not enough for France to pull up.

The ISU World Team Trophy in Figure Skating 2015 continues Saturday with the Pairs and Ladies Men's Free Skating. For full entries and results please refer to [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org) and <http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/figure/>.