

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 CH 1006 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: media@isu.ch

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For immediate release

ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final Day Three And Synchronized Skating Free Skating

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating and ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating continued Saturday with the Junior Ladies and Junior Pairs Free Skating and Synchronized Skating Free Skating.

Polina Tsurskaya (RUS) takes Junior Ladies gold

Polina Tsurskaya of Russia took the Junior Ladies gold. Teammate Maria Sotskova rose from fourth place to earn the silver medal and Japan's Marin Honda claimed the bronze.

Skating to "Chess", Tsurskaya nailed seven triple jumps including a triple Lutz-triple toe-double toe and another triple Lutz-triple toe combination. The 14-year-old posted a new personal best score with 128.59 points and totaled 195.28 points to win the title in her debut at the ISU Junior Grand Prix Final. "I was a little nervous before the free skating, because I was in first place after the short program and I needed to skate clean. The other girls are very strong. So I was focused on each element and I tried to execute them as ideally as possible. I'll go to Junior Nationals and I have to skate clean there and finish first so I can qualify for Junior Worlds and the Youth Olympic Games", the Moscow-based skater said.

Sotskova turned in a strong performance to "Romeo and Juliet" by Sergei Prokofiev as well, completing seven triples and three level-four spins. The 2013 ISU Junior Grand Prix Final Champion scored 121.37 points which added up to 184.01 points overall. Sotskova won her second medal in her third consecutive appearance in the Junior Final. "I'm very happy to be in second place because after the short program I was fourth and, of course, that's not a great place to be. The competition was very strong and I didn't cope with everything", the 15-year-old commented.

Honda's program to "Beetlejuice" included five clean triples, but she fell on an underrotated triple flip. The Japanese skater earned 114.95 points and remained in third place at 178.64 points. "I was aiming to have two clean skates in both the short program and the free skate but I couldn't do that. I thought I could do better, All through the program I was very nervous. I've learned how difficult it is to have two clean skates. Next year I would like to come back to this stage and to win first place", the 14-year-old noted.

Alisa Fedichkina (RUS) dropped from second to fourth (178.11 points). Yuna Shirawa (JPN, 173.82 points) and Mai Mihara (JPN, 166.25 points) finished fifth and sixth.

Ekaterina Borisova/Dmitry Sopot (RUS) skate to Junior Pairs gold

Ekaterina Borisova/Dmitry Sopot of Russia skated to the Junior Pairs gold medal. Anna Duksova/Martin Bidar of the Czech Republic picked up the silver medal, becoming the first Czech pair team to win a medal at the Junior Grand Prix Final. The bronze medal went to Amina Atakhanova/Ilia Spiridonov of Russia.

Borisova/Sopot gave a strong performance to "Lawrence of Arabia" that featured a triple twist, throw triple loop and Salchow as well as level-four lifts and spins. The only glitch came when he put his hand down on the side by side double Axel. The team from Perm achieved a new personal best with 111.57 points and accumulated 171.86 points. "We're thrilled, I have no words. We've

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worked a lot and this is the result. Now we'll just have to add a triple jump or even two. I also see that we didn't get a level four for everything, so we can improve on that", Borisova commented.

Duskova/Bidar landed a triple twist, double Axel-double toe-double toe combination and two triple throws in their routine set to "La Leyenda del Beso" by Raul di Blasio. The Czech team earned 106.55 points and moved up from third to second at 162.33 points. "We are so happy because we have never reached as high as (we have) now, I can't explain how happy I am. We did almost a clean program", Duskova told the press.

Atakhanova/Spiridonov's program to "Funny Girl" and "Gigi" was highlighted by their triple throws, but she underrotated the side by side triple toe and triple Salchow while he struggled with a lift. The team from Moscow earned 103.42 points and slipped from second to third at 162.00 points. "We feel more disappointment with the skate than happiness with the placement. The skate wasn't clean and we dropped a place, and we made mistakes on the lift and jumps. The jumps have not really been working today, I don't know why. But everything was fine in training", Atakhanova said.

Anastasia Gubanova/Alexei Sintsov (RUS) placed fourth with 157.09 points followed by Renata Oganesian/Mark Bardei (UKR) with 149.87 points and Anastasia Poluianova/Stepan Korotkov (RUS) with 145.27 points.

Team Paradise (RUS) wins Synchronized Skating Free Skating

Team Paradise of Russia won the Synchronized Skating Free Skating competition. Team Rockettes of Finland skated to the silver medal and Team Nexxice of Canada settled for the bronze. For the first time in the history of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, a Synchronized Skating event was included.

Team Paradise, the 2015 World bronze medalists, put out a confident performance to "Carmen" by George Bizet, picking up a level four for the Pair element, the group lift, the Pivoting Line Element and the Wheel to score 131.09 points. "We feel great about our performance. We had so much fun out there and we performed like we can do in training. We want to go out and prove that we can fight for victory at the World Championship", team captain Anna Iurchenko said. "It is a big responsibility to compete in the Grand Prix Final, not only for us to represent our country well, but also for the whole discipline. We want to show that Synchronized Skating is worthy of being part of the Olympic program", she added.

Team Rockettes skated to "Galactic Invasion" and "A Day in the Life" and completed three level-four elements. The Finns earned 127.66 points. "We had some little mistakes, it was not our best and we have had better scores in Finland. There was a mistake on the lift and some other small mistakes but nothing big, the program as a whole was great overall. We want to use it (this event) to show figure skating people what synchro skaters can do. We need more publicity and it is great to be on TV and at such a big event shown around the world", team captain Anna Vuorela commented.

Team Nexxice's routine to "Bohemian Rhapsody" was highlighted by their no hold element, block and pivoting line element that merited a level four. The reigning World Champions received 120.34 points. "We've overcome a lot of hardship to get here so we're really pleased with our result. We've been battling a lot of injury. In fact the man in our team (Lee Chandler) was pulled out of retirement to join us. He was with the team for five years but has only been training with us since last Sunday and then performed today", team captain Becky Tyler explained.

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Team Surprise (SWE) placed fourth with 118.48 points and Team Haydenettes (USA) ranked fifth (106.81 points).

Full results are available at www.isu.org. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continues with the Seniors Free Dance, Ladies and Men Free Skating.

For further information please contact

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating & Final
Selina Vanier, Media Coordinator
email: vanier@isu.ch

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final
Alberto Montenegro, OC Press Officer
email: press@gpfbarcelona2015.com