

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2016 **Preview**

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2016 will open in Boston, USA on March 30. Boston hosts the ISU World Figure Skating Championships for the first time, but the USA have hosted the World Championships twelve times before.

172 skaters/couples from 38 ISU Members have been entered for the Championships. Following a decision of the ISU Congress in 2012, no Preliminary Rounds are held. All skaters/couples compete in the Short Program/Short Dance and the top 24 single skaters, top 16 Pairs and 20 Ice Dance couples will proceed to the Free Skating/Free Dance. Participants need to have obtained a minimum total element score in the Short Program and Free Skating in order to be eligible for the Championships.

Overview over the top contenders

Reigning Olympic Champion and World silver medalist Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN) leads the Men, but has to expect tough competition. Hanyu won the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final earlier this season and became the first skater to achieve more than 300 points, posting a personal best of 330.43 in Barcelona (ESP). Competition should come from reigning World and European Champion Javier Fernandez (ESP), who scored a seasons best of 302.77 points and Olympic silver medalist Patrick Chan (CAN). Chan sat out the post-Olympic season but proved that he is back in business when he took gold at the ISU Four Continents Championships last month (seasons best 290.21 points).

World and Olympic bronze medalist Denis Ten (KAZ) enters the competition as a dark horse after missing the Four Continents Championships due to injury (seasons best 276.39 points). Other contenders to watch include 2016 Four Continents silver medalist Boyang Jin (CHN), 2016 Four Continents bronze medalist Han Yan (CHN), ISU Grand Prix Final bronze medalist Shoma Uno (JPN), 2015 Skate America Champion Max Aaron, 2016 U.S. Champion Adam Rippon and 2016 European bronze medalist Maxim Kovtun (RUS).

2016 European Champion Evgenia Medvedeva (RUS) leads the Ladies in Boston. The ISU Grand Prix Final Champion achieved a seasons best of 222.54 points. Competition should come from 2016 Four Continents Champion and reigning World silver medalist Satoko Miyahara (JPN/seasons best 214.91 points), European silver medalist Elena Radionova (RUS/seasons best 211.32 points) and three-time World Champion Mao Asada (JPN/seasons best 197.48 points). However, several other Ladies will challenge for the podium as well: ISU Grand Prix Finalist Ashley Wagner (USA/202.52 points), U.S. Champion Gracie Gold (202.80 points) and European bronze medalist Anna Pogorilaya (RUS/seasons best 214.07). Others to watch include Rika Hongo (JPN) and Mirai Nagasu (USA).

2015 World Champions Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford (CAN) are hoping to defend their title, but they'll face stiff competition in Boston. 2014 Olympic Champion Tatiana Volosozhar/Maxim Trankov (RUS) are back and won the European title earlier this year with a seasons best of 222.66 points. ISU Grand Prix Final Champions Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov (RUS) lead the seasons best standings with 229.44 points and 2015 World silver medalists Wenjing Sui/Cong Han (CHN) won the ISU Four Continents Championships last month, scoring a seasons best of 221.91 points. Other top contenders include 2016 European silver medalists Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot

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(GER), 2016 Four Continents silver medalists Alexa Scimeca/Chris Knierim (USA), European bronze medalists Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov (RUS) and ISU Grand Prix Finalists Cheng Peng/Hao Zhang (CHN).

In the Ice Dance, competition promises to be exciting with reigning World Champions Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron (FRA), reigning ISU Grand Prix Final Champions Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje (CAN) and current ISU Four Continents Champions Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani. Papadakis/Cizeron top the seasons best list with 182.71 points, but Weaver/Poje are not far behind with a seasons best of 182.66 points followed by Shibutani/Shibutani with 181.62 points. 2015 World silver medalists Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA/seasons best 177.55 points) and 2014 World Champions Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte (ITA/seasons best 178.01 points) have set their eyes on the podium as well.

Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS), 2015 European bronze medalists Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin (RUS) and ISU Grand Prix Finalists Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue (USA) are looking to get to the podium as close as possible as well.

Prize Money

The ISU awards a global prize money of US\$ 686,750 at the World Championships to skaters/couples placed 1st to 12th in Men and Ladies, 1st to 8th in Pair Skating and 1st to 10th in Ice Dance. The prize money is awarded to winners and placed skaters/couples as follows:

Men and Ladies

1st place US\$ 45,000
2nd place US\$ 27,000
3rd place US\$ 18,000
4th place US\$ 13,000
5th place US\$ 10,000
6th place US\$ 7,000
7th place US\$ 6,000
8th place US\$ 5,000
9th place US\$ 3,500
10th place US\$ 3,000
11th place US\$ 2,500
12th place US\$ 2,000

Pairs and Dance (per couple)

1st place US\$ 67,500
2nd place US\$ 40,500
3rd place US\$ 27,000
4th place US\$ 19,500
5th place US\$ 15,000
6th place US\$ 10,500
7th place US\$ 9,000
8th place US\$ 7,500
9th place US\$ 5,250 (only Ice Dance)
10th place US\$ 4,500 (only Ice Dance)

The schedule of the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2016 is as follows:

Wednesday, March 30: Short Dance and Men's Short Program
Thursday, March 31: Ladies Short Program and Free Dance
Friday, April 1: Pairs Short Program and Men's Free Skating
Saturday, April 2: Pairs and Ladies Free Skating
Sunday, April 3: Exhibition Gala

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and www.worlds2016.com and follow the Championships #Worlds2016

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