

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **Progressive Skate America 2016 Day One - #GPFigure**

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2016/17 started Friday with the Ladies and Pairs Short Programs at Progressive Skate America in Chicago/Hoffman Estates, IL. Skate America is the first of six events in the series. Skaters compete for points to qualify for the Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

### **Ashley Wagner (USA) claims Ladies Short Program**

Ashley Wagner (USA) claimed the Ladies Short Program. Mai Mihara of Japan and Gracie Gold (USA) follow in second and third place.

Wagner opened her routine to “Sweet Dreams” with a triple flip-triple toe, but underrotated the toe. She went on to complete a triple loop, double Axel and level-three spins and footwork to score 69.50 points. “Tonight was a great event for me. My training from this season really pulled through. I spent a lot of time working on my combinations, my jump quality as a whole and my spins,” the World silver medalist said. “I think that that’s a show program and I get to skate it in competition and I love every second of it, so that’s kind of what gets me through it,” she added referring to her new program.

Skating to “Rondo Capriccioso” by Camille Saint-Saens, Mihara landed a triple Lutz-triple toe, double Axel and picked up a level four for her spins. However, she stepped out of the triple flip. The 17-year-old set a new personal best with 65.75. “Today it was the first time for me to compete at the senior Grand Prix, therefore I was nervous, but I think I did a solid job. I try to do what I could during the practice,” the ISU Junior Grand Prix Finalist noted.

Gold’s program to “Assassin’s Tango” included a triple Lutz-triple toe and double Axel, but she fell on an underrotated triple flip. The U.S. Champion earned 64.87 points. “It was unfortunate to fall on triple flip. There are only three jumping passes in the short program but the quality of the rest of my elements was great enough to keep me on the podium in the short program. I’m looking forward to a solid skate tomorrow,” the 21-year-old told the press.

Gabrielle Daleman (CAN) is ranked fourth at 64.49 points. The back-end of the triple Lutz-triple toe combination was downgraded. Mao Asada (JPN) currently sits in fifth after underrotating a triple flip (64.47 points).

### **Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov (RUS) win Pairs Short Program**

Russia’s Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov skated to the lead in the Pairs Short Program followed by Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier (USA) and Julianne Seguin/Charlie Bilodeau of Canada.

Tarasova/Morozov’s Swing program to “Glam” was highlighted by a huge triple twist, throw triple loop, level-four spin, lift and footwork. The European bronze medalists achieved a new personal best with 75.24 points. “Today we did well in the short program we did well, we have a personal best and were glad to have this moment,” Morozov commented. “We feel it’s possible for us (to become Russia’s top pairs team). We work with our great team and our coaches, Robin (Szolkowy) and Nina (Mozer), and think it’s possible and we will do everything for this,” he added.

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Denney/Frazier produced a triple twist, throw triple loop and three level-four elements in their program to “Don Juan”, picking up a personal best score of 67.29 points. “It was our first Grand Prix back since almost two years. We were appreciative to be back on the ice. The last time we were here was two years ago when we were doing Skate America. It’s bringing back good memories; that was a fun competition,” Denney said, referring to winning the silver medal in 2014 at Skate America in Hoffman Estates and to coming back from a knee injury.

Seguin/Bilodeau completed a triple twist, throw triple Lutz and got a level four for five elements in their program to “Skookian”, but he doubled the side by side loop and stumbled. The Canadians scored 66.49 points. “It (the loop) is pretty consistent except today for me. For me, that jump is really a feeling jump. As soon as I’ve got that feeling, we land it almost every time but sometimes it happens, like today. We have been able to get our level we wanted to have at this competition, so we are happy with that and we still have some room with going higher in the score,” Bilodeau shared.

Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres (FRA/65.78 points) and Kristina Astakhova/Alexei Rogonov (RUS/64.34 points) are currently ranked fourth and fifth.

Progressive Skate America continues Saturday with the Men's Short Program, Short Dance, Ladies and Pairs Free Skating. A total of 57 skaters/couples from 13 ISU members compete at Progressive Skate America. For full entry lists of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2016/17 please refer to <http://www.isu.org/en/single-and-pair-skating-and-ice-dance/series/isu-grand-prix-of-figure-skating>

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