

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships 2017 **Ice Dance, Free Dance**

The ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships 2017 continued in Taipei, Chinese Taipei, Saturday with the Free Dance.

Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons (USA) dance off with gold

USA's Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons danced off with the gold medal, edging out Alla Loboda/Pavel Drozd of Russia by 0.55 points. Christina Carreira/Anthony Ponomarenko (USA) rose from sixth to claim the bronze medal in their debut at the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships.

Parsons/Parsons dance to a new arrangement of "Singing In the Rain" included five level-four elements, while the diagonal step sequence was rated a level three. The only glitch in the otherwise smooth performance was a somewhat wobbly rotational lift. Nevertheless, the 2016 World Junior silver medalists posted a new personal best of 97.54 points and totaled 164.82 points to overtake the leading Loboda/Drozd. "It feels incredible for us. Michael and I had a really good season so far and this is just the perfect way to cap off our junior career. We couldn't be more happy", Rachel Parsons said. "I think everybody has really improved since last year. Everybody has been working really hard and it was a much closer competition since last year. It was just an amazing competition", Michael Parsons added.

Dancing to "Malaguena", Loboda/Drozd earned a level four as well for their twizzles, lifts, spin and the circular step sequence. The 2016 World Junior bronze medalists scored 96.78 points which added up to 164.37 points overall. "Today we really enjoyed our skating and I want to say thank you to all couples, because today we all shared our passion with the crowd and I think people liked it. We lived the music, and this is the most important thing. We felt each other from the first second of the program until the end", Drozd commented.

Carreira/Ponomarenko's performance to "Exogenesis Symphony" by Muse featured four level-four elements and level-three footwork. The ISU Junior Grand Prix Finalists set a new personal best of 94.15 points in the Free Dance and accumulated 154.88 points overall to claim the bronze in their debut at the Junior World Championships. "We came in, just wanted to skate two clean programs and we're very happy it ended this way", Ponomarenko, the son of 1992 Olympic Champions Marina Klimova/Sergei Ponomarenko (URS and CIS) said.

Anastasia Shpilevaya/Grigory Smirnov (RUS) remained in fourth place at 152.66 points. Anastasia Skoptcova/Kirill Aleshin of Russia slipped from third to fifth at 152.53 points and Majorie Lajoie/Zachary Lagha (CAN) placed sixth (148.26 points). 2016 World Junior Champions Lorraine McNamara/ Quinn Carpenter (USA) finished seventh (148.11 points).

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and <http://www.wjc2017.com/>. #WorldJFigure

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