

February 12, 2022

Beijing, China

## **Papadakis/Cizeron (FRA) take lead in Rhythm Dance with record score in Beijing**

### **Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games**

2018 Olympic silver medalists [Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) of France danced to the lead in the Rhythm Dance, setting a new highest score as the Ice Dance event kicked off at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games. ROC's World Champions [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) are following in second, trailing the leaders by two points. Three-time ISU World medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) placed third.

#### **Papadakis/Cizeron win Rhythm Dance with new record score**

Papadakis/Cizeron put out an excellent performance of their innovative "waacking" dance to "Made To Love" and "U Move I Move" by John Legend, earning a level for the Midnight Blues, the Twizzles, the stationary lift and a level three for the Pattern dance step sequence and the midline step sequence. The 2018 Olympic silver medalists set a new personal best and record score with 90.83 points.

"We had a wonderful time tonight and we really skated the way we wanted to," Cizeron said. "China has been a lucky place for us, we won our first senior Grand Prix and our first World title in China and we always were happy to come here. Today we felt some liberation and relief, the beginning is always the most stressful part. We are very happy that we performed our best and enjoyed it," he continued.

Performing to the Blues "You Can Leave Your Hat On" and the Funk piece "Brick House", Sinitsina/Katsalapov were spot on as well, hitting level fours for the twizzles, Blues and rotational lift. The reigning World Champions posted a personal best of 88.85 points.

"We enjoyed the team event, we tested the ice, our legs and the atmosphere. Today in the individual event we felt totally comfortable and enjoyed performing a lot," Sinitsina commented.

"It was a clean, an inspired skate, a 100 percent it was our best performance this season," Katsalapov shared. "Now we'll take deep breath, rest a bit. Tomorrow is a day off, we'll test our free dance and we'll be on our way."

#### **Personal best scores for Sinitsina/Katsalapov (ROC), Hubbell/Donohue (USA)**

Hubbell/Donohue produced an upbeat dance to "Nasty", "Rope Burn" and "Rhythm Nation" by Janet Jackson that featured a level-four stationary lift. The step sequences and her twizzles were rated a level three. The 2021 World silver medalists achieved a personal best with 84.14 points.

"We are definitely trying to stay in the moment during the performance and not trying to get overly excited as we're actually performing. So that moment that we hit the final pose and you hold one, two, you can finally let out how you're feeling inside. It was just great to have another season's best and exciting performance," Hubbell told the press.

When asked what worked well in their performance, Donohue had a short answer: "The beginning, the middle, the end."

Two-time ISU Four Continents Champions [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) came fourth with their dance to Billie Eilish songs at 84.14 points. The lift and twizzles garnered a level four while the midline footwork was a level two.

"We have some mixed feelings about the performance. Mostly it was really good, we wanted to have fun and show this unique program to this modern music. I think we had one small mistake that cost us some points on an important element. But it's not over yet and we have a great free dance that we are looking forward to," Bates said.

2022 ISU European silver medalists [Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin](#) (ROC) gave a lively performance to the "Backstreet Boys" to place fifth at 84.09 points. "We really enjoyed our skate. When we stood in the first pose of the dance, we just felt all the nerves going away. We were able to feel the performance and live in it," Stepanova noted.

Reigning ISU World bronze medalists [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) (CAN), who put out an entertaining dance to an Elton John medley are sitting in sixth (83.52 points). 2022 ISU European bronze medalists [Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri](#) (ITA) are ranked seventh with their Michael Jackson program (82.68 points).

The Ice Dance competition concludes Monday with the Free Dance.

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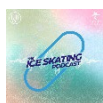
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**Monday, February 14, 2022**  
Ice Dance/Free Dance, 09:15 (local time)

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