

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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Trophee de France 2016 Day One #GPFigure

The Trophee de France kicked off in Paris (FRA) Friday with the Short Dance, the Pairs, Men's and Ladies Short Programs. Trophee de France is the fourth of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2016/17. 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.

Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot (GER) win Pairs Short Program

Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot of Germany won the Pairs Short Program, edging out Russia's Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov by 1.31 points. Natalia Zabiiako/Alexander Enbert of Russia follow in third place.

Performing to "That Man" by Caro Emerald, Savchenko/Massot produced a side by side triple Salchow, a big triple twist and picked up a level four for the footwork and the death spiral. However, Savchenko stumbled on the landing of the throw triple Axel. The European silver medalists nevertheless set a new personal best of 77.55 points. "It was a little step up from last week (at the Grand Prix in Moscow), but it still wasn't our very best", Savchenko, who had to deal with a costume malfunction that happened during the lift. "I was surprised when the dress was open, the zipper broke", she explained.

Tarasova/Morozov's program to "Glam" featured a high triple twist, side by side triple toeloop, and slightly two-footed throw triple loop. The European bronze medalists picked up a level four for the twist, the step sequence and the reverse lasso lift to score a personal best of 76.24 points. "It was a good short program, but we can do more. In the past two weeks we did good work and now we have to keep concentrated for tomorrow (the Free Skating)", Morozov noted.

Zabiiako/Enbert completed a triple toe, triple twist and throw triple loop in their routine to "The Snowstorm" to earn 71.36 points, a personal best as well. "It is a good experience for us, because last year we had only one Grand Prix. This short program was better than in Moscow (last week) and we are on the right way", Zabiiako commented.

Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres (FRA) placed fourth at 66.05 points followed by Marissa Castelli/Mervin Tran (USA) at 59.26 points and Miriam Ziegler/Severin Kiefer (AUT) with 52.06 points.

Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron (FRA) dance to lead

Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron of France took a strong lead in the Short Dance. Russia's Elena Ilinykh/Ruslan Zhiganshin are currently ranked second while Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue (USA) are sitting in third place.

Dancing to the Blues "Bittersweet" and the Swing "Diga Diga Doo", Papadakis/Cizeron earned a level four for the Blues pattern, the stationary lift and the twizzles while the partial step sequence and the side by side footwork merited a level three. The two-time and reigning World Champions achieved a new personal best with 78.26 points. "We did a very good performance, especially for the beginning of the season. There are still little things to work on, but overall we are really pleased", Papadakis commented.

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Ilinykh/Zhiganshin's Blues "Big Bad Love" and Swing "Sing Sing Sing" was highlighted by a curve lift and smooth steps, however the Blues pattern, the twizzles and the side by side footwork garnered only a level two. The Russians earned a seasons best with 68.72 points. "We skated very well today and I think we improved compared to Skate America, at least our coaches said it was better than the first Grand Prix", Ilinykh told the press.

Hubbell/Donohue completed a level-four straight line lift and level-four Blues pattern while their partial step sequence and the twizzles were graded a level two. The Progressive Skate America silver medalists scored 66.77 points. "Zach and I put in a lot of work in the last few weeks, especially on our short dance, which was our weaker program at Skate America. I was a bit shaky today, I made mistakes on two of our elements, but overall I felt our performance was better", Hubbell shared.

Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier (CAN) came fourth after she stumbled on the twizzles (64.74 points). Isabella Tobias/Ilia Tkachenko (ISR) are currently ranked fifth (63.70 points).

Javier Fernandez (ESP) takes Men's Short Program

Spain's Javier Fernandez took the lead in the Men's Short Program. Nathan Chen (USA) came second and Denis Ten of Kazakhstan placed third.

Fernandez fell on his opening quad toe in his "Malaguena" routine, but recovered to nail a quadruple Salchow-triple toeloop combination and a triple Axel. He collected a level four for his three spins and the footwork and scored a seasons best with 96.57 points. "We did have an improvement in the short program in the spins and steps, in Moscow the levels were quite low. Still it wasn't perfect, there was a fall on the quad toe. But I have the best program now, what I'm going to have later?", Fernandez said.

Skating to "Le Corsaire", Chen pulled off a quadruple Lutz-triple toe and a quadruple flip, but doubled the Axel. The ISU Junior Grand Prix Final Champion posted a new personal best with 92.85 points. "This is my first senior Grand Prix, I'm really happy that I was able to hit two jumps today, I made a mistake on the Axel, I doubled it, but that's how you improve and we'll take it competition by competition", Chen commented.

Ten's program to "Romeo and Juliet" by Sergei Prokofiev in a modern arrangement included a somewhat tight quadruple toeloop, a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination and triple Axel. The 2015 Four Continents Champion earned 89.21 points. "Unfortunately I skipped the first one (Grand Prix) and I had quite a rough year last year. To me it's a big pleasure to be back. I'm happy with my performance today, but the competition isn't over yet and I'm looking forward to doing my best tomorrow", the Olympic bronze medalist noted.

Adam Rippon (USA) finished fourth (85.25 points) followed by Jorik Hendrickx (BEL) with 80.34 points and Takahito Mura (JPN) with 78.38 points.

Evgenia Medvedeva (RUS) wins Ladies Short Program

Evgenia Medvedeva of Russia won the Ladies Short Program, setting a new personal best en route. Canadian Gabrielle Daleman took second place ahead of Russia's Maria Sotskova.

Medvedeva's performance to "River Flows in You" and "Winter" was highlighted by a triple Flip-triple toe combination, a triple loop, double Axel and level-four spins and steps. The World Champion achieved 78.52 points, which is the second highest Short Program score achieved so far.

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“I am pleased with today’s performance, but this is still not the limit. I think I can improve my second score, because I think it’s not enough for senior skating. I have to work harder on it”, European Champion Medvedeva said.

Skating to “Herodiade” by Jules Massenet, Dalemann landed a triple toe-triple toe combination, a triple Lutz and double Axel to crack the 70-points barrier for the first time with 72.70 points. “I felt very happy about the score. Going into the program I felt very confident and relaxed and I just did my job like I do every day in practice, and just took one element at a time”, Daleman told the press.

Sotskova completed a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, a triple flip and double Axel in her routine set to “Butterflies Are Free” by Alfred Schnittke. The 2016 World Junior silver medalist netted a personal best of 68.71 points. “I took pleasure in my performance today, but there is still a lot of work for me to do to get better every time, but for today I did a good result”, Sotskova commented.

Laurine Lecavelier (FRA) is ranked fourth at 66.61 points followed by Wakaba Higuchi (JPN) at 65.02 points. Three-time World Champion Mao Asada (JPN) underrotated the triple flip in her combination to finish eighth (61.29 points).

Trophee de France continues Saturday with the Pairs Free Skating, Free Dance, Men’s and Ladies Free Skating. A total of 55 skaters/couples from 19 ISU members compete at Trophee de France. For full entry lists and results 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>

For further information please contact:

Selina Vanier

ISU Communications Coordinator

Email : vanier@isu.ch

Tel: +41 21 612 66 66

ISU Social Media Hub: <http://www.isu.org/en/social-media>