

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

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NHK Trophy 2016 Day Two #GPFigure

NHK Trophy continued Saturday in Sapporo, Japan with the Short Dance, Pairs, Ladies and Men's Free Skating. NHK Trophy is the sixth and last event in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2016/17 and thus provides the last opportunity for skaters to qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. Skaters also compete for a prize money of US \$ 180,000 per individual event of the Grand Prix.

Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir (CAN) dance to lead in Short Dance

Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir of Canada danced to the lead in the Short Dance. France's Gabriella Papadakis/ Guillaume Cizeron are currently ranked second followed by Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte of Italy.

Virtue/Moir's dance to "Kiss" (Hip Hop), "Five Women" and "Purple Rain" (Blues) by Prince featured intricate footwork, fast twizzles and a curve lift. The 2014 Olympic silver medalists collected a level four for the Blues Pattern, the side by side footwork, the twizzles and the lift. The 2010 Olympic Champions set a new record score with 79.47 points, surpassing the record of Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA) set at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games (78.89 points). "Tessa and I are very pleased with our skate today. It felt pretty similar to what we've been done in training at home. We had some work to do to bring our levels up and it was nice to get a couple of level fours and we'll continue to work technically," Moir said.

Dancing to the Blues "Bittersweet" and Swing "Diga Diga Doo", Papadakis/Cizeron produced three level-four elements, but the partial step sequence garnered a level two. The two-time World Champions scored 75.60 points. "We did a pretty good skate today, with a few mistakes on the elements, but we're pretty happy with our performance today, it was a good one", Cizeron commented.

Cappellini/Lanotte's Blues "Cry For Me" and Boogie Woogie "Choo Choo Boogie" was highlighted by a straight line lift and smooth footwork, but there was a little wobble on the twizzles. The 2014 World Champions got a level four for two elements and a level three for three elements to achieve a new seasons best with 72.00 points. "We had a little wobble and it definitely was not the best that we could put out there, but it's a work in progress and we're looking forward to make this dance very strong for the technical part," Cappellini told the press.

Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov (RUS) placed fourth at 68.85 points and Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker (USA) are in fifth (65.41 points). Kana Muramoto/Chris Reed (JPN) withdrew on Friday from the competition as he suffers from an injury to his left knee sustained in practice two weeks ago.

Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford (CAN) skate to gold

Canada's Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford skated to the gold medal in the Pairs event. Cheng Peng/Yang Jin of China earned the silver medal and the bronze went to Xuehan Wang/Lei Wang, also of China.

Skating to "Non, je ne regrette rien", Duhamel/Radford completed a triple twist, throw quadruple Salchow, throw triple Lutz and somewhat shaky side by triple Lutz. However, he doubled the side

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by side toeloop and struggled with their last lift. The two-time World Champions earned 131.61 points and moved up from second to win their third NHK Trophy gold medal with 204.56 points. “Similar to yesterday in this long program there were some very strong elements and some unfortunate mistakes. For me, personally, I don’t know what happened, but at the end of the program my body got very tight, my legs were very tired and we just mismatched the timing on that last lift and it was a bit of a struggle. But we have to make these mistakes throughout the season so that we can learn from them so that they don’t happen again,” Radford explained.

Peng/Jin’s program to “The Umbrellas of Cherbourg” included a triple twist, throw triple Salchow and five level four elements, but she missed the double Axel and triple toeloop. The Cup of China silver medalists scored 123.54 points and slipped from first to second at 196.87 points overall, taking their second silver medal in their second international competition as a team. “Today I made mistakes on the jumps and we did not show our level. We are in second place, but not satisfied with the performance”, Peng commented.

Wang/Wang executed a triple twist, a throw triple loop and Salchow, but Xuehan Wang doubled the Salchow and underrotated the triple toe. The Chinese team picked up 119.66 points and remained in third place at 185.32 points to secure their third Grand Prix bronze medal. “Overall we are pleased with our program, although there were still errors and it was not perfect. But we know what we have to work on for the next competition”, Lei Wang noted.

Duhamel/Radford and Peng/Jin advance to the ISU Grand of Figure Skating Final.

Tarah Kayne/Danny O’Shea (USA) moved up from fifth to fourth place at 172.20 points, overtaking Mari Vartmann/Ruben Blommaert (GER), who came fifth (170.70 points).

Anna Pogorilaya (RUS) strikes gold

Russia’s Anna Pogorilaya struck gold in the Ladies event. Satoko Miyahara of Japan pulled up from third to take the silver and the bronze went to Maria Sotskova of Russia.

Pogorilaya reeled off a triple Lutz-triple toe, triple Lutz-single loop-triple Salchow combination as well as three more triple jumps in her routine to “The Modigliani Suite” and “Memorial”. Her only error came when she stumbled on her last double Axel. The 2016 World bronze medalist scored 139.30 points and totaled 210.86 points to win her second Grand Prix gold medal this season. “I am completely satisfied with my performance today, although there were some little mistakes like in the short program yesterday. I’m also extremely happy to go to the Grand Prix Final again,” the two-time European bronze medalist shared.

Performing to “The Planets” by Gustav Holst, Miyahara landed a triple loop, double Axel-triple toe combination as well as two more clean triples and had a level four for her spins and footwork, but she underrotated three jumps. The 2015 World silver medalist picked up 133.80 points and moved up one spot at 198.00 points overall. “Today’s performance was much better than yesterday’s, but I was more nervous. I am glad to be in second place and I found many things I want to practice,” the ISU Grand Prix Final silver medalist pointed out.

Sotskova produced a triple Lutz-triple toe, two other clean triples and level-four spins and steps in her routine set to “Adagio” by Alfred Schnittke, but she, too, underrotated a few jumps. With 125.92 points the World Junior silver medalist was ranked third in the Free Skating and dropped to third overall at 195.88 points. “I liked skating today, there were many people and I felt their

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support. I am happy I did a clean performance, but I did some mistakes and I will work on that”, the Russian skater said.

All three medalists qualified for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

Wakaba Higuchi (JPN) finished fourth (185.39 points) followed by Mirai Nagasu (USA) in fifth (180.33 points) and Karen Chen (USA) in sixth place at 178.45 points.

Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN) skates off with gold

Yuzuru Hanyu of Japan skated off with the gold medal. Nathan Chen of the United States of America claimed the silver and Keiji Tanaka of Japan rose to the occasion to take the bronze. It was the first Grand Prix medal for Chen and Tanaka at the senior level.

Performing to “Hope and Legacy” by Joe Hisaishi, Hanyu pulled off a quadruple loop, Salchow and toeloop as well as two triple Axels and three more triple jumps. He only missed his second quad Salchow. The Olympic Champion posted a new seasons best with 197.58 points and racked up 301.47 points to win his first gold medal on the Grand Prix this season. “I am actually very relieved that I advance to the Grand Prix Final and also I was able to land the quad loop for the first time in an official (major competition) program,” the 2014 World Champion told the post-event press conference. “I was certainly feeling anxious coming in (to the competition) but at the same time I was mentally prepared, because I was confident that I had practiced very hard. Additionally, this is my home turf and I was able to get a lot of support,” the 21-year-old added.

Chen hit a quadruple flip-triple toe and quadruple toe-double toe as well as four triples in his routine to “Polovtsian Dances” by Alexander Borodin, but he fell on a quadruple Lutz and stepped out of a quadruple toeloop. The ISU Junior Grand Prix Final Champion achieved a new personal best of 180.97 points and accumulated 268.91 points overall. “I just want to say how much of a relief it is to be able to qualify for the Grand Prix Final in the first year as a senior. I made a few mistakes today that shouldn’t happen, but I think it’s a good step for me. The Lutz is a risky jump, but I’m glad I’m trying it right now,” the U.S. bronze medalist said.

Tanaka’s program to Fellini movie soundtracks featured a quad Salchow (with hand down), quad Salchow-double toe and six clean triples including a triple Axel-double toe-double loop combination. The 2011 World Junior silver medalist earned 167.95 points, a new personal best, which added up to 248.44 points. “My goal for NHK Trophy was to give a very good performance and I’m happy with the result. However, compared to Yuzuru and Nathan my score still is not that great, so I feel stronger than before about building up and working on my mistakes,” Tanaka commented.

Alexei Bychenko (ISR) moved up from seventh to fourth place (229.87 points) while Mikhail Kolyada (RUS) slipped from fourth to fifth (225.69 points). Deniss Vasiljevs (LAT) rose from tenth to sixth place at 223.73 points.

Hanyu and Chen qualified for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

NHK Trophy concludes Sunday with the Free Dance and the Exhibition Gala. A total of 54 skaters/couples from 15 ISU members compete at NHK Trophy. 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>. NHK Trophy was the last event of

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the series and the top six qualifiers in each discipline proceed to the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Marseille (FRA) in two weeks.

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