

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2017

Pairs Free Skating

The first medals of the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2017 in Helsinki, Finland, were awarded Thursday evening in the Pairs event.

Wenjing Sui/Cong Han (CHN) claim first World title

Wenjing Sui/Cong Han of China claimed their first World title after two consecutive silvers. Germany's Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot took the silver medal and the bronze went to Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov.

Sui/Han skated last out of the 16 teams in the Final. They opened their program to "Bridge Over Troubled Water" with a quad twist and a side by side triple toe-double toe combination. Sui then fell on the side by side triple Salchow, but the 2017 Four Continents Champions recovered immediately, and continued without further errors. The throw triple Salchow and throw triple flip were spectacular and six elements garnered a level four. At the end of their emotional performance, the skaters hugged and radiated with joy. Sui/Han set a new personal best with 150.83 points and racked up 232.06 points overall to take the title. "At the end I was very excited and thought we could have won. I didn't know what score we would get, but I thought we did our very best, we gave a moving performance to the audience and the audience can feel our story and emotion", Han told the post-event press conference. "The gold medal was our dream and we got step by step to the top of the podium. Our team, the coaches, the physiotherapists gave us a lot of help and made the dream come true. Sharing a goal gave us power and this power pushed us on to the top of the podium", Sui explained.

Savchenko/Massot's lyrical program to "Lighthouse" by Patrick Watson featured a huge triple twist, beautiful lifts and a throw triple Axel (two-footed). Savchenko also wobbled on the landing of the throw triple Salchow, but the quality of their other elements was excellent. The European silver medalists posted a personal best of 150.46 points and totaled 230.30 points to improve on last year's bronze medal finish. "Every day we are learning something in figure skating and it's a long life of pain here (points to his head) and in the body to get to this level and to get these amazing feelings on the ice. This feeling that we got today at end of the program is amazing. It was hard but we did it for something and we are happy to be here and we want more", Massot commented.

Performing to "Music" by John Miles, Tarasova/Morozov produced a quadruple twist, side by side triple Salchow and triple toe-double toe-double toe as well as a throw triple Salchow and throw triple loop. Their only major error came when they aborted the Axel Lasso lift. The European Champions earned 139.66 points and were ranked fourth in the Free Skating. With a total of 219.03 points they remained in third place to take home their first World medal. "We did a pretty good job today, and we are quite satisfied with elements and jumps. The beginning was really strong, then we maybe got too excited and emotional and lost some control and concentration, so we made a small mistake on the lift. This is our third World Championship and we know how to compete here", Morozov said.

Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang (CHN) came fourth in their World Championship debut as a team with a solid performance that included a quadruple twist (211.51 points). Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov (RUS) rallied back from a disappointing Short Program that had left them in 13th place. The 2014 Olympic silver medalists were second in the Free Skating and pulled up to fifth place (206.72 points). Liubov Ilyushechkina/Dylan Moscovitch (CAN) round up the top six (206.19 points). Defending World Champions Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford (CAN) settled for seventh place. The competition continues Friday with the Short Dance and the Ladies Free Skating tonight with the Pairs Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.isu.org and the official event website <http://www.helsinki2017.com/> #WorldFigure and #helsinki2017