

Press release

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ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2017/18: Rostelecom Cup Preview

Reigning World Champions Evgenia Medvedeva (RUS) and Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN) start their Grand Prix season 2017/18 at Rostelecom Cup in Moscow (RUS) on Friday. In each discipline, the current World No. 1 will compete at the first Grand Prix event of the season.

Overview of the top contenders

Olympic Champion Hanyu set a new Short Program record score of 112.72 points at the Challenger Series event Autumn Classics in Montreal (CAN). He is up against Four Continents Champion Nathan Chen (USA). Denis Ten (KAZ), who battled a severe ankle injury, hopes to return to form in time for the first Grand Prix. Other contenders include Russian Champion Mikhail Kolyada, World Junior silver medalist Dmitri Aliev (RUS), Grant Hochstein (USA), Misha Ge (UZB) and 2016 World Junior Champion Daniel Samohin (ISR).

Two-time World Champion Medvedeva is eager to start the Grand Prix season following her victories at the ISU Challenger Series event Ondrej Nepela Trophy in Bratislava (SVK) and with team Europe at Japan Open. The European Champion comes with her new Free Program to “Anna Karenina” to her first Grand Prix. “We first did Anna Karenina as an exhibition program. The original program went over well at Nepela Trophy, but the character of Karenina touched me so deeply that I decided I have to switch. Together with the coaches we came to the conclusion that ‘Anna Karenina’ will be preferable for me in the Olympic season”, Medvedeva said.

Medvedeva will face five-time European Champion Carolina Kostner (ITA), who returns to the Grand Prix series for the first time since fall 2013 and 2015 World bronze medalist Elena Radionova (RUS). 2017 World Junior bronze medalist Kaori Sakamoto (JPN), Wakaba Higuchi (JPN), Mirai Nagasu (USA) and Elizabet Tursynbaeva (KAZ) are aiming at the podium in Moscow as well.

In the Pairs, European Champions Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov (RUS) will meet 2014 Olympic silver medalists Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov (RUS). World standing leaders Tarasova/Morozov started the season with a win at the ISU CS Nebelhorn Trophy in September, while Stolbova/Klimov struggled at the ISU CS Finlandia Trophy earlier this month, coming third. Other contenders include 2015 World Junior silver medalists Julianne Seguin/Charlie Bilodeau (CAN), Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek (ITA) and Kristina Astakhova/ Alexei Rogonov (RUS).

Two-time World medalists Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani (USA) headline the Ice Dance competition. The challenge should come from multiple European medalists and current World No. 1 Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev (RUS) and Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier (CAN). Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri (ITA) and Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin (RUS) hope for a podium finish as well. Reigning

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World Junior Champions Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons (USA) debut on the senior Grand Prix circuit.

The schedule of Rostelecom Cup is as follows:

Friday, October 20: Men Short Program, Short Dance, Pairs and Ladies Short Program

Saturday, October 21: Men Free Skating, Free Dance, Pairs and Ladies Free Skating

Sunday, October 22: Exhibition Gala

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series consists of six events and culminates in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Nagoya (JPN) in December. The top six skaters/couples in each discipline qualify for the Final. The global prize money for the Grand Prix is US \$ 272,000.

Full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2017/18 are available [here](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#GPFigure #FigureSkating**.

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