

ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2010 Preview

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2010 will open in Torino, Italy, on March 22. It will be the 100th edition of World Figure Skating Championships. Torino is hosting the ISU World Figure Skating Championships for the first time, but has hosted the 2006 Olympic Winter Games and the ISU European Figure Skating Championships 2005. The ISU World Figure Skating Championships return to Italy for the first time in 47 years. Worlds took place in Italy only twice so far, in Milan in 1951 and in Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1963.

210 skaters/couples from 53 ISU members have been entered for the Championships. All skaters/couples will compete in the Short Program and the top 24 Men and Ladies and the top 16 Pairs will proceed to the Free Skating. In Ice Dance, all couples will compete in the Compulsory Dance and Original Dance and the top 20 dance teams will compete in the Free Dance.

Overview over the top contenders

2010 Olympic Champion Yu-Na Kim (KOR) headlines the Ladies' field. The Korean wants to defend her World title to cap off a very successful season. Kim travels with a seasons best score of 228.56 points from the Olympic Winter Games to Torino. Competition should come from Olympic silver medallist Mao Asada (JPN), who, after a slow start into the season, has picked up a seasons best of 205.50 points in Vancouver and seems ready for the challenge. 2009 World bronze medallist Miki Ando (JPN) has set her eyes at the podium again after finishing fifth at the Olympic Winter Games (seasons best 188.86 points). After her fourth-place finish in Vancouver, Mirai Nagasu (USA/seasons best 190.15 points) is aiming at the World podium in what will be her debut at the event. Other contenders include European silver medallist Laura Lepistö (FIN), US Champion Rachael Flatt (USA), Grand Prix Final bronze medallist Akiko Suzuki (JPN), European Champion Carolina Kostner (ITA) and Alena Leonova (RUS).

Three-time Olympic medallist Evgeni Plushenko (RUS) leads the Men and wants to add a fourth World title to his impressive collection. Torino so far was a lucky place for the reigning Olympic silver medallist: He won gold at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games and at the 2005 European Championships at Palavela ice rink. Plushenko scored a seasons best of 256.36 points in Vancouver. But competition should be tough, even without newly crowned Olympic Champion Evan Lysacek (USA). 2010 Olympic bronze medallist Daisuke Takahashi (JPN/seasons best 247.23), 2009 World silver medallist Patrick Chan (CAN/seasons best 241.42) and Nobunari Oda (JPN/seasons best 243.36) are closing in. US Champion Jeremy Abbott (seasons best 235.38) and 2009 World bronze medallist Brian Joubert (FRA/seasons best 236.45) want to make up for their disappointment at the Olympic Winter Games.

The Ice Dance competition will be highlighted by a rematch between Olympic Champions Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir (CAN) and Olympic silver medallists Meryl Davis/Charlie White (USA). Virtue/Moir had lost to Davis/White at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in December, but beat them in Vancouver. The Canadians achieved a seasons best of 221.57 points at the Olympic Winter Games while the Americans scored 215.75 points. A group of strong challengers is aiming at the podium in Italy as well. 2010 European silver medallists Federica Faiella/Massimo Scali (ITA/seasons best 199.17 points), Nathalie Pechalat/Fabian Bourzat (FRA/seasons best 190.49), reigning European bronze medallists Jana Khokhlova/Sergei Novitski (RUS/seasons best 189.67 points) and Sinead Kerr/John Kerr (GBR/seasons best 186.01 points) are expected to fight for a spot on the podium or close to it.

In the Pairs, two-time and defending World Champions Aliona Savchenko/Robin Szolkowy (GER) will be up against 2010 Olympic silver medallists Qing Pang/Jian Tong (CHN) who beat them at the Grand Prix Final and in Vancouver. Pang/Tong picked up a seasons best of 213.31 points at the Olympic Games while the Germans got 211.72 points at the European Championships. 2010 European Champions Yuko Kavaguti/Alexander Smirnov (RUS/seasons best 213.15 points), who came fourth at the Olympic Games, will challenge the leaders again. Entering the mix are two-time European bronze medallists Maria Mukhortova/Maxim Trankov (RUS), 2008 World bronze medallists Jessica Dube/Bryce Davison (CAN) and 2009 World silver medallists Dan Zhang/Hao Zhang (CHN), who all have a shot at a medal in Torino as well.

Prize money & World Standing Bonus

The ISU awards a global prize money of US\$ 710,000 at the World Championships to skaters/couples placed 1st to 12th. The prize money is awarded to winners and placed skaters/couples as follows:

<i>Men and Ladies</i>	<i>Pairs and Dance (per couple)</i>
1 st place US\$ 45,000	1 st place US\$ 67,500
2 nd place US\$ 27,000	2 nd place US\$ 40,500
3 rd place US\$ 18,000	3 rd place US\$ 27,000
4 th place US\$ 13,000	4 th place US\$ 19,500
5 th place US\$ 10,000	5 th place US\$ 15,000
6 th place US\$ 7,000	6 th place US\$ 10,500
7 th place US\$ 6,000	7 th place US\$ 9,000
8 th place US\$ 5,000	8 th place US\$ 7,500
9 th place US\$ 3,500	9 th place US\$ 5,250
10 th place US\$ 3,000	10 th place US\$ 4,500
11 th place US\$ 2,500	11 th place US\$ 3,750
12 th place US\$ 2,000	12 th place US\$ 3,000

By competing in the ISU World Figure Skating Championships the athletes earn points towards the World Standings as well. The three skaters/couples per discipline having earned most World Standing points during the 2009/2010 season will be awarded with the World Standing Bonus. The following amounts will be awarded to the concerned skaters/couples:

Ladies & Men
 1st: US\$ 45,000
 2nd: US\$ 27,000
 3rd: US\$ 18,000

Pairs & Dance (per couple)
 1st: US\$ 67,500
 2nd: US\$ 40,500
 3rd: US\$ 27,000

The schedule of the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2010 is as follows:

Tuesday, March 23: Compulsory Dance, Pairs Short Program
 Wednesday, March 24: Men Short Program, Pairs Free Skating
 Thursday, March 25: Original Dance, Men Free Skating
 Friday, March 26: Ladies Short Program, Free Dance
 Saturday, March 27: Ladies Free Skating
 Sunday, March 28: Exhibition Gala

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: [Entries/Results](#) and <http://www.torino2010.org/>

