



## NEWS

# Brown's finesse trumps Yan's big jumps

Russians sweep ice dancing podium

By Lynn Rutherford, special to icenetwork.com

(12/10/2011) - **Jason Brown** may not have a triple Axel -- yet -- but he knows how to put on a show.

The 17-year-old from the Chicago area hit every nuance and step in his free skate to James Newton Howard's "Flow Like Water," producing a clean and polished routine that floated over the ice and edged China's **Han Yan** for gold at the **2011 Junior Grand Prix Final**.

"It's amazing," said the pony-tailed skater with the big smile. "For the past two years, my goal was just to make it to the Final, and to be sitting here is unbelievable."

While he doesn't have that one weapon, the jumps Brown did do -- including a triple Lutz-triple toe combination -- were clean, and he was the only man in the event to earn Level 4 for steps. Brown earned 139.64 for his free; when added to his short program total, it gave him 208.41 overall.

The skater hopes to master the three-and-a-half revolution jump in time for his next competition, the **2012 U.S. Figure Skating Championships**.

"I would love to put that in for nationals and just to keep going up from here," Brown said.

After his third-place finish in the short, Yan revealed he was skating with a heavy cold and fever. Although he still appeared ill in the post-event press conference, he certainly didn't seem sick on the ice, hitting a triple Axel, quadruple toe loop and triple flip-triple toe, among other jumps. While he won the short program, Brown's overall total was 2.48 points higher.

Colorado Springs skater **Josh Farris**, who led after the short, unveiled a new free skate to Rachmaninoff's "Piano Concerto No. 2" that opened with a solid triple Axel and triple flip-triple toe. The skater tripped and fell at the end of his straight line steps and fell on a second triple Axel but placed third in the free and won bronze.

"I am very happy I medalled," Farris said. "I am a little disappointed in how I skated, but they can't all be perfect. I was good enough to medal for sure, but I am definitely going to train harder."

Farris said feedback from judges encouraged him to drop his former free skate, choreographed to music from the *Transformers* soundtrack, in favor of Rachmaninoff.

"It's not that they didn't like the program; they thought it didn't fit me or my personality," he said. "They thought it was a little too heavy. I found this music I have wanted to skate to ever since I was little, and [coach and choreographer] Damon [Allen] and I said, 'Why not do it?'"



JGP Final champ Jason Brown is confident he will get the triple Axel consistent. (Getty Images)

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## Russians sweep junior dance

Russia earned its second event medal sweep here when its junior ice dancers dominated the free dance event.

The top three teams showed off differing styles but shared similar polish and maturity.

Last season's Junior Grand Prix Final silver medalists **Victoria Sinitsina and Ruslan Zhiganshin** were clear winners, displaying deep edges, good speed and difficult lifts in their free dance to *The Phantom of the Opera*. They won both the short dance and free skate, and finished with 147.53 points, nearly 11 points over the field.

"Our main goal is to skate well at Russian nationals," Sinitsina said. "We need to work on our technique and to raise the bar for ourselves."

Competing at their first Junior Grand Prix Final, **Anna Yanovskaia and Sergei Mozgov** were surprise silver medalists. **Alexandra Stepanova and Ivan Bukin** were second in the free dance, but Bukin's fall in the short dance limited them to their second consecutive bronze.

Zhiganshin's older sister, Nelli, is the German ice dancing champion with Alexander Gazsi. Bukin is the son of 1988 Olympic dance champion Andrei Bukin.

Americans **Alexandra Aldridge and Daniel Eaton**, who train at the Detroit Skating Club under a group headed by Pasquale Camerlengo and Anjelika Krylova, climbed from fifth after the short dance to fourth overall with a solid free dance to *Lord of the Dance*.

"The free dance went well," Aldridge said. "We went into it thinking that placement doesn't matter; we just want to skate the way we know we can skate and show people why we love this sport. This program really portrays that. We just had fun with it."

"The whole environment of the Grand Prix Final is something we haven't experienced before, and it definitely gives us something to bounce back on going into U.S. championships," Eaton said.

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