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## Team USA runs off with three golds from Belarus

McNamara and Carpenter, Chen, Edmunds take titles in Minsk

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*American Polina Edmunds captured her second JGP title on Saturday. -Laurie Johnson*

The 2013 JGP season continued this week in Minsk, Belarus, where Team USA's Polina Edmunds and Nathan Chen remained internationally undefeated. Adding to Team USA's medal count were Madeline Aaron and Max Settlege, who took the pairs silver, and Lorraine McNamara and Quinn Carpenter, who took home their first career JGP title.

With two 2013 JGP titles to their names, Edmunds and Chen have qualified for the 2013 Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final, set for Dec. 5-8, in Fukuoka, Japan.

### Ladies

After placing second in the short program, Edmunds, the reigning U.S. junior champion, turned in a solid free skate performance to top the podium for the second time in her first international season. Edmunds' performance, set to a medley of music by Edvard Grieg, featured seven triple jumps, including a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, and her program components score of 50.91 bested the field by more than four points. She earned 113.28 points for the segment, en route to 165.77 points for the week.

The silver medal went to Kazakhstan's Elizabet Turzynbaeva, who earned a total score of 150.83 points. Turzynbaeva, who trains in Toronto with two-time Olympic silver medalist Brian Orser, executed two clean performances this week. Her "Evita" short program included a triple Salchow-triple toe combination worth 8.80 points. She received a Level 4 on all three of her spins and earned an event-high 53.22 points for the segment.

Rounding out the podium was Japan's Rika Hongo, who rallied from a fifth place finish in the short program to take the bronze medal. Hongo, a high school student from Nagoya, Japan, completed six triple jumps in her "Don Quixote" free skate, including a triple flip-double toe combination worth a program-high 7.20 points. She earned 94.87 points for the segment and 144.97 points for the week.

## Men's

Chen, a three-time U.S. champion at the novice and junior levels, won his second 2013 JGP title after a lower leg injury cut his 2012 JGP Final campaign short. Winning both segments of the event, Chen totaled 211.11 points, more than 10 points above his competitors. His free skate, set to "Chattanooga Choo Choo" by Glenn Miller and selections from *Porgy and Bess* by George Gershwin, included seven triple jumps, all of which received a 10 percent bonus for being completed in the latter half of the performance.

His program components score of 69.39 topped the field by nearly 10 points and he received a Level 4 on each of his four spins. He finished the segment with 141.15 points and finished the event with his third career JGP gold.

Placing second was Ryuju Hino of Japan, who took bronze at the JGP Final in Sochi, Russia, last season. Hino, who has earned a medal at each of his last five JGP events, placed second in both segments of the competition, finishing with a clean free skate to music from Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. He opened his performance with an admirable quadruple toe loop attempt, followed by a triple Axel-triple toe combination worth 12.74 points. Hino earned a segment score of 131.65 and a total combined score of 198.12 points. Adding to the silver he earned at JGP Mexico this season, Hino hopes to challenge Chen at the JGP Final this December.

The bronze medal went to Russia's Murad Kurbanov, who fought his way onto the podium after missing the top three in the short program by less than one point. Unlike Chen, Kurbanov only received a 10

percent bonus on four of his seven jumping passes, which included a triple flip-triple toe combination. His "Godfather" performance didn't receive a single negative Grade of Execution, and his program components score of 60.92 points was the second highest of the event. Kurbanov finished the segment with 122.20 points, en route to a total of 183.48.

## Pairs

Topping the pairs podium were Russia's Kamilla Gainetdinova and Ivan Bich, who made their 2013 JGP debut in Minsk. Winning both the short program and the free skate, Gainetdinova and Bich finished the week more than 10 points above their challengers with a total of 142.38 points. After just missing the podium last season at JGP Croatia, their title in Belarus marks the team's first JGP medal.

Earning their second JGP medal this week were Aaron and Settlage, who garnered 131.66 total points. The reigning U.S. junior bronze medalists entered their third JGP season together with a clean short program performance to "The Chairman's Waltz" from the *Memoirs of a Geisha* soundtrack that featured side-by-side double Axels and a Level 4 step sequence. The duo, who train in Colorado Springs, Colo., under the direction of Dalilah Sappenfield and Larry Ibarra, earned 49.03 points for the segment and finished the event with the silver medal.

Gainetdinova and Bich's teammates, Vasilisa Davankova and Andrei Deputat, completed the podium with 130.46 total points -- despite a disappointing fifth place finish in the free skate. The reigning JGP Final silver medalists received the second-highest short program score of the event, earning 51.40 points for their "Godfather" performance. The program featured a throw triple toe loop, worth a program-high 5.60 points, and received a Level 4 on its final two elements, a step sequence and combination spin.

## Ice Dance

McNamara and Carpenter bested the field in both the short and free dance events, setting personal-best scores in each segment. Their free dance, set to "Discombobulate" by Hans Zimmer and "The Godfather Waltz" by Nino Rota, included the highest-scoring element of the event, a circular step sequence that netted 7.90 points. They received a Level 4 on five of their eight elements and finished the segment with 80.99 points.

Earning 137.97 total points, McNamara and Carpenter finished the week with their first career JGP medal -- the gold. Paired with the silver they earned earlier this season at JGP Latvia, they hope to qualify for their first JGP Final.

In their JGP debut, Betina Popova and Yuri Vlasenko of Russia took the silver medal. After a third place finish in the short dance, Popova and Vlasenko turned in a solid free dance to music from the *Spartacus*

soundtrack that included eight elements, each of which received positive Grades of Execution. The performance was good for 76.89 points, en route to a combined score of 128.71 points.

Less than a point behind were Popova and Vlasenko's teammates, Daria Morozova and Mikhail Zhirnov, who won the bronze medal with 128.64 points. Their short dance, which received the second-highest score of the event, included three Level 4 elements, a straight line lift, twizzle sequence and Quickstep pattern that earned a program-high 7.20 points. Morozova and Zhirnov finished the segment with 56.31 points and their second career JGP bronze.



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