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## NEWS

### Chen wins novice men's title in Spokane

Savary second; Dolensky third

By Mickey Brown, special to icenetwork.com

(01/19/2010) - Now, when his brothers make fun of him about being a figure skater, Nathan Chen can pull out his gold medal and quickly shut them up.

Chen fell twice in his *Peter and the Wolf* free skate Monday night, but the rest of his program was top notch, and his big lead after the short program held up to give him the 2010 U.S. novice title.

That's the third straight U.S. medal for Chen, who won juvenile bronze in 2008 and intermediate silver last season.

After beginning his program by bearing his "wolf claws," Chen fell on his triple Salchow and later hit the ice on his triple toe. He received positive GOEs on his other nine elements, however, including triple Salchow-double toe and double Lutz-double toe-double toe combinations, and his three spins were all graded Level 4. His placed third in the free skate with a segment score of 85.80

Chen said he started skating so he could take after his brothers, all of whom play hockey.

"My mom wanted me to know how to skate, so she gave me rental skates," Chen said. "I liked it, so I kept on going."

Chen said his brothers sometimes tease him for choosing figure skating over hockey, and while that teasing isn't likely to stop anytime soon (big brothers, you know), it's clear he made the right decision.

Picking up the silver medal was Emmanuel Savary. It's clear the 12-year-old Savary is the one who chose his program music, as he skated to the *Super Mario Bros.* theme for his short program and music from *The Simpsons* for the free skate.

"I picked the music that suits me best," Savary said. "It's young but mature, because I'm at a high level."

While the maturity of Homer Simpson is up for debate, the quality of Savary's skating is not. Dressed in a neon yellow shirt covered with jagged shapes, mimicking the show's style of animation, he landed four clean triples (two in combination) and a beautiful double Axel. His only mistake was a fall on his triple loop. His segment score of 86.80 gave him 133.65 points for the competition, about half a point more than bronze medalist Timothy Dolensky.

"I'm so excited that all my hard work paid off," said Savary, who trains 4-5 hours a day in Newark, Del.

Dolensky was an unlikely bronze medalist, as he sat ninth after the short program, seven points out of third place.



Nathan Chen won the novice men's gold medal in Spokane. (Sarah S. Brannen)

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"My mindset was I wasn't that many points away from medaling," Dolensky said. "I really like my long, and I train it very hard. It felt just another day in practice."

Skating to the "Warsaw Concerto," Dolensky landed four clean triples (two in combination), plus a double Axel-double toe-double toe combo, and exhibited dynamite spins en route to a first-place segment score of 93.50 points. Only a step-out on the landing of his triple loop prevented him from skating a clean program.

"The past year and a half I've been cracking down on off-ice training a lot," said Dolensky, who's coached by Debbie Prachar and Brittney Bottoms in Atlanta. "Consistency is what I've been working on the most."

Fourth place went to Philip Warren, who finished third in the short program but sixth in the free skate.

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