



NEWS

Rippon: 'It will be quad Salchow and not quad Lutz'

U.S. silver medalist says he will go for more consistent edge jump

By Jean-Christophe Berlot, special to icenetwork.com

(03/28/2012) - As soon as he landed in Nice Tuesday morning, **Adam Rippon** went to his hotel to check in and to the accreditation desk to receive his cards and documents. Then he was gracious enough to come to the rink to see his teammates, **Caydee Denney and John Coughlin**, and **Mary Beth Marley and Rockne Brubaker**, practice.

Asked whether he was bothered by jet lag, he answered quickly with his usual broad smile: "I don't believe in jet lag!"

Even though the practice rink is open to the bright sun outside, Rippon was quick to point out that this was not vacation.

"It looks relaxed outside, but it is so intense inside, and you can feel it," he said, laughing.

His practice session Wednesday morning went quite smoothly. His triple flip-triple toe combination was superlative, and his Rippon Lutz combined with his spin was an instant hit with the capacity-filled rink audience. His final step sequence won him the warmest applause of the day (besides France's **Brian Joubert**).

"This is only my first practice. I am trying to get my feelings back. By Friday I'll be in good shape!" he promised, with his full Rippon smile.

For several years now, Rippon has been one of the favorite American skaters for the European audience. As seen from this continent, his qualifying for the **world championships** was not a question. Still, he admits it was not so obvious.

"I knew I could do it and work through it. Now I am really excited to be here," he said.

Rippon has been working a lot since the **Four Continents Championships**, where he finished fourth. Maybe too much, he admits.

Yet an unplanned event helped put him back into the right perspective.

"Right after Four Continents, I had a problem with my skates, as I broke the heel of a boot. So I had to change skates and for a while I could not do flips and Lutzes anymore," Rippon said. "That was actually the best thing that could have happened to me, because I could finally have a calm-down period."

This was all the more important, as Rippon's artistic skating has been one of his keys to success on the international scene. Even in this area of strength, however, nothing can be taken for granted.



Blending the artistic with the technical is a constant challenge for Adam Rippon. (Getty Images)

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"We all know how important the artistic side of skating is," Rippon said. "Yet it is always a challenge to make things look easy and remain concentrated at the same time. Also, it is so easy to lose sight of [the artistic side of skating], as you are consumed by your technical elements."

In any case, Rippon is confident in the days to come.

"I feel ready and well trained for this event," he said.

Concerning his technical choices, Rippon was clear: "It will be quad Salchow and not quad Lutz," he said. "I am, of course, still working on both the Lutz and the Salchow during practice, but I have had more consistency on the Salchow recently, so we will go for it.

"Also, the boot problem I experienced may have been caused by too many Lutzes and flips."

Strangely or not, edge jumps are more consistent with Rippon's way of skating, which has always been fluid and flowing on the ice.

"This is true," he said. "Also, when I was younger, I got my edge jumps before my toe jumps."

Rippon's connection with the audience will for sure be an asset for him in Nice. His way to approach it, however, is quite different from what one might expect.

"When I am skating, I understand what I am doing, but I just keep focusing. I am really in a bubble, not seeing nor hearing anything else," Rippon explained. "I am trained for looking [like] I am not, but really I am!"

How then can he project that deep emotion to his spectators and make each one of his programs an instant hit with the audience?

"This is interesting, you know. When I watch myself, I get a completely different feeling than when I skate. I am always more critical when I watch my programs on television. I tell myself, 'I should have done this, I should have done that.' Whereas when I can be more relaxed, in an exhibition for instance, I will have a feeling of overwhelming joy."

Rippon came to the rink even before meeting with his fans.

"I have just seen a few so far," he said. "There should be more tomorrow, though!"

The only person Rippon could not see was his mother.

"My mom is here, but I have no idea of where she is. We do not have a telephone, so we can meet only when we run into each other!"

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Go Adam! I believe in you! 😊

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Kristina Ziegler

LOL about not being able to find your mom! Have a wonderful time in Nice and skate beautiful!

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