



News

Adam Rippon's Japan Open athlete diary

Team North America finishes second behind Team Japan

By Adam Rippon, special to icenetwork.com

(10/06/2010) - [Adam Rippon's](#) athlete diary from the Japan Open.

The Japan Open is a great season-opening competition. It's a chance for skaters to test-run programs before the Grand Prixes begin. What makes this event so different is that it's a pro-am team event. Four skaters -- two men and two ladies, professional and amateur alike--make up three teams (Team North America, Team Europe and Team Japan), with the team earning the highest point totals being the overall winner.

It was my first time skating in the Japan Open, and I had only heard a few things about what it was like from my good friend and team mate, [Jeff Buttle](#). Going to Japan, Team North America decided it was necessary that we travel as a team to get in the competitive mindset (or it could have been that [Cynthia Phaneuf](#) and [Joannie Rochette](#) had flights that connected with the flight me and Jeff were on from Toronto... I'm still not sure.)

Regardless, we were off to do our best! On our first day there, we had official competition practice and rehearsal for the "Carnival On Ice" exhibition. It was weird and cool all at the same time to be hanging out and having fun with the people you were going to be competing against tomorrow. Within a few hours, our wonderful choreographer, Yuka Sato, had finished up the opening and closing numbers and we were off to get some rest for competition day.

The competition day arrived and we, Team North America, were ready to go.

It is a tradition in the Japan Open that, before the events start, each team takes the ice and shows the audience its team cheer. My team was first to take the ice. We realized as soon as the other teams had shown the audience their cheer that ours wasn't that creative. With that behind us, Jeff gave us all a final pep talk: "Bad cheer, good skate." We all took it to heart.

I went out to skate, and I was very happy to show what I had been doing in practice at home all summer. I know I can do a lot better, but I think it was a solid start to this season. It was funny because after I finished my program, I was happy about how I did well for the team. Skating can feel so individual that the word "team" almost never comes to mind. At the same time, I was also happy that I won the men's event (as the true singles skater in me comes out).

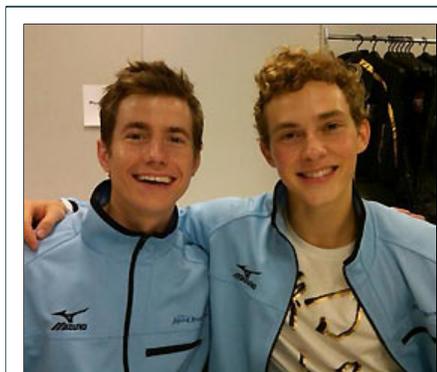
Everyone skated really well, and I think for most all of us, our debuts were a success!

After the competition, we had the exhibition right away. It all went really smoothly and before I knew it, I was packing my bags and it was time to leave.

I want to thank all the fans who came and supported us. You're all the best :) On a more personal note, thank you to all my "Japanese Juliets" for their gifts, lovely banners and incredible support.

Until next time,

Adam Rippon



Adam Rippon and Jeff Buttle are all smiles at the Japan Open. (courtesy Adam Rippon)

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