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NEWS

Rippon chooses Arutunian for aggressive style

U.S. silver medalist is grateful for productive years under Dungjen, Sato's tutelage

By Amy Rosewater, special to icenetwork.com

(09/12/2012) - Adam Rippon was about halfway to his destination when the news of his coaching change became public.

During a stopover at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Rippon confirmed the news that he will begin training with Rafael Arutunian at Lake Arrowhead, Calif. The 2012 U.S. silver medalist and world team member said he only had two bags of luggage with him but said he is looking forward to the change. Rippon spent last season in Detroit with coaches Jason Dungjen and Yuka Sato.

"I made many improvements while skating with Jason and Yuka and learned a lot about myself," Rippon said. "No matter how I skated or what the result, they always encouraged me to see some level of satisfaction in my effort. They pushed me to identify my weaknesses and to be honest about what I really felt was lacking in my training."

Over the years, Rippon has trained with several different coaches and realized that he had the most success under a more aggressive, hands-on coaching style and felt that Arutunian could offer this. Actually, he said he tried to work with him last year but the timing was not right. This summer, plans were made for Rippon to work with Arutunian for two weeks following Champs Camp in Colorado Springs.

"I always admired Rafael and the students he worked with," Rippon said. "I am grateful that the timing is better for both of us this year."

Arutunian is an Olympic and world coach who has worked with Michelle Kwan, Mao Asada, Sasha Cohen, Alexander Abt and Jeffrey Buttle, among others.

Rippon also said that Arutunian thought it was essential to enlist the advice of Olympic and world coach, Frank Carroll, because they had collaborated successfully in the past and his evaluation and input could be very helpful.

"I spoke with Mr. Carroll, and he was very supportive about my move to Arrowhead and said that he would meet with Rafael and me to offer advice and assist with my progress," Rippon said.

Rippon is scheduled to compete in two Grand Prix Series events this fall, but he starts the season relatively late with his first event being Cup of China (Nov. 2-4) and then NHK Trophy (Nov. 23-25). The opening Grand Prix event is Hilton HHonors Skate America, set for Oct. 19-23 in Kent, Wash.

Rippon's short program is to "Nessun Dorma" by Puccini and his free skate is set to various selections from the movie soundtrack from The Incredibles. Five-time U.S. ice dancing champion Michael Seibert choreographed both programs this season.



Adam Rippon hopes to improve on his silver medal from last year's U.S. championships. (Getty Images)

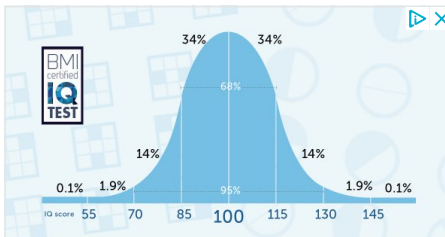
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"I like my programs very much this year, and I am excited that they challenged me and present a different style and a departure from past classical programs." Rippon said.

After a few days at the OTC, Rippon soon will join Arutunian in California to begin the next part of his journey and prepare for the upcoming competitive season.

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Lydia Magill

Sort of sad to see that Adam just can't seem to be at home for very long with a coach.

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