

Teen Sensation Lipnitskaya Falls During Short Program Skate

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Yulia Lipnitskaya fell while performing her short-program skating routine.

SOCHI — Defending champion Kim Yuna secured a narrow lead in the women's figure skating competition as the pretender to her throne, Russian sensation Yulia Lipnitskaya, languished in fifth place after a fall.

Kim, 23, had not competed at a major global event since winning the world championships in March but put in a near-faultless routine in Wednesday's short program that began with a confident triple lutz-triple toeloop combination to score 74.80 points.

Breathing down her neck is not 15-year-old Lipnitskaya as expected but 17-year-old Russian Adelina Sotnikova, who finished behind Lipnitskaya at last month's European championships.

Sotnikova, dancing to "Habanera" from "Carmen," romped to a score of 74.64, a big personal best and enough for a shot at gold in Thursday's free program.

Italy's five-time European champion Carolina Kostner, who accrued 74.12 with her graceful "Ave Maria" performance, lies in third place.

Gracie Gold of the U.S. lies in fourth place, winning 68.63 points from a skate set to a Grieg piano concerto, with 15-year-old Lipnitskaya next on 65.23, over nine points short of Kim at the top.

It appeared Lipnitskaya had tamed the ice in a manner similar to her stunning short program that won the team event for Russia last week, nailing her opening triple lutz-triple toe without much fuss. But she appeared unbalanced launching into a triple lutz later and crashed to the ice, doing so for the first time in three performances at her maiden Olympic Games.

Japan's Mao Asada, who won the silver behind Kim in Vancouver, fell on her opening triple axel and ended up in 16th.

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