

FIGURE SKATING

Boston's World Figure Skating Championships will play a key role in shaping the 2026 Winter Olympics

By Kat Cornetta Globe Correspondent, Updated November 8, 2024, 12:51 p.m.



2016 world silver medalist Ashley Wagner, 2024 world champion Ilia Malinin, and former US Olympian Scott Hamilton appeared at a promotional event ahead of the

2025 World Figure Skating Championships, which will be held in Boston. BARRY CHIN/GLOBE STAFF

Ashley Wagner knows how great TD Garden audiences can be.

As she competed at the 2016 World Figure Skating Championships with a medal on the line — the first for an American woman since 2006 — the crowd was roaring before she could even finish her long program.

“I couldn’t even hear my music, they were so loud,” said Wagner, who went on to win the silver medal.

It was that kind of enthusiasm that made International Skating Union and US Figure Skating officials want to bring the championships back to Boston in 2025 (March 25-30). At the Garden Thursday, Wagner joined 1984 Olympic gold medalist Scott Hamilton and current world champion Ilia Malinin to mark the start of single-session ticket sales for the event Friday at 10 a.m. via Ticketmaster.

“That response at worlds is why I moved to Boston,” said Wagner, who now lives with her family on Nantucket.

While every year’s World Championships are important, the 2025 edition is particularly so. The 300 athletes expected to participate will be seeking to secure their nation’s spots for the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano-Cortina, Italy. In each category (men, women, pairs, and ice dance), if a nation’s top two skaters’ or teams’ placements combined equal 13 or less, it receives the maximum three spots in that category.

“Boston is truly the first step to Milan,” said US Figure Skating president Sam Auxier.

Being one of the last major events before the Olympics, the World Championships also are important for purposes of momentum. Hamilton recalled that while he had won two world titles heading into the 1983 World Championships, it was his title that year that truly made him believe he could win gold at the 1984 Winter Games.

“It was a situation where once I won in 1983, it felt like the Olympic gold medal was mine to lose,” said Hamilton.

Malinin will be looking to repeat after winning his world title last March in Montreal. Having made history in 2022 at Skate America at the Skating Club of Boston by landing the first quadruple axel at a major international event, he is looking forward to skating in front of the area's audiences again sports," said Malinin. "They really get energetic and almost chaotic in a way, and it really helps us to feel that energy and how excited they are to see us skate."



Two-time US champion Ilia Malinin performed a demonstration routine that included a flip Thursday. BARRY CHIN/GLOBE STAFF

The World Championships are expected to bring a \$40 million boost to the Boston economy, with 12,000 hotel-room nights expected to be reserved among fans, skaters, coaches, volunteers, and media. Internationally, Boston is considered one of the sport's hubs, and skaters were excited to hear of the event's return to the area after a mere nine years, which is rare for the World Championships.

"It is rare for a city to host twice in such a short amount of time," said Doug Zeghibe, executive director of the Skating Club of Boston, which is the host of the event. "The audience made 2016 a standout success."

2025 World Figure Skating Championships schedule

March 26

Women's short program, 11:05 a.m.

Pairs short program, 6:45 p.m.

March 27

Men's short program, 11:05 a.m.

Pairs free skating, 6:15 p.m.

March 28

Ice dance rhythm dance, 11:20 a.m.

Women's free skating, 6 p.m.

March 29

Ice dance free dance, 1:30 p.m.

Men's free skating, 6 p.m.

March 30

Exhibition gala, 2 p.m.

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