

Ice Abroad

WEST GERMANY: In the West German Championships at Garmisch (Jan. 9-12), three time Ladies' winner Gerti Schanderl (1972-73-74) was unexpectedly defeated by her great rival, Isabel de Navarre. Neither girl was at her best, and in the final free skating both made errors on important jumps. Last year Isabel beat Gerti on figures, only to be overtaken in the free; this time Isabel was decisively better in the short programs, and as so often has been the case, those two minutes of prescribed movements upset the expected result.

Erich Reifschneider won the Men's title for the third time, while Corinna Halke & Eberhard Rausch took their second Pair's crown. The current World Roller Dance champions Christina Henke & Udo Dönsdorf added the ice crown to their credits.—*Dennis L. Bird*

USSR: Another national champion who has just been dethroned is Sergei Volkov, the 1974 World Men's silver medalist. At the USSR Championships at Kiev (Jan. 8-12) Yuri Ovchinnikov won the Men's title; Volkov was second, and Vladimir Kovalev, who went on to win the 1975 European Men's crown, placed third.

Irina Rodnina became Soviet Pair champion for the sixth time (and third with her present partner Alexander Zaitsev). They received no less than twelve 6.0s.

The top three in ice dancing finished in the same places as last year—1. Ljudmila Pakhomova & Alexander Gorshkov; 2. Natalia Linnichuk & Gennadi Karponosov; 3. Irina Moiseeva & Andrei Minenkov. The Gorshkovs did even better than the pair winners in "perfect" scores—16 of their 18 free dance marks were 6.0s!—*Dennis L. Bird*

HUNGARY: In the Hungarian Championships (Jan. 10-12), László Vajda was the certain winner of the Men's event from beginning to end. Runner-up István Simon had difficulty in figures but did very well choreographed and executed short and free programs to end up a unanimous second. Competition in Ladies was very keen, but defending champion Agnes Erös secured first place with good free skating. In Dance, Krisztina Regöczy & András Sallay were absolute winners, showing tremendous improvement in both compulsory and free dancing since last year.—*Eva György*

SWITZERLAND: With the world's best lady skater of figures, Karin Iten, defending her title at the Swiss Senior Skating Championships on Dec. 20-21, there appeared little chance that

any of the 18 other competitors would dethrone her in figures. In free skating, however, five girls placed above her in what was surely the highest standard national ladies' event ever. Karin still held onto the lead, and Evi Köpfli, second overall, and Michelle Haider, third, joined her on the Swiss Ladies' team for the European Championships. The only man, Stéphane Prince, 14, abandoned after the second figure as he was marked too low to have any chance of qualifying for champion.

Karin & Christian Künzle walked through the Pair competition to win their fifth Swiss title, having little opposition from young Sibylle & Peter Dekumbis. In Senior Dance last year's champion, Gerda Buehler, skated with her new partner, Maxime Erlanger, to take the title.—*Nigel Brown*

JAPAN: The 43rd All Japan Skating Championships, held in Hiroshima, ended Nov. 30 with the defending Men's and Ladies' champions winning their third successive titles. Minoru Sano attempted five different kinds of triple jumps; he made fine landings on triple Lutz, flip and two Walleys but missed loop and Salchow. He has made great strides in artistic expression and had no trouble keeping his early lead to win. In Ladies' free skating, Emi Watanabe received the highest scores for a nearly flawless program, presented with sparkly and liquid style, to retain her title. Emi's jumps have become larger in scale and added stability, though she does not attempt triple jumps as other top-ranking ladies do. In Ice Dancing, Misa Shikage & Masanori Takeda won for the first time.—*Kazuyoshi Oimatsu.*

Emi Watanabe



Tony Duffy photo