**KAITLYN WEAVER & ANDREW POJE BIOGRAPHY**

No ice dance team in the world brings more life experience to their performances than the Canadian duo of Kaitlyn Weaver and Andrew Poje, which is evident in the sense of joy and nuance with which they skate. Theirs is a story of huge setbacks followed by even more stupendous comebacks.

In 2014–15 season, their hard work, persistence and talent prevailed, as they dominated ice dancing, winning not only Grand Prix competitions—Skate Canada and NHK Trophy—but the Grand Prix Final (first Canadian team to do so in 13 years), ISU Four Continents Championships and second World Championships medal.

“We find the silver linings in all the difficult moments and show ourselves what we can do no matter what happens—going through adversity and showing our strength,” says Poje.

Before they go out to skate a competitive program they embrace, which calms them and lets them know they’re in it together.

Their sense of unity was sealed during their first season together when Weaver uprooted her life and moved to another country because she knew a partnership with Poje was meant to be. Their hurdle for Olympic eligibility was cleared on June 22, 2009, when Weaver became a Canadian citizen.

They won their first ISU title at the Four Continents Championships in 2010. At the World Championships in 2011, they cemented their place in the sport’s elite with a fifth-place finish. They rose to fourth in 2012 performing an extraordinary free dance to the song “Je Suis Malade.”

*Dancing with the Stars* pro Anna Trebunskaya said of that routine, “They’re like the leading man and leading lady. They have all the right ingredients: charisma, chemistry and great dynamics in their own bodies.”

Trebunskaya is not the only one from the dance world to praise this couple. *DWTS* and internationally renowned ballroom/Latin dancer Julian Tocker described their Argentine tango free dance from 2013–14 as: “Both were very involved, emotionally connected and on the same page. It was very clear that they were in tune with each other. You saw that constantly.”

*So You Think You Can Dance* alum Paul Karmiryan, who appears with the troupe on *DWTS*, described this season’s free dance: “I felt their timing was nearly flawless in their partner work. They did an amazing and beautiful performance.”

Their Olympic dream came true in 2014. Walking into Fisht Olympic Stadium in Sochi, Weaver and Poje were elated.

“Coming into the stadium, hearing the cheers and being surrounded by our Canadian teammates felt amazing,” said Poje. “At that moment we became true Olympians.”

“There was such incredible energy and excitement,” said Weaver. “I felt like electricity was running through my body.”

Both admit the Olympic excitement got the best of them in the short dance and their technical skills suffered a bit. In order to deliver the free dance they’d trained so hard for, they shut out the world for a brief time.

“We felt so grounded and in tune with each other and in tune with our program,” Weaver said. “When we took the ice for that tango, the world melted away. That was a state of focus we’d never reached before. It created a moment for us we’ll never forget—competing the very best we could.”

Competitive success brings opportunities. In 2015, they toured with *Stars on Ice Canada* for the third time. They enjoy sharing the experience with friends from the skating world, but they also use the shows to hone their performance skills and connection with the audience.

“We’re out there to get emotion and expression across to the audience so that they have a great experience and a great show,” Poje said. “We get better at performing.”

Away from the ice, Poje was tapped to do a photo shoot for *Azzarenko*, a men’s fashion and lifestyle magazine. The photos were shot at various locations around Detroit, including an incredible abandoned church. He wore several different styles of clothes—from casual pieces to an extravagant, modern tuxedo.

Their continued growth is fueled by their extraordinary coaching team, which is comprised of some of the most innovative and artistic people in ice dancing. Weaver and Poje divide their training between Detroit, Michigan, where they work with Pasquale Camerlengo and Anjelika Krylova, and Toronto, where Shae-Lynn Bourne is based. Krylova, a two-time World Ice Dance Champion and Olympic silver medalist, focuses on technical proficiency, and Camerlengo, a past Olympic and World competitor and highly sought after choreographer, pushes forward the team’s artistry. Bourne, also a World Champion, works on the couple’s performance level. They also work with dancers to give their programs authenticity.

In 2014, Weaver and Poje became ambassadors for Right to Play, an international humanitarian organization that uses sport and play programs to improve health, develop life skills and foster peace for children and communities in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the world. They’ve made several appearances and are deeply moved by the organization’s mission.

“It’s something we believe in and feel the message is incredibly important,” said Weaver. “We speak about our experiences at the Olympics. That sets the stage to talk about how important sport is in our lives and how important it is in lives of children across the planet.

“That’s such a beautiful thing about Right to Play; they teach important life skills through sport and games.”

Each season, they challenge themselves with new and intricate programs. For the 2014–15 season, Bourne created a free dance to Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons,” which challenged them athletically and artistically.

“It was an extremely daunting task to be able to perform that program,” Weaver said. “We became such stronger skaters. We were able to connect to the music and draw upon our emotions and experiences to find our story. That seems to be one of our defining factors, our emotional connection to music. That program was very special for us.”

Mindful of a life to come after skating, both are university students, taking part in distance learning education with the University of Waterloo. Weaver is exploring public relations and media, and Poje is studying biomedical science.

The things Weaver and Poje have learned from skating have set them up to conquer whatever life sends their way.

“I’m really looking forward to seeing where we can go from here,” said Weaver. “I’m very excited to be living this adventure with Andrew.”

You can follow them on Twitter @WeaverPoje and get the latest news on their Website: <http://www.weaverpoje.com/>.