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## Abbott stands tall

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Olympics

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It was a night for records to fall at TD Garden.

Competing first in the last group of skaters, three-time U.S. champion Jeremy Abbott landed one of his first career quadruple toe loop, triple toe loop combinations, as well as a high triple axel, and received no deductions in his spins or step sequences to earn a record 99.86 score to lead the men's short program at the 2014 U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

Abbott's score bests the world record previously held by Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu by two hundredths of a point, but will not be recognized because it was not achieved in an international competition. The performance wasn't what he was expecting.

"I've been having dreams where I imploded in the short program," said the 2010 Olympian. "I would be in seventh and too far out to make the Olympics."

The dreams were a result of some of Abbott's finishes over the past year, where he did not always skate to his potential. Last year, he placed third at nationals.

Abbott came into this week's championships wanting to soak up every moment. The 28-year-old plans on retiring from competitive skating after this season.

"This whole week has been really special," said Abbott. "I've been trying to soak up every moment. I tried to enjoy everything I was doing, every crossover, each step."

Abbott's massive score came after Richard Dornbush had broken Abbott's previous U.S. record with the second program of the night. The Riverside, Calif., based skater set an American record in the men's short program with a score of 92.04 to take second place heading into tomorrow's long program. Dornbush's 92.04 beat Abbott's previous record set at the 2012 championships by 1.81 points.

Dornbush began his skate to Henry Mancini's "Sons of Italy" with a clean and effortless quadruple Salchow that made up 12.07 points of his score. He came into

this weekend's competition with a goal of landing the four revolution edge jump more often.

"A few days ago, someone asked me what my New Year's resolution was," said Dornbush. "I am not really a New Year's resolution kind of person, but I said, 'I'm going to land more quad Salchows.'"

Dornbush's steely resolve carried through all seven of his required elements, including a smooth triple axel and a triple Lutz, triple toe loop combination. He had the crowd clapping to the music during his circular step sequence, and the buzz only built from there.

Fan favorite Jason Brown's "The Question of U" short program may have lacked a quadruple jump, but made up for it in quality and performance ability, earning a personal best 87.47 and finishing the first segment of competition in third.

Brown fought for the landing on his opening jump, a triple axel, but he held on.

"Before I skated, my coach said to me, 'This is an Olympic year, this is the time when you fight. You fight for everything you can, every landing,'" said Brown.

Last season's national champion, Max Aaron, had a few off-landings on jumps to earn an 86.95 to sit in fourth heading into the free skate.

Watertown's Ross Miner took the hometown ice to huge applause, but a wonky landing on his triple flip, a singled triple axel and the lack of a quadruple jump left him in eighth place with a 71.94 score. The mistakes mean Miner will need to perform his "Boston Strong" free program flawlessly tomorrow to earn a medal.

"Now no matter what, I just have to skate for myself," he said.

Wakefield's Stephen Carriere opened his short program with a high quadruple toe loop, but fell on the landing. A popped axel left him in 12th with a score of 64.42.

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