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Skate Today was created to showcase the people of the skating world, skaters and coaches and others, who make figure skating and ice dancing a pleasure to watch for fans from around the world. The goal was to create a site that would give viewers an insight into the personalities of the people involved in this sport and to give you a more personal connection when watching them live at an event or on the television. Our staff knows how much time and dedication is put into this sport and that's why SkateToday was created.

## Great Start for Germany's Frohberg and Giesen



### Stefanie Frohberg and Tim Giesen

Article & Photos by J. Barry Mittan

Germany's Stefanie Frohberg and Tim Giesen started training together only in April 2009 but they have already done well internationally. They first competed at the ISU Junior Grand Prix in Lake Placid, NY, where they finished fourth. In October, they placed fifth at their second JGP in Dresden, Germany.

"I was really nervous when we started and really happy after," Frohberg said.

"We're hoping to win the German Nationals and go to Junior Worlds," Giesen said. "If all goes well, we'll continue until 2014. Another year in juniors would be good for us, but I'll be too old next season."

Giesen, 21, was born in Wuppertal but later moved to Berlin. He started skating at six. "My older sister was a skater and I was always at the rink," he recalled. "I wanted to skate better than my sister. I competed in singles until I was eleven but I was really bad. I couldn't jump. But then a dance coach invited me to skate with a girl, Frauke Stein, and I really liked it."

Giesen won a full set of medals with Saskia Brall in novice dance between 2003 and 2005, then finished fourth with her in junior dance in 2006. He won the German junior dance title in 2008 with Jana Werner and placed fourth in seniors with Christina Beier in 2009.

Frohberg, who is 18, also started when she was six. "My sister also skated and I followed her," she said, "but then she went into speed skating. I was better at jumping so I competed in singles until I was 17. I did a triple Salchow when I was 14 and could also do triple toe loop and triple loop. I was the German champion in 2006. It was the level between novice and junior."

"I saw her in singles practice and told her that I was watching an ice dancer," said 2005 world ice dancing bronze medalist Rene Lohse. "I knew William Beier was looking for a partner and suggested that she try with him. He did all the tests with her up through seniors and it was very good for her. I was watching both couples at practice every day and thought it would be better to team up partners at the same age and level, so when Christina and William decided to go back together, it was natural to put Stefanie and Tim together."

"Stefanie learns very fast," Giesen noted. "We look good together and get along very well."

Lohse coaches the dancers, who train in Berlin for about three and a half hours a day, five days a week and two hours on Saturday. Giesen had moved to Berlin from Dortmund, where he formerly trained, to work with Beier before teaming with Frohberg. The dancers also do an hour of ballet every day plus ballroom and running in the summer.

"It's unbelievable how fast they have improved," Lohse said. "It's really amazing how prepared they are every day. They are very professional. Tim has told her everything and she has done all the rest. It's like she was with him for two years already."

"I'm still trying to find the right way of moving," Frohberg admitted. "I like doing the waltzes the best."

Jutta Deutschland, a former prima ballerina, choreographed the dancers' 2009-10 programs and found the free dance music, "La Mer" performed by Charles Trent. "I like lyrical and classical dances," Giesen noted.

For their original dance, the couple is doing an Irish folk dance to "Lord of the Dance" by Ronan Hardiman. "Stefanie picked the Irish dance music for our original dance," Giesen said. "A lot of couples try to do German so we tried something different."

It suits them," Lohse said. "They look very elegant, not like farmers doing polkas."

Frohberg is in her next to last year of high school and is a top student. She enjoys geology, biology and other sciences but is not sure what to study at university.

Giesen is in his second year of studies at Humboldt University in Berlin, where he is studying economics.

Off ice, both skaters enjoy dancing and being with friends. Frohberg also likes to read, especially science magazines.