

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 CH 1006 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND  
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: media@isu.ch

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## **ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2018** **Kostner (ITA) and Savchenko/Massot (GER) take lead on Day One**

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2018 opened in Milan, Italy on Wednesday with the Ladies and Pairs Short Programs. The ISU World Figure Skating Championships are held in Milan for the second time since 1951. More recently, Milan has hosted the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships in 2013 and the ISU European Figure Skating Championships in 1998.

192 skaters from 43 ISU members have been entered for the Championships. Skaters/couples need to have obtained a minimum total technical score in Short Program and Free Skating in order to compete at the World Championships. The event features 2018 Olympic Champions Alina Zagitova (RUS) and Aljona Savchenko/Bruno Massot (GER) as well as Olympic medalists Shoma Uno (JPN), Kaetlyn Osmond (CAN) and Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron (FRA).

### **Carolina Kostner (ITA) upstages Alina Zagitova (RUS) in Ladies Short Program**

Italy's 2012 World Champion [Carolina Kostner](#) wowed the home crowd with a personal best performance. Kostner upstaged reigning Olympic Champion [Alina Zagitova](#) of Russia, who came a close second. The 2015 World silver medalist [Satoko Miyahara](#) of Japan ranked third in the first segment of the competition.

Kostner gave a mesmerizing performance to 'Ne me quitte pas', hitting a triple flip-triple toeloop, triple loop, double Axel as well as level-four spins and footwork. The 2014 Olympic bronze medalist posted a personal best of 80.27 points.

"I am amazed and happy any joyful to be here. For me it's a big honor, like a big cherry in the cake," the five-time European Champion shared. "I already felt amazing even before my performance because skating in my home country is so, so special and so emotional. You could feel the silence, you could feel the tears. I could feel the support and the passion. I remember, 15 years ago when I started to compete internationally, nobody came to watch figure skating in Italy and now we fill up this big venue," she continued. "I hope I'll be able to show all the elements and want to show how much I love skating (in the Free Skating)," the multiple Italian Champion concluded.

Zagitova's program to 'Black Swan' featured a triple Lutz-triple loop combination, a triple flip and a double Axel. The European Champion collected a level four for her spins and footwork as well to score 79.51 points. "I am not that happy with my performance today. The combination (triple Lutz-triple loop) could have been better and I felt I was tight overall in the program," the 15-year-old admitted. "It was hard to get back into the training process. After the Olympics, we had a lot of events going on. Carolina Kostner is my idol, I am looking up to her and I am very happy for her that she was able to do her best performance today."

Skating to 'Memoirs of a Geisha', Miyahara completed a triple loop, double Axel and exquisite spins. However, the Japanese Champion underrotated the back end of her triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination. She earned 74.36 points. "The first Lutz-toe I got stuck, so it was not my best jump. I thought I could not get high points like today, but I'm really happy today with the performance," Miyahara told the post-event press conference. "(After the Olympic Games) I took a couple of days to rest my body and then I started to practice as usual. Physically my body is ready and mentally I'm very excited to come here," she added.

The 2018 Olympic bronze medalist [Kaetlyn Osmond](#) (CAN) stayed in medal contention in fourth place on 72.73 points. She had stumbled on her double Axel in her Edith Piaf routine. "Overall it

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wasn't my best and it wasn't the way I wanted to finish my short program this year but I'm happy. I'm still in a good spot and I'm still happy that I can fight in my long program and to see what happens," Osmond said.

ISU Grand Prix Final silver medalist [Maria Sotskova](#) (RUS) sits in fifth with 71.80 points followed by 2017 World bronze medalist [Gabrielle Daleman](#) (CAN) with 71.61 points.

37 Ladies competed in the Short Program and the top 24 advance to the Free Skating on Friday.

## **Aljona Savchenko/Bruno Massot (GER) shine in Pairs Short Program**

Olympic Champions [Aljona Savchenko/Bruno Massot](#) of Germany shone in what was a high level Pairs Short Program at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2018 in Milan (ITA) on Wednesday. The Germans edged Russia's two-time European Champions [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) by 1,69 points to take the lead. The 2017 European bronze medalists [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) of France came third.

Savchenko/Massot put out an entertaining program to 'That Man' by Caro Emerald that got the crowd going right away. The 2017 World silver medalists opened with a big triple twist and followed up with a triple Salchow, throw triple flip and a spectacular lift. They picked up a level four for five elements to set a personal best of 82.98 points.

"The goal was to do a clean short program, because that was missing this season," Savchenko commented. "It is important for us to do our job. This is a new competition, it's the World Championship. We are Olympic Champions, but the Olympics were yesterday. We put our Olympic gold medals aside and focus on this competition," she added.

"We skated exactly like we wanted and we can be happy to share this with the fans who came here to see us and didn't have the chance to come to Korea," Massot noted.

Skating to 'Piano Concerto No. 2' by Sergei Rachmaninov, Tarasova/Morozov produced a high triple twist, side by side triple toeloop and a huge throw triple loop. The Russian Champions as well earned a level four for the twist, death spiral, pair combination spin, lift and footwork and posted a personal best score of 81.29 points.

"We are happy with our skate, in the last competition of the season and after the Olympic Games it is very hard but we are happy we can do our short program like that after this whole season" Morozov said. "We are here to get revenge after the Olympics, definitely. But let's see what happens tomorrow, we don't think about it, we just do it."

James/Cipres' program to 'Let It Rain' included a triple twist, difficult lift and throw triple flip, but James stumbled on the triple Salchow. The French earned 75.32 points.

"I was very positively surprised (to be in third), it wasn't a clean program but we gave it all, we really fought for the program and we skated it with our heart from the beginning until the end. This score is our seasons' best with mistakes, so this shows we're able to skate with the "big kids" I guess," James told the press.

"Honestly speaking, we had a bad preparation. I injured my neck doing a lift in practice a week after the Olympics. I couldn't skate for a week and a half, so Vanessa worked a lot by herself," Cipres revealed.

[Natalia Zabiako/Alexander Enbert](#) (RUS) came fourth with a solid performance to 'Summer of 42' and remain within striking distance to the podium on 74.38 points. To the delight of the home crowd, [Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise](#) (ITA) placed fifth (72.53 points). [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) (CHN) round up the top six with 71.98 points.

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28 Pairs competed in the Short Program and 16 qualified for the Free Skating.

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2018 continue Thursday with the Men's Short Program and the Pairs Free Skating. For more information, full entry lists and results please see the [ISU website](#) and [official event website](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using the hashtags #WorldFigure and #Milano2018