



Press release

25 November 2017

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2017/18: Bridgestone Skate America Day One

Two-time World Champions [Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford](#) (CAN) and Four Continents Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) skated to the lead as Bridgestone Skate America opened on Friday at Lake Placid (USA) with the Pairs and Men's Short Programs.

Bridgestone Skate America is the sixth and last event in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series and provides the last opportunity for skaters to qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

Duhamel/Radford (CAN) lead Pairs Short Program at Bridgestone Skate America

Two-time World Champions [Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford](#) of Canada took the lead in the Pairs Short Program. China's [Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang](#) came second followed closely by World silver medalists [Aliona Savchenko/Bruno Massot](#) of Germany. The top three teams are separated by a little less than three points.

Duhamel/Radford turned in a clean program to 'With Or Without You' by U2, hitting a side by side triple Lutz, triple twist and throw triple Lutz.

However, the twist and the pair combination spin was rated a level two. The Canadian Champions earned 75.37 points.

"For me, there are aspects of this Short Program that I'm really proud of and aspects that I am frustrated with," Radford said.

"I am really proud of how we felt the program and stayed in the moment. I am frustrated with our levels. We lost levels on elements that we usually don't lose points on. We don't want to make those mistakes heading into the rest of the season."

Duhamel added: "Our ultimate goal this season is to reach 80 points in the short program and we'll keep working our way up until we get those 80 points."

Yu/Zhang's performance to 'Swan Lake' featured a side by side triple toe, triple twist and a big throw triple loop. The Audi Cup of China silver medalists collected a level four for four elements and scored 73.67 points.

"Compared to Cup of China, I felt we had less energy," Zhang said. "I was a bit tired in practice the first few days and had problems with the solo jump, but today in competition it was fine."

Savchenko/Massot opened their flamenco routine with an impressive triple twist and throw triple flip, but Massot fell on the triple Salchow and the pair combination spin garnered only a level two.



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The European silver medalists picked up 72.55 points for their efforts.

“It wasn’t our best, but we had a hard time (preparing for this competition) and we’ll do our best when we need to be at the best,” Savchenko told the post-event press conference.

[Natalia Zabiako/Alexander Enbert](#) (RUS) are ranked fourth on 70.19 points. [Alexa Scimeca Knierim/Chris Knierim](#) (USA) placed fifth (64.27 points) ahead of teammates [Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier](#) (63.04 points).

Chen (USA) distances field in Men’s Short Program in Lake Placid

Four Continents Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) made a statement in the Men’s Short Program, taking the lead with 15 points to spare. [Adam Rippon](#) (USA) and Russia’s [Sergei Voronov](#) (RUS) follow in second and third, with good chances to make the Grand Prix Final.

Chen reeled off a quad Lutz-triple toe combination, a quad flip, a somewhat shaky triple Axel, two level-four spins and level-four footwork in his routine to ‘Nemesis’ by Benjamin Clementine.

The United States Champion posted a new personal best of 104.12 points.

“It was really exciting to be in America for my fourth ever Grand Prix,” the 18-year-old said.

“I made a little bobble on my Axel, but this is something I will try to focus on for tomorrow.

“The music has a really good beat, everybody can feel it and clap along. I definitely feel that, even in practice when I am just alone on the ice. When the music is playing, I can feel the character and I can really get into it.”

Performing to ‘Let Me Think About It’, Rippon produced a triple flip-triple toe combination, a triple Axel and triple Lutz as well as level-four spins and footwork. The NHK Trophy silver medalist recorded a new personal best with 89.04 points.

“I felt really strong, really confident. I like to show off and I like to perform, it’s what I love about competing,” the 2016 U.S. Champion said.

“I wanted to improve on my program component scores from NHK. I listened to what the judges had to say and I made I sure that I cleaned up all the elements.

“I wanted to get as many points as I could. I might not be trying the hardest program, but I’m going to milk it.”

Voronov’s tango to ‘Adios Nonino’ included a quad toe-triple toe, triple Axel and earned a level four for his three spins. However, the triple Lutz was a bit wobbly. The NHK Trophy Champion scored 87.51 points.



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“I am quite pleased with my performance because I was able to deal with my nerves,” the two-time Russian Champion said.

“It was a little new for me to skate first (in the group) in the Short Program. The whole season I skated towards the end. There were some issues in my performance. Now, I need to focus for tomorrow.”

[Han Yan](#) (CHN) fell on a quad toe but still managed a season’s best of 85.97 points to finish fourth.

Daniel Samohin (ISR) is ranked fifth on 82.28 points followed by World bronze medalist [Boyang Jin](#) (CHN), who singled his Axel (77.97 points).

Bridgestone Skate America continues on Saturday with the Pairs and Men’s Free Skating, Short Dance and Ladies Short Program.

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series consists of six events and culminates in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Nagoya, Japan, in December. The top six skaters/couples in each discipline qualify for the Final. The global prize money for the Grand Prix is US\$ 272,000.

Full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2017/18 are available [here](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#GPFigure** **#FigureSkating**.

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