



Press release

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

[Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani](#) (USA) and [Satoko Miyahara](#) (JPN) took the final gold medals of this season's ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series as competition wrapped up at Bridgestone Skate America in Lake Placid on Sunday.

At Bridgestone Skate America, the last qualifiers for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final were determined.

Child's play as Shibutani siblings (USA) win gold in Free Dance

Two-time world medalists [Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani](#) (USA) turned back the clock to record a confident victory on home ice, taking the gold medal with a little over 12 points to spare. The 2014 World champions [Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte](#) of Italy claimed the silver medal and the bronze went to Russia's [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#). Shibutani/Shibutani and Cappellini/ Lanotte qualified for the Grand Prix Final.

Dancing to 'Paradise' by Coldplay, Shibutani/Shibutani delivered an excellent performance with beautiful lifts and intricate footwork, collecting a level four for the spin, twizzles and lifts. The step sequences merited a level three. The brother-and-sister team set a new season's best with 115.07 points for an overall total of 194.25 points.

Alex Shibutani recalled how the siblings had competed 13 years ago in the Herb Brooks Arena in Lake Placid as children: "This is the first big arena we ever skated in our lives and so it was a special weekend.

"We made a lot of big changes after Russia to the Free Dance in particular, in the second half of the program, and I think it really paid off as far as the overall feel of the program that we have skating it.

"Even though there is only one week, it is about continuing to build the momentum that we've developed personally over the past months."

Maia Shibutani added. "Alex and I are very proud of how we skated this weekend. This was the longest time that we ever had in a Grand Prix season between our two Grand Prix and we feel very strongly about how well we've used our time following Cup of Russia.

"These two performances were really heading into the direction that we are looking for. This was the competition we wanted to have before the Grand Prix Final."



INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 - CH 1006 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
PHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 FAX (+41) 21 612 66 7 E-MAIL media@isu.ch

Cappellini/Lanotte's solid dance to 'La vita e bella' featured four level-four elements, but the exit of their straight-line lift didn't go as planned when her blade became stuck. The Italian champions scored 108.93 points for the Free Dance for a total of 181.63 points.

"We had the impression that we need to be perfect today and it always adds pressure to the whole process," Cappellini said. "We were nervous. We missed the exit of the lift and we knew we already lost some points.

"We're definitely looking forward to improving our technical score and we're trying to do that, especially for the second part of the season where all the major championships take place."

The couple is excited to return to the Grand Prix Final: "Eight years ago we qualified for our first Grand Prix Final here (at Skate America). So, it's come full circle. We were hoping to go back to the GP Final as we missed it last year," Cappellini said.

Sinitsina/Katsalapov completed strong lifts and twizzles in their program to Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 and 'Vocalise'. However, the diagonal footwork garnered only a level two. The Muscovites achieved a new personal best of 107.81 points in the Free Dance for 176.53 overall.

"We are very happy with how we skated here at Skate America, we skated clean," Katsalapov told the post-event press conference.

"Now we know what we need to work on. Our next competition is our national championship and we'll try to fix everything that wasn't perfect yet. It was a great pleasure to compete in this historical place and we felt really energized."

[Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) (CAN) moved up from fifth to fourth on 166.54 points. The 2014 world junior champions [Kaitlyn Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker](#) (USA) pulled up from seventh to fifth place (163.53 points) while [Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (RUS) slipped from fourth to sixth on 160.28 points.

Satoko Miyahara (JPN) wins Ladies event full of surprises at Bridgestone Skate America

The 2015 world silver medalist [Satoko Miyahara](#) of Japan won the Ladies gold in an event full of surprises. [Kaori Sakamoto](#), also of Japan, took the silver medal and [Bradie Tennell](#) (USA), competing in her first senior Grand Prix event, earned the bronze.

None of the medalists qualified for the Grand Prix Final, but Miyahara is the first substitute.

Performing to 'Madame Butterfly', Miyahara turned in a strong performance, reeling off seven clean triples, including a triple Lutz-triple toe combination as well as level-four spins and footwork. The Japanese champion posted a new season's best of 143.31 points for a total of 214.03.



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“I am very happy and satisfied with today’s performance and to get my best scores,” the 19-year-old said. “After the injury, this is the first big step. The most important event, the Japanese nationals, are coming next month. I’ll keep working hard to be able to do my best.”

Sakamoto’s program to ‘Amelie’ featured a triple flip-triple toe combination, five more triples and difficult spins and footwork. The 2017 world junior bronze medalist set a new personal best with 141.19 points and accumulated 201.59 overall to win her first Grand Prix medal.

“After I was not satisfied with the Russian Grand Prix, I practised so hard for a few weeks and this second try (here) gives me confidence for the future,” Sakamoto said. “In the Short Program, I did a mistake on the spin and I have so much room to improve my performance – the jumps, the spins and the grade of execution.”

Tennell landed seven clean triples in her ‘Cinderella’ program to achieve a new personal best of 137.09 points. Overall, she had 204.10 points to move up from fourth to third place.

“The past few seasons have been kind of frustrating because I haven’t been able to train consistently,” the 19-year-old said. “I feel like this year I’ve been able to get back into the flow of things and I feel like that is shown in how I’m skating “I would like to work on my overall skating and my step sequence (heading into nationals).”

[Polina Tsurskaya](#) (RUS) pulled up from eighth to fourth place on 195.56 points. Her teammate [Serafima Sakhanovich](#) remained in fifth place on 189.75 points. The 2017 world bronze medalist [Gabrielle Daleman](#) (CAN) dropped from third to sixth after some errors (189.14 points).

The 2016 world silver medalist [Ashley Wagner](#) (USA) withdrew during the Free Skating due to the effects of an infection in her right ankle.

“I was diagnosed with an [right] ankle infection a little over a week ago and I’d been fighting through it for about a week before that,” Wagner explained. “I had just gone on antibiotics and I did everything that I could to do like a quick fix, but it’s not a quick fix kind of a situation.”

Bridgestone Skate America was the sixth and last event of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series that culminates in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Nagoya (JPN) 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**.

For further information please contact:

Selina Vanier
ISU Communications Coordinator
media@isu.ch
Tel: +41 21 612 66 66