

## Press release

09 December 2017

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**ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2017/18:  
ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final  
ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final  
Day Three**

Spectacular performances highlighted the final day of competition at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final Saturday in Nagoya (JPN).

The events featured the top six skaters/couples in each category from the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating and the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating series.

**Skoptcova/Aleshin (RUS) dance off with gold in Junior Ice Dance**

Russia's [Anastasia Skoptcova/Kirill Aleshin](#) danced off with the gold medal. [Christina Carreira/Anthony Ponomarenko](#) (USA) claimed the silver medal and [Sofia Polishchuk/Alexander Vakhnov](#), also from Russia, earned the bronze in what was their debut in the Junior Final.

Skoptcova/Aleshin put out a strong Tango program, collecting a level four for their lifts, twizzles and the sin while the serpentine step sequence was rated a level three. The Muscovites achieved a season's best with 87.74 points for a total of 153.61 points. "For now, we are satisfied with our performance and now we would like to start our preparation for our next competition," Aleshin commented. "For us each competition is important, we make no difference between important or not important events. We try to win each time", Skoptcova shared.

Carreira/Ponomarenko's fluid dance to the 'W.E.' soundtrack was highlighted by difficult lifts and smooth footwork. The 2017 World Junior bronze medalists earned the same levels as Skoptcova/Aleshin to set a new season's best of 87.66 points. Overall, the Americans accumulated 151.76 points. "We are super happy but we still have a lot of things to work on. Our ultimate goal is to win the Olympics, but for this season we would like to win Junior Worlds," Carreira said. "I feel like we executed our elements very well, we skated the best we can skate it. We still need to work on our GOE and presentation mark. In the beginning of the season, we created a story, she is a butterfly and I am the wind, carrying her through the free dance," added Ponomarenko.

Performing to 'Black Swan', Polishchuk/Vakhnov produced a flawless dance as well and had a level four for four elements. They scored a season's best as well with 85.87 points which added up to 149.04 points overall. "We are very satisfied with our performance today. It is our first experience to compete at such a high-level event, so we are happy. Of course, there are still things we need to reflect and work on to improve," Vakhnov noted.

[Sofia Shevchenko/Igor Eremenko](#) (RUS) finished fourth on 144.38 points followed by [Arina Ushakova/Maxim Nekrasov](#) (RUS) on 141.88 points while [Majorie Lajoie/Zachary Lagha](#) (CAN) slipped from fourth to sixth on 141.28 points.

### **Alexandra Trusova (RUS) stays strong to take Junior Ladies title**

Russia's [Alexandra Trusova](#) led a Russian sweep of the Junior Ladies podium at the ISU Junior Grand Prix Final in Nagoya (JPN). [Alena Kostornaia](#) took the silver and [Anastasia Tarankova](#) claimed the bronze medal. All three Ladies competed in their first Junior Final.

Trusova underrotated and fell on her opening quad Salchow, but rallied back to produce a triple flip-double toe-double toe, triple Lutz-triple toe, two more triples and excellent spins and steps, but she wobbled on the triple Lutz-triple loop combination. The Muscovite posted a personal best with 132.36 points and racked up 205.61 points overall to win the title. "Not everything worked out today and I am upset about missing the quad Salchow and I also made a little error on my combination. But I am happy that I was able to win the Junior Grand Prix Final," Trusova said. "I'll work on my jumps, I want to do the triple Axel and quad toe and I want to perfect the quad Salchow," she added.

Kostornaia's program to 'Stella's Theme' by William Joseph featured seven triple jumps including two triple-triple combinations as well as level-four spins and footwork. The 13-year-old set a new personal best of 132.93 points and won the Free Skating, but remained in second overall on 204.58 points. "I am pleased with my performance today, but actually, to be honest, it could be better. Well, it means that I must work harder and that is what I am going to do after coming home. As for difficult elements in my program, of course, it is hard to train them, but when you do them on practices every day, more and more, it becomes easier," Kostornaia shared.

Skating to 'Sarabande Suite', Tarakanova landed seven clean triples as well and also had a new personal best with 131.74 points. She remained in third place on 199.64 points overall. "I am glad that I could calm down and skate clean both of my programs here. I was really nervous that I even didn't feel my feet on the ice. The short program was clean, so I really wanted to show a clean free program too. But of course, I'm not going stop, I will work hard to be better and better with every competition," the Muscovite commented.

[Rika Kihira](#) (JPN) became the first Lady to land a triple Axel-triple toeloop in ISU competition, but she singled her second planned triple Axel and came fourth (192.45 points). [Daria Panenkova](#) (RUS) and [Sofia Samodurova](#) (RUS) put out excellent performances as well to finish fifth (191.16 points) and sixth (187.74 points) respectively.

### **Savchenko/Massot (GER) soar to victory, set new record score in Pairs Free Skating**

World silver medalists [Aljona Savchenko/Bruno Massot](#) of Germany soared to victory setting a new record score in the Pairs Free Skating. Reigning World Champions [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) of China moved up one spot to take the silver medal and Canada's two-time World Champions [Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford](#) pulled up from fourth to claim the bronze.

Skating to ‘La terre vue du ciel’, Savchenko/Massot put out a spectacular performance, reeling off a huge triple twist, side by side triple Salchow-double toe-double toe, triple toe, a throw triple Lutz and amazing lifts. The only glitch was a shaky landing on the throw triple Salchow. The European silver medalists picked up a level four for six elements and scored 157.25 points for a total of 236.68 points. The Germans got five perfect 10.00s.

“I saw the score of the Chinese team (Sui/Han) and I knew the level was very high and the program will be difficult. But we wanted to give the best and everything went well except for that tiny little mistake. We felt it was a big practice for the Olympic Games. The top six pairs were here and the level was so high. Now we have to calm down and to realize that we got the gold. We have to keep practicing this way and be ready for the Olympic Games,” Massot commented.

Sui/Han were brilliant as well in their ‘Turandot’ routine. The 2017 Four Continents Champions opened with a quadruple twist and followed up with a triple toe-double toe-double toe, big throw triple flip and Salchow. They, too, earned a level four for their lifts, spins and death spiral. However, Han wobbled on the triple Salchow. The World Champions earned 155.07 points, just 0.03 points below their personal best, and accumulated 230.89 points overall. “Throughout Grand Prix and the Final, we learnt a lot and found the room for improvement. I felt we need to improve the execution of the jumps and performance once we go back home. After the short program, I was disappointed but I know where to make changes, so I prepared myself to get ready for free program today,” Han said.

Duhamel/Radford produced a triple twist, side by side triple Lutz, throw triple Lutz as well as two level-four lifts, but she fell on the throw quadruple Salchow and the last lift was rated a level two. The Canadian Champions picked up 138.65 points which added up to 210.83 points overall.

“Our free skate was ok today. Everything has been going well for us in practice and the short program really shook up our confidence. The throw quad is always a risk, but we fought through the long program so when we finished we feel proud of ourselves because we didn't give up,” Duhamel shared. “I think we took a nice step and we built at this competition from the last competition so I think our goal will be to go into our National Championships, take one more step up, try to get some more levels, don't make so many mistakes and we want to hit that big peak at the Olympic Games in February,” Radford added.

2014 Olympic silver medalists [Ksenia Stolbova/Fedor Klimov](#) (RUS) missed the podium narrowly and remained in fourth place on 209.26 points. European Champions [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) (RUS) dropped from second to fifth after some errors on 208.73 points and [Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang](#) (CHN) placed sixth (207.14 points).

### **Papadakis/Cizeron (FRA) beat Virtue/Moir (CAN) to take first Grand Prix Final gold**

Two-time World Champions [Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) of France beat Canada’s reigning World Champions [Tessa Virtue/Scott Moir](#) for the first time and took their first Grand Prix Final title as the Ice Dance event concluded. Three-time World medalists [Maia Shibutani/Alex Shibutani](#) (USA) clinched the bronze medal.

Papadakis/Cizeron's romantic dance to 'Moonlight Sonata' featured beautiful lifts and effortless looking footwork. The two-time World Champions collected a level four for the twizzles, lifts and combination spin and a level three for the two step sequences. The judges awarded them mostly plus three GOEs and 24 perfect 10.00s. The French Champions tallied 120.09 points for the Free Dance and totaled 202.16 points. "We are happy to have won this competition. It was a good practice for the Olympic Games that are coming up in few months. It was a very good performance and there was a lot of pressure here with the top six teams competing. We're very happy that we were able to deal with this pressure," Papadakis shared. "This is also the first time for us to win the Grand Prix Final, so it is one more thing off our list. It (the program) was not perfect yet, there are still some things that we can improve in both programs, technically and also to make it more consistent," Cizeron added.

Virtue/Moir delivered a passionate performance to 'El Tango de Roxanne' and 'Come What May' from 'Moulin Rouge', executing level-four lifts, twizzles and a level-four spin as well. The footwork garnered a level three and the 2010 Olympic Champions picked up 15 perfect 10.00s in the component scores. The 2014 Olympic silver medalists posted a personal best with 118.33 points for a total of 199.86 points. "We are on track towards the Olympics. We had an extremely successful season so far that's testament to the team of people around us with our on and off ice coaches, they have put a spectacular plan in place and as athletes it's been rewarding to really follow that. We just have to continue taking care of the details, making little tweaks to make sure that the programs are at our best for February," Virtue said. "To be honest it was a funny program for us, we had a great feeling between the two of us but we made a couple little uncharacteristic glitches that we don't even make in training that often, but I guess that's why we train," Moir noted.

Dancing to 'Paradise' by Coldplay, Shibutani/Shibutani produced excellent lifts and a level four spin, but the diagonal step sequence merited a level two and his twizzles were somewhat shaky. That was enough for the 2017 World bronze medalists to be ranked sixth in the Free Dance on 109.91 points, but overall they held on to third place on 188.00 points.

"Today was not the performance that we wanted to have unfortunately. We feel pretty good this week overall and there was a lot of stuff to make progress, but I just had issues on the twizzles this week, which is uncharacteristic. We know what we need to work on. I'm not too worried about it," Alex Shibutani commented.

[Madison Hubbell/ Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) finished in fourth place on 187.40 points. [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) were third in the Free Dance, but remained in fifth place with 187.15 points. [Anna Cappellini/Luca Lanotte](#) (ITA) came sixth (185.23 points).

### **Alina Zagitova (RUS) celebrates confident victory in Grand Prix Final debut**

Russia's World Junior Champion [Alina Zagitova](#) continued her impressive senior-debut season to confidently win the Ladies event in what was her debut at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Nagoya (JPN) Saturday. [Maria Sotskova](#) capped off a successful event for Russia with her silver

medal, moving up from fourth place after the Short Program. World silver medalist [Kaetlyn Osmond](#) of Canada settled for the bronze.

Skating to 'Don Quixote' by Leon Minkus, Zagitova nailed seven triples including her trademark triple Lutz-triple loop combination, but she wobbled on a triple toe in combination with a double Axel and also stepped out of a triple Lutz. The 15-year-old earned level fours for her spins and footwork to score 147.03 points and moved up from second place to the top on 223.30 points. "I am pleased with my performance. There were a few glitches, but they were minor. I am glad I was able to deal with my nerves. To be honest, it was hard to skate today. I really wanted to do well and my legs were a bit shaky. But towards the end I pulled myself together and everything went well," the newly minted Grand Prix Final Champion explained.

Sotskova's routine to 'Clair de Lune' by Claude Debussy was highlighted by seven clean triple jumps and two level-four spins. The 2016 World Junior silver medalist achieved a new personal best with 142.28 points and accumulated 216.28 points overall.

"This is my second Grand Prix Final, last year I was in fifth place. So this year going up to second place and being able to go on the podium was a great experience for me," the skater from Moscow said. "It was a good performance. But you always have something to work on and something to achieve. We did a great job with my team and now we have result."

Overnight leader Osmond produced five triples as well as difficult spins and steps in her 'Black Swan' routine. However, the Canadian Champion fell on an underrotated triple Salchow and doubled the loop. These errors cost her, she was fifth in the Free Skating on 138.12 points and slipped from first to third overall on 215.16 points. "I made a lot of changes between France and this competition and I think I did really well on those changes. I focused a lot on my choreography and improving the package in the story line of the program. There are things I am really proud of, some silly mistakes for me, but overall I am happy with the performance. It is getting better each time so hopefully I will peak at the right time," the World silver medalist pointed out.

2012 World Champion [Carolina Kostner](#) (ITA), who had returned to the Grand Prix Final for the first time in four years as she did not compete in the series, moved up from sixth to fourth place on 214.65 points. 2015 World silver medalist [Satoko Miyahara](#) of Japan underrotated three jumps to drop from third to fifth (213.49 points). [Wakaba Higuchi](#) (JPN) came sixth (202.11 points).

With the conclusion of the two Finals the qualified teams for the team event at the Olympic Winter Games 2018 have been determined.

The following ISU members have qualified:

Canada (6084 points)

Russia (5924 points)

USA (5055 points)

Japan (4345 points)

China (4231 points)

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Italy (3801 points)

France (3652 points)

Germany (2806 points)

Spain (1858) but is not eligible as Spain qualified entries only in two disciplines for the Olympic Games

Israel (1521 points)

Republic of Korea (1397 points) – comes in instead of Spain

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final conclude Sunday with the Exhibition Gala.

All relevant information such as results, biographies, planned program content, quick quotes of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final are available on the ISU website [here](#). The ISU Junior Grand Prix Final was streamed live on the [ISU Junior Grand Prix channel](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#GPFigure** and **#JGPFigure2017 #FigureSkating**.

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