

October 28, 2018

Lausanne, SUI

## **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2018/19**

### **Skate Canada International, Day Two**

[Shoma Uno](#) (JPN), [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) (RUS), pair skaters [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) (FRA) and ice dancers [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) skated off with gold as the competition wrapped up at Skate Canada International Saturday in Laval, QC.

#### **Stunning James/Cipres (FRA) skate to first Grand Prix gold**

[Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) of France skated to their first Grand Prix gold medal with 20 points to spare. China's [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) claimed the silver and the bronze went to Canadians [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#).

James/Cipres turned in a stunning performance to "Wicked Game" and "The Last Feeling", producing a triple twist, side by side triple toe-double toe and triple Salchow, as well as a throw triple Lutz and Salchow plus impressive lifts. The World bronze medalists set a new season's best with 147.30 points in the Free Skating and racked up 221.81 points overall.

"We are really happy with the performance we did today, it was better than yesterday. I'm really proud to win this competition, because again today it was a big fight on the ice and everyone skated really well," Cipres said. "We are very proud of this gold medal here but even more so about of the performance we made in that group full of great skaters and great performances. It gives us confidence," James added.

Skating to "La Vie en Rose", Peng/Jin landed a triple twist, throw triple loop and Salchow, but they doubled the side by side Salchow and Peng was shaky on the triple toe combination. The team from Beijing ranked fourth in the Free Skating with 129.08 points, but overall held on to second place at 201.08 points.

"We missed the jumps, but the other elements were okay and the GOE was good. We just need to improve the jumps. We love our programs this year and a big thank you goes to Lori Nichol (choreographer). She gave us so much help to show more emotions and our connection," Jin said.

Moore-Towers/Marinaro's program to a Pink Floyd medley featured a triple twist, solid throw jumps and a triple toe, but the triple Salchow in the combination with a double Axel was downgraded. The Canadians picked up 129.67 points and accumulated 200.93 points overall.

"It was a personal victory to go out in a group such as this one, of very capable and impressive pair teams," Moore-Towers said. "Our goals are mainly to improve on our performances each time. We started with a rough competition at Autumn Classics, we were a little bit better in Finlandia (Trophy) and a little bit better again here."

The 2017 World Junior silver medalists [Aleksandra Boikova/Dmitrii Kozlovskii](#) (RUS) came second in the Free Skating with a flawless performance to “The Nutcracker”, but remained in fourth place at 196.54 points. Evelyn Walsh/Trennt Michaud (CAN) pulled up from sixth to fifth place (172.53 points).

### Shoma Uno (JPN) jumps to Men’s gold

World and Olympic silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) of Japan fought back in the Free Skating to take gold in the Men’s event at Skate Canada International. Canada’s [Keegan Messing](#) earned the silver medal and [Junhwan Cha](#) of Korea claimed the bronze. Messing and Cha got their first medals on the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating. It was also the first ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating medal for a Korean male skater.

Uno’s performance to “Moonlight Sonata” by Ludwig van Beethoven was highlighted by three clean quadruple jumps – a flip and two toeloops. A fourth quad, the Salchow, was underrotated. Uno also pulled off two triple Axels but fell on a triple flip and on a triple toeloop.

The Japanese champion scored 188.38 points for a total of 277.25 to move up from second place. “I was able to put in all the frustration from yesterday and I was able to perform the program,” Uno said. “I thought I’ll go all out from the beginning, so I went at 100 percent from the start. That’s probably why I did get a bit tired at the end. I made mistakes on the last two jumps, so this is something I’ll take as a task for the next competition.”

Overnight leader Messing tripled his planned quad Lutz but then went on to hit a quad toe and five triples including two Axels as well as excellent spins in his Charlie Chaplin routine. He only fell on the second (underrotated) quad toe. The Canadian silver medalist earned 170.12 points and slipped to second on 265.17 overall.

“I was very excited to win the short program yesterday and I came into the long program very excited to put on a performance for the home crowd once again,” Messing said. “I’m a little bummed I didn’t rotate my quad Lutz, but I took every element once at a time and the crowd was right behind me, helping me through the whole program. I wasn’t really nervous after having a bad warm-up, because I know that I can go out at any time and nail jumps that I want to do.”

Skating to the “Romeo and Juliet” soundtrack by Craig Armstrong, Cha missed his opening quad toe but pulled himself together to produce a quadruple Salchow, a triple Lutz-triple loop as well as two triple Axels and two more clean triples. The 16-year-old picked up 165.91 points for a total of 254.77.

“Today my performance was a little harder than yesterday, but I tried my best and worked hard until the finish. I had a mistake on the first jump, but kept going and I’m very satisfied,” the ISU Junior Grand Prix Finalist told the media. “After I was in third after the short program, to prepare for today’s program I told myself to forget about yesterday and fully focus on today’s program.”

The 2017 Skate Canada bronze medalist [Alexander Samarin](#) (RUS) this time came fourth on 248.78 points. [Nam Nguyen](#) (CAN) moved up two spots to fifth (240.94 points) and [Jason Brown](#) (USA) pulled up from 11<sup>th</sup> to sixth (234.97 points).

## Hubbell/Donohue (USA) dance to gold and into Grand Prix Final

USA's [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) danced to their second consecutive Grand Prix gold medal and are the first skaters to qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) of Russia secured the silver medal. [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) of Canada surged from sixth to grab the bronze medal.

Hubbell/Donohue's romantic dance to "Romeo and Juliet" featured difficult lifts and twizzles as well as interesting choreographic elements. The World silver medalists picked up a level four for the lifts, the twizzles and the spins, while the diagonal step sequence was rated a level three. The U.S. Champions scored 120.27 points and were ranked second in the Free Dance. They totaled 200.76 to take their second consecutive Grand Prix title.

"I guess we came in, we achieved our goal, which was another gold medal and assure the ticket to the (Grand Prix) Final," Hubbell said. "We were feeling the two weeks fatigue today. It was a pretty tough free dance, not without mistakes, but overall we were very pleased with how we were able to face these challenges."

Sinitsina/Katsalapov put out a soft and flowing program to "Air" by Johann Sebastian Bach, executing level-four lifts and twizzles, but their serpentine step sequence merited a level two. The Muscovites edged Hubbell/Donohue for first place in the Free Dance with 120.51 points but remained in second place at 195.17 points.

"We are very pleased with how this competition went for us. It wasn't without little mistakes, but overall we are improving and moving forward," Katsalapov said. "Our next event is the Grand Prix in France. We have a month and we'll work a lot on the Tango and the free dance. We'll work day and night to get these key points (in the Tango Romantica) and also will work on all the other elements."

Gilles/Poirier rallied from a faulty Rhythm Dance that had left them in sixth place. Their program, called "Vincent" and set to "Starry Night", included excellent lifts and smooth footwork. The Canadians set a season's best with 120.02 points and had 186.97 points overall.

"We were able to put the rough short dance behind us. We felt really present in our performance and it was really enjoyable to finally perform this free dance in front of a big audience at home in Canada," Poirier told the post-event press conference.

[Marie-Jade Lauriault/Romain Le Gac](#) (FRA) finished fourth with an upbeat dance to Bruno Mars songs (180.32 points). [Olivia Smart/ Adrian Diaz](#) (ESP) delivered a solid performance to Beatles songs but had a few low levels and slipped from third to fifth (176.57 points). [Shiyue Wang/Xinyu Liu](#) (CHN) placed sixth (165.88 points).

## Tuktamysheva (RUS) clinches gold in tight Ladies final

Russia's [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) clinched her first ISU Grand Prix gold medal in four years, edging out Japan's [Mako Yamashita](#) by 0.26 points as the competition wrapped up at Skate Canada International with the Ladies event. [Evgenia Medvedeva](#) of Russia surged from seventh to take the bronze medal.

Performing to “You Don’t Love Me”, “Petite Fleur” and “Cat Groove”, Tuktamysheva fell on her opening triple Axel but recovered to land five triple jumps and two double Axels. With 129.10 points, the 2015 World Champion ranked third in the Free Skating but managed to stay in first place with a total of 203.32.

“I didn’t skate so well today, I fell on my triple Axel and I was nervous to be honest,” Tuktamysheva admitted. “I’m happy I am in first place but I need to work a lot. My next event is the NHK Trophy in Japan and I’m very glad I can go there. I want to improve my triple Axel and skate better in Japan.”

Yamashita nailed six clean triples in her routine to “Madame Butterfly”, including two triple Lutz-triple toe combinations and only a triple loop was underrotated. The 15-year-old scored 136.76 points and was second in the Free Skating. Overall, she moved up to second place on 203.06 points. “I didn’t expect to win a medal today. I did the best I could and this led to me winning a medal. I learned a lot and I need to improve a lot,” said Yamashita, who was competing in her first Grand Prix event.

Medvedeva’s determined performance to Astor Piazzolla Tangos featured six clean triples jumps, including a triple flip-triple toe and a triple Salchow-triple toeloop combination. The only glitch came when she underrotated a triple loop. The Olympic silver medalist picked up 137.08 points to win the Free Skating and accumulated 197.91 points to surge from seventh to third.

“It wasn’t my best at all, there were a lot of mistakes. My next Grand Prix is in France and I have three weeks. In three weeks, I can do a huge [amount of] work. I want to improve my skating skills and focus on my technique, on the spins, my jumps. In France I have to win in order to be sure to go to the Final,” the two-time World Champion said.

[Mariah Bell](#) (USA) placed fourth on 190.25 points with a solid outing. [Elizabet Tursynbaeva](#) (KAZ) moved up from sixth to fifth on 185.71 points while [Wakaba Higuchi](#) (JPN) dropped from second to sixth after making some errors (181.29 points).

Skate Canada International concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating continues next week with the Grand Prix in Helsinki, Finland. For full results and further information regarding the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series please visit: <https://isu.org/GrandPrix>. Follow the discussion on social media by using **#FigureSkating** **#GPFigure**.