

November 9, 2018

Lausanne, SUI

NHK Trophy, Day One

The 2018 Olympic silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) (JPN), 2015 World Champion [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) (RUS) and pair skaters [Natalia Zabiiako/Alexander Enbert](#) (RUS) are leading as the NHK Trophy opened in Hiroshima (JPN) on Friday 9 November with the Short Programs. NHK Trophy is the fourth of six events in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2018/19.

Zabiiako/Enbert (RUS) lead after Pairs Short Program

Russia's [Natalia Zabiiako/Alexander Enbert](#) skated to the lead in the Pairs Short Program. [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) of China came second, followed in third place by Canadians [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#).

Performing to "Alexander Nevski", Zabiiako/Enbert completed a triple twist, a side-by-side triple toeloop, throw triple loop and a level-four lift and spin. The Grand Prix Helsinki Champions set a season's best with 73.48 points. "It was a good performance and we enjoyed it," Enbert said. "Almost everything worked out well, there were just a few small mistakes, but the impression overall was good and positive. There is still room for improvement. We want all elements to be a level four."

Peng/Jin's routine to "Ophelia" by The Lumineers featured a triple twist, triple toeloop and throw triple loop. The Skate Canada silver medalists picked up a level four for their lift and a level three for their death spiral and spin, to earn 70.66 points. "The performance was better than at Skate Canada, but we missed some levels in the death spiral, spin and step sequence. We will focus on the levels in the free program," Jin said.

Moore-Towers/Marinaro produced a triple twist and two level-four elements. However, the 26-year-old Moore-Towers touched down on the triple toe and the throw triple loop was shaky. The Skate Canada bronze medalists scored 67.70 points. "We are a little bit disappointed with our performance today. We've been practising well all week, it was just a little bit off in a lot of places." Moore-Towers said. "We know in a field like this one, with teams like this, we need to be perfect to stack up. Unfortunately, today it wasn't our day, we're ready to fight tomorrow."

[Alexa Scimeca Knierim/Chris Knierim](#) (USA) finished fourth on 64.75 points after Scimeca Kneirim fell on the triple Salchow. The 2018 Four Continents Champions [Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea](#) (USA) came fifth on 59.00 points.

Tuktamysheva (RUS) edges Miyahara (JPN) in Ladies Short

[Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) of Russia edged Japan's [Satoko Miyahara](#) by 0.09 points for the lead in the Ladies Short Program. [Mai Mihara](#), also from Japan, is currently ranked third.

Tuktamysheva did it again - hitting an excellent triple Axel, a triple toe-triple toe combination and a triple Lutz in her program to "Assassin's Tango". Her spins and footwork merited level threes and fours as the 2015 World and European Champion scored 76.17 points.

"I am very happy to have skated the short program the way I did today. I was more nervous than at Skate Canada, it was hard to skate, because I was a bit sleepy," she said. "I put a lot of energy into my program, because I really wanted to skate well. Now I feel a bit empty emotionally and I want to recover for the free skating and want to skate better than in Canada.

"We are very close (in points), but I expected that as Satoko (Miyahara) is a very strong skater. It will be an interesting fight tomorrow and I hope all of us will skate very well and may the best one win."

Skating to "Song for the Little Sparrow", Miyahara landed a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, double Axel, triple loop and showed excellent spins for a season best score of 76.08 points. "I was nervous in the short program today, but I did the jumps better than I thought I would and so I achieved my goal for the jumps," the reigning World bronze medalist said. "However, I did not achieve the highest level for my footwork and I hope to be able to do the steps and jumps tomorrow."

Her fellow countrywoman Mihara's performance to "It's Magic" concluded an exciting Ladies Short Program with another highlight. Mihara delivered a beautiful performance that featured a double Axel, a triple flip and level four spins and footwork. However, she underrotated the back end of her triple Lutz-triple toe combination, leaving the 2017 Four Continents Champion with 70.38 points.

"As I skated last today, I was extremely nervous, but skating in Japan I felt the support of the audience," the 19-year-old said. "I am disappointed that the second jump in my triple-triple combination was called underrotated. Tomorrow I want to land all jumps cleanly so that there is no underrotation."

[Eunsoo Lim](#) (KOR) remained close to the podium on 69.78 points with a strong performance. [Rika Kihira](#) (JPN) fell on an underrotated triple Axel to finish fifth on 69.59 points, while Russia's [Alena Leonova](#) came sixth (68.22 points). ISU Grand Prix Final silver medalist [Maria Sotskova](#) (RUS) struggled with her combination and sits in ninth place on 60.75 points.

Shoma Uno (JPN) grabs narrow lead in Men's Short Program

Olympic silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) of Japan grabbed a narrow 1.12 point lead over Russia's [Sergei Voronov](#) in the Men's Short Program at NHK Trophy on Friday. [Dmitri Aliev](#) of Russia placed third in the first segment of the competition.

Uno opened his program to "Stairway to Heaven" with a quadruple flip but then crashed on the quadruple toeloop, failing to execute a combination. The World silver medalist rallied back to complete a triple Axel and two level-four spins to score 92.49 points. "My performance was not that great, there were major mistakes," Uno admitted.

“Physically I was moving well, but I bent forward on the jumps and I need to make adjustments. Of course, I have regrets, but the mistake today was different from Skate Canada (when Uno missed a triple Axel). There, it happened mostly because of emotions, while today my body was moving almost too well.”

Voronov, who skated last, delivered, nailed a quadruple toeloop-triple toeloop combination, a triple Lutz and a triple Axel in his routine to “Prelude No. 5” by Sergei Rachmaninov. The defending NHK Trophy Champion collected a level four for two spins while the step sequence and the change sit spin garnered a level two as he registered a total of 91.37.

“I am just happy that I was able to go out after one of the top skaters of the world and show my level and what I am capable of. Some levels were lower, probably the emotions affected the quality,” said the Russian, who at 31 is the oldest man in the competition. “He (Rachmaninov) is one of my favorite composers. I really wanted to prove something to those who were skeptical about changing the program - and this is my best score ever.”

Aliev’s program to “Modigliani Suite” included a quadruple toeloop, triple Lutz-triple toeloop and intricate footwork, but he fell on the triple Axel. The 2018 European silver medalist managed 81.16 points. “Overall I felt good emotionally and it was a good fight. I made an error on the triple Axel, but this was probably because I was overwhelmed by emotions after I did the first jump (quad toe) very well and then I went into the Axel without control,” the 19-year-old said.

The 2018 World Junior bronze medalist Matteo Rizzo (ITA) came fourth on 77.00 points, followed by 2017 World Junior Champion Vincent Zhou (USA) on 75.90. Sota Yamamoto (JPN) rounds out the top six (74.98 points).

Overall, 58 skaters/couples representing 13 ISU members compete in NHK Trophy November 9-11, the fourth event in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series. The top 6 qualifiers in each discipline will proceed to the Final in Vancouver (CAN), December 6 to 9, 2018.

NHK Trophy continues Saturday with the Rhythm Dance, Pairs, Ladies and Men’s Free Skating.

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series please visit [here](#).

Follow the discussion on social media by using **#FigureSkating #GPFigure**.