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Lausanne, SUI

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 18/19 Internationaux de France, Day Two

Favorites [Gabiella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) (FRA), [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) and [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) (FRA) prevailed as competition wrapped up at the Internationaux de France in Grenoble Saturday with the Free Skating and Free Dance. Five skaters grabbed the last available spots for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. The Internationaux de France was the sixth and last event of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2018/19.

Nathan Chen (USA) rebounds to grab the gold in Grenoble

World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) rebounded after a sub-par Short Program to take the gold. [Jason Brown](#) (USA) claimed the silver and the bronze went to Russia's [Alexander Samarin](#).

Chen reeled off a quadruple flip, quadruple toe, another quad toe (in combination with an underrotated triple toe) as well as a triple Axel and four triples jumps in his program to "Land of All" by Woodkid. The American picked up a level four for his spins and a level three for his footwork to score 184.64 points. The U.S. Champion totaled 271.58 to win his second Grand Prix gold medal and qualify for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. "I'm pretty happy with my performance of the long program, definitely more satisfied with the long than with the short," the 19-year-old Yale student said. "I'm looking forward to continuing to develop the program and develop the technical side of the program."

Skating to a Simon and Garfunkel Medley, Brown produced four clean triples, including an Axel and exquisite spins. However, the 23-year-old underrotated his second triple Axel and doubled a Lutz. Brown was ranked third in the Free Skating with 159.92 points and slipped from first to second at 256.33 points. "I'm pretty pleased with the way things went. Whereas the short program places my strengths, the long program really tests those strengths. I have a long way to go, but I'm really happy with the development as it has come along since the start of the season. I'm glad that I was able to stay focused and walk away with my first international medal of this season," Brown said.

Samarin's routine to "The Greatest Showman" included a quad toe-double toe combination, a triple Axel-double toe as well as three more clean triples, but he almost fell on an underrotated quad Lutz and also underrotated the second triple Axel. The national silver medalist earned 156.23 points and dropped from second to third place on 247.09 points overall. "I am not completely satisfied with my performance in the free skating as there were mistakes, notably on the combination jumps. I am not so pleased with the result either, as the Grand Prix Final was so close and so far away at the same time. But I'm overall glad with how it ended and that I'm not going home empty-handed," the 20-year-old said.

[Dmitri Aliev](#) (RUS) pulled up from ninth to fourth place and ranked second in the Free Skating with a solid skate (237.82 points). [Kevin Aymoz](#) (FRA) moved up from sixth to fifth on 231.16 points while [Romain Ponsart](#) (FRA) slipped from fourth to sixth (229.66 points).

[Nicolas Nadeau](#) (CAN) withdrew from the event following the morning practice, citing a back injury.

Papadakis/Cizeron (FRA) float to Ice Dance gold in Grenoble

Three-time World Champions [Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) of France continued their winning ways and cruised to the gold in Grenoble. Russians [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) took the silver medal and booked their ticket to the Grand Prix Final while [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) of Canada earned the bronze.

Papadakis/Cizeron put out a fluid and emotional dance to “Duet” and “Sunday Afternoon” by Rachael Yamagata. The four-time European Champions collected a level four for the lifts, twizzles, diagonal step sequence and their spin. Only the one foot step sequence was graded a level three for her. The French Champions scored 132.65 points for the Free Dance and racked up 216.78 points overall; both scores are the highest achieved this season in Ice Dance. Since the couple competed in only one Grand Prix event, they did not qualify for the Final.

“We are really with what we have done today,” Cizeron said. “We didn’t expect to have such a great score. So we’re very happy with the technical aspect of our program and we had a really good moment on the ice. I feel like we shared a very good moment with the audience. It was the first time we’ve done our free program this year, so we had a little bit of stress, but I feel the audience connected to it.”

Dancing to Johann Sebastian’s “Air” Suite, Sinitsina/Katsalapov produced an elegant performance that was highlighted by level-four twizzles and lifts. The Skate Canada silver medalists set a season’s-best score of 122.47 points in the Free Dance and accumulated 200.38 points overall. “We are very happy with how the season has been going for us so far,” Katsalapov said. “We really enjoyed the competition. We got a season’s-best in both programs and we couldn’t be happier right now. We skated for each other.”

Gilles/Poirier gave an emotional performance of their “Vincent” program set to “Starry Starry Night” by Don MacLean and Govardo. The lifts and the combination spin merited a level four while the twizzles were graded a level three and four. The Skate Canada bronze medalists earned 114.49 points and 188.74 points overall. “Today’s free dance was one of those programs we had to fight through. We didn’t make any errors, but it was one of those programs that we had to go through each thing, take one element at a time,” Poirier said. “Of course, we’re a little bit disappointed not to qualify for the Final in this Grand Prix season. We had very tough events with deep fields. We need to look at the levels in our program that were very low at this event to make sure we’re ready for the Championship season.”

NHK Trophy Champions [Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker](#) (USA) placed fourth on 181.74 points with a dance to songs by The Irrepressibles. They also qualified for the ISU Grand Prix Final. NHK Trophy bronze medalists [Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons](#) (USA) came fifth with 171.17 points ahead of [Marie-Jade Lauriault/Romain LeGac](#) (FRA) on 170.64.

Kihira (JPN) leads Japan to one-two finish

[Rika Kihira](#) led the Japanese Ladies to a one-two finish at the Internationaux de France and took her second Grand Prix gold medal this season. [Mai Mihara](#) slipped from first to second while [Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) climbed from sixth to third.

Kihira opened her program to “Beautiful Storm” by Jennifer Thomas with a shaky triple Axel and underrotated the jump. She recovered to land a double Axel-triple toeloop combination as well as four more clean triples and two level-four spins. The NHK Trophy Champion earned 138.28 points and accumulated 205.92 points to move up from second to first place. “Considering that I couldn’t condition my body well, I did what I could do. I’m happy about my victory, but I’m not satisfied with my performance and my score, and I hope to do better in the Grand Prix Final,” the 16-year-old said.

Mihara’s program to “The Mission” soundtrack included five clean triple jumps, but she doubled a Salchow and underrotated a toeloop. The 2017 Four Continents Champion ranked third in the Free Skating with 134.86 points and slipped from first to second place on 202.81 points. “Today I am not satisfied with my free skating. Before I skated I almost burst into tears, but my coach told me, ‘don’t worry, I’m here with you’ and that was a relief. Overall it was a good experience for me and I will continue to practice to gain more confidence,” the 19-year-old said.

Tennell delivered a strong performance of her “Romeo and Juliet” program, landing five clean triples, including a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination. The U.S. Champion was ranked second in the Free Skating with 136.44 points and totaled 197.78 points. “I’m pretty happy with how today’s performance went,” she said. “To come to an event like this and skate like I have been practicing is really rewarding. Obviously, I still want to improve on things in the program and yesterday’s performance can be much improved as well.”

Two-time World Champion [Evgenia Medvedeva](#) (RUS) made a few errors and dropped from third to fourth on 192.81 points. Grand Prix Helsinki silver medalist [Stanislava Konstantinova](#) (RUS) pulled up from ninth to fifth with a strong performance (189.67 points). [Marin Honda](#) (JPN) came sixth on 188.61 points.

James/Cipres (FRA) rise from third to take gold on home ice

World bronze medalists [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) of France came back from a faulty Short Program in the Free Skating to claim their second Grand Prix gold medal this season as competition wrapped up at Internationaux de France in Grenoble on Saturday.

In an event that produced a few surprises, [Tarah Kayne/Danny O’Shea](#) (USA) captured the silver medal while overnight leaders [Aleksandra Boikova/Dmitrii Kozlovskii](#) of Russia earned the bronze. Both Kayne/O’Shea and Boikova/Kozlovskii won their first ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating medal.

Performing to “Wicked Game” and “The Last Feeling”, James/Cipres produced a triple twist, triple toe-double toe-double toe combination, throw triple flip and Salchow as well as a level-four lift, spin and death spiral. The only major glitch came when James doubled the triple Salchow. The French pair scored 140.53 points and to 205.77 points overall.

“We’re really happy to win this competition,” Cipres said. “It’s the first time for us to win two Grand Prix in the season and to go to the Grand Prix Final. We have a lot of work to do for these next two weeks. Added James: “We’re both happy with the fight today, especially after a disappointing short program yesterday. We’re very proud to have our second gold medal at a Grand Prix. We just have more work to do mentally and try to skate even better than at Skate Canada. It’s nice to have made these few mistakes here to learn from them and be perfect for the next competition.”

Kayne/O’Shea’s routine to “Swan Lake” was highlighted by a triple twist, a triple Salchow-single Euler-double Salchow combination and a spectacular carry lift. However, Kayne stumbled on the double Axel. The 2018 Four Continents Champions posted a season’s-best score of 127.98 points for an overall total of 191.43. “Danny and I are very pleased with how we skated at this competition on the whole, especially the free skate,” Kayne said. “Our free skate at NHK (Trophy), our first Grand Prix, was less than desirable, especially on my part. So, to have come to France and make this much improvement in just two short weeks made us both very happy.”

Boikova/Kozlovskii completed a side by side triple Salchow, a big triple twist and a throw triple Salchow in their “Nutcracker” program. But Boikova struggled with the triple toeloop and fell on the throw triple loop. The 2017 World Junior silver medalists scored 121.01 points in the Free Skating and dropped two spots to third on 189.84 points. “We had a good experience here, but we have to work harder. I hope you’ll see us in a better shape next time,” Boikova said. Added Kozlovskii: “It was our first medal in the Grand Prix, which is nice, and I hope that we’ll skate better in the future. We need to do step by step.”

[Tae Ok Ryom/Ju Sik Kim](#) (PRK) slipped from second to fourth after they made errors on the double Axel and throw triple loop (187.95 points). [Camille Ruest/Andrew Wolfe](#) (CAN) finished fifth on 164.10 points.

Overall, 57 skaters/couples representing 14 ISU members competed at Internationaux de France November 23-25, the sixth and final 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.

For full results 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**.