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Vancouver, Canada

## **Nathan Chen (USA) repeats as ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final Champion**

### **Hubbell/Donohue (USA) claim Rhythm Dance with season's best score**

World silver medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) danced to the lead in the Rhythm Dance as the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continued Friday in Vancouver (CAN). Italians [Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri](#) edged [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) of Russia for second place.

Hubbell/Donohue's sultry Tango to "Alevare", "Tangata" and "Maria de Buenos Aires" included a level-four lift and level-four twizzles while the Tango Romantica Pattern garnered a level one and two. The World silver medalists slightly surpassed their previous season's best with 80.53 points. "It's been five weeks since we competed and the last competition also being in Canada so it was a long five weeks of changing the program. Today we felt like we really put the performance first and really showed off this new concept to the audience and got a lot of energy in return," Hubbell commented. "We changed a quite bit actually- with the Rhythm Dance, so much of the program is elements so the changes we made even though they were quite drastic they came together relatively quickly. The steps of the Tango stayed the same and lift stayed the same as well. We just love the character and I really connect with this piece and with female vocals so it's really great to have the very classic song," she elaborated.

Guignard/Fabbri put out a characteristic Tango to "Miedo a la Libertad", "La Chanson des vieux amants" and "Tanos", collecting a level four for her twizzles, the rotational lift and the first sequence of the Tango Romantica. The Skate America silver medalists posted a new season's best of 78.30 points. "After our two senior Grand Prix, we had another competition, another Challenger Series event after which we worked a lot on the Rhythm Dance to make this program even more passionate and precise and clean. We're very happy because we could perform it the way we wanted to tonight and we couldn't ask for more," Fabbri told the press.

Dancing to "Verano Porteno", Sinitsina/Katsalapov produced excellent twizzles and footwork, but the rotational lift merited only a level two. The Muscovites scored 77.33 points. "We really enjoyed our skate. Since this is the mid-season, we are improving with each competition. I think there was a mistake - we didn't complete the rotation in the lift. We didn't get our season best," Katsalapov noted. "Still we think that our skate was decent, at least that is how we feel. We will work towards our best, and we hope that during the Russia Championships we would skate our short dance even better, enjoy the skate and get a different score. We still have room to grow," he continued.

[Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin](#) (RUS) are just 0.13 points off the podium in fourth place with 77.20 points. [Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (RUS) placed fifth (72.98 points) followed by [Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker](#) (USA) on 71.33 points.

## Cheng/Peng (CHN) upset favorites in Pairs Short Program

China's [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) upset the favorites in the Pairs Short Program, edging Russians [Natalia Zabiako/Alexander Enbert](#) and [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) for a narrow lead at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Vancouver (CAN) on Friday.

Peng/Jin turned in an excellent performance to "Ophelia" by The Lumineers that was highlighted by a side by side triple toe, triple twist and a throw triple loop. The NHK Trophy silver medalists picked up a level four for the lift, spin, death spiral and footwork to earn a season's best score of 75.69 points. "The first time we went to the Final, we didn't do very well since we made some mistakes. This time, we made sure that we could do our best," Jin commented.

Skating to "Alexander Nevski" by Sergei Prokofiev, Zabiako/Enbert produced a set of triple toes, a high triple twist and big throw triple loop. The European bronze medalists collected level threes for their death spiral, footwork and spin and scored 75.18 points, which was a new season's best. "We are truly satisfied, and we did our best today. I think it worked out well, it was emotional, and with that focus which this program requires. It is great that we are here, and we are competing for the top spots," Enbert told the press.

Tarasova/Morozov opened their program to "I Got You" by James Brown with a huge triple twist, but then Tarasova missed the triple toe. The World silver medalists recovered to complete a throw triple loop and three level-four elements. The European Champions earned 74.04 points. "It was a big mistake and I am not satisfied. You need to skate clean in the short program. The mistake wasn't even something technical and the training has been going very well. But what happened, happened," Tarasova noted.

World bronze medalists [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) (FRA) finished fourth as she struggled with the landing of the triple toe and the throw triple flip (71.51 points). [Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise](#) (ITA) are standing in fifth on 69.77 points while [Daria Pavliuchenko/Denis Khodykin](#) (RUS) are ranked sixth on 61.24 points.

## Nathan Chen (USA) repeats as ISU Grand Prix Final Champion

Reigning World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) added his second ISU Grand Prix Final title to his resume Friday in Vancouver (CAN). Japan's [Shoma Uno](#) earned the silver medal like last year while [Junhwan Cha](#) of Korea pulled up from fourth to take the bronze medal in his debut at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final.

Skating to "Land of All" by Woodkid, Chen nailed an excellent quad flip right out of the gate, but then missed the quad Lutz (underrotated) and stumbled on the quad toe. The reigning World Champion rallied back to land a triple Axel, quad toe-triple toe combination as well as four more triple jumps. He picked up a level four for his spins and footwork. The 2017 Four Continents Champion scored 189.43 points for his Free Skating which added up to 282.42 points overall. "I am definitely not happy with the Lutz, I stepped back on the toe so that I would not miss out on a combo. I definitely need to bump this up to next level, this is not quite where I wanted it to be," Chen said. "I mostly wanted to improve on what I already had in the last competition in improving whether it be adding a new jump or cleaning things up. For the next competition, I will be working on completing the (quad) Lutz," the 19-year-old added.

Uno struggled with his opening quad Salchow and flip, landing forward on the first one and underrotating the second one. The Olympic silver medalist pulled himself together to produce a quad toe, quad toe-double toe as well as two triple Axels and difficult spins and footwork in his

program set to “Moonlight Sonata” by Ludwig van Beethoven. The Japanese Champion earned 183.43 points and totaled 275.10 points. “I can definitely say it was not a good performance. And I think every time I finish a competition I say the same thing. I performed today with the mindset that I would finally be able to make it. But it did not go well. The only good thing was even if I made mistake on my Salchow I was able to do the (quad) flip and (quad) toe,” the World silver medalist commented.

Cha missed his first jump, an underrotated quad toe, but then reeled off a quad Salchow as well as seven triples in his performance to “Romeo and Juliet”. The Korean Champion posted a season’s best of 174.42 points and moved up one spot on 263.49 points overall. “I really fought until my program finished. I really worked hard and tried my best, so I’m satisfied with my program today. I missed my first jump, but I controlled myself really well and did everything else later in the program,” the 17-year-old said. “I have a lot of competitions left so I don’t want to get injured and stay healthy. I want to practice harder to get the better result, too,” he added.

[Michal Brezina](#) (CZE) fell on an underrotated quad Salchow and slipped from third to fourth place on 255.26 points. [Keegan Messing](#) (CAN) finished fifth (236.05) while [Sergei Voronov](#) (RUS) dropped to sixth (226.44 points).

Full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series are available [here](#). Follow the conversation with #JGPFigure and #GPFigure.