

October 25, 2019

Kelowna, Canada

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Skate Canada International Day 1

Two-time and reigning Olympic Champion [Yuzuru Hanyu](#) (JPN), ISU Grand Prix Final Champion [Rika Kihira](#) (JPN), Pair skaters [Aleksandra Boikova/ Dmitri Kozlovskii](#) and World Ice Dance medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) took the lead as Skate Canada International opened in Kelowna Friday with the Short Programs and the Rhythm Dance. Skate Canada International is the second of six events of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019/2020.

Hanyu (JPN) dazzles in Men's Short Program at Skate Canada

Two-time Olympic champion [Yuzuru Hanyu](#) of Japan swept aside the competition in the Men's Short Program at Skate Canada in Kelowna on Friday, winning with 20 points to spare in a stunning performance. Grand Prix debutant Camden Pulkinen (USA) surprisingly came second ahead of Canada's Nam Nguyen.

Hanyu opened his dramatic performance to "Otonal" by Raul di Blasio with a quadruple Salchow and a triple Axel followed by a quadruple-triple toeloop combination. The 2019 world silver medalist collected a level four for his spins and earned a mammoth 109.60 points to the delight of the enthralled crowd.

"It was not so great, but I felt I did my best today. I felt calm today, but I am not sure if my calmness led to me being more focused," the two-time world champion explained.

Pulkinen produced a quadruple toeloop, triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toeloop and solid spins in his routine to "Caruso" to set a personal best of 89.05 points.

"This is my senior Grand Prix debut, so I think I surprised myself with scoring 89 points. I never really knew I could do that until I actually did it. I was just happy that I could hold together a complete program, hold my spins and nail my jumps," the 19-year-old said.

[Nam Nguyen](#)'s performance to "Blues for Klook" included a quadruple Salchow-triple toeloop combination, a somewhat shaky triple Axel and a triple flip. The Canadian champion scored 84.08 points.

"Everything fell into place today. The crowd was great, the energy was insane. The program overall felt great. It was a big step up from Nebelhorn Trophy, but there is a lot more work that needs to be done," Nguyen commented.

[Deniss Vasiljevs](#) (LAT) remained within striking distance of the podium in fourth place at 84.01 points. [Keiji Tanaka](#) (JPN) ranks fifth and [Andrei Lazukin](#) (RUS) rounds off the top six (78.99 points).

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating [Standings Men](#)

Kihira (JPN) storms to lead in triple Axel battle in Ladies Short Program

ISU Grand Prix Final champion [Rika Kihira](#) of Japan stormed into the lead in the Ladies Short Program at Skate Canada in Kelowna, following a thrilling duel with Korea's Young You where both skaters hit a triple Axel. World Junior champion Alexandra Trusova of Russia finished third.

Kihira opened her program to “Breakfast in Baghdad” with a solid triple Axel and followed up with a triple flip-triple toe combination, a triple loop and level-four spins and footwork. The 2019 Four Continents champion scored 81.35 points.

“The quality of my triple Axel and my triple loop was good, like in practice, but in some parts of the program I was nervous and I didn’t do my spins so well. Tomorrow in practice I want to focus on my jumps and spins. I want to keep a positive attitude,” the 17-year-old said.

Skating to “Romeo and Juliet” by Craig Armstrong, Young pulled off a triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe and triple flip to achieve a new personal best with 78.22 points.

“The triple Axel was not as good as in practice, but it was still good and the other elements were as good as in practice. I have been working on the triple Axel for three years. Now I feel good and have more confidence,” the Korean champion explained.

Trusova’s dynamic routine to “Peer Gynt” by Edvard Grieg featured a double Axel, triple Lutz-triple loop and triple flip. The two-time World Junior champion picked up 74.40 points.

“I am pleased with my performance today, but I will continue to work on my spins, skating skills and I hope to do the triple Axel soon. I’ve waited a long time to be able to compete at the senior level and I really like it,” the 15-year-old commented.

[Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) remains close to the podium in fourth place on 72.92 points. [Gabrielle Daleman](#) (CAN) follows in fifth place at 63.94 points. Olympic silver medalist [Evgenia Medvedeva](#) (RUS) placed sixth after falling on her triple Lutz and stumbling on the double Axel (62.89 points).

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating [Standings Ladies](#)

Youngsters Boikova/Kozlovskii (RUS) win Pairs Short Program

Young Russian Pair [Aleksandra Boikova/ Dmitri Kozlovskii](#) reigned supreme in the Pairs Short Program at Skate Canada in Kelowna on Friday. Canadians [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#) thrilled the home fans to take second while [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) of Russia are currently ranked third.

Boikova/Kozlovskii delivered a smooth and elegant performance to “My Way” that included a side by side triple Salchow, throw triple flip, triple twist and a level-four lift. The 2019 European bronze medalists earned 76.45 points.

“Today doesn’t matter, because tomorrow is the main day and our scores are not important,” Kozlovskii said. “For each athlete, the goal is to give a clean performance and to bring across the idea of the programs. Figure skating is not just sport, but also an art and all athletes want to develop to combine the technical aspect and the second mark that consists of different components,” he added.

Skating to “Love on the Brain”, Moore-Towers/Marinaro completed a triple twist, a triple toeloop and throw triple loop out of a difficult entry to score 75.50 points.

“As for every athlete, our main objective is to compete how we train and today for the most part we’re pretty pleased with the outcome. There are a few things that we lost a few points on we’re looking to gain at NHK (Trophy), but overall we’re happy and looking forward to tomorrow,” Moore-Towers told the post-event press conference.

Tarasova/Morozov's routine to the iconic "Bolero" by Maurice Ravel was highlighted by a triple twist and huge throw triple loop. However, Morozov doubled the toeloop and the world silver medalists ended with 73.57 points.

"In general, the short program was not bad, but we made one big mistake, therefore we are not so happy. But we'll keep going and working hard and come back with a new mindset tomorrow," Morozov commented.

[Alexa Scimeca Knierim/Chris Knierim](#) (USA) finished fourth on 71.28 points followed by the new duo of [Liubov Ilyushechkina/Charlie Bilodeau](#) (CAN) on 68.62 points.

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating [Standings Pairs](#)

Hubbell/Donohue (USA) edge Gilles/Poirier (CAN) in Rhythm Dance

Two-time World Ice Dance medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) edged Canada's home favorites [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) for the lead in the Rhythm Dance as the Skate Canada International opened on Friday in Kelowna (CAN). [Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker](#) (USA) are currently ranked third.

Performing to "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" and "Let's Be Bad", Hubbell/Donohue picked up a level four for the straight line lift and level three for the pattern dance part and the midline step sequence. The U.S. champions scored 83.21 points.

"We were actually pleased to end our Grand Prix (series) for the Rhythm Dance already," Hubbell said. "We had this experience (of back-to-back Grand Prix events) last season and we kind of knew how to approach it. But, we also were able to stay with friends and really take a couple of days of full mental and physical rest in Vancouver before arriving here. We feel ready and prepared for this competition," she continued.

Gilles/Poirier turned in a lively dance to March, Foxtrot and Quickstep from "Mack and Mabel", collecting a level four for the twizzles and the lift to set a personal best of 82.58 points.

"The two of us are both very proud of what we did today. We've trained really hard on the Short Dance (Rhythm Dance) to make a statement. Our first program on the Grand Prix series is usually a tough one, so it was nice to have the home crowd behind us. We felt their energy and we're excited for tomorrow," Gilles commented.

Hawayek/Baker's Bee Gee medley was highlighted by fast twizzles and a curve lift that merited a level four. The 2018 Four Continents champions earned 79.52 points.

"Every time we come to Skate Canada, the crowd doesn't disappoint us and they give us this extra boost of energy," Hawayek noted. "We're happy with the improvements we've made since our senior B events this fall and we're looking forward to continue that in the free dance tomorrow," she added.

[Lilah Fear/Lewis Gibson](#) (GBR) placed fourth with an upbeat performance to the Blues Brothers on 76.67 points and [Sara Hurtado/Kirill Khaliavin](#) (ESP) came fifth on 72.77 points.

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating [Standings Ice Dance](#)

Skate Canada continues on Saturday with the Free Dance, Ladies, Pairs and Men's Free Skating.. Full [entry lists, results, the General Announcement](#) of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series are available on isu.org.

Where to watch and follow the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019?

Viewers will be able to watch the Series either via their national broadcaster / channel and for countries where there are no broadcasters, the ISU will offer a live stream on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) as of season 2019/20. You will find the full list in the [Where to watch news here](#).

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ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019/20

[Skate America - Las Vegas \(USA\) – October 18 – 20](#)

[Skate Canada International – Kelowna \(CAN\) – October 25 – 27](#)

[Internationaux de France – Grenoble \(FRA\) – Novembre 1 – 3](#)

[SHISEIDO cup of China – Chongqing \(CHN\) – November 8 – 10](#)

[Rostelecom Cup – Moscow \(RUS\) – November 15 – 17](#)

[NHK Trophy – Sapporo \(JPN\) – November 22 – 24](#)

[ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final \(Senior & Junior\) – Torino \(ITA\) – December 5 – 8](#)

[The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series](#) started in 1995 (previously known as the ISU Champions Series) and consists of six international senior invitational events and the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. The skaters are seeded and invited to the six Grand Prix of Figure Skating events based on the results of the previous ISU World Figure Skating Championships. Competitors collect points in their ISU Grand Prix events towards the qualification for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. Only the top six Skaters / Couples in each discipline can qualify for the Final.