

November 1, 2019

Grenoble, France

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019/20 **Internationaux de France, Day 1**

World Ice Dance Champions [Gabriella Papadakis/ Guillaume Cizeron](#) (FRA), World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA), rising star [Alena Kostornaia](#) (RUS) and young pair [Daria Pavliuchenko/Denis Khodykin](#) (RUS) skated to lead in an exciting first day of competition at the ISU Grand Prix Internationaux de France in Grenoble on Friday.

Chen (USA) skates to lead in Men's Short Program in Grenoble

Two-time World Champion and hot favorite [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) took the lead in the Men's Short Program. Russia's [Alexander Samarin](#) currently sits in second followed by [Kevin Aymoz](#) of France.

Performing to 'La Boheme', Chen nailed a quadruple-triple toeloop combination and a quadruple flip, but stumbled on his triple Axel. Two spins and the footwork merited a level four and the U.S. Champion scored 102.48 points.

"I'm happy to be in this position. However, the program was a little shaky. The Axel, I obviously did a mistake, the (first) toe a little forward on the landing, but beyond that I think it's a good second run of the Short Program. Obviously, work has to be done, but it's exciting to be in this position," Chen said.

Samarin's program to 'Blues for Klook' featured a quadruple Lutz-triple toeloop combination, a quadruple flip and level-four spins and steps. However, the 2019 European silver medalist stepped out of his triple Axel. He picked up 98.48 points, a personal best.

"I really enjoyed performing here. There were some mistakes, but overall I am satisfied, as a lot worked out as planned. The important thing for tomorrow is to keep the focus and show what I can do in training," he said.

Aymoz opened his routine to Prince's 'The Question of U' with a quadruple toeloop and landed a triple Axel, but then fell on his triple Lutz to earn 82.50 points.

"I am happy to be in the top three, because that was my goal. Even with the mistake I made I am quite happy with what I did," the Frenchman said.

[Shoma Uno](#) (JPN) landed a quad flip but missed his quad toe and triple Axel to come fourth (79.05 points). [Morisi Kvitelashvili](#) (GEO) placed fifth on 78.79 points while [Romain Ponsart](#) (FRA) is currently ranked sixth on 77.48 points.

Papadakis/Cizeron (FRA) rule on home ice in Rhythm Dance

France's four-time World Champions [Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) shone in the Rhythm Dance as they took a confident lead. [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) came second, edging Italy's [Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri](#).

Papadakis/Cizeron got the crowd going with their entertaining aerobic-themed dance to 'Fame', dressed in workout outfits complete with a headband for Cizeron. The five-time European Champions collected a level four for the twizzles and the stationary lift as well as a level three for the Finnstep pattern dance and the midline step sequence to score 88.69 points.

"It was a fun performance. We were quite nervous, because it was our first competition, but I think we were very lucky that it was in France. The audience was very responsive and very supportive, so it helped during the performance. We made a couple of small mistakes, so we have some things to work on for the next one," Papadakis said.

Cizeron added: "It's really fun for us that it is really different. It's different from what everyone else is doing and it's different from what we've been doing. It was a kind of a challenge to work on this program and make it fun."

Dancing to 'Too Darn Hot', Chock/Bates delivered a strong performance as well, earning a level four for the lift and twizzles, but the Finnstep pattern garnered only a level one. The 2019 Four Continents Champions scored 80.69 points.

"We really had our best performance of the season. It's our third time out and I felt like we're really getting comfortable with the program and were able to have more energy throughout the program. It was really an amazing atmosphere in the arena today. I was delighted to see an almost full arena and the crowd went crazy," Bates said.

Guignard/Fabbri's Blues and Quickstep to music from Cirque du Soleil's 'Paramour' included four level-four elements. However, Fabbri wobbled on the twizzles. The 2019 European bronze medalists set a season's best of 79.65 points. Fabbri was wearing a cast after injuring tendons in his right hand in a practice accident in September, but it didn't stop him from competing.

"I'm super happy and super angry at the same time. The only element I didn't use my hand I made a mistake. It was a really stupid mistake that cost us a lot of points. But I will not complain," Fabbri said.

"We just decided to come (to the competition) two days before the departure. Until one week ago we didn't think we could come to France as the doctors told us I would not be able to do a program. I couldn't use my hand and I wasn't even thinking that we could adapt everything (to the situation)."

[Olivia Smart/Adrian Diaz](#) (ESP) finished fourth with an upbeat dance to 'Grease' on 76.09 points. ISU Grand Prix Finalists [Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (RUS) are sitting in fifth place with 75.05 points.

In the Rhythm Dance, there were two instances of wrong data input of the Pattern Dance Element (Finnstep) which had been detected in due time by the Referee. The correction of the data resulted in a new score for the couples Marie-Jade Lauriault/Romain Le Gac (FRA) to 63.42 points and

Allison Reed/Saulius Ambruelicius (LTU) to 60.99 points. The ranking of the Rhythm Dance did not change.

Kostornaia (RUS) grabs lead over Zagitova (RUS) in Ladies Short Program

Grand Prix debutant [Alena Kostornaia](#) of Russia grabbed a narrow lead over Olympic Champion and teammate [Alina Zagitova](#) in the Ladies Short Program. [Mariah Bell](#) (USA) finished third.

Kostornaia opened her performance to 'Lullaby' and 'November' by Max Richter with a triple Axel, but underrotated the jump. The ISU Junior Grand Prix Final Champion went on to complete a triple Lutz, triple flip-triple toeloop combination as well as level-four spins and footwork to pick up 76.55 points.

"I am pleased that I was able to show my maximum, but obviously there is something that can be fixed. Overall it was a good start for my senior competitions," the 16-year-old said.

Zagitova's expressive flamenco routine to 'Me Voy' by Yasmin Levy featured a triple flip, double Axel as well as difficult spins and footwork that merited a level four. However, the 2019 World Champion underrotated the back end of her triple Lutz-triple loop combination. She scored 74.24 points.

"I went out on the ice with the thought that I wanted to enjoy my performance and I think this is what I did. Obviously, there is still some work left to do, but overall I am pleased with myself today," the 17-year-old said.

Skating to 'Radar' and 'Work' by Britney Spears, Bell produced a triple flip-triple toe combination, triple Lutz and double Axel to earn 70.25 points.

"I'm really pleased with my skate today. I had a lot of fun. I think there is obviously some room to improve, but I'm really proud of that skate for my opening Grand Prix of the season," the 23-year-old said.

[Starr Andrews](#) (USA) came fourth on 66.59 points with a clean performance, followed by 2018 World silver medalist [Wakaba Higuchi](#) (JPN) on 64.78 points. 2018 Four Continents Champion [Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) fell on her double Axel to place sixth (64.08 points).

Sublime Pavliuchenko/Khodykin (RUS) take lead in Pairs Short Program

[Daria Pavliuchenko/Denis Khodykin](#) of Russia skated to the lead in the Pairs Short Program. Teammates [Anastasia Mishina/Alexander Galliamov](#) took second place while [Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier](#) (USA) came third in the first part of the event.

Pavliuchenko/Khodykin put out a strong performance to 'The Storm' by Havasi, landing a side by side triple toe, triple twist, throw triple loop and level-four side by side combination spin and Axel Lasso lift. The 2018 World Junior Champions posted a personal best of 76.59 points.

“We are happy to have skated a clean program, but that it already behind us and we focus on the next event tomorrow,” Khodykin said.

Pavliuchenko added: “Our program is called ‘Storm’ and it has something exciting, even alarming which we are trying to bring across. I am Denis’ muse and at first he does not see me, but in the end I inspire him.”

Mishina/Galliamov’s routine to ‘Je suis malade’ was highlighted by a triple twist, side by side triple Salchow, throw triple flip and a reverse Lasso lift. The 2019 World Junior Champions earned 73.77 points.

“We had some mistakes today, but we are still happy, because it is our first senior Grand Prix so far. We hope it will be better tomorrow,” Mishina said.

Denney/Frazier completed a triple twist, throw triple loop and a difficult Axel Lasso lift in their routine to ‘Quidam’ from Cirque du Soleil. She underrotated the triple Salchow, but the 2013 World Junior Champions managed a personal best of 68.65 points.

“We’re happy with how our short went today. We still lost a few levels and points that we need to improve on, but all in all it was a good stride in the right direction for our short and we move on to the free. It’s a new day tomorrow,” Frazier said.

[Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy LeDuc](#) (USA) currently sit in fourth place close to the podium on 66.12 points after she fell on the throw triple Lutz. [Rebecca Ghilardi/Filippo Ambrosini](#) (ITA) finished fifth at 59.62 points.

The Internationaux de France continue Saturday with the Men’s, Ladies, Pairs Free Skating and the Free Dance. Overall, 59 skaters/couples representing 13 ISU members compete at Internationaux de France November 1-3. The top six qualifiers of the Grand Prix series in each discipline will proceed to the Final in Torino (ITA), December 5 to 8, 2019. 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](#).

Subscribe to the [ISU Newsletter](#) to receive the latest information and the “Where to Watch” news and you can also subscribe to the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) to receive notifications when live streams start or new videos are published.

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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.