

March 22, 2021

Stockholm, Sweden

ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2021 Preview

“Quad queens” to enter center stage

The Ladies event at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Stockholm (SWE) features an exciting mix of newcomers and experienced skaters who are expected to battle for the medals.

Overview of the top contenders

“Quad queens” [Anna Shcherbakova](#) (FSR) and [Alexandra Trusova](#) (FSR) are aiming high at their debut at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships, especially since missing out last year when the event was cancelled. These teenagers have multiple quadruple jumps in their arsenal – Lutz and Flip for Shcherbakova, Lutz, Flip, Salchow and Toeloop for Trusova. The first and so far only quad performed by a Lady at an ISU senior-level ISU World Figure Skating Championship was [Elizabet Tursynbaeva's](#) (KAZ) quad Salchow in 2019. Tursynbaeva is not competing this time.

Shcherbakova earned her third consecutive national title in December with spectacular performances. Trusova looked strong as well at Nationals and the Russian Team Event.

[Rika Kihira](#) (JPN) wants to break through the Russian dominance. The two-time ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Champion also has added a quad (Salchow) to her repertoire and has another trump card - the triple Axel. Kihira will be competing in her second ISU World Figure Skating Championship after coming 4th in her debut in 2019. She landed her first quad Salchow in competition at the Japanese Championships last December and scored a clear victory.

A strong group of more experienced Ladies is eying the podium as well. Stockholm will see the return of “The Empress” [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) (FSR), who returns to the World stage for the first time since 2015, when she had won her ISU World and European titles. Tuktamysheva, by the way, has fond memories of the Ericsson Globe as she was crowned ISU European Figure Skating Champion on this ice six years ago. Tuktamysheva comes with her best weapon, a triple Axel, to Sweden. [Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) has established herself as a top contender over the past years and recaptured her National title in January. Two-time ISU World Figure Skating medalist [Satoko Miyahara](#) (JPN) and 2020 NHK Trophy Champion [Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) are challenging for top placements as well.

Be sure to keep an eye on up and coming skaters such as [Loena Hendrickx](#) (BEL), who just won the Challenge Cup in The Hague, [Eva-Lotta Kiibus](#) (EST), [Yelim Kim](#) (KOR), ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Finalist [Haein Lee](#) (KOR) as well as on [Alexia Paganini](#) (SUI) and [Karen Chen](#) (USA).

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2020 were cancelled because of the pandemic. None of the 2019 ISU World medalists – Champion [Alina Zagitova](#) (RUS), silver medalist [Elizabet Tursynbaeva](#) (KAZ) and bronze medalist [Evgenia Medvedeva](#) (RUS) - are competing this time around and Tuktamysheva is the only Lady that has won an ISU World Figure Skating title before.

Epic duel in the Men's category

A new edition of the epic duel between two-time Olympic and ISU World Figure Skating Champion [Yuzuru Hanyu](#) (JPN) and two-time ISU World Figure Skating Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) highlights the Men's event at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Stockholm (SWE). However, several strong contenders are prepared to enter the battle of the quad kings.

Overview of the top contenders

Hanyu only competed once this season at the National Championships of Japan in December, but came out all guns blazing in Nagano and skated off with his fifth National title.

Chen won the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating and National Championships with strong performances and proved in those events that he is still at the top of his game as well.

While both men are the top favorites for Stockholm, a group of strong competitors is looking to challenge the leaders. 2019 ISU World Figure Skating bronze medalist [Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) did not compete in the past season, but he is back as he made clear at Guaranteed Rate Skate America and the U.S. Championships. The same goes for 2018 ISU World Figure Skating bronze medalist [Mikhail Kolyada](#) (FSR), who missed the past season due to health problems and celebrated a strong comeback this season by winning each competition he entered including the National Championship, the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating - Rostelecom Cup and the Challenge Cup in The Hague. Two-time ISU World Figure Skating bronze medalist [Boyang Jin](#) (CHN), 2018 Olympic silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) (JPN) and rising star, Youth Olympic Games Champion [Yuma Kagiyama](#) (JPN), are in the mix as well.

Others to watch include 2019 ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final bronze medalist [Kevin Aymoz](#) (FRA), [Jason Brown](#) (USA), [Daniel Grassl](#) (ITA), [Deniss Vasiljevs](#) (LAT) and [Junhwan Cha](#) (KOR).

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2020 were cancelled because of the pandemic. With Chen, Hanyu and Zhou, all three 2019 ISU World medalists are back in action in Stockholm – plus a few other World medalists, which makes the field very competitive.

Sui/Han (CHN) to face stiff competition in the Pairs event

Pair Skating power houses China and “FSR” are poised to compete for the podium spots at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Stockholm (SWE). However, the deep field of 28 couples – a rarely seen high number - includes also strong teams from Canada, the USA and Europe.

Overview of the top contenders

Two-time and reigning ISU World Figure Skating Champions [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) (CHN) have not competed since winning gold at the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2020, but they have experience with coming back strong after a long break and should never be counted out.

The 2018 Olympic silver medalists have to expect stiff competition from two-time ISU World Figure Skating silver medalists [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) (FSR) and reigning ISU European Figure Skating Champions [Aleksandra Boikova/Dmitri Kozlovskii](#) (FSR). Both teams have shown excellent performances during the season at the events in Russia. Tarasova/Morozov won the Russian Championships over their rivals while Boikova/Kozlovskii struck gold at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating - Rostelecom Cup.

There are more strong couples that have their eyes set on a podium finish in Stockholm: Two-time ISU Four Continents Figure Skating medalists [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) (CHN) won the gold medal at the Cup of China. 2020 ISU Four Continents Figure Skating bronze medalists [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#) (CAN) only competed virtually as in Canada live events had been cancelled, but will make sure they are ready for the challenge in Stockholm. 2019 ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final bronze medalists [Anastasia Mishina/ Aleksandr Galliamov](#) (FSR) will debut at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships but are a force to be reckoned with.

The new team of [Alexa Knierim/Brandon Frazier](#) (USA) turned heads with their victories at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating - Guaranteed Rate Skate America and the U.S. Championships. Other

Pairs to watch include [Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise](#) (ITA), [Miriam Ziegler/Severin Kiefer](#) (AUT) and [Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy LeDuc](#) (USA).

Two of the 2019 ISU World medalists – Champions Sui/Han and silver medalists Tarasova/Morozov - are back on the ice this year. The 2019 World bronze medalists [Natalia Zabiako/Alexander Enbert](#) (RUS) have retired from competitive skating.

Ice Dancers looking for new ISU World Figure Skating Champions

With four-time ISU World Figure Skating Ice Dance Champions [Gabriella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) (FRA) sitting out the Championships this year, the Ice Dancers will crown new World Champions in Stockholm (SWE). Competition will be close and exciting with several top teams in the mix.

Overview of the top contenders

The competition looks open as the World's best Ice Dance couples are usually separated by just a few points. 2019 ISU World Figure Skating silver medalists [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) (FSR) and two-time ISU World Figure Skating medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) as well as two-time ISU World Figure Skating medalists [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) are the leaders of the pack, but competition will be stiff.

Sinitsina/Katsalapov won the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating - Rostelecom Cup, but then missed the National Championships due to illness. The 2020 ISU European Figure Skating Champions came back to form for the Russian Cup Final in February to win clearly. Hubbell/Donohue claimed gold at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating - Guaranteed Rate Skate America as well as at the U.S. National Championships. Chock/Bates did not compete at the Guaranteed Rate Skate America, but looked strong at the National Championships in January, coming second.

Multiple ISU European Figure Skating medalists [Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin](#) (FSR) came close to the World podium in 2019 and this time around aim higher than fourth place. The couple earned their first National title in December. 2020 ISU Four Continents Figure Skating silver medalists [Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier](#) (CAN) and 2019 ISU European Figure Skating bronze medalists [Charlene Guignard/Marco Fabbri](#) (ITA) want to challenge for a medal as well.

Others to watch include [Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (FSR), [Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker](#) (USA), [Laurence Fournier-Beaudry/Nikolaj Sorensen](#) (CAN) and [Sara Hurtado/Kirill Khaliavin](#) (ESP).

The 2019 ISU World silver and bronze medalists Sinitsina/Katsalapov and Hubbell/Donohue are competing again.

A total of 42 Ladies representing 35 ISU Members, 34 Men representing 27 ISU Members, 25 Pairs representing 18 ISU Members and 32 Ice Dance couples representing 24 ISU Members have been entered for the event. Following a ruling of the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS), Russian athletes compete not under Russia (RUS), but under "FSR".

Skaters/couples need to have obtained a minimum total technical score in Short Program and Free Skating in order to compete at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships. Due to the limited possibilities to compete during the ongoing pandemic, the ISU has adapted the rules for obtaining the minimum score. For more details, see [ISU Communication 2370](#).

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships serve as well as the main Olympic qualifying event. A maximum of twenty-four spots (out of 30 in total) are on the line in the Ladies and Men's Singles events, a maximum of 16 (out of 19) entries in the Pairs and a maximum of 19 (out of 23) entries will be determined in the Ice Dance event. See [OWG2022 Qualification system](#).

Prize Money

The ISU awards a global prize money of US\$ 886,000 at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships to skaters/couples placed 1st to 6th. The prize money is awarded to winners and placed skaters/couples as follows:

Men and Ladies	Pairs and Dance (per couple)
1st place US\$ 64,000	1st place US\$ 90,000
2nd place US\$ 47,000	2nd place US\$ 65,500
3rd place US\$ 33,000	3rd place US\$ 45,000
4th place US\$ 19,000	4th place US\$ 26,000
5th place US\$ 11,000	5th place US\$ 16,000
6th place US\$ 8,000	6th place US\$ 10,000

Event Schedule

The schedule of the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2021 is as follows:

Wednesday, March 24: Ladies and Pairs Short Programs, Opening Ceremony
Thursday, March 25: Men's Short Program, Pairs Free Skating
Friday, March 26: Rhythm Dance, Ladies Free Skating
Saturday, March 27: Men Free Skating, Free Dance
Sunday, March 28: Exhibition Gala

For more information, full entry lists and results please see the [ISU website](#) and the [official event website](#). Follow the discussion on social media using #WorldFigure and #FigureSkating.

Where to watch and follow the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2021?

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships will be live streamed on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#). Geo-restrictions will apply in markets where TV rights are in place. You will find the full list in the [Where to Watch news here](#).

Subscribe to the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) to receive alerts when the live streams start and when new videos are posted.

Stay connected with the ISU Social Media:

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Follow the conversation with #GPFigure and #FigureSkating.

About the International Skating Union

The International Skating Union (ISU), founded in 1892, is the oldest governing international winter sport federation and the exclusive international sport federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) administering the sports of Figure Skating (Single & Pair Skating and Ice Dance), Synchronized Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating worldwide. The objectives of the ISU are to regulate, govern, promote and develop its sports on the basis of friendship and mutual understanding between athletes. Currently three ISU disciplines are included in the Olympic Winter Games program (Figure Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating).