

September 12, 2022

Riga, Latvia

## **Memola (ITA), Smith/Deng (USA) sealing spots in Junior Final with win at ISU JGP Riga**

**Nikolaj Memola (ITA) and Pair Skaters Cayla Smith/Andy Deng (USA) became the first Skaters to seal spots in the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final (Dec. 8-11, 2022) with their win at the ISU Junior Grand Prix in Riga (LAT) (Sept. 7-10, 2022). ISU World Junior silver medallist Jia Shin (KOR) struck gold in the Women's event while Darya Grimm/Michail Savitskiy (GER) topped the Ice Dance podium.**

### **Nikolaj Memola (ITA) successful in back-to-back events**

[Nikolaj Memola](#) (ITA) came fresh off a silver medal at the ISU Junior Grand Prix in Ostrava (CZE) last week and rode the momentum to earn his first gold medal on the ISU Junior circuit. Fourteen-year-old [Rio Nakata](#) (JPN) celebrated a successful debut on the ISU Junior Grand Prix by claiming silver and the bronze went to [Rakhat Bralin](#) (KAZ).

Memola (ITA) skated to a strong lead with a clean Short Program to "Prelude No. 2 in C Sharp Minor" by Sergei Rachmaninov and followed up with an excellent Free Skating to "Samson and Dalilah" by Camille Saint-Saens, reeling off six triple jumps. Only his second triple Axel and a triple toeloop were slightly underrotated. The Italian, who is coached by his mother Olga Romanova, posted a new personal best score in both segments and totaled 225.76 points, winning with more than 25 points to spare.

"I'm happy because the (Junior) Grand Prix Final is in Italy, so I'm going to skate at home," Memola said. "I will try to do my best and I will try to add a quad to the program, because now I can do the quad but I'm not ready to put it into the program. Now of course I'm happy because I'm first and that's a super goal, but I know that I have to work a lot on every element and I have to start to do a perfect program."

Nakata (JPN) ranked third in Short Program and Free Skating, but overall came second, making himself a nice present for his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday that he celebrated the day of the Short Program. The Japanese hit a triple Axel in both programs, but messed up the change sit spin in the Short and received no credit for it. He scored 200.17 points total. Bralin (KAZ) was fourth in both segments, but pulled up to third to clinch the bronze with 199.38 points, his first medal on the circuit. [Tsudoi Suto](#) (JPN) placed second in the Short Program, but dropped to sixth after falling on three jumps.

### **Favorite Jia Shin (KOR) celebrates first JGP title**

[Jia Shin](#) (KOR) came out of nowhere to skate to the silver medal at the ISU World Junior Championships last April, but now she was considered the top favorite in Riga. The 14-year-old athlete confirmed her status as a leader of the Junior Women and took the gold – her first victory on the Junior circuit after a bronze medal in Gdansk (POL) a year ago. Skating to "The Tree of Life Suite", Shin nailed five triples, but fell on a triple Lutz. She made no mistake in her Short Program to "The Giving" by Michael W. Smith and scored 194.68 points overall.

"I planned to do a triple Lutz-triple toe in the second part of the program and I was confident about that but I made a mistake, and finally I fell and that made me kind of nervous," Shin explained. "I had a good Short Program, I got a personal best of over 70 points, so that makes me very happy, that's kind of a highlight moment for me."

[Soho Lee](#) (USA) debuted on the ISU Junior Grand Prix and put out two solid programs to take home the silver with 185.92 points. Bronze medallist [Ami Nakai](#) (JPN), another newcomer, went for a triple Axel in the Free Skating, but underrotated it (185.62 points).

### **Smith/Deng (USA) book ticket to Turin JGP Final**

[Cayla Smith/Andy Deng](#) (USA) followed Memola's example in the Pairs event: They came with a silver medal from Ostrava (CZE) and left with the gold from Riga. [Ava Rae Kemp/Yohnatan Elizarov](#) (CAN) claimed the silver medal while their teammates [Ashlyn Schmitz/Tristan Taylor](#) (CAN) picked up the bronze.

Smith/Deng won the Short Program in spite of a mistake on their double twist. The team defended their lead in their Free Skating set to "Angel and Demon" by Maxime Rodriguez with a much better double twist, but had falls on a double Axel and throw triple Salchow. They collected 137.23 points. "We have to go back home, train, fix all of our mistakes, definitely put in some harder elements if we make it to the Final," Smith commented. "That was good, small mistakes here and there, other than that it was pretty good," Deng said. "Winning in Riga is kind of a combination of all our hard work but it also means that we have to work even harder and get even harder elements in our programs for the Final – a triple twist and I think harder jumps."

Kemp/Elizarov, who have been skating Pairs only for a year, ranked second in the Short Program and Free Skating. Their only major mistake was her fall on the side by side double Axel (124.73 points). Schmitz/Taylor collected 113.40 points.

### **Grimm/Savitskiy (GER) score first JGP victory for German Ice Dance in 21 years**

Top contenders [Darya Grimm/Michail Savitskiy](#) (GER) danced off with gold – and it was their first international medal and the first victory for German Ice Dancers on the ISU Junior Grand Prix since 2001. The Germans overtook [Sandrine Gauthier/Quentin Thieren](#) (CAN) with their "Nutcracker" Free Dance that featured level-four twizzles and lifts as well as a level-four dance spin and level-three step sequences. Grimm/Savitskiy were second in the Rhythm Dance to the "Milonga Sentimental", "Finale Tango Apasionado" and "TangoCodigo de Barra" after they lost a point to an extended lift and had only a level one for their second Argentine Tango pattern dance, but they made up for that in the Free Dance. The couple from Oberstdorf (GER) accumulated a personal best score of 161.42 points.

"It feels incredible, especially since this our first international win and to do that at a (Junior) Grand Prix feels really great," Grimm shared. "After we were second in the Rhythm Dance, I think it is even cooler that we didn't stay there but fought our way through to first place," she added.

"Now we have much better chances to make the Final. Our next Grand Prix is in Gdansk (POL) and we have similar goals there. The Free Dance was almost really good, but there is still a lot of work left to do, it is only the beginning of the season. If there is something we really want to improve, it is the Rhythm Dance," Savitskiy noted.

Gauthier/Thieren (CAN) turned in a solid Rhythm Dance with two level-four elements. The Canadians, who competed in their first ISU Junior Grand Prix event, left a few technical points on the table in their Free Dance

to “Any Other World” and “Sound of an Orchestra” by Mika and slipped to second at 156.92 points. [Mariia Pinchuk/Mykyta Pogorielov](#) (UKR), who are currently training in Vienna due to the war in their home country, earned the bronze, their first medal in what is their second ISU Junior Grand Prix season (150.28 points).

A total of 102 Skaters/Couples representing 36 ISU Members competed in the third ISU Junior Grand Prix event of the season. The ISU Junior Grand Prix series 2022/23 continues in two weeks with the Armenian Cup in Yerevan (ARM).

Full entry lists, results, the General Announcement and further information are available on the [ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series](#) page.

### **Selection Criteria**

More than 300 young Skaters from over 50 ISU Members are expected to compete in this year's Series. Each ISU Member is entitled to enter competitors for the Series while the number of their entries depends on the result of the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships 2022.

*Following the IOC recommendation and in order to protect the integrity of ice skating competitions and for the safety of all the participants of international ice skating competitions, the ISU Council based on Article 17.1.q)i) of the ISU Constitution, agreed that with immediate effect and until further notice, no Skaters belonging to the ISU Members in Russia (Russian Skating Union and the Figure Skating Federation of Russia) and Belarus (Skating Union of Belarus) shall be invited or allowed to participate in International ice skating competitions including ISU Championships and other ISU Events. The same applies to Officials listed in the respective ISU Communications and/or Regulations under Russia and Belarus (see [ISU Communication 2469](#)).*

### **Junior Grand Prix Standings**

[Men](#)

[Women](#)

[Ice Dance](#)

[Pair Skating](#)

### **Where to Watch**

The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating events will be live streamed on the official [ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating YouTube Channel](#) in most countries. Find out [where to watch](#) the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating competitions.

[Subscribe](#) to the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating YouTube Channel to receive all the latest videos and follow the conversation with #JGPFigure.

### **ISU Junior Grand Prix Schedule**

The schedules of each ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating events are available below:

<a href="#">24 - 27 Aug 2022</a>	<a href="#">Courchevel/FRA</a>
<a href="#">31 Aug - 3 Sept 2022</a>	<a href="#">Ostrava/CZE</a>
<a href="#">7 - 10 Sept 2022</a>	<a href="#">Riga/LAT</a>
<a href="#">21 - 24 Sept 2022</a>	<a href="#">Yerevan/ARM</a>
<a href="#">28 Sept - 1 Oct 2022</a>	<a href="#">Gdansk/POL</a>
<a href="#">5 - 8 Oct 2022</a>	<a href="#">Gdansk/POL</a>
<a href="#">12 - 15 Oct 2022</a>	<a href="#">Egna/ITA</a>

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**About ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating**

The ISU Junior Grand Prix Figure Skating Series started in 1997. It includes seven events and the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. The Series features some of the up and coming Skaters of the world and provides young skaters aged 13 to 19 (21 for the male Ice Dance and Pair Skating partners) with the opportunity to compete at a high international level. A points system based on the ranking has been established to determine the qualifiers for the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. Points are obtained according to the results in each of the seven events and only the top six Skaters / Couples in each discipline can qualify for the Final. The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating is financed by the [ISU Development Program](#).

Since 2011 all events of the Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating are live streamed on the official ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating [YouTube Channel](#).