

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final #JGPFigure Day Two

The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continued Friday in Marseille (FRA) with the Junior Free Dance and Junior Ladies Free Skating. The events feature the top six skaters/couples in each category from the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating series.

Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons (USA) capture Junior Ice Dance gold

USA's Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons captured the Junior Ice Dance gold medal, edging out Alla Loboda/Pavel Drozd of Russia. Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter (USA) claimed the bronze medal.

Performing to "Singing in the Rain", Parsons/Parsons produced a strong dance, picking up a level four for the twizzles, lifts and combination spin and a level three for the two step sequences. The 2016 ISU World Junior silver medalists achieved a new personal best with 95.59 points for the Free Dance and accumulated 162.50 points to overtake overnight leaders Loboda/Drozd. "I couldn't believe it. We put out a solid skate but there were still some little mistakes so I didn't know if was good enough. We were really just trying to live through the program and not focus on the technical elements and just tell the story. We didn't come into this competition with placement goals we were just competing against ourselves", Rachel Parsons said.

Loboda/Drozd's dance to "Malaguena" included three level-four elements, but the straight line lift was graded a level three and the diagonal footwork a level two. The World Junior bronze medalists earned 94.29 points and slipped to second at 161.87 points to take their third consecutive silver medal at the Junior Final. "Today we skated with all our emotions, we were skating in the moment and maybe that affected the timing slightly but we skated together and for each other today. The goal was to win as it is our last time in the Junior Final. The lift that got a level 3 never was in question before and always was a level 4 and that made the difference", Drozd explained.

McNamara/Carpenter produced four level-four elements, but the step sequences merited a level two. The World Junior Champions scored 89.74 points and totaled 153.47 points. "It definitely felt good today. Unlike yesterday there were no fluke bobbles which is a definite plus. We just enjoyed the skate and felt strong. For us it's always been more about the performance than the medals so, regardless of where we come, we're happy", Carpenter said.

Christina Carreira/Anthony Ponomarenko (USA) placed fourth with 149.98 points followed by Angelique Abachkina/Louis Thauron (FRA, 146.12 points) and Anastasia Shpilevaya/Grigory Smirnov (RUS, 140.64 points).

Alina Zagitova (RUS) skates off with Junior Ladies gold

Alina Zagitova of Russia skated off with the Junior Ladies gold medal. Her teammate Anastasiia Gubanova pulled up from third to take the silver medal and the bronze went to Kaori Sakamoto of Japan.

Zagitova pulled off six clean triple jumps in her performance to "Don Quixote" including a double Axel-triple toeloop as well as level-four spins and footwork. The Muscovite only underrotated the back end of her triple Lutz-triple loop combination. She achieved a new personal best with 136.51 points and racked up 207.43 points to win the title in her debut at the event. "I did some small

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mistakes, I was a little nervous, but overall I dealt with my job and I'm very happy about that. I am overwhelmed with emotions and I can't even describe them now. Skating last didn't bother me. We've trained that in practice at home", the 14-year-old told the press.

Gubanova's program to "Romeo and Juliet" by Abel Korzeniowski featured seven triple jumps and three level-four spins. The skater from St. Petersburg scored 133.77 points, a new personal best, in the Free Skating and with 194.07 points overall pulled up one spot to second. "I am Juliet, I think I can show her character very well because it comes naturally to me and I do not need to pretend. That is why it is one of my favorite programs, I feel very comfortable skating it. I have read Shakespeare and watched the film and I cried when I watched it because it touched me so much", Gubanova commented.

Sakamoto landed six clean triples in her routine to "The Color Purple" and earned 111.85 points. At 176.33 points overall, she slipped from second to third. "This is my first junior Grand Prix Final and I am very happy to have ended up with third place. I was nervous since this morning and I didn't feel grounded. I did quite well on the Nationals, but international competition is a different game. I still need to improve my technique, I feel it was not good enough for here", the 16-year-old said.

Rika Kihira (JPN) finished fourth with 175.16 points ahead of Elizaveta Nugumanova (RUS) with 170.06 points.

The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating is available as a live stream and on demand on the ISU Junior Grand Prix Youtube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/ISUJuniorGrandPrix> . The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final and ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continued with the Short Dance, Pairs Free Skating and Ladies Short Program. For full results please refer to www.isu.org .

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