

November 13, 2021

Tokyo, Japan

## **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2021/22**

### **NHK Trophy, Day Two**

2021 ISU World Ice Dance Champions [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) (RUS) and reigning World Pair Skating Champions [Anastasia Mishina/Alexander Galliamov](#) (RUS), 2018 Olympic silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) (JPN) and 2018 Four Continents Champion [Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) skated to victory as competition wrapped up on Saturday at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating [NHK Trophy](#) in Tokyo (JPN).

#### **Mishina/Galliamov (RUS) win second Grand Prix title of their career**

2021 ISU World Champions [Anastasia Mishina/Alexander Galliamov](#) of Russia skated to a confident victory with 14 points to spare in the Pair Skating event. The silver went to teammates [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#), while Japan's [Riku Miura/Ryuichi Kihara](#) collected the bronze medal.

Mishina/Galliamov delivered a confident performance of their program to "Snow Storm" and "Time Forward", completing a triple Salchow-Euler-triple Salchow sequence, triple twist, throw triple flip and difficult lifts. The only glitch came when Mishina put down her hands on the throw triple loop. The ISU World Champions scored 148.88 points for their Free Skating and totaled 227.28 points to claim the second Grand Prix gold medal of their career.

"We are satisfied with our performance today, but it is not the maximum yet, there is still room to grow," Galliamov said. "We really enjoyed the atmosphere in Japan, we felt the support and these are incredible emotions," he added.

The World Champions will compete in Sochi (RUS) at the last event of the series.

Skating to "Lighthouse" by Patrick Watson, Tarasova/Morozov produced a triple Salchow, high triple twist and level-four lifts. However, he doubled the toeloop while she stepped out of the throw triple flip and loop. The two-time ISU World silver medalists scored 137.49 points which added up to 213.27 points overall to take the silver. With their gold from Skate America and their second place from NHK Trophy, the Russians secured their spot in the ISU Grand Prix Final.

"We made quite a few errors today, so we were not able to give a good performance. We will continue to work," Morozov commented.

Miura/Kihara's program to "Woman" by Shawn Philipps was highlighted by a triple toe-double toe-double toe combination, throw triple Lutz and four level-four elements. The 2021 Skate America silver medalists netted 135.44 points and tallied 209.42 overall for their second consecutive Grand Prix medal – and a chance to qualify for the Final.

"Compared to Skate America we had a higher score," Kihara said. "The score we were able to get was close to Skate America, and I really feel that we've grown," he added.

“It has been two weeks since Skate America and I struggled in practice with the triple Salchow, so I was really worried,” Miura admitted. “I tried to feel comfortable about it, but I didn’t go for it. This is what I am disappointed about.”

Skate Canada bronze medalists [Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy LeDuc](#) (USA) remained in fourth place on 202.79 points followed by [Audrey Lu/Misha Mitrofanov](#) (USA) in fifth (190.03 points).

### **Sinitsina/Katsalapov (RUS) dance to golden glory**

2021 ISU World Ice Dance Champions [Victoria Sinitsina/Nikita Katsalapov](#) of Russia danced to the gold in style. Two-time World medalists [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) earned the silver medal and Great Britain’s [Lilah Fear/Lewis Gibson](#) claimed the bronze.

Sinitsina/Katsalapov put out a romantic, fluid dance to Sergei Rachmaninov’s Second Piano Concerto that was highlighted by beautiful lifts and smooth step sequences. The 2020 ISU European Champions picked up a level four for the lifts, combination spin and twizzles. However, the midline step sequence and the one foot step sequence were rated a level two (and level one for her part). The Muscovites scored 129.11 points and accumulated 215.44 overall for their fourth ISU Grand Prix title.

“We really enjoyed performing today thanks to the audience. We did a good job for this moment, but we will continue to improve for the next competition,” Sinitsina noted. “Our program is about us, our career, hopefully with a bright finish,” Katsalapov shared.

Sinitsina/Katsalapov will compete next at their home Grand Prix in Sochi (RUS) and will want to book their ticket to the Final there.

Chock/Bates had a shaky start to their unique program as alien and astronaut to music by Daft Punk when he fell right at the beginning. The two-time ISU Four Continents Champions recovered instantly and continued without further mistakes, collecting a level four for four elements and a level three for two elements. The Skate America silver medalists earned 124.76 points and remained in second place at 210.78 points.

“Today’s performance was an interesting one, mostly because I fell within the first 20 seconds of the program on a transition before the first element,” Bates said.

“I never experienced something like that before. We responded well and put together a good performance considering the early mishap. We learned something from that type of performance,” he added.

With their two silver medals and 26 points, Chock/Bates should qualify for the Grand Prix Final.

Fear/Gibson entertained the crowd in the Yoyogi Stadium with their upbeat performance to “The Lion King” that featured a spectacular stationary-rotational lift and two more level-four elements. However, Gibson wobbled on the twizzles. They 2019 Skate Canada bronze medalists netted 115.58 points and took the second ISU Grand Prix medal of their career with 191.91 points.

“I think we put in a lot of work in the days between Skate Canada and coming here,” Fear commented. “We had a lot of improvements to make and a lot of feedback from that competition so

I was happy with what we put out and I feel like we implemented a lot of the things that we worked on.”

[Sara Hurtado/Kirill Khaliavin](#) (ESP) came fourth with their dance to “Stairway to Heaven” (188.09 points). [Majorie Lajoie/Zachary Lagha](#) (CAN) placed fifth with their lively dance to the “Rio” soundtrack (187.38 points). [Kana Muramoto and Daisuke Takahashi](#) (JPN), the 2010 Olympic bronze medalist in single skating who switched to Ice Dance in 2020, finished sixth (179.50 points) with their balletic dance to “La Bayadere”.

### **Kaori Sakamoto (JPN) storms to gold on home ice in Tokyo**

2018 Four Continents Champion [Kaori Sakamoto](#) of Japan stormed to the gold medal. Little heralded teammate [Mana Kawabe](#) made it one-two for the Japanese women and Korea’s [Young You](#) secured the bronze medal.

Sakamoto’s program might be called “No More Fight Left In Me”, but she actually put up a great fight, reeling off a double Axel, triple Lutz, triple flip-double toe, triple Salchow, triple flip-triple toe and a triple loop as well as level-four spins. The 21-year-old from Kobe posted a season’s best with 146.78 points and totaled 223.34 points to repeat as NHK Trophy Champion.

“On my first and last jump today, I was a little bit at an angle in the air and that got me worried, but my goal of putting out a good free and short program was achieved,” Sakamoto shared. “To be honest, one month ago it would have been hard to imagine today’s result. This season every competition is very important. I don’t have a big element (such as triple Axel or quad), so I have to make sure to skate clean.”

Sakamoto collected 24 points with her first and fourth place finishes in her Grand Prix events and has good chances to make it to the Final.

Kawabe landed seven triple jumps in her routine to “Miracle” and the miracle happened – she won her first ISU Grand Prix medal. The 17-year-old made only one mistake when she crashed on a double Axel. Kawabe scored 131.56 points and had 205.44 overall.

“After I missed my Axel, I was able to change my mindset and focus on something else. I achieved my personal best, so I’m very happy about that,” Kawabe noted. “At Skate Canada, my free skating gave me confidence, especially the fact that I could focus on the free. I was able to do that in the short program in this competition. Little by little my (triple) Axel success rate is getting better.”

You missed her opening triple Axel in her program to “Les Miserables”, but went on to land five clean triples. Two more triple jumps were slightly underrotated (q). The 2020 ISU Four Continents silver medalist earned 135.52 points which added up to 203.60 points to take her second ISU Grand Prix medal this season after her bronze at Skate America.

“Like yesterday, I am disappointed in myself. Next time I want to concentrate on my triple Axel and I don’t want make these mistakes,” You said. “Until now I had a lot of competitions and until Nationals I don’t want to get an injury, take care of my body so I can do well at Nationals and get to the Olympic Games.”

[Alysa Liu](#) (USA) was edged out the podium in fourth place by less than a point. She landed a triple Axel, but it was “q-ed” (slightly underrotated). She earned 202.90 points. [Eunsoo Lim](#) (KOR) ranked fifth on 186.68 points and [Rino Matsuike](#) (JPN) moved up one spot to finish sixth (186.17 points).

### Home favorite Shoma Uno (JPN) takes Men’s gold in Tokyo

[Shoma Uno](#) (JPN) struck gold on home ice 30 points ahead of silver medallist [Vincent Zhou](#) (USA). [Junhwan Cha](#) (KOR) claimed bronze.

Skating to a new arrangement of Maurice Ravel's "Bolero", Uno hit four quadruple jumps - loop, Salchow and two quad toes plus two triple Axels. His only error came when he doubled the planned quad flip. The two-time World silver medalist scored 187.57 points, a season's best and racked up 290.15 for his first ISU Grand Prix win since 2018.

“I felt good on the ice, the skate, my movement, my mind. Everything was as during practice, everything went well,” he said. “It wasn't a coincidence, everything was happening the way it should. The second half, the flip, if I had done it, it would have been great. But it wasn't and that means I wasn't training enough.”

Zhou's martial arts inspired routine to "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon" included a quad flip, but he struggled with other jumps that were underrotated. The 2019 ISU World bronze medalist ranked sixth in the Free Skating with 161.18 points, but held on to second place with 260.69 points.

“I am very disappointed in my free skating. Thankfully it happened here and not at the Olympic Games. I am glad that I got this out of my system now and not next February,” Zhou noted. “I was not able to train consistently leading up to this competition and it showed. I need to make sure I am in better health and condition for my next competition.”

Uno and Zhou have 28 points each from their two Grand Prix events and will meet again in the Final.

Cha landed a quad toe and three clean triples in his program to "Turandot", but he missed the quad Salchow. The Korean Champion was fifth in the Free Skating with 163.66 points but remained in third to get bronze on 259.60 points.

“My performance was disappointing, but I fought until the finish,” Cha shared. “I found a lot of things I need to work on for my next competition to be in a better condition.”

[Makar Ignatov](#) (RUS) landed three clean quads and slightly underrotated a fourth to rank fourth (257.20). [Matteo Rizzo](#) (ITA) came fifth on 255.84 points and [Alexander Samarin](#) (RUS) pulled up one spot to sixth (255.56 points).

The NHK Trophy concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. NHK Trophy was the fourth of sixth events in the ISU Grand Prix. The series continues next week with the [Internationaux de France](#) in Grenoble.

Viewers are able to watch the [ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series](#) either via their national broadcaster / channel or via the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) for countries where there is no broadcaster agreement in place. For more information please see [here](#).

The [General Announcement](#) of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series is available at the ISU website. The individual announcements are published under the respective events. For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series please visit [here](#). The ISU has an anti-Covid protocol in place to keep all participants of the events as safe as possible.

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series consists of six events: [Guaranteed Rate Skate America](#) in Las Vegas (USA) October 22-24, [Skate Canada International](#) in Vancouver (CAN) October 29-31, [Gran Premio d'Italia](#) in Turin (ITA) November 5-7, [NHK Trophy](#) in Tokyo (JPN) November 12-14, [Internationaux de France](#) in Grenoble (FRA) November 19-21 and [Rostelecom Cup](#) in Sochi (RUS) November 26-28. The [ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final](#) will take place in Osaka (JPN) December 9-12.

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

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series started in 1995 (previously known as the ISU Champions Series) and consists of six invitational international senior events and the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. The top six of the past World Championships are seeded. Competitors collect points in their 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.