

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final Day One

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating and ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final opened Thursday with the Junior Short Programs. The events feature the top six skaters/couples in each category from the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating series.

Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter win Junior Short Dance

Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter (USA) won the Junior Short Dance ahead of teammates Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons. Alla Loboda/Pavel Drozd of Russia are currently ranked third.

Dancing to Waltz and March from the "Peer Gynt" Suite by Edvard Grieg, McNamara/Carpenter picked up a level four for the twizzles, lift and the second Starlight Waltz pattern while the first Waltz pattern and the side by side footwork were graded a level three. The 2015 World Junior silver medalists scored 65.90 points. "Our performance was strong, solid and powerful. Most importantly we really enjoyed it. We wanted something that stood out and was not the old one, two, three, one, two, three. It's powerful music and gives us energy", McNamara said.

Parsons/Parsons turned in a smooth dance to "Cinderella" by Sergei Prokofiev as well, earning a level four for three elements to collect 64.91 points. "We both just went out and had a good time. I was actually laughing by the end of the program. We skated our hearts out and it felt really good", Rachel Parsons noted.

Loboda/Drozd produced four level-four elements in their dance to a Waltz by Chopin and a Russian March to earn a personal best score of 64.01 points. "It was a celebratory performance for us, because it is my partner's birthday today. We had a rather long break following our Grand Prix events and so we worked a lot with some experts to polish our programs and to make them the cleanest and most confident possible", Drozd commented.

Betina Popova/Yuri Vlasenko (RUS) ranked fourth place at 61.85 points, followed by Marie-Jade Lauriault/Romain Le Gac (FRA) with 57.97 points and Anastasia Skotpcova/Kirill Aleshin (RUS) with 56.51 points.

Polina Tsurskaya (RUS) takes Junior Ladies Short Program

Russia's Polina Tsurskaya took the Junior Ladies Short Program with teammate Alisa Fedichkina coming second. Marin Honda of Japan is currently sitting in third.

Performing to "Adagio" by Tomasino Albinoni, Tsurskaya produced a triple Lutz-triple toe combination, triple flip, double Axel and two level-four spins. The 14-year-old posted a new personal best with 66.69 points. "I did everything clean, but I could have had a few more plusses on my elements. I felt very confident in my performance and it was the best of the season so far. Technically I could compete with them (senior Ladies), but my second mark is not as good yet, after all my skating is still juniorish", the skater from Moscow said.

Fedichkina's routine to "Valse Sentimentale" by Petr Tchaikovski included a double Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe combination and three level-four spins. The 13-year-old earned 64.17 points. "It was a very pleasant experience to skate here. I wanted to have two clean programs and I always want to

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skate clean. I skate for myself only, I don't think about competing with them but just about competing against myself and keep trying to get better and better", she noted.

Honda landed a triple loop-triple toe combination, double Axel and triple flip in her program to "Spring Sonata No. 5" to collect 63.69 points, a new personal best. "This morning I was a little bit nervous but after the six minutes warm up I felt calm. The atmosphere at the Grand Prix Final is a little bit different from normal competitions. It feels a bit like Pro Wrestling when the announcers call your name and the atmosphere of the supporters is a little bit different but that gave me energy", the 14-year-old said.

Maria Sotskova (RUS) came fourth (62.64 points) followed by Yuna Shirawa (JPN, 60.08 points) and Mai Mihara (JPN, 56.01 points).

Ekaterina Borisova/Dmitry Sopot (RUS) lead in Junior Pairs Short Program

Ekaterina Borisova/Dmitry Sopot of Russia skated to the lead in the Junior Pairs Short Program. Their teammates Amina Atakhanova/Ilia Spiridonov placed second and Anna Duskova/Martin Bidar of the Czech Republic follow in third place.

Skating to "Ninja" by Maxime Rodriguez, Borisova/Sopot hit a triple twist, side by side double Axel and throw triple Salchow. Their lift and their pair combination spin merited a level four. The team from Perm set a new personal best with 60.29 points for themselves. "This is exactly what we hoped for and what we aimed for. Katia has had some problems with her jumps but this was the best skate we have had", Sopot explained.

Atakhanova/Spiridonov's performance to a modern arrangement of "Nutcracker" was highlighted by a triple twist, throw triple Salchow and a level-four step sequence. However, Atakhanova stepped out of the double Axel. The Russians scored 58.58 points. "We're not so satisfied. The jump (double Axel) could have been better. But in competition things don't always work out as planned. I wasn't that nervous at first, but once we got out on to the ice, nerves kicked in. But this is just the beginning for us. We're here to present ourselves", Atakhanova told the press.

Duskova/Bidar landed a double Axel, triple twist and throw triple Salchow to earn 55.78 points. "We skated quite well. The first jump was pretty good. We kept it (the Short Program) the same because we both skate in singles competitions and it's hard to change all the programs. But this year we changed a double twist for a triple twist and we did a more difficult lift", Duskova shared.

Anastasia Gubanova/Alexei Sintsov (RUS) are not far behind in fourth place at 54.88 points. Renata Oganesian/Mark Bardei (UKR) are sitting in fifth (52.54 points) and Anastasia Poluianova/Stepan Korotkov (RUS) placed sixth (45.89 points).

Nathan Chen (USA) grabs Junior Men's Short Program

Nathan Chen (USA) grabbed the lead in the Junior Men's Short Program. Russia's Dmitri Aliev finished second and Sota Yamamoto of Japan is currently ranked third.

Skating to a Michael Jackson Medley, Chen nailed a triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe and triple flip. His three spins garnered a level three while the footwork was a level four. The 2014 World Junior bronze medalist achieved a new personal best with 78.59 points. "I'm glad I could pull it off today. It's been getting better this season and I think I've put more effort in this season than before. I love Michael Jackson. As kids we used to moonwalk across the floor. But my choreographers chose it for me because they wanted me to do something out of my comfort zone", the 16-year-old said.

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Aliev's program to "Nothing the Same" by Gary Moore featured a triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe and triple flip as well as a level-four combination spin. The skater from St. Petersburg set a new personal best as well, scoring 76.78 points. "I'm crazily happy, so pleased to manage to get all the elements I wanted, to fight my emotions inside and take strength from the audience to calm myself down and achieve everything I could", the 16-year-old pointed out.

Skating to "Poeta", Yamamoto completed a triple Lutz-triple toe and triple flip, but he stepped out of his triple Axel and received no credit for his change camel spin. The reigning ISU Junior Grand Prix Final silver medalist earned 72.85 points. "I'm not satisfied with today's performance, especially the spins didn't have enough levels. In the short program we can't include a quadruple jump, so it is necessary to do a clean triple axel, but it wasn't clean for me today", the World Junior bronze medalist told the press.

Vincent Zhou (USA) finished fourth at 70.48 points. Daniel Samohin (ISR) is fifth (69.48 points) and Roman Sadovsky (CAN) ranked sixth (59.37 points).

The ISU Junior Grand Prix Final is live streamed on the ISU Skating Channel and is available globally except in Japan due to TV Rights: <http://www.eurovisionssports.tv/isu/>

The full list of entries and results are available at www.isu.org. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continues this with the Pairs and Men Short Programs.

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