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Las Vegas, USA

## **Shcherbakova takes debut gold as Chen shines in Las Vegas**

World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA), newcomer [Anna Shcherbakova](#) (RUS), [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) (CHN) and [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) skated off with the gold medals as the competition wrapped up at Skate America in Las Vegas on Saturday. Skate America was the first of six events of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019/2020.

### **Golden Peng/Jin (CHN) seal first Grand Prix victory in Las Vegas**

China's [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) scored their first ever victory at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating as they skated to gold at Skate America. Russia's [Daria Pavliuchenko/Denis Khodykin](#) took the first Grand Prix silver medal of their career while [Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier](#) (USA) climbed one spot to claim the bronze medal.

Skating to the 'Cloud Atlas' soundtrack, Peng/Jin completed a triple toe-double toe, throw triple Salchow, triple twist and two level-four lifts. However, she crashed on the throw triple loop. The 2019 Four Continents bronze medalists earned 128.16 points and totaled 200.89 points to win the event.

"We've won several silver medals and we've been longing for a gold medal. We put in a lot of effort and this gold medal is like a new starting point for us and will push us further. Hopefully we'll win many more gold medals," Peng said.

Pavliuchenko/Khodykin's program to 'Tron Legacy' by Daft Punk featured a triple flip, triple toe-double toe-double toe, triple twist and difficult – as well as original – lifts. The only error came when Pavliuchenko fell on the throw triple flip. The 2018 World Junior Champions were ranked third in the Free Skating with 125.73 points, but remained in second overall at 196.98 points.

"It was a good skate, but not our best as I had one big mistake," Pavliuchenko said.

"We made a step forward in our skating and in our technical elements," Khodykin added.

Denney/Frazier put out a dynamic performance to 'The Lion King' soundtrack that was highlighted by spectacular lifts, a side by side triple Salchow, throw triple loop and Salchow. The 2013 World Junior Champions collected 127.52 points and were second in the Free Skating but third overall on 192.70 points.

"Our goal for this program was to be very proactive and mindful of what we were doing and not let anything get taken away from us. That's how bad we want it," Denney said.

"We want it so bad and we're going to fight for everything and not let anything go, so I think we did that today and that's why we got very emotional during the end of the program."

[Jessica Calalang/Brian Johnson](#) (USA) pulled up from fifth to fourth place on 180.52 points. US Champions [Ashley Cain-Gribble/Timothy Le Duc](#) dropped from third to fifth after several errors (177.54 points).

### **'Rocketman' Chen (USA) soars away with Men's gold at Skate America**

World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) scored a runaway victory on home ice, striking gold at Skate America with 45 points to spare in Las Vegas. USA teammate [Jason Brown](#) moved up from fourth to earn the silver medal and the bronze went to Russia's [Dmitri Aliev](#).

Performing to music from the Elton John 'Rocketman' biopic, Chen reeled off a quad flip, quad toe-Euler-double flip, quad Salchow as well as four triple jumps. He only popped another quad toe into a double. The two-time and reigning World Champion scored 196.38 points which added up to 299.09 points overall.

"I'm pretty happy with the performance today. This is the first Grand Prix of the season, the first real competition since the Worlds, so it's nice to be able to put out both programs. I'm pretty happy with the score, but there are a lot of things to improve on. Overall it's a good starting point," Chen said.

Brown's emotional performance to 'Schindler's List' featured a triple Axel-double toe, another triple Axel as well as five more clean triple jumps and exquisite spins. The American earned 171.64 points for his Free Skating and totaled 255.09 points.

"I'm super happy with the fight. I fought through bits and pieces of it, but I really felt happy that I was able to move past the mistakes from the short to make up for them in the long. It was great to debut both my programs here," Brown said.

Aliev produced a quad toe-triple toe combination, another quad toe and five triple jumps in his program to 'The Sound of Silence'. However, he singled the Axel and doubled a Lutz. The 2018 European silver medalist picked up 156.98 points and slipped from second to third on 253.55 points overall.

"This is my first senior Grand Prix medal and obviously I am very pleased about it. This is a big medal for me and one of the most important ones in my life after the tough season I had last year," the 20-year-old said.

[Keegan Messing](#) (CAN) dropped from third to fourth on 239.34 points and [Kazuki Tomono](#) (JPN) moved up from eighth to fifth (229.72 points).

### **Hubbell/Donohue (USA) capture second Skate America title**

Two-time World Ice Dance medalists [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) sealed their second Skate America title in Las Vegas. Russians [Alexandra Stepanova/Ivan Bukin](#) earned the silver medal and [Laurence Fournier Beaudry/Nikolaj Sorensen](#) of Canada picked up the bronze, their first Grand Prix medal.

Hubbell/Donohue delivered a solid performance to 'Shallow' and 'Alibi' by Lady Gaga and earned a level four for the twizzles, the combination lift, spin and the curve lift, while the serpentine step sequence and the one-foot step sequence were rated a level three.

The ISU Grand Prix Final Champions were ranked second in the Free Dance at 124.58 points but overall remained in first place to win their fourth Grand Prix gold medal with a total score of 209.55 points.

"We were really looking forward to debuting this program. It feels like you work on a project for so many months and you can't see straight anymore. We're happy to put it out the first time, we got a lot of feedback. There were good things and not so good things and we feel like we can make a lot of progress already for next week (at Skate Canada)," Hubbell said.

Stepanova/Bukin's dance to 'Primavera' and 'Cry Me a River' was highlighted by difficult twizzles, combination spins and lifts that garnered a level four.

The reigning European silver medalists edged Hubbell/Donohue in the Free Dance with 124.66 points, but finished second overall on 206.57 points.

"Today we're more pleased with our performance than yesterday. We fought through and kept pushing until the end and overall it was not a bad performance," Stepanova said.

Dancing to 'Summertime', 'Georgia On My Mind' and 'Cry Me a River', Fournier Beaudry/Sorensen completed four level-four elements, but the one-foot step sequence merited only a level two.

The Nebelhorn Trophy Champions scored 118.36 points and accumulated 197.53 points overall.

"I think it (a Grand Prix medal) is something that we've dreamed about since we started skating together," Sorensen said.

"Stepping onto that podium is everybody's dream, so to finally be able to do it in our first Grand Prix skating for Canada after not being on the circuit last year is just very exciting. We've set high goals for ourselves this season and we felt like we were able to give our best."

[Olivia Smart/Adrian Diaz](#) (ESP) placed fourth (191.01 points overall) ahead of ISU Grand Prix Finalists [Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (RUS) who got 181.82 points.

### **'Firebird' Shcherbakova (RUS) flies to debut gold with two quad Lutzes**

[Anna Shcherbakova](#) of Russia landed two quad Lutzes to clinch gold in her ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series debut at Skate America. Overnight leader [Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) took the silver and Russia's [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) pulled up from fifth place to claim the bronze.

Skating to 'The Firebird' by Igor Stravinski, 15-year-old Shcherbakova impressed the Orleans Arena crowd with her spectacular blitz of jumps, hitting a quadruple Lutz-triple toeloop combination, another quadruple Lutz as well as three clean triple jumps and excellent spins. The only glitches were two underrotated triple jumps.

The Russian Champion set a personal best of 160.16 points and totaled 227.76 points.

“My goal was to show (two) quad Lutzes and all my other jumps. This (medal) is very important to me, because this is my first senior season and I want to show clean skating,” the 2019 World Junior silver medalist said.

Tennell’s performance to the ‘Cinema Paradiso’ soundtrack included six clean triple jumps as well as level-four spins and footwork. The 2018 US Champion scored 141.04 points and slipped to second place on 216.14 points.

“I am happy with my skate today. I think there is a lot of room for improvement, so my goal going into next week (Skate Canada) is just to maintain what I have and possibly [need to] improve on,” the 21-year-old said.

“Obviously, the second triple Lutz-triple toe was a little wobbly, so I’d like to clean that up a bit. Also, I want to be more free. Going into next week, my main goal is just to skate free.”

Tuktamysheva reeled off a triple Axel-double toe, a solo triple Axel and followed up with four clean triples in her jazzy program to ‘Caravan’ and ‘Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen’ to earn 138.69 points.

With a total score of 205.97 points, the 2015 World Champion moved up two spots.

“I’m so happy to skate an almost clean free program and I want to improve my program. I want to skate clean programs. I can’t do a quad toe or quad Lutz, so for now it is just the triple Axel,” the 2018 ISU Grand Prix Final bronze medalist said.

[Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) dropped from second to fourth on 202.47 points after doubling two jumps. Eunsoo Lim (KOR) came fifth (184.50 points) and [Wakaba Higuchi](#)(JPN) slipped from third to sixth place on 181.32 points.

Overall, 60 skaters/couples representing 13 ISU members competed in Skate America. The top 6 qualifiers of the series in each discipline will proceed to the Final in Torino (ITA), December 5 to 8, 2019.

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series continues next week in Kelowna (CAN). Full [entry lists, results, the General Announcement](#) of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series are available on [isu.org](http://isu.org).

### **Where to watch and follow the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019?**

Viewers will be able to watch the Series either via their national broadcaster / channel and for countries where there are no broadcasters, the ISU will offer a live stream on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) as of season 2019/20. You will find the full list in the [Where to watch news here](#).

Subscribe to the [ISU Newsletter](#) to receive the latest information and the “Where to Watch” news and you can also subscribe to the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) to receive notifications when live streams start or new videos are published.

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**ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2019/20**

[Skate America - Las Vegas \(USA\) – October 18 – 20](#)

[Skate Canada International – Kelowna \(CAN\) – October 25 – 27](#)

[Internationaux de France – Grenoble \(FRA\) – Novembre 1 – 3](#)

[SHISEIDO cup of China – Chongqing \(CHN\) – November 8 – 10](#)

[Rostelecom Cup – Moscow \(RUS\) – November 15 – 17](#)

[NHK Trophy – Sapporo \(JPN\) – November 22 – 24](#)

[ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final \(Senior & Junior\) – Torino \(ITA\) – December 5 – 8](#)