

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

### **Men, after Free Skating**

#### **Javier Fernandez (ESP), 2019 European Champion**

(On whether he expected his win) I think when I was younger, seven years ago I didn't know was going to win my first European title. I didn't know I was going to be here today, I didn't know it was going to be Europeans in Minsk or somewhere else, but I'm glad it was here and I'm glad I competed.

(On whether he felt relief at finishing his career) Not relief, I think it's a bit sad of course because it has been 21 years training for competitions, but it was the time to retire. I will skate for other things but not for competitions. But at the same time I was happy I've done a great career and I was able to accomplish much more than I thought I could accomplish. (On atmosphere) Before my program there was good energy on the ice, he (Alexander Samarin, RUS) skated great and I could hear. But you know what, I've skated forever and done so many competitions and been in so many different atmospheres that at some point you know what you have to do. If you skate after Yuzuru Hanyu in Japan that teaches you a lot and you can use that in other places. I was confident in myself; I trained great in a short period of time but it was efficient and I was sure I was going to do well. (On his legacy) I think it's good for the world to know that not only skaters from strong countries can appear. I'm from Spain, I've got a friend here at my side from Italy and another from Russia, everyone has his own story to tell and it's good that everyone does not come from a strong figure skating country because that means more stories to tell to everyone. I hope I can develop skating more in my home country to try and make it bigger, but I hope with the work I was able to do I've made history and in 20 years some people will still recollect my name. Maybe not, we'll have to see, but I'm proud of what I've done and still have a lot of work to do to make it even better in my home for figure skating. (On what he said to the judges at the medal ceremony after his marks for the short program) I said I'll miss you guys. I think that's the right thing to say. I wasn't mad. Yesterday I was mad with life, not for any reason but I like everything to be right and I know my mistakes and if it's right I don't want it to be a mistake. It's not about being first or last but the little details I like to be right. But even if I did the program today and I was fifth, OK, it is what it is, but everything needs to be correct and right. But at the end of the day I'm here and still talking so it doesn't matter what was in the short or free program. (On being a consistent champion) I think you need to understand the person you are and the kind of athlete you are. Pretty much the people around you will tell you that. At the end of the day a skater has to be complete, and that doesn't mean five or six quads in a program but being complete. At the start, you [should be] growing yourself with time, not when you're a really young teenager and then your body changes and everything goes wrong. Little things are involved, a lot of things are involved. It's hard to say. I'm not someone who can tell people to do anything, I don't know, but that's what I've seen over many years. But figure skating has changed from 20 years ago when all skaters lasted 20 years – now it's just three or four. But that's a question to ask someone smart enough to answer it - I can't. (On his best memory) It's so hard to say. When you achieve so many things - I won Worlds twice, Europeans seven times and a bronze medal at Olympics it's hard to choose. This one is special also because it's the last one, but is it more special than Olympics? I don't know. (On what he did before Europeans) I only did Japanese Open back in September/October then went straight to Europeans because I was really busy back at home doing a lot of work, a show in Spain that needed my time. So I was really putting the focus on that, then tried to be ready for Europeans. It was a little complicated because I was so busy doing a lot of things. But there were no injuries and no mental things, just a lot of work. That was the reason. I needed to do that after Olympics, I think it was the time. (On any possible comeback) No. I am not coming back. Maybe like a pro competition or Japan Open, maybe I'll think about it, but no, I've achieved everything, I've set goals and I've done [them]. I set the goal for this to be my last competition and I did it. I'll be skating, doing shows, teaching, doing a lot of other things, but not competing.

#### **Alexander Samarin (RUS), 2019 European silver medalist**

(On his rivals falling) I tried to switch off from what was going on around me. I didn't manage everything I wanted but I'm glad I kept going to the end, fought for every element and made my team happy, finally, on my third go. (On the difference between his score and that of Javier Fernandez) I wouldn't have believed it and the fact I didn't achieve everything I wanted to means I could have been ahead, but I need to work and push harder to achieve more. But I really admire Javier Fernandez, I've watched him on TV since I was

-2-



young and as this was his last skate I'm happy for him that he could skate so beautifully. I'm also happy I could make him a bit nervous. (On the pattern of Russians who were not at the top at Nationals doing well at Europeans, like Sofia Samodurova) First of all I want to congratulate Sofia, I watched and supported her, and a huge well done to her. I don't see any trend there, we just all work hard and try to achieve the highest results possible; everyone does what they can and some succeed and some do not, but I'm happy for her and me and the teams, and that I managed to do this for my country at Europeans.

## **Matteo Rizzo (ITA), 2019 European bronze medalist**

Of course there are a lot of emotions inside me, as going from tenth to third place was kind of incredible, and I'm really proud of myself and the work me and all my team have done. It brings a lot of joy and emotions so I'm really happy about this. It was very unexpected because I was first in the third group so 11 skaters had to skate after me and there was a lot of time before the result so we just watched and waited. We couldn't have expected it but it's amazing. It was a big surprise for me and there are no words to describe my emotions right now, just enjoying the moment and looking to the future, I think I will enjoy my future actually. (On Italian men's skating) Of course it's good for the figure skating movement in Italy and, you know, it was many years without a competitive man at ISU championships, so at this competition me and Daniel did a really great job and I think this is just one small step for us. We need to see in a few years because everything can change, but at least this is a start, a good start, and I hope we can achieve goals like in ladies, in pairs or in ice dance, of course I hope that.

