

PRESS CONFERENCE

Men, after Short Program

Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN), 1st after the Short Program

(on competing in Stockholm after the 2020 World Championships were cancelled)

First of all, let me say that last year when the World Championships were cancelled, it was quite abrupt. And although we did anticipate the possibility, we were kind of lost without any goals or objectives. But amid this pandemic situation, all the skaters were working hard. We'd also like to thank all the staff that made it possible for us to hold this competition, and show what we've been training for on the ice. (on the new style in his Short Program) So this is something I was discussing with Jeffrey Buttle given the times, and it's something we wanted everybody to enjoy, of course, so we came up with this program. And it might have the potential to become an even better program with a live audience and their clapping and cheering. Having said that, though, everybody is tuning in through the internet or TV, and I can actually feel that, and I'm receiving all this energy on the ice when I'm skating this program. I would have thought about piano first, and I do think that expressing the piano melody is a strength of mine. I like doing this as well, but the rock music, it kind of hits the bottom of my heart and brings out the pulse that I feel, and the breath that I take. And I actually enjoy expressing all of that as well. (on training by himself for most of this season) Of course it was hard, but on the other hand, I was free to decide on my own when to play the music, and I also started to see a lot of things from different angles and was able to adopt things that are not common in figure skating. For example, I tried out different training methods and drew ideas from gymnastics and athletics. These are some things I drew some ideas from. From this, I could improve my jumps, my skating, and my stamina training as well. So in that sense, I actually gained a lot from this opportunity that arose in front of me. (on possibly being more focused in this pre-Olympic World Championships) Of course I was more relaxed compared to the Nationals. But at the same time, I was more focused and more nervous. Because this is, after all, the World Championships—which means that all the skaters are going to bring out their best performances here. And Nathan and Yuma, sitting on both sides (next to me), they put on wonderful performances tonight. So I knew that I had to really perform my best short program here. And that's exactly what I tried to achieve. For me, this short program has a very important meaning, which is that, everybody, I hope, could enjoy this and enjoy skating. So I hope that the reporters and journalists could also forget about their work a little bit and enjoy the program. And I don't have any ideas about the Olympics. (on how happy he is with the performance and the message he wanted to convey) Regarding today's performance, I'm overall very satisfied. But having said that, there's still a lot of room for improvement. That, I know. And this music, it's just full of energy, and the choreography, and all that. I think I was able to put out all of that on the ice today. (on whether his relationship with skating has changed during the pandemic) Of course, amid this COVID pandemic, I actually thought about changing the theme for my short program. And that's exactly what I did. Because I felt more strongly about having the audience feel something and take away some sort of emotion, despite not being here physically. And, at the same time, of course I do have my coaches, but I had to train on my own, and that really made me revisit skating, and my relationship with figure skating became much stronger. (on gender differences in figure skating) Of course I'm sure there must be many, such as delicateness, and powerfulness, and such. But it's not about gender. It's more about individuality and the character each skater has. And that's what makes figure skating so interesting and attractive. So I think if all the skaters can show their own uniqueness, that's what figure skating is all about.

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Yuma Kagiya (JPN), 2nd after the Short Program

(on competing in Stockholm after the 2020 World Championships were cancelled) I started skating on the senior circuit this season. So having won a ticket to Worlds, of course I was thrilled. There were many restrictions, but I'm grateful that this competition was able to be held. And it's just nice to see everybody skating. (on coming out so strong as a 17-year-old newcomer) Of course it's my first (Worlds) so that's why I was nervous, but at the same time, because it's my first competition I had nothing to lose, and I could just go and enjoy myself. And I guess, honestly speaking, that's what I did today with my short program. There was some tension of course, but it was more about "I really want to go on the ice as soon as possible and enjoy each moment." I was just so excited, and in the short program, I think I was able to portray that joy of skating to everyone. So I'm very happy about that. (on whether his relationship with skating has changed during the pandemic) Figure skating and myself, that's a very good question because with the restrictions when we couldn't be on the ice, I really couldn't skate and said to myself, "Wow, if I don't skate, I can't do anything." And being back on the ice after the restrictions were lifted, I really loved skating, and I realized how important skating was to me. (on gender differences in figure skating) As Mr. Hanyu said, because even among the male skaters, there are some people that skate softly, while some are more powerful. And in the ladies, there are those that are also powerful. At the same time, some are very gentle. You know, there's so many different characters in skating, and each one of them has their wonderful uniqueness.

Nathan Chen (USA), 3rd after the Short Program

(on competing in Stockholm after the 2020 World Championships were cancelled) Last season ended so quickly. The rinks started getting closed down, my school (Yale University) got closed down, I went back to California. So for me to be able to compete at Nationals and now be at Worlds is incredible and something I didn't expect to happen so soon. I'm so fortunate to have this opportunity and to be able to skate with Yuzuru as well as Yuma. It's incredible to be able to have this high level caliber of skating and (it's) something that I've missed a lot, so I'm really happy to be here. (on whether his relationship with skating has changed during the pandemic) It definitely felt like a big loss not being able to go to the rink every day. Skating ultimately is my identity and I'm so passionate, I love it. Being able to get back on the ice, being able to recognize how fortunate I was to have a safe environment to train with people I love and have the shared passion, helps you take a step away from being so individually driven. (on gender differences in figure skating) It is a very individual sport and you can really see that within each performer. I don't think anything that we do, the girls can't do. And you've seen this over the past couple of years and you continue to see this. Everything that we try to do to push forward they will continue doing to push forward and that's incredible, you know? I don't think there's any argument that can be made that they're not able to do what we're able to do. (on why he changed his short program jump layout this season to 4Lz, 3A, 4F+3T) I just like this layout better. This layout happened to be something I enjoyed doing in training so I stuck with it.