

## PRESS CONFERENCE

Men, after Free Skating

### **Nathan Chen (USA), 2021 World Champion**

(On plans after the competition) After all this is over, I'm excited to go home and see my family. I don't have any specific plans right now and of course there's still distancing required so I will keep away from my family for a bit, but once that's over then I'm excited to see them all again and get some rest and recovery. (On how many quads will be needed at the next Olympics) It's hard to predict the future and a lot of things change within a sport, that happens very fast, so it's hard to say definitively what is necessary. But I can say at the Olympics I attempted eight and got fifth [place], if that's an indicator that you have to throw a lot of quads at it, that is definitely not true. From that experience, is it worth it to risk it? Not necessarily. Ultimately it will come down to what everyone else is doing, what the sport looks like. Competition to competition you will see guys attempt even crazier things, so it's really hard to say right now. I'm looking forward to next season, to what others will bring to the table and to challenge myself. And this guy [Yuzuru Hanyu] is going to do quad Axel, so I need to figure that out too! (On next season's schedule) Next year within the skating schedule I'm not entirely sure what it will look like. The fact that we're here at Worlds is already pretty incredible so I don't know what that will look like as we get into next season. Will it be similar to this season, who knows, but we'll play it by ear. Every day we'll learn something new. As for outside of skating, I'm currently taking a gap year from school and planning on going back after the Games. I miss it, I really like being at school, but I'm looking forward to going back after [Beijing] '22. In the meantime I will try to stay healthy, stay happy, what else can I do, that's basically it.

(On this Worlds compared to Worlds 2019) Well, 2019 was pretty incredible. The magnitude of fans and people supporting skating was highly evident and being able to follow that and recognise how many people love the sport and share a passion for figure skating was a really cool moment. But then I had to remind myself to snap back in and focus on skating. This time we didn't have that, but being present in this huge arena, I did think about what it would have felt like full of people, in theory it would have been a really cool experience as well, but ultimately we are here, we are competing, we have a great opportunity to do this, so I try to remind myself how lucky I am to be in this situation.

(On his free program to Philip Glass music) I wouldn't say it is my best free program ever, but it's definitely one I will remember forever and cherish being able to skate like that here in Sweden at Worlds. Philip Glass is incredible. I don't know if having a little more knowledge about him necessarily creates a different portrayal on the ice but it definitely helps me appreciate the music a little bit more and recognise the underlying genius that he has being able to create something out of nothing. The music is beautiful and I think having music that moves you as you skate helps you as an athlete continue through the program and gets you in a mindset that makes you happy and present, which are all important to succeed. So I'm happy I chose this music and Shae [-Lynn BOURNE] chose this music for me, and I'll continue to love Phillip Glass's music.

(On looking ahead to the Olympics) I think given this circumstance it is incredible that we're all here together. As an athlete I'm always trying to learn, always trying to improve, and there's so much learning I can do from a veteran and skating icon and legend like Yuzuru [HANYU], as well as from the up-and-comers like Yuma [KUGIYAMA]. There's so much passion and energy that comes to the sport from so many different directions and it's really cool to be able to pick up on that. I kind of fall into the middle ground, I'm not purely a veteran but I'm also not one of the young up-and-coming skaters. But I'm happy to be where I am and it's really cool to be able to see so much innovation as well as expertise within the sport. It's something that comes

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there's a lot of time to figure things out, to rework things. So it's hard to say what the Olympic season will look like, but I'm looking forward to it.

### **Yuma Kagiya (JPN), 2021 World silver medalist**

(on what he is looking forward to doing the most) This is a little bit of a self contradiction but when I go back to Japan, I want to rest, but I also want to practice. I discovered a lot of areas for improvement, so I want to make sure to practice these areas. (In the next Olympics, how many and how many types of quads do you think are necessary to stay on the top of the game—especially considering tonight. All types of quads were actually attempted in this competition. Nathan dominated the challenge, but also Yuma delivered strong results by only attempting 2 types of quads. Rather than go after the very difficult ones (jumps) with a low level of accuracy, I'd rather aim for a perfect, and high quality, stable program. And that's why next season, of course I want to add one or two different types of quads, but my priority would be that stability. (on plans for next season) Well this season was definitely different from the rest. There was less time for practice, for instance, but it made me realize how each training session, each one of them, is important to us given the limited frequency. Going into next season, I don't know what's going to change, but I still think the same, in that each one of the practice sessions will become very important for me. And hopefully I'll see my growth through that. (on this being the pre-Olympic World Championships) Well of course, coming into this competition, I was able to confirm where I stand in the grand design going into the Olympics (to sort of speak). And so, I was able to deliver good results here, but it doesn't necessarily mean that I can aim for the top ranks of the Olympic Games. That's undetermined yet. And I guess the first thing I'll do is, of course, because other skaters are going to train hard for the Olympic Games, I'll need to train harder and grow much more and win the ticket to the Games first. And then, if I do make it to the Olympics Games, of course I'm going to aim for the podium.

### **Yuzuru Hanyu (JPN), 2021 World bronze medalist**

(on what is he looking forward most after the competition) So coming into this competition, I've been working a lot on my quad Axel. So I've overworked my body to that extent, and it is important that I get rested well. However, I want to go back to practicing the quad axel again because I want to be the very first person to land it cleanly in a competition. (on the Japanese theme for the free program: was this influenced by the fact that he was in Japan for a long time or the 10-year anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake) Of course the 10 year anniversary of the Great East Japan earthquake had quite a large impact on me. I've been one of those who were disaster-hit and I also suffered, but there have been many people who have suffered much more and—as we speak today—continue to suffer. They're always going through so much, but are trying to make sure they step forward one step at a time, so this is very dear to me and if there is anything I could do, I've done so in the past ten years, and I will continue to do whatever I can in my capacity. Now the program; it's irrelevant whether I was in Japan or experiencing an earthquake or anything like that. The very basic idea was that I wanted to point to a program and something that brings out the best of who I am, and so with that aim I chose this piece. (how many types of quads to stay on top of the game) Well, I totally agree with what Nathan said, and of course it's going to be difficult to say how many jumps we have to do, but I personally want to make sure I jump my quad Axel. Having said that, 7 to 8 quads is a little bit of a challenge for all of us I think, but I believe that there are going to be new technologies, techniques and training methods. Our sport will continue to evolve, so making that difficult challenge is something that we as athletes welcome and actually enjoy. So I actually welcome and look forward to that challenge. Now when it's a competition situation, whether it will contribute to winning or not, I'm not sure I'll have to strike a right balance, so I'll keep my eyes on all these little things and strike my balance. (thoughts about changes for olympics and schedule) Of course I'm praying that the situation will be better than this season and that we're getting to know a little bit more about coronavirus, so hopefully we will take the necessary precautions and that we will be able to remain safe and practice more. Practice is important because we're athletes and we figure skaters need to be on the ice to train properly. So I will cherish each moment on the ice and I'm also very grateful that my family and everyone around us are healthy. That will be important, I think, going into next season as well. (on how he feels about this World Championship) Well, before the Sochi Games my ranking or my results of the Worlds previous to that was 4th place. Now before the Pyeongchang games I ended up first at Worlds and went to Pyeongchang and won gold. So this season the world champion is the guy sitting next to me, Nathan, I wish you all the best

of course for the games. At this moment I have many thoughts and ideas on the Olympic Games and looking back on my past two Games there have been a lot of good memories, bad memories, good experiences and bad experiences. And all of that - every single thing I went through - drove me to be a better skater and drove me to this growth I went through. So I don't know what kind of experience will lie ahead for us, I don't know what the global situation might be, but all I can do is do my best if the Olympic Games will take place. Well I guess that will be that then.